

Decisions made without the public. Czech cities make it harder for residents to access key information.

Prague, 30 September 2026

Residents often learn about important plans for their city only once a decision has already been made. The decision itself often fails to explain why or how it was reached. An assessment of 56 cities in the Transparent Czechia project (Transparentní Česko) shows that residents lack the information they need to participate in decision-making or at least scrutinise it. Liberec achieved the best overall score (66%), while Mladá Boleslav came last (24%).

Cities mainly publish decisions they have already made. Information is scarce at the stage when the public could still respond. This is particularly clear in the findings on the transparency of municipal executive boards. 90% of the cities assessed publish minutes and resolutions, but only a third publish the meeting agenda. Only one of the 56 cities, Písek, makes the papers used by executive board members to reach their decisions available to the public.

The situation is better for municipal councils, but access to meeting papers is still not guaranteed. Almost 30% of the cities assessed publish only the agenda before a meeting, without the supporting documents, and 30% do not attach to adopted decisions the documents those decisions refer to.

“Democracy is not just about being able to vote regularly. It also means finding out in time who makes decisions about our city, why, how and at what cost, scrutinising those decisions and getting involved before everything is final. We are currently in the paradoxical situation where cities themselves complain about being overwhelmed by information requests, yet they create that pressure through their own lack of transparency,” says **Šárka Zvěřina Trunkátová**, Chair of Oživení.

Transparency is not determined by the size of the city administration. At least one city already meets each of the assessed criteria, so good practice can simply be adopted.

More documents do not mean greater openness.

Transparency cannot be measured simply by counting documents on a website. More than 90% of cities publish minutes, archives or lists. But the results worsen markedly when we ask whether those documents make the reasons for a proposal, the course of the debate and individual politicians' responsibility clear. Only 14 of the 56 cities publish how individual executive board members voted, and just four publish a brief account of the discussion. Almost a third of cities do not even provide information on who in the city leadership is responsible for which portfolio.

Cities disclose little about property. Grant information is buried in PDFs.

80% of the cities assessed do not even publish an overview of the real estate they own, and only a tenth give notices of intended property sales more publicity than the law requires. Grant information is also difficult to find. Only a third of local authorities provide an archive of funding calls in one place, and fewer than a quarter publish unsuccessful applications.

Municipal newsletters are not fulfilling their potential to inform.

Municipal newsletters could be an important tool for making decision-making more transparent, but the way they are organised often prevents this. Most editorial boards have no opposition representative, and in 60% of them councillors from the governing coalition hold a substantial majority. In most cities, the city leadership controls the newsletter's content. As a result, the focus is on presenting the current city leadership in a positive light rather than informing residents.

"Municipal newsletters cannot serve as a balanced source of information if their content is influenced by the politicians whose work they are supposed to cover. This problem is all the more serious because other independent media are often absent in the regions," says **Marie Krutišová**, an analyst at Oživení.

www.transparentni-cesko.cz

Key findings - Transparent Czechia 2026

About Transparent Czechia

Transparent Czechia (Transparentní Česko) monitors the transparency of Czech municipalities, regions, and state-owned and municipally owned companies.

Transparent Czechia 2026 assesses 56 cities, boroughs and municipal districts. We examine the openness of local government, the transparency of information about property management, municipal newsletters and whistleblowing channels. The assessment is based on publicly available information and local authorities' responses to requests under the Freedom of Information Act.

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Original Czech press release: Oživení, 30 September 2026