

TENDENCIES OF IMPROVEMENT OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IN POLITICAL PARTIES' PROGRAMMES AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION

Diana Šaparnienė, Audronė Meškytė, Iveta Reinholde

***Abstract:** Having performed literary analysis, the aspects of improvement of local self-government in the context of new public governance have been theoretically substantiated. Referring to theoretical insights, the provisions of programmes of the biggest political parties of the Republic of Lithuania related to local self-government have been analysed covering period from December 12, 2012 to March 31, 2014. In addition, the agendas and reports of the meetings of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania have been analysed in order to determine main tendencies of improvement of local self-government that receive biggest attention from the political parties in decision making process. The research has shown that improvement of local self-government in the programmes of political parties is oriented to 4 tendencies: 1) independence/autonomy; 2) strengthening of democracy and civil society; 3) improvement of governance; 4) quality of public sector services. In the agendas of the meetings of Government of the Republic of Lithuania mainly the issues related to efficiency, effectiveness, legitimacy of local self-government, strengthening of abilities of civil servants have been analysed.*

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Introduction

Local self-government being close to the citizens, their needs, representing their interests takes especially important part in state's political system. Being a territorial link of political system and civil society, through local citizens are able to express their interests, control how they are being implemented and influence state's governance as well. The New public governance (NPG) became a conceptual background for local self-government democracy expression (Torfing, Triantafyllou, 2013). According Osborne (2010), the nature of NPG paradigm supposes a strong link between polycentric democracy and government efficiency, emphasis pluralism, attached great importance to the links between citizens in governance. NPG highlight such governmental values as transparency, responsibility, accountability and other moral-ethical features.

Improvement of local self-government in Lithuania as well as in other European countries is a topic of interest of political parties stating in their programmes that they will pay quite much attention to solve various issues of local self-government. Political parties in their programmes not only express citizens' political will, but also try to implement programmes' provisions in the sphere of local self-government. Consequently, the provisions declared in the programmes of political parties and their implementation are an important issue at state level as well as at the level of local (self-government) governance.

1 Statement of a problem

1.1 Problem of the research

There is a lack of empirical researches investigating the issues of improvement of local self-government in the programmes of political parties in the context of NPG. In scientific literature mainly the issues of efficiency of local self-government (Wollman, 2010, 2012; Kuhlmann, 2010; Sanderson, 2001; Astrauskas, 2013, et al.), the problem of policy implemented by political parties in local government (Back, 2003; Kjaer, Elklit, 2010, Buchmann, 2013) are being analysed. Provisions of political parties' programmes regarding the issues of improvement of local self-government were analysed quite poorly.

In the programmes of political parties of Lithuania usually the aim to improve local self-government taking essential reform actions (change of the system of municipalities and subdistricts, expansion of municipalities' functions, citizens' involvement in institutions' activities, etc.) that will help to implement constitutional obligation of state institutions and organisations to serve people and to gain stronger society's trust is emphasised. However, researches and practice show that relatively insufficient attention is paid to the implementation of provisions of reform of local self-government declared in the programmes of political parties.

The problem of this research might be defined by the following questions: 1) What tendencies of improvement of local self-government are foreseen in the programmes of political parties that at present are in power? 2) How are the provisions of programmes of political parties related to improvement of local self-government implemented?

Object of the research – tendencies of improvement of local self-government and their implementation in political parties' programmes.

Aim of the research – having carried out the analysis of provisions declared in the programmes of selected Lithuanian political parties in the aspect of improvement of local self-government to investigate practical implementation of these provisions.

Tasks of the research:

1. With the reference to literary analysis to examine the aspects of improvement of local self-government in the context of NPG and the impact of local policy on the improvement of local self-government.
2. To analyse political parties' programmes and to determine what tendencies of improvement of local self-government they define.
3. When analysing the agendas and reports of the meetings of the Government of the LT to determine the main tendencies of improvement of local self-government that receive the greatest attention of political parties when making decisions.

1.2 Conceptual Background

Democratic states pursue to develop effective, transparent and accountable institutions of local self-government corresponding to society's needs and aims. Political parties are the link of local self-government that aggregate the expectations of different society's groups and articulate public policy options to respond to them (Torfing, Triantafillou, 2013). Therefore, elections provide an opportunity to the electors to vote for the parties which programmes correspond their needs and expectations and political parties while being

in power and forming public policy pursue the implementation of programmes. In modern democracies elected political parties actually formulate and implement public policy.

Since political parties implement not only the set values and ideals, however, first of all while being in power they represent public interest, their formed and implemented policy is inseparable from the paradigm of NPG which emphasises the stimulation of citizens to participate in political decision making processes, increase of cooperation of government stakeholders, assurance of openness, transparency, stimulation of public spirit and pluralism (Peters, Savoie, 2012). Having in mind that public policy is implemented through various symbolic forms (programmes, reports, laws, decrees, etc. of parties and Government), their content and practical expression acquires an important role. As the formers and implementers of public policy – political parties/politicians – are concerned about improvement of state and local self-government, the principles of NPG are emphasised in their programmes, agendas of the meetings and other activities. The latter contribute while corresponding society's needs and expectations in the period of globalisation, the newest information technologies and evaluation of rationality and efficiency.

In the context of NPG local self-government institutions pay more attention to improvement of service structure, to teaching and educating employees, to managing the newest procedures and activities' methods of planning, management and coordination (Buškevičiūtė, Raipa, 2011). NPG presents a certain alternative to the previous models of public administration (traditional public administration, public management, new public management) due to its social engagement, social quality. Particular significance of this model is noticed when forming and developing communities when real rather than formal local self-government is created (Guogis, Šilinskytė, 2013). NPG covers many governance processes and is perceived as networking of political elite (Osborne, 2010), therefore, in theoretical and practical aspects the influence of formers and implementers of state policy upon improvement of local self-government acquire wider discourse. In addition, NPG links together policy design and public service delivery as well as offers to look on cooperation of public and private sector through a glasses of interdependence and networking (Peters, Savoie, 2012).

2 Methods

Trying to determine the tendencies of improvement of Lithuanian⁴ local self-government in political parties' programmes and analyse their implementation qualitative research has been carried out. The following methods have been used in the research: scientific literary analysis; content analysis of the documents.

The parties that received the majority of votes during the elections⁵ to the Government of the Republic of Lithuania (LT) (in 2012 were selected for the research: Social Democratic Party of Lithuania (SDPL), Labour party (hereinafter LP), Homeland Union – Lithuanian Christian Democrats (hereinafter HU-LCD), Liberal Movement of the

⁴ Lithuania is a unitary state, administratively divided in to 60 municipalities. There is one level of self-government in Lithuania. The right to self-government for municipalities is guaranteed by the Constitution of Lithuania. The functions of local government are based on the principle of subsidiarity. By territory and number of inhabitants the average population in municipalities is 57 000. The municipal councils range in size from 15 to 51 members, depending on their population. Municipalities' revenues come mostly from central government's grants and a share of the general income tax. Property incomes and local taxes, on which municipalities have some leeway, account of only 6% of municipalities' revenues.

⁵ The voter turn-out in parliamentary election in 2012 was 52,93%. The Social Democrats became the largest party in the Seimas.

LT (hereinafter LMRL), Order and Justice Party (OJP). Due to the biggest number of obtained mandates these parties form the majority in the Seimas, in addition, they have an opportunity to form the Government and implement their political provisions. The selected parties participate in adopting laws and making political decisions.

Using documents' content analysis, political parties' programmes have been analysed following the provisions that it is a document which defines party's responsibility, ability to foresee local governance in the future. It is worth to mention that in order to supplement research data, the election programmes of selected political parties that participated in the elections to the Seimas in 2012 have been analysed. This analysis of programmes' provisions helped to find out what tendencies of improvement of local self-government different political parties define.

Trying to determine the implementation of provisions of political parties' programmes related to local self-government, the agendas and activities' reports of the meetings of the Government of the LT have been analysed since Government is the main character agglomerating political promises and creating the programmes for implementation of political "promises". Government is responsible for implementation of state's policy. It should be noted that the agenda of Government's meetings was analysed for the period from December 12, 2012 (when the elections to the Seimas of the LT were held and the 16th Government was formed) to March 31, 2014.

3 Problem solving

3.1 Content analysis of political parties' programmes

Referring to inductive access of content analysis the programmes of selected political parties have been analysed. Their provisions related to improvement of local self-government were grouped according to formed categories and subcategories (see Tab. 1) that have been distinguished referring not only to provisions of programmes of political parties, but also to principles distinguished in the conception of NPG.

Tab. 1: Categories and subcategories

Category	Subcategory
Independence/autonomy of self-government	Financial autonomy of municipalities
	Autonomy of municipalities' economic activities
	Autonomy of municipalities' activities
	Financial autonomy of subdistricts
	Autonomy of subdistricts' activities
Democracy and strengthening of civil society	Citizens' participation/involvement in decision making
	Change of election system of local self-government
Improvement of governance	Responsibility
	Accountability
	Openness
	Transparency
	Efficiency
	Legitimacy
	Competences/leadership
	Inter-sectoral cooperation
	Service to society
Structural changes	
Quality and governance of public sector services	-

Source: (Authors of the article)

During the analysis of political parties' programmes, 4 main categories have been distinguished related to autonomy of subjects of self-government, strengthening of civil society, improvement of governance and provision of public services. 17 subcategories have been distinguished in order to supplement categories and to present provisions of political parties' programmes in a structured manner.

3.2 Implementation of provisions of political parties' programmes

3.2.1 Conformity of agendas of Government's sessions to provisions of political parties' programmes

Since political parties are active participants of making agenda, operating ideological provisions, the agenda of sessions of the Government of the LT (see Tab. 2) has been analysed following the provision that the Government is an institution participating in the process of formation of agenda of public policy at state's level and is responsible for implementation of state's policy.

Tab. 2: Conformity of agendas of Government's sessions to provisions of political parties' programmes

Category/subcategory	Number of questions
Autonomy of municipalities' economic activities	70
Quality and governance of services of public sector	3
Efficiency/effectiveness	2
Citizens' participation/involvement in decision making	2
Legitimacy	2
Autonomy of municipalities' activities	2
Financial autonomy of municipalities	1
Change of election system of local self-government	1
Competences/leadership	1
Structural changes	1
Accountability	1
Transparency	1
Publicity	1
Improvement of governance	1
Total:	89

Source: (Authors of the article)

After carrying out analysis of agendas of sessions of the Government of the LT it appeared that majority of discussed questions were related to autonomy of municipalities' economic activities. It is worth mentioning that "autonomy of economic activities" is related to transfer of multipurpose assets to municipalities, for instance, "Regarding the transfer of a piece of state land for other purposes to the municipality of Palanga city to manage, use and dispose under the trust law", "Regarding the transfer of tangible fixed assets to municipalities", "Regarding the transfer of real estate to the ownership of municipality of Raseiniai district". It should be emphasised that tasks of Commission of Improvement of Public Governance (hereinafter referred to as Commission) indicated in paragraph 3.1.6 which states that Commission will be able to provide suggestions regarding "more efficient management of state and **municipal** assets" have been revised, however, during the meeting held after a week this initiative was changed rejecting the management of municipal assets.

In the agendas of the Government of the LT priority is given not only to autonomy of municipalities' economic activities but also to activities related to implemented functions. During the analysis, two questions related to **autonomy of municipal activities** have been found: 1) Article 33 of the Law on Local Self-Government has been supplemented by Part 7

which indicates that all office, post, transport and other expenses related to elder's activities are paid by allowance determined by the Municipal Council. 2) Part 1 of the Article 4 of the Law on Financial Social Support for Disadvantaged People of the LT has been changed stating that "Municipalities provide social support while implementing independent municipal function". This means that from 2014 payment of social benefits became municipality's independent (not delegated) function what provides municipalities with more rights to control reasonable usage of funds.

Having changed Part 3 of the Article 4 of the Law on Financial Social Support for Disadvantaged People of the LT the increase of municipal financial autonomy was noticed, when the Government assigns financial resources following actual costs of 2012 that municipality was able to use upon its own discretion.

In the agendas of sessions of the Government of the LT attention is paid to the issues of **quality and governance of services of public sector**. For example, Paragraph 11.2.1 of the Programme of Improvement of Public Governance in 2012-2020 was supplemented trying "to create united electronic system of communication of public management institutions and citizens". With this issue it is tried to ensure high level of transfer of services to cyberspace that are important to citizens.

In the sphere of **effectiveness and efficiency** several questions have been discussed corresponding provisions of political parties' programmes: 1) The paragraph 13.2.2 of the Programme of Improvement of Public Governance in 2012-2020 has been supplemented by the following statement: "Trying to increase the efficiency of aldermen's activities, the procedures of planning of aldermen's activities will be improved". 2) In priority means of implementation of Government's programme of 2012-2013 the chapter "Development of self-government and enlargement of municipalities' responsibility" has been distinguished. Paragraph 313 states that amendments of the Law on Local Self-government will be prepared that will distribute aldermen's functions more precisely. This initiative will contribute to efficiency and effectiveness of governance of local self-government.

In political parties' programmes (considering frequency of repetitive provisions) **citizens' participation and involvement into decision making** is emphasised most, however, in the agenda of the Government of the LT only two questions related to strengthening of civil society were discussed. In the approved action plan for the year 2013-2015 of implementation of the Programme of Improvement of Public Governance in 2012-2020 the task 1.2 has been emphasised – "to motivate society especially nongovernmental organisations and local communities to participate in the processes of public governance". To achieve the task, measure 1.2.1 has been determined that ensures consulting with society and increasing the opportunities of its participation in the processes of public governance. It is worth to mention several actions of implementation of this measure: creation of internet access to people, preparation of methods of public consultations (practical manual), organisation of public consultations with youth organisations, etc. In addition, the measure 1.2.2 was distinguished that implements and determines the measures that would stimulate people and local communities to participate in solving public local matters, for instance, to prepare practical manual of elders' activities that would contain necessary information for elders' activities, to determine and evaluate legal and practical problems of elders' activities and to present them to the representatives of municipal institutions (mayors, administration directors, aldermen) and elders.

One more principle of NPG – **legitimacy** – is also emphasised in agendas of the Government of the LT. Referring to it, paragraph 9.2.2 of the Programme of Improvement of Public Governance in 2012-2020 has been supplemented trying to improve legal regulation of aldermen’s activities, i.e. clearly defined functions of aldermen and subdistricts, distinctly determined rights and duties of aldermen. Analogous actions of implementation of direction of improvement of local self-government are revealed also in Paragraph 313 of implementation of priority measures of the Government’s Programme of 2012-2013, whereas Paragraph 314 emphasises formation of legal presumptions for more effective activities of representatives of local people and communities preparing amendments of the Law on Local Self-Government and regulating more clearly elders’ status and relations with local government.

In the **changes of the system of elections of local self-government** some reform actions were implemented. In the agenda of the Government of the LT it has been determined to revise and amend Part 5, Article 33 of the Law on Local Self-Government where it is indicated that the elder will be elected not for 2, but for 4 years.

In the provisions of political parties’ programmes attention is paid to improvement of **competences and abilities** of civil servants. In the agenda of the Government of the LT the issue regarding approval of description of order of organisation of civil servants’ training has been discussed which determines “procedures of preparation, evaluation, approval, invalidating of programmes of civil servants’ training, procedures of organisation of trainings and the system of evaluation of education quality”.

Principles of NPG such as **accountability** and **transparency** dominate not only in political parties’ programmes but also in agendas of sessions of the Government of the LT. In the paragraph 9.2.2 of the Programme of Improvement of Public Governance in 2012-2020, the improvement of legal regulation of aldermen’s functions is implemented trying to increase aldermen’s accountability to subdistrict’s community. The tasks of Commission of Improvement of Public Governance were revised referring to the Provisions of Programme 2012-2016 of the 16th Government of the LT pursuing effective and transparent public management oriented towards satisfaction of society’s needs and social justice. This statement reflects not only the principle of transparency but also principles of efficiency, serving society, justice that belong to the paradigm of public management.

While analysing agenda of Government’s sessions, revision of the Law on Local Self-Government (hereinafter referred to as Law) has been noticed that does not have an equivalent to the provisions distinguished by political parties’ programmes, however, corresponds (considering its content) to the category of **improvement of Public Governance**. There was an attempt to supplement Article 3 of the Law with Part 3: “3. If survey results are related to the spheres of competences and responsibility of state institutions or their implementation requires participation of these institutions, municipal Council presents survey results to respective state institutions”. However, such Government’s position has been rejected due to a doubtful necessity.

Generalising the analysis of sessions’ agendas, we may state that main issues discussed in the agendas have relations with principles of public governance: satisfaction of society’s needs, efficiency, effectiveness, development of servants’ abilities, etc. Main tendencies of development of local self-government are implemented in the Programme of Improvement of Public Governance in 2012-2020 as well as in the Law on Local

Self-Government. Besides, the development of self-government implemented in 2012-2014 transferred not only financing but also functions. Although this autonomy is not related to big opportunities to implement projects, however, the fact that Government agreed to provide certain autonomy is very important to municipalities. In general context of analysis of political parties' programmes and agendas of sessions of the Government of the LT we may notice that the Government of the LT tends to adopt resolutions and suggest amendments of various programmes and laws corresponding the provisions of programmes. It is worth to mention that during the sessions of the Government 3 proposals have been made that contradict the principals/provisions declared by political parties' programmes. In addition, there is lack of questions related to the development of subdistricts' autonomy, the emphasis of principle of higher responsibility and inter-sectoral cooperation.

3.2.2 Conformity of reports of the Government of the LT to provisions of political parties' programmes

Pursuing supplement of implemented analysis of agenda of Government's sessions, two main reports have been analysed: Report of the progress of I-III quarters of implementation of activities' priorities of the year 2013 of the Government of the LT and Report of activities of the year 2013 of the Government of the LT. Table 3 presents systemised information of the reports corresponding provisions of political parties' programmes

Tab. 3: Conformity of reports of the Government of the LT to provisions of political parties' programmes

Report	Category/subcategory	Number of equivalents to category/subcategory
Report of the progress of I-III quarters of implementation of activities' priorities of the year 2013 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania	Autonomy of municipal activities	1
	Efficiency/effectiveness	1
Report of activities of the year 2013 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania	Quality and management of services of public sector	3
	Financial autonomy of subdistricts	2
	Democracy and strengthening of civil society	1
	Citizens' participation and involvement in decision making	1
	Competences/leadership	1
	Openness	1

Source: (Authors of the article)

While performing the analysis of Report of the progress of I-III quarters of implementation of activities' priorities of the year 2013 of the Government of the LT it has been revealed that new version of the Law on Territorial Planning of the LT has been adopted which changes the regulation of territorial planning i.e. citizens do not need to prepare detailed plans, they are prepared by municipalities. Revision of this law conditions not only additional functions transferred to municipalities, but also contributes to implementation of efficiency and effectiveness principles as the number of documents necessary to prepare for territorial planning decreased and the process of preparation of planning was reduced by more than 30%.

In the Report of activities of the year 2013 of the Government of the LT main implemented works related to increase of financial autonomy of the lowest level of local

self-government – subdistricts and local communities have been emphasised. 8 million Litas have been allocated to encourage self-government of local communities, so during 2013 in Lithuania communities were stimulated to participate in decision making regarding usage of funds to satisfy public needs of local community. In such manner it was tried to preserve specific role of communities' organisations and to ensure their sustainable development. It should be emphasised that while strengthening of communities' organisations 81 project of social activities of communities' organisations were financed, regional communities' forums and training events were organised that helped to improve abilities of social activities and entrepreneurship of heads of communities' organisations.

Continuing analysis of subdistricts' financial autonomy, in the report of the Government of the LT it has been noticed that the part (average) of municipal budget given to finance subdistricts is growing. Referring to the data of research of municipal activities, in 2012, 3% of the part of municipal budget were allocated to subdistricts, in 2013 – 3,23%. This shows that municipalities are concerned about strengthening subdistricts and increasing their financial autonomy.

In the sphere of quality and management of public sector services some reform actions started related to implementation of electronic services. Essential changes have been noticed in development of e-health System while preparing model of project activities: development of e-health services and communication infrastructure; development of e-services, E-prescription; creation of national information system of archiving and exchange of medical images and execution of electronic services based on that system.

In 2013 installation works of ESPBIS IS (Electronic Information System of Health Service and Cooperation Infrastructure) started and in 2015 after installation of ESPBI IS patients are able to get more efficient and better quality health services and data exchange among health care institutions is ensured.

In the sphere of services public management institutions using EU structural support in 2013 implemented projects which aim is to improve management of activities of these institutions and internal administration, to apply methods of quality management, to improve citizens' service and effectively apply one-stop-shop principle. 96 such projects were implemented (35 projects were finished; 40 new projects were started).

In the Report of activities of the Government of the LT relatively little information is provided about citizens' participation and involvement in decision making. It is worth mentioning new version of Description of Order of Land Numbers and Description of Order of Names of Streets, Buildings and other Constructions. One of the essential changes – municipalities must inform in advance people about changing addresses, besides, people will be informed about adopted decisions to change street names or house numbers. In such manner it is tried to ensure citizens' right to know and the right to participate while solving important local matters, to determine clear procedure of address allocation referring to arising problems. It has been noticed that in the process of revision of descriptions besides citizens' participation, implementation of openness principle is pursued that is based on informing people about adopted decisions as well as ensuring the right to know essential local matters.

4 Discussion

Initiatives of the Government of the LT have relations with provisions of political parties' programmes related to development of competences and abilities of civil servants.

In 2014 proposals were provided to the Seimas to strengthen body of senior heads, to implement competence-based management of human resources, to determine new conditions of payment and motivation. Having evaluated these changes, it is possible to make a conclusion that it is pursued to determine a simpler and less resources demanding legal regulation of civil service. At the same time, it is path to implement NPG towards responsibility and accountability of central and local levels of governance.

Data reveals that the governmental agenda of the sessions is different as the government reports. The sessions are more devoted to discuss municipal economic activities while the government reports cover the whole spectrum of municipal activities. However, issues of public service delivery and financial autonomy of local governments are relevant for both: the government sessions and reports since any amendments or changes in the legal acts related to public service delivery might have impact on municipal economy and finances.

Meanwhile, there are some empirical evidence identified regarding public participation. Trying to determine the changes of participation of local people in managing local affairs, monitoring of organisation and implementation of surveys of local people has been started. Primary results of monitoring provide a conclusion that municipalities do not often consult with the people regarding important local matters even when legal conditions are created. However, it is ordinary to consult with the community regarding territorial matters. This creates evidence that NPG is a more empirical phenomenon rather a well-defined and structured theoretical paradigm (Torfig et all 2014).

As it was found out that improvement of local self-government in political parties' programmes is concentrated around fields like strengthening of democracy and civil society; improvement of governance as well quality and governance of public sector services. In order to achieve improvements in all above mentioned fields cooperation between public, private sectors and local communities are essential. However, Torfig (et all 2014) emphasised that a cooperation might be hindered by standard operating procedures in bureaucratic bodies, profit making drivers in business and multi-identity of community members. Anyway, interest of political parties in issues of local governance reflects important tendency towards polycentric governance where local municipalities has been accepted as political actors not only service providers.

Conclusions

1. The analysis of programmes' provisions of LP, LMRL, SDPL, HU-LCD, OJP revealed that improvement of local self-government in political parties' programmes is oriented towards 4 tendencies: 1) independence/autonomy of self-government; 2) strengthening of democracy and civil society; 3) improvement of governance; 4) quality and governance of public sector services.

2. The analysis of agendas of the meetings of the Government of the LT revealed that during the analysed period the issues of improvement of local self-government were analysed that correspond the principles of NPG, mainly oriented to assurance of efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy of local self-government, strengthening of abilities of civil servants.

3. In general context of analysis of political parties' programmes and agendas of the meetings of the Government of the LT it has been determined that the Government tends to make decisions and present amendments of various programmes and laws corresponding the provisions of parties' programmes. However, there is a lack of practically

investigated issues defined in the programmes that are related to emphasising of principles of higher responsibility and inter-sectoral cooperation, essential changes in modification of election system and optimisation of the structure of apparatus of local government's institutions/governance. In addition, citizens' involvement and participation in decision making was highly emphasised in political parties' programmes, however, only several questions related to this sphere were found in the agendas of the meetings of the Government of the LT.

4. Conformity of reports of the Government of the LT with political parties' programmes let us state that the main tendencies of improvement of local self-government during the period 2012-2014 were oriented towards the increase of quality of public sector's services and financial independence of subdistricts. In addition, the following tendencies of local self-government emphasised in political parties' programmes are being implemented: strengthening of civil society, strengthening of civil servants' competencies, pursuit of openness, effectiveness and efficiency, expansion of municipalities' functions.

5. The analysis of reports of the Government of the LT let us state that there is a lack of attention when implementing the provisions of political parties' programmes related to implementation of principles of responsibility, accountability, transparency and cooperation in local self-government that are the main principles of improvement of local self-government in the context of theories of NPG.

6. There are some practical implications for practitioners like citizen's participation in the decision making process that might request resources and skills for e-communication. The segmented approach for consultations and communication with different groups of citizen's should be included in municipal marketing and communication activities. Thus, local governments might be encouraging to review their own public consultation and communication strategies and approaches.

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Contact address

Diana Šaparnienė, professor, PhD

University of Klaipėda, Department of Recreation and Tourism

Herkaus Manto str. 84-218, LT-92294 Klaipėda, Lithuania

Email: diana.saparniene@gmail.com

Phone number: +370 682 46551

Audronė Meškytė, mg.

University of Klaipėda, Department of Recreation and Tourism

Herkaus Manto str. 84-218, LT-92294 Klaipėda, Lithuania

Email: diana.saparniene@gmail.com

Phone number: +370 682 46551

Iveta Reinholde, asoc. prof., PhD

University of Latvia, Department of Political Sciences

Lomonosova street 1A, Riga, LV1019, Latvia

Email: iveta.reinholde@lu.lv

Phone number: +371 29127742

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