

## **Peculiarities of Performance Measurement in Municipalities**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this paper is to characterize the performance measurement system by identifying its cornerstone peculiarities in municipalities. Analysis revealed that performance measurement is an inevitable tool for municipalities to improve public services. However, due to its complexity, the biggest attention should be paid to the organizational structure, actors who perform their roles, different objectives, their versatility and the environment. In addition, this system is inconceivable without engaged leadership, learning and culture. Interpretations of these results highlighted the peculiarities to be considered when creating, developing and implementing performance measurement in municipalities.

**Keywords:** performance measurement, performance evaluation in municipalities.

### **Introduction**

In literature, many authors emphasize that performance measurement is an essential in municipalities. This proposition is based on the assumption that performance measurement can be helpful in achieving local and national priorities (Kondrasuk, 2011). It is also a way to demonstrate that municipalities are able to achieve important objectives with less governmental control (IDeA, Audit Commission, 2006). Moreover, it helps to make significant strides in improving the performance of municipalities by combining people, processes, skills and infrastructure. Moreover, National Performance Management Advisory Commission (2010) states that performance measurement is a vital tool to improve public services.

Although performance measurement is stressed by numerous benefits that those organizations where this method is applied, many authors recognize an emerging problem that some municipalities face: the performance measuring system is difficult to be implemented (IDeA, Audit Commission, 2006). Jackson (1993) noticed that difficulties may appear because of the complexity while measuring performance in public service organizations. The author elaborated that performance measurement in municipalities is burdened by theoretical,

methodological and practical problems, which run deep in any discussion on democracy. However, Roberts (1995) noticed that, despite numerous papers that describe the benefits of performance measurement in municipalities, an overview of the published literature provides little guidance how to measure the components of municipal government performance and how these components interact.

In some countries like Lithuania, the establishment of the performance measurement system was caused by certain political events. When Lithuania joined the Europe Union, implementation of the performance measurement system in the public sector was launched (Ministry of Internal Affairs, Lithuanian Institute of Public Administration, 2005). However, this led to a forced creation of the system, the benefits and applicability of which were known by few. In this way an attitude towards performance measurement was linked to obligatory functions but not to the tool capable of bringing a significant benefit to the organization. So in such a situation performance measurement and recognition of its specific characteristics is the key element in developing the process of performance measurement in the future.

*The topic of this paper* reveals that although it is clearly understood that performance measurement is evidently beneficial for municipalities, municipal activities abide to a lot of different regulations which may result in the complexity of the performance measurement system. Municipalities are characterised by a wide variety of objectives of different organizational structures such as elected officials, society, local councils, executives, municipal administration bodies and others that need to be declared. Moreover, the complexity encompasses the aspect of management and regulations, which require that the performance measurement system incorporated and was adapted to these special conditions. It is important that municipalities were capable of identifying those complex elements, using them to achieve enhanced public services, improving accountability and transparency. Generally, the

research question of this paper could be formulated as follows: *How is the performance measurement system diverse in municipalities?*

**The subject of research:** performance measurement.

**The aim of this article:** to characterize the performance measurement system in municipalities by identifying its main peculiarities.

In the first part of the paper the framework of the performance measurement system and its capacity to improve municipal operations has been discussed, determinants and motives evaluated. The next aspect taken into consideration is assessment of performance measurement features that drive municipalities to improve. Lastly, the peculiarities of performance measurement analyzed by various authors, the results of their research have been studied.

**Methodology:** scientific literature analysis, logical analysis, theoretical modelling. Theoretical modelling is a part of a post positivism and explanatory type of study and is based on knowledge exclusivity and collection. Knowledge collection can be acquired through critical theoretical evaluation and modelling. The aim of these methods was to adopt quantitative considerations for monitoring the municipal environment while developing performance measurement models.

### **Performance measurement in municipalities**

Performance measurement, one of the major features of the new public management reform, has remained a significant “management fashion” for many years (Abrahamson, 1996). Many academics and practitioners follow this trend in traditionally more developed countries of the English-speaking world and continental Western Europe. This tendency has been also slowly coming to the post-communist countries in Central Europe that have recently joined or are planning to join the European Union, and took over the experience of the “advanced” countries in various areas of public administration (Gudelis, 2007).

Different authors define various concepts of performance measurement. However, a common understanding of the performance measurement concept dominates in literature. Coens and Jenkins (2000), Radnor and McGuire (2004), Bracegirdle (2003), Kondrasuk (2011) affirm that the performance measurement system incorporates a wide range of diverse tools and activities that drive improvement. IDeA, Audit Commission (2006) expanded by saying that actions may be at the individual, team, service, corporate or even community level. Generally, according to the dictionary definition, measurement is a systematic assessment used to determine the value of something. Meanwhile some dictionaries define the concept as evaluation and appraisal,

synonyms for measurement, what means that all these concepts are closely linked together. Measurement as the system is set up to ensure that the goals of managers as well as individuals are clearly linked to the authority’s corporate objectives (IDeA, Audit Commission, 2002). However, the system alone does not provide effective performance. Dayal (1976) stated that it has to be introduced alongside changes in the organizational culture that make performance measurement part of everyday evaluation activity. National Performance Management Advisory Commission (2010) states that measurement must be a component of performance management because an understanding of the relationship between the activities municipalities carry out and the results they achieve is necessary for learning, improvement and accountability. Thiel and Leeuw (2002) outlined that evaluation particularly relies upon developing objectives, against which results can be measured, and availability of data on results. Similarly, Gimzauskiene (2007) described performance measurement as a useful tool that continuously revises the sub-systems of organizational management, including the most important components of the measurement process, measurement, monitoring and planning of the necessary parameters (inputs, processes, outputs) in their relation to the external environment through feedback.

Bourn (1982) pointed out that it is extremely important that the measurement process, information and knowledge gathering in municipalities were of a decision-making nature. Thus, this process must not only ensure continuous updating of information and knowledge but also constantly innovate itself in order to improve information and obtain benefits. National Performance Management Advisory Commission (2010) states that measurement may enhance municipality activities by assessing whether the strategic goals and objectives were appropriate, suitable or relevant for determining the extent to which the strategy would help achieve objectives, also identifying factors that demonstrate satisfactory performance and ways of strategy improvement. Bracegirdle (2003) proposed to group the objectives for using performance measurement into three main categories: 1) *To ensure accountability*. That means either accountability of the government to citizens, internal accountability of department heads and municipality staff. 2) *To improve performance*. That means to improve policies, programs, plans and processes of providing services, the quality, quantity and costs of these services. 3) *To help determine expenditures*. That means to take a result-based budgeting approach by linking resources allocated to specific, measurable results that reflect the agreed priorities. Such grouping may facilitate municipalities to set a direction, observe municipality activities.

Audit Commission (2000) states that it is important that organizations did not lose sight of the fundamental objectives of performance measurement.

In literature, there are many different opinions how performance measurement may have a positive impact on municipality activities. U.S. Ministry of Internal Affairs (2010) argues that the main reason for performance measurement in municipalities is initially quality improvement at the level of an employee and finally throughout the organization. National Performance Management Advisory Commission (2010) highlights that good performance measurement aims at improving results, explaining or justifying resource distribution, adopting good management, increasing benefits for the entire community. Kondrasuk (2011) added that performance measurement provides objective information to elected officials to be used while discussing the rationale of made decisions or voting. Meanwhile Mooney (2009) noticed that data obtained through performance measurement may help elected officials come to an agreement on priorities faster and make proper decisions. Moreover, Padovani, Yetano, Orelli (2009) claimed that performance measurement in municipalities helps prioritize what must be done, ensures proper resource allocation. Furthermore, it helps local authorities ensure the value of money, manage and motivate staff, identify performance drawbacks and improve at an early stage, learn from the past experience and improve future performance, increase user and public satisfaction. National Performance Management Advisory Commission (2010) emphasizes that it is important to provide full explanation and the context of information gathering to the public. Municipalities are obligated to account to citizens and superior institutions, the government. The principles and practices of performance measurement show that performance measurement allows municipalities to provide easily understandable and timely information to the public so that citizens assessed the results of municipality activities, their role fulfilling their obligations (National Performance Management Advisory Commission, 2010).

Information obtained through performance measurement is important for those engaged in public service delivery, municipalities and municipal institutions, local communities. Managers may use information to judge whether services are efficient and improving. Council members may use it to ensure that policy decisions are properly implemented and citizens are served well. Besides, citizens and partners may use performance measurement as a tool of public reporting on municipality matters (National Performance Management Advisory Commission, 2010). In some cases elected officials may need to be convinced about the benefit from implemented and sustained performance measurement. Some officials

may tend to think that performance measurement driven by high level outcomes and numerical targets may interfere with their authority of setting goals and making decisions. Mooney (2009) assumed that elected officials need to undertake the role of policy makers in the planning stage, when goals are set, and also in later stages, when responsibilities are exercised. Another factor that must to be taken into account is that information on performance is useful for municipalities in order to raise an understanding of the factors that have an impact on performance, support key management functions such as priority setting, strategic management, program management, including the planning, budgeting, monitoring and reporting cycles. Bracegirdle (2003) in her study stated that municipalities collect much useful information from performance measurement. Firstly, municipalities get a better understanding of their capacities, needs and problems, set targets for performance, identify expectations, effectively allocate resources. According to this information they improve the quality and efficiency of services, identify and adopt best practices, ensure internal accountability, improve internal processes, state accomplishments and improve measures. However, performance measurement in municipalities bears risk to make the process endless.

Lastly, the aim of performance measurement is to improve motivation of each individual and organization. It is obvious that the measurement process in the knowledge-based economy must not limit itself to data collection, assessment of organization performance, information analysis are also vital. Specific characteristics of municipalities should be taken into account in order to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of performance measurement, to build a solid foundation for further development of municipality performance.

### **Complexity of performance measurement in municipalities**

According to the authors of scientific literature, performance measurement is a useful tool for measuring municipality performance; however they note that it is applicable only to a particular part of competences of the public sector. Municipalities significantly differ from private organizations in their structure and management form. Many factors determine the complexity of implementing performance measurement in municipalities. IDEA, Audit Commission (2006) note that an understanding why some municipalities face difficulties in implementing performance measurement may be the first step towards making it workable in the real world of complex organizations.

One of the most important features that distinguish municipalities from other organizations

is a variety of functions. Although private sector organizations diversify their products, their selected range of activities is not as wide as those of municipalities, which range from services for homeless pets and street cleaning to health care and education. Many functions are set by the central authority, others – by public services, still others – by public organizations, political parties. European Institute of Public Administration (2007) found in its study that the majority of member states agree that performance measurement in public services is particularly difficult because many aspects are hard to quantify and information about performance measurement is lacking. This is particularly evident in the police, fire safety, judicial, penitentiary, political spheres. Namely here performance output is often under the influence of external variables: changing values, catastrophes, resources, coordination, time, hierarchy, etc. as well as policy strategies and decisions by policy makers. Changes in these variables are frequent and hardly incorporate target agreements. For that reason performance measurement in municipalities is a complex process. A number of different performance indicators must be developed taking into account overall impact in order to ensure comprehensive performance measurement. For example, performance measurement in municipalities must encompass such indicators as the rate of criminal offences and social care for different target groups which must be assessed in complex.

Literature states that local authorities prefer an easy way of performance measurement, i.e. information or data gathering. Palmer (1993) in his study on local government performance measurement in the UK concluded that “authorities, perhaps not surprisingly, concentrate on measuring what is easily measurable and this results in a bias towards measuring performance in terms of economy and efficiency, rather than effectiveness”. Jackson (1993) added that too often petty and easily measurable performance dimensions are recorded, meanwhile deeper, of higher value, aspects but difficult to measure are ignored. Puškorius (2006) noted that municipality performance must be measured against common criteria, the so called 3E criteria: economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Using these criteria public institutions must identify the strengths and weaknesses of the business side, the areas that need to be improved. Individual performance also must be assessed. The effectiveness of measurement will be controlled and evaluated.

One more complicated factor is competition, when several municipalities compete by comparing their performance, judging their strengths and weaknesses. Competition and performance measurement practices are interrelated (Gudelis, 2007). Palmer (1993) and Thiel, Leeuw, (2002) stated that a

list of standardized criteria, against which performance indicators are measured and compared, is of primary importance. The following aspect, that requires deeper consideration, is that municipalities are decentralized public administration units, comprise separate institutions that provide public services and formulate their goals autonomously. However, performance indicators, formulated in a centralized top-down way, may disagree with the objectives, success criteria, formulated locally and reflecting different local needs and preferences (European Institute of Public Administration, 2007). IDeA, Audit Commission (2006) added that benchmarking at the local government level means that authorities must develop local performance indicators and measure performance against both, defined locally and nationally, performance criteria.

Radnor and McGuire (2004) pointed that public interest, which must be protected, is a particular feature of municipalities. Thus, having in mind this particular feature, performance indicators should be an important but not the main aspect of performance measurement in municipalities. It is important to identify customer needs, conduct customer satisfaction surveys, set the quality standards for services (Folz, 2004).

Jackson (1993) also added that municipalities have more opportunities to involve citizens as they are functioning on a relatively small area therefore performance measurement practices must not limit these opportunities but take advantage of them. Performance measurement practices must promote citizen participation in governance, regularly and on time provide information on performance measurement and performance indicators to the public, ensure that community needs are met, municipalities and communities are committed and involved.

The organizational structure of municipalities also determines the complexity of performance measurement in municipalities. Local government institutions are made up of authority bodies (local councils), executive bodies (mayors, commissions, boards), hierarchically arranged administration staff. Municipalities differ from other organizations, say departments, ministries, budgetary institutions, which do not have special interest groups. They also differ from social organizations, political parties, where the power of executive bodies is decisive. The organizational structure of municipalities is peculiar in the way that they establish and manage different enterprises and institutions to provide public services. These enterprises are not autonomous, they are funded by municipalities and generate revenue for them.

Another important organizational feature of municipalities is that they depend on the central and / or regional authorities. Following the principle of

decentralization, local governments, municipalities, make decisions, carry out administrative functions, use allocated financial resources. Municipalities perform a number of functions delegated by the state using funds allocated from the state and / or regional budgets for the use of which they account to the central or regional authorities. Such management and regulatory aspects as policy changes, goodwill, agreements, etc. may be regarded as regulations and have an impact on performance measurement. As it has been stated in the first part of the paper, performance measurement is the mechanism that encompasses accountability and reporting. Municipalities are accountable to the central government institutions, local residents and businesses, public institutions are accountable to their administrations for allocated funds and implementation of delegated functions. Thus, performance measurement in municipalities should include all these complex connections. Furthermore, it should ensure that local entities benefited from information about the activities of entities.

People are the key factor in performance measurement and staff must be engaged and involved in the process. IDeA (2005), referring to local government staff opinion survey of MORI, found that the level of staff commitment and motivation is higher in better performing municipalities: being involved, seeing that their opinions about performance improvement, priorities are not only sought but also taken into account they feel more responsible for performance. However, the turnover of civil servants and elected politicians is high and a possibility to make pressure on agreements, goodwill, etc. is very likely.

The study of European Institute of Public Administration (2007) revealed that several member states mentioned specific difficulties that complicate qualitative performance measurement and evaluation. However, despite particular difficulties municipalities encounter in performance measurement in public services, they aim to achieve objectivity and do it as professionally as possible. Performance measurement must identify and describe both measurable results per time unit (output) that will lead to the result (input). Furthermore, Audit Commission (2000) noted that the principles of professionalism and impartiality are very important. Within this framework, it is important that the performance measurement process was conducted in accordance with the set procedure by taking into account the complexity of public services. According to IDeA, Audit Commission (2002), data validation as an important component of performance measurement in municipalities. Assessors must be trained to obtain reliable data and validate them. If data validation is not properly addressed, performance measurement may create and communicate an inaccurate picture of actual performance.

Performance measurement must not be a mechanical process, it must be launched and run properly attended to. The benefits will not be gained without strong leadership and organizational commitment to change, set proper decision-making procedures, structures, culture (National Performance Management Advisory Commission, 2010). Roberts (1995) added that performance management practitioners must know that better results are achieved when the principles and practices of performance measurement adopt a sound technical approach, strong leadership, lead to improvement, expertise and culture by focusing on results. IDeA, Audit Commission (2006) noted that the hard systems, processes, data gathering are inseparable parts of such soft aspects as culture, leadership and learning. One simply does not work without the other.

*Culture* is essential for effective performance measurement. Dayal (1976) stated that culture is the total of beliefs, values and behaviours of individuals within a given group, by which the norms of acceptable behaviour are established. IDeA, Audit Commission (2006) specified that culture is about what people believe and do. Culture has a huge impact on what municipalities do, vision, ambitions, priorities and targets, how staff are managed, motivated and supported, how individuals or groups respond to demands for improved performance, how individuals and municipalities understand performance measurement and use it. Jackson (1993) noted that a change in the mission and strategy results in changing service plans. Instability at the operational level may result in poor performance as staff are constantly adjusting to new expectations and routines. In addition, flexibility can bring greater procedural uncertainty, which may paralyze the organization and result in delayed decision making,

*Leadership* must instil the sense of performance improvement, build a performance-based organizational culture, management structures, continuously communicate information on provided services and used resources to the public, ensure that a performance-based culture and practices are initiated and sustained. Managers must make sure that an effective performance measurement framework is in place, linked to other aspects of corporate governance such as risk and financial management. The role of all council members is vital. They must take a strategic role rather than micro-management of daily delivery, take into their hands performance management, ensure that the set objectives are met. Audit Commission (2000) added that all council members must be aware of their authority, performance and management issues, priorities, be involved in service improvement. Jackson (1993) stated that seeking understanding and applying performance measurement principles and practices is not only a responsibility of public officials and managers, it is an ethical obligation.

*Learning* is vital for the development of a performance-oriented culture. Learning is about gathering and understanding information about what has been and has not been done, using this

information for changes, willingness to challenge and be challenged. Learning must promote staff confidence in a constructive dialogue (IDeA, Audit Commission, 2002) (Table 1).

Table 1

**Components of performance measurement in municipalities**

	<b>Component</b>	<b>Aim</b>
1.	Variety of objectives	To develop a number of different performance indicators, including mutual impact
2.	Competition	To prepare a list of standardized criteria, against which indicators must be evaluated, made more comparable
3.	Public interest	To ensure the level of community satisfaction, commitment by identifying customer needs, conducting customer satisfaction surveys, benchmarking services
4.	Organizational structure	To ensure proper reporting within the organization
5.	Management, regulatory aspects	To ensure the benefit from information for entities
6.	Data validation	To ensure valid data in order to create and communicate an accurate picture
7.	Participants/Staff	To train staff to collect and validate relevant data
8.	Culture	To set the vision, ambitions, priorities, targets, staff management, motivation, support systems, to monitor response to demands, understanding and use of performance measurement
9.	Leadership	To ensure an effective performance measurement framework, link to other aspects of corporate governance (risk, financial management)
10.	Learning	To train staff to understand and trust performance measurement

Source: own composition.

Table 1 provides components that must be addressed while implementing performance measurement. Their basis is theoretical modelling by summarising various research, studies. The conceptual framework provides an understanding how performance measurement should be planned and created.

Marr (2008) identified other aspects of performance measurement in municipalities in her study *Strategic Performance Management in Government and Public Sector Organizations*: implementation is often too mechanical, focuses on what prevents performance improvement, analytical skills are lacking. It means that although much information on performance is collected but little of it is actually used to provide an insight and make decisions. The lack of a clearly mapped strategy confuses staff about the direction, they are unable to make effective decisions and improve performance. One more point is that 68% of organizations falsify performance data, i.e. performance measurement cannot be trusted and fails to provide valid input into the decision making process what could result in wrong or counter-productive decisions, resource allocation, fail public accountability and trust. Gudelis (2007) generalized that municipalities face difficulties in adopting performance measurement for three main reasons: 1) lack of motivation, 2) lack of knowledge, 3) scarcity of resources. Performance measurement innovations are difficult to be adopted

because municipality council members, mayors, heads of municipality departments, internal auditors, subordinate institutions are not interested in them or do not have the necessary knowledge or, even knowing how to do it, do not have necessary institutional, financial, technological, human resources.

To sum up, municipalities are extremely complex institutions, have multiple objectives, many different customers, a specific organisational structure, deliver a wide range of services, accountability is their important feature and must be exercised in an uncertain socio-political environment. The criteria against which performance measurement must be conducted are also a barrier. Taking into account that the environment within which public service managers must make decisions is an important and challenging factor a wide body of knowledge, skills and additional resources is necessary.

**Conclusions**

Performance measurement can be defined as the system that incorporates a wide range of diverse tools and activities that drive improvement of municipal activities. It is a useful sub-system constantly renewing the organization's management and encompasses important components of the measurement process: measurement, monitoring and planning by using adequate parameters: inputs, processes, outputs and is linked to the external environment through feedback.

Properly designed performance measurement promotes the organizational culture and enhances organizational efficiency and development. The main result is improved public services, accountability and use of allocations. Performance measurement in municipalities may enhance an understanding of performance, capacities, needs, problems, help set performance targets, identify expectations, properly and effectively allocate resources, improve the quality and efficiency of services, identify and adopt best practices, improve internal processes, state accomplishments and improve measures.

While launching performance measurement in municipalities it is necessary to evaluate the peculiarities of municipalities as they are extremely complex structures; while measuring the performance of municipalities a wide variety of objectives, various performance indicators must be identified; while developing a list of standardised criteria organizational structure, management, regulations, accountability, competition must be taken into account. It must incorporate the public interest, one of the key factors that has an impact on performance measurement, identify customer needs. Performance measurement must involve all staff, elected officials, local councils, executives, public administration entities and the public.

Analysis revealed that performance measurement in municipalities must be accompanied by strong leadership, organizational commitment to introduce changes in decision making processes, structures, organisational culture and focus on results. Performance measurement in municipalities greatly depends on staff and must fulfil three key criteria: motivation, a necessary body of knowledge, adequate resources.

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## Savivaldybių veiklos vertinimo ypatumai

### Santrauka

Sparčiai besivystančioje visuomenėje didėja spaudimas viešajam sektoriui teikti rezultatus, kurie yra svarbūs vietos gyventojams. Tuo pat metu valdžios pareigūnai ir vadovai yra priversti įveikti visuomenės trūkstamą pasitikėjimą valstybinėmis institucijomis. Veiklos vertinimo sistemos tampa gyvybiškai svarbiomis vietos valdžios institucijų modernizavimo priemonėmis, nors paprastai teigiama, kad egzistuoja atotrūkis tarp lūkesčių ir realių rezultatų. Savivaldybės yra institucinis vienetas, kuris teikia didelę paslaugų įvairovę ir turi sudėtingas įtakos sferas. Dėl šios priežasties, norint pasiekti veiksmingą ir naudingą veiklos vertinimo sistemą, būtinas supratimas apie santykį tarp strategijos, žmonių ir organizacinės struktūros valstybiniam sektoriuje (Radnor, McGuire, 2004).

Nors veiklos vertinimas siejamas su didelę naudą savivaldybėms teikiančiu įrankiu, tačiau daugelis autorių taip pat pripažįsta atsirandančią problemą, kad kai kurioms savivaldybėms per daug sudėtinga įgyvendinti veiklos vertinimą (IDeA, Audito komisija, 2006). Šio straipsnio problema atskleidžia, kad nors vyrauja aiški nuostata, kad veiklos vertinimas teikia didelę naudą savivaldybėms. Tačiau savivaldybių veiklai įtaką daro daugelis įvairių reguliatorių, kurie gali lemti veiklos vertinimo sistemos sudėtingumą. Apskritai šio straipsnio **probleminis klausimas** gali būti formuluojamas taip: kuo savita veiklos vertinimo sistema savivaldybėse?

Šio straipsnio **tikslas** – apibūdinti veiklos vertinimo sistemą ir nustatyti jos kertinius ypatumus savivaldybėse. Veiklos vertinimo įgyvendinimas kiekvienoje organizacijoje unikalus. Savivaldybės yra labai sudėtingas institucinis vienetas, kuri veikia tiek vidiniai, tiek išoriniai reguliatoriai. Veiklos vertinimo ypatumai savivaldybėse buvo analizuojami per vertinimo sistemos koncepcijos atskleidimą ir jo gebėjimą pagerinti savivaldybių vykdomas operacijas, taip pat įvertinti veiklos vertinimo sistemos įgyvendinimą lemiančius veiksnius ir motyvus, pereinant prie įvairių autorių organizacijos veiklos vertinimo analizės, parentos įvairių tyrimų rezultatais ir išvargomis, kurios atskleidžia veiklos vertinimo ypatumus savivaldybėse.

Mokslinės literatūros analizė ir teorinis modeliavimas atskleidė pagrindinius veiklos vertinimo ypatumų savivaldybėse rezultatus. Veiklos vertinimas gali būti apibrėžtas kaip sistema, kuri apima plačią skirtingų priemonių ir veiklų įvairovę, kurie skirti savivaldybių veiklai tobulinti. Ji taip pat gali būti laikoma kaip naudinga, nuolat atsinaujinanti organizacijos valdymo posistemė, apimanti

svarbiausius vertinimo proceso jėgos komponentus: matavimą, stebėseną ir planavimo sistemą su būtiniais parametrais (įėjimai, procesai, išėjimai), kurie susieti su išorės aplinka per grįžtamąjį ryšį.

Tinkamai suprojektuota veiklos vertinimo sistema, kuri sutampa su organizacijos kultūra, gali būti svarbus pagalbinis savivaldybių efektyvumo ir plėtros įrankis. Svarbiausi tokios sistemos rezultatai savivaldybėms yra patobulintos viešosios paslaugos, didesnė atskaitomybė ir išlaidų nustatymo įrankis. Be to, įgyvendinamos veiklos vertinimą, savivaldybės gali geriau suprasti savo veiklą, pajėgumus, poreikius, problemas, nustatyti veiklos tikslus ir lūkesčius, tinkamai ir veiksmingai paskirstyti išteklius. Sistemos įgyvendinimas taip pat pagerinti paslaugų kokybę ir efektyvumą, nustatyti ir panaudoti geriausią praktiką, tobulinti vidinius procesus, valstybės pasiekimus ir tobulinti matavimo priemones.

Matuojant savivaldybių veiklą, būtina įvertinti ypatumus, kurie atsiranda savivaldybėse. Savivaldybė kaip institucinis vienetas yra nepaprastai sudėtingas, o į tai būtina atsižvelgti vertinant jos veiklos rezultatus. Pagrindiniai išskiriami ypatumai yra tikslų įvairovė, o tai reikalauja parengti daug skirtingų veiklos matavimo rodiklių; organizacinė struktūra, taip pat valdymo ir reguliavimo aspektai, kurie lemia atskaitomybės ryšių atsiradimą; konkurencija, kuri reikalauja, kad veiklos vertinimo rodikliai tenkintų palyginamumo principus. Be to, viešasis interesas irgi svarbus veiksnys, turintis įtakos organizacijos veiklos vertinimo sistemai; dėl šios priežasties turėtų būti įtraukti tokie rodikliai kaip klientų poreikių identifikavimas. Savivaldybėje veikiantys asmenys (išrinkti pareigūnai, vietos tarybos, vadovai, savivaldybių administracijos) ir visuomenė taip pat turėtų būti įtraukti kaip veiklos vertinimo sistemos dalyviai.

Ši analizė atskleidė, kad organizacijos veiklos vertinimo sistema savivaldybėse yra neįsivaizduojama be stiprios lyderystės ir tvirto organizacinio išpareigojimo, pakeičiant netinkamus sprendimų priėmimo procesus, struktūras ir sukuriant kultūrą, kuri nuolat stiprintų orientavimąsi į rezultatus. Kuriant matavimo rezultatus, savivaldybėse dalyvauja dauguma darbuotojų, todėl jie turi atitikti tris pagrindinius kriterijus: motyvacija, pakankamas žinių kiekis ir turimi pakankami išteklių šaltiniai.

**Pagrindiniai žodžiai:** veiklos vertinimas, veiklos rodikliai, veiklos vertinimas savivaldybėse.

The article has been reviewed.

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