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II. deputy mayor
City of Banská Bystrica

Banská Bystrica, 30th of september 2020

Number: Pr. KP - 156257 /2020

Dear OGP team,

on behalf of the mayor of the City of Banská Bystrica, let me introduce you to our city.

The town of Banská Bystrica is the metropolis of central Slovakia, with approximately 76,000 inhabitants. It is the seat of many institutions. It is located on the banks of the Hron River and is surrounded by the mountain ranges of the Low Tatras, the Great Fatra and the Kremnica Hills. As a historic town with easy access to the surrounding mountains, Banská Bystrica is a popular winter and summer tourist destination.

The city of Banská Bystrica has its own representative bodies - the mayor and the city council - as well as subordinate bodies. The city council consists of departments dealing with various life situations, such as education, social care, regional development, culture, sports and local taxes.

Everyone who has a temporary or permanent residence in the city, including foreigners, has the right to local participation. There is an opportunity to participate in local government meetings and address their proposals or petitions to the mayor, the city council and subordinate bodies of the city of Banská Bystrica.

Only residents of the city (permanent residents) have voting rights. Permanent residents have the right to vote and be elected mayor or city council and to vote in local and regional referendums.

We have had a participatory budget in our city for 6 years and every year we try to work with it so that it serves our inhabitants in the best and most transparent way possible. It is led by a coordination board composed of volunteers from different fields. Currently, even during a difficult pandemic situation, we have started this year's cycle for consulting projects submitted by city residents, and the city office can implement them after the vote. The institute of participatory budget means a lot to us, because we can meet the requirements of our citizens and improve our city. Thanks to him, we also learn a lot, because the trends in the field of participation are constantly increasing and the members of the coordination board are educated in this field and we consider them to be real experts.

There are also civic councils in the city, which bring together the inhabitants of the city districts so that they can take part in the administration of their surroundings and cooperate with the deputies. This tool of participation is unique in Slovakia and is not in many cities.

The city of Banská Bystrica also has advisory bodies of the mayor of the city, such as the mayor's council for students, but also the mayor's council for non-governmental non-profit organizations or for seniors. Thanks to the cooperation with the engaged inhabitants in these bodies, we are able to gather suggestions for improving the quality of life in our city. However, we are still not in our dreams in this area. We are interested in increasing and supporting participation in our city. Many partner organizations help us with this. For this reason, we decided to join the OGP project.

We are entering the OGP project with partner organizations Interactive school of urbanism and spatial planning - ISUP and Dialogue Centre - DC. We know both organizations and we already have cooperation. It is the members of ISUP who help to develop the topic of participation in our city and, together with DC, deepen the need for dialogue between citizens and self-government. In cooperation with these, but also other organizations, we want to open a dialogue on various topics such as participation, open self-government or transparency and smartcity, youth education. We would like to develop cooperation with organizations in our city, we would like to continue to support organizations in our city and encourage participation through joint steps.

In our goals, as self-government, is also to get closer to our inhabitants. We want our people to be able to work with us, and so do we. We want to receive advice from the professional public and use their energy and help to develop our society.

In cooperation with other cities in Slovakia, we create strategic documents with action plans that form the vision of our city. We create these documents together with the inhabitants because their opinion is very important to us.

By participating in the OGP program, we want to gain not only theoretical knowledge, but also inspiration from other countries and local governments, as well as new partnerships and possible projects for the future.

Dear OGP team,

I am an authorized deputy mayor of the city and I work with the third sector, NGOs, the environment, history and I am looking for opportunities that will move society forward in our city. I believe that cooperation, engagement and participation will help us and contribute to the creation of better conditions for life in our city. It is not possible without partners, so I am glad that we have such strong and experienced partners for the cooperation of this project, and I am already looking forward to our cooperation regardless of the result of our application.

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