

Performance Measurement in Local Authorities

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The article analyses the following issues: 1. Performance measurement in literature. The performance measurement has an important role to play in the efficient and effective management of organizations. 2. Performance measurement in local authorities. Local governments themselves use a wide range performance measurement system in services area such as fire, solid water, water, roads, transportation, health, housing, recreation and social services. Measuring municipal performance means assessing how well a municipality performs when delivering goods and services to the public. 3. The principles underlying effective performance measurement. An effective performance measurement system will be built around six key principles: clarity of purpose, focus, alignment, balance, regular refinement, robust performance indicators. 4. Types of performance indicators. Performance measurements indicate how much or how well agency is doing. The approach adopted for developing the performance measurement system is based on the inputs – outputs efficiency outcomes framework. 5. Performance measurement importance for local authorities. 6. Performance management versus performance measurement. 7. Measures, methodologies and approaches.

Keywords: *performance measurement, performance indicators.*

Pagrindinės sąvokos: *veiklos vertinimas, veiklos rodikliai.*

1. Introduction

Performance measurement is a cornerstone of our commitment to modernise government. It provides some of the tools needed to bolster improvements in public sector performance including improving accountability, performance management, risk management and business planning. Good quality information also enables people to participate in government and exert pressure for continuous improvement. In addition to empowering citizen, this information equips managers and staff within the public sector to drive management. Performance information is thus a catalyst for innovation, enterprise and adaptation.

Aim of this article is to emphasize that performance measurement in the public sector runs a risk and the process might become an end in itself. It is important that organisation does not lose sight of the fundamental objectives of performance measurement: improved public services and improved accountability. Performance measurement can help organisations improve performance by identifying good practice and learning from others.

Problematic of this article reveals that performance measurement's main contribution is to generate improvements through impulses similar to what market mechanisms provide to private enterprises. Public organisations are by nature monopolists, and performance measurements provide the tool for quasi-competition. They enable the comparison and assessment of performance, and consequently lead to performance-based budgeting. By measuring economy, efficiency and effectiveness, public managers can identify the strong and weak points in performance as well as areas that need to be improved. Besides organisational performance, we need to measure individual performance. If we do not measure performance, we cannot manage it and we cannot evaluate it. Performance measurement is a base for performance pay and the motivation of public employees. But to develop the performance measuring system takes a lot of time and professional knowledge. What is necessary first of all is a political decision to enable this transitional change, which must reflect also a cultural change, from a monopolistic culture to an entrepreneurial one. The major obstacle to such a change is the lack of managerial knowledge and

its adjustment to specifics of public sector. During the last decade, some countries have also experienced various problems implementing the performance measurement paradigm. Most of the problems were with the method of privatising public services, where the private monopoly can be even worse than in a public monopoly. Usually not enough details were defined in the contracts, mainly due to a lack of information related to a lack of performance measurement prior to privatisation. A good performance system can provide a knowledge base for many strategic/policy decisions as well as a base for contracting in and contracting out. Many problems showed up during the development of performance measurement systems, the majority of them in connection with the standardisation of public services as a unit for measuring output. In a monopolistic environment people do not want to be evaluated, which makes the difficult task of building the system even more difficult. These processes can take place at different speeds and may also have different emphases, which is the result of numerous factors triggered by the interests of various individual participants (centres of power), that affect the rhythm of this process and policymaking. There are many obstacles to the introduction of managerial principles into the public sector. These are primarily seated in the traditional bureaucratic mentality, insufficient knowledge of even the basics of management and the market economy and of the principles of democracy. Obstacles are also found in the current legal regulations, which in the majority of cases still do not allow the degree of flexibility in decision-making that is required for the introduction of managerial methods.

The introduction of new managerial methods, such as performance measurement, in the Lithuanian public sector is through to increase performance by making public organisations, such as local governments, more accountable towards both the political decision – makers as well as the public. By developing systems that allow direct comparisons of services – over time as well as between similar service providing organisations or jurisdictions – democratic accountability is increased. In Hirschman's (1972) [7] terminology the possibilities for exercising both *exit* and *voice* are, given certain circumstances, enhanced. In the case of sub-national government, citizens will be equipped with better possibilities for comparing the service providing institutions within their local authorities as well as their local authority as a whole with the neighbouring author-

ity, thereby enhancing the possibilities for exercising voice as well as exit possibilities.

Local councillors will likewise be provided with more adequate information and data on service and performance, which will increase the possibilities for making informed policy- making and prioritisation of services.

When combined with free choice of services (i.e. a form of internal markets), the use and publication of performance indicators will increase competition. This competition may be exercised between service providing institutions, for instance schools, within and across local jurisdictions or even between sub-national governments. Supposedly such competition will result in increased performance and responsiveness toward the needs and preferences of the end – users to the extent that citizens and end-users have a choice of service providers and that funding of service depend on the number of “customers”. The fact that performance indicators are made publicly available may in itself have an effect on service providing organisations, in particular those that are under – performing, the argument goes.

One issue that deserves further attention is that of “ownership” and formulation of performance indicators. In decentralised systems of public administration, local governments and even individual service providing institutions are to a large extent given the responsibility for and autonomy to formulate the objectives of services. However, insofar as performance indicators are formulated centrally and implemented in a top –down fashion the performance indicators may not be congruent with the objectives or “success criteria” that have been formulated locally and which are supposed to reflect local needs and preferences.

Performance measurement, including the use of performance indicators, is essential tool for improving public services. But full benefit of using performance indicators will be achieved only if the indicators are devised carefully, and used appropriately.

2. Performance measurement in literature

One of the issues quite often mentioned in literature is the dimensions on which performance should be measured. Authors offer a variety of dimensions to be used for performance measurement. Attention at the moment varies from the measures of input, output and outcome to the relationship between them. Performance can be

measured using the dimensions economy, efficiency or effectiveness. The traditional approach is to have a performance system with indicators to measure economy and efficiency, rather than effectiveness or to measure outcomes. How to measure outcome is an important problem, especially in local government because of the difficulty to define objectives with different stakeholders. Tichelar (1998) [17] observed that a general view from a literature was that outcome measurement was still in its infancy, and that greater attention should be given to developing performance indicators in the context of political debates about the purpose of public service.

For local government, from the body of literature, there is a recognised tendency to measure something easy in terms of costs and data collection. Palmer (1993) [13] in her study of local government performance in the UK concluded “authorities, perhaps not surprisingly, concentrate on measuring what easily measurable and this results in a bias towards measuring performance in terms of economy and efficiency, rather than effectiveness. Another issue of performance measurement in local government that attracts attention is capability of using indicators for valid comparison between councils. The approach of using performance indicators for comparing seems to be active in UK, Australia, including Victoria and US.

A good performance measurement system should provide information that is meaningful and used to decision-makers. A good system plays integral part of an agency’s operations and is well supported by executive management.

An effective measurement system should satisfy the following criteria:

- * **Results oriented:** focuses primarily on outcomes and outputs.
- * **Selective:** concentrates on the most important indicators of performance.
- * **Useful:** provides information of value to the agency and decisions-makers.
- * **Accessible:** provides periodic information about results.
- * **Reliable:** provides accurate consistent information over time.

3. Performance measurement in local authorities

Municipal performance measurement comes in many shapes and sizes. Benchmarking systems and performance scorecards publicize attractive cities in which to live or to do business. Local

governments themselves use a wide range performance measurement system in services area such as police, fire, solid water, water, wastewater, roads, transportation, health, housing, recreation and social services. Measuring municipal performance means assessing how well a municipality performs when delivering goods and services to the public. The performance measures often include the volume, quality, efficiency and outcomes of providing these goods and services.

Performance measurement belongs to an institutional culture that values planning, accountability, and information use in the management of public and private organizations. Measurement supports other ongoing management functions such as priority setting and results management. The managing for results process helps an organization to focus on its mission, goals, objectives, and its capability to learn and improve its work.

Performance measurement means the regular measurement, and reporting of the performance of public agency programmes, organizations or individuals. In the context of Lithuanian local bodies performance measurement can be defined as the determination of how effectively and efficiently a jurisdiction is delivering the public service of interest. It tell us not only how much is being done, but also how efficiently, of what quality, and to what effect. Measuring the performance of local authority is a complex exercise but it can be worthwhile. The basic thrust of performance measurement is continuous monitoring of an agency’s performance in all functional areas and operations. The basic premise of performance measurement for local authorities is what gets measured gets done.

The important features of performance measurement are:

- * It is an essential tool for determining the efficiency, efficacy, cost effectiveness, and time of services being provided by municipal body.
- * It is a tool for identifying strengths and weaknesses in the area of operation.
- * It serves as a framework for relating inputs to outputs.
- * It helps in prioritizing the issues and problems faced by local bodies and help the agency to prioritize goals and objectives.
- * It motivates improvements in managerial efficiency.
- * It brings about transparency and accountability in the organization.

In short, a well – developed performance

measurement system can promote better practices in the organization.

The emphasis on performance measurement in public sector carries with it the risk that the process becomes an end in itself. It is important that organisations do not lose sight of the fundamental objectives of performance measurement:

1. Improved public services. Performance measurement is one of essential elements in performance management to secure continuous improvement in public services.

2. Improved accountability. Clarifying the outputs and outcomes that are achieved for the resources used makes it easier to hold organisations accountable.

Performance measurement can help organisations improve performance by identifying good practice and learning from others. It can also ensure that the organisation is focused on its key priorities, and that areas of poor performance are questioned.

However, identifying opportunities for improvement is only a start. The choice of performance indicators will have a major impact on the behaviour of the organisation. It is therefore necessary to understand the processes that will have a beneficial impact on performance, and to choose indicators that reflect it. Organisations should develop their processes for reviewing performance and ensure that the lessons learnt are fed back and used to review objectives and are included in their strategies for

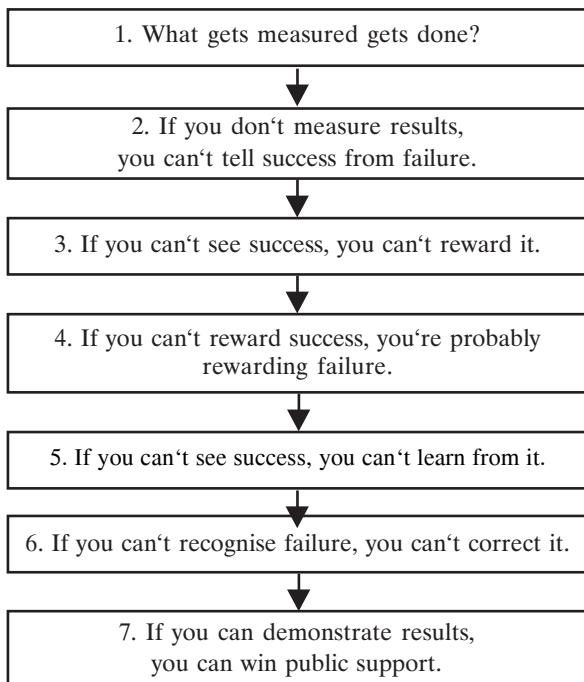


Figure 1. Why measure performance? [1]

service development; and that they continue to monitor performance to ensure that the improvements are achieved (Figure 1).

There are some problems with introducing performance measurement because of the local authorities:

- may not want to share information or be compared;
- may lack the knowledge, resources or skilled staff to improve performance;
- may find it difficult and costly to gather precisely defined information;
- may be inconsistent accounting information and, as a result, indicators that do exist may not be comparable between authorities;
- may not see performance measurement as a priority;
- may be concerned that they will receive undue or unfair criticism.

4. The principles underlying effective performance measurement

An effective performance measurement system will be built around six key principles:

- * **Clarity of purpose.** It is important to understand who will use information, and how and why the information will be used. Stakeholders with an interest in, or need for, performance information should be identified, and indicators devised which help them make better decisions or answer their questions. A performance measurement system can have a multiplicity of users. These users might include:
 - * services users, and the general public, including interest groups and the media;
 - * central government;
 - * national and local politicians, local councillors of trusts and non-executive directors of trusts and health authorities;
 - * managers at all levels in the organisation.
 Each user may use the information in a different way, for example:
 - * service users and the public will want to know what service standards to expect, and to be able to hold the organisation to account;
 - * the government will want to improve service delivery by monitoring of national targets, publishing local performance information at the national level, identifying both poorly performing organisations and successful ones;
 - * local councillors, politicians and trust non-

executives will want to ensure that strategic objectives are being met, and that service standards are being maintained; and
 * managers will want to monitor and manage service efficiency and output in their areas of responsibility, and to benchmark their performance against others.

Each user of the performance measurement system therefore needs to be identified, and their information needs recognised (Figure 2).

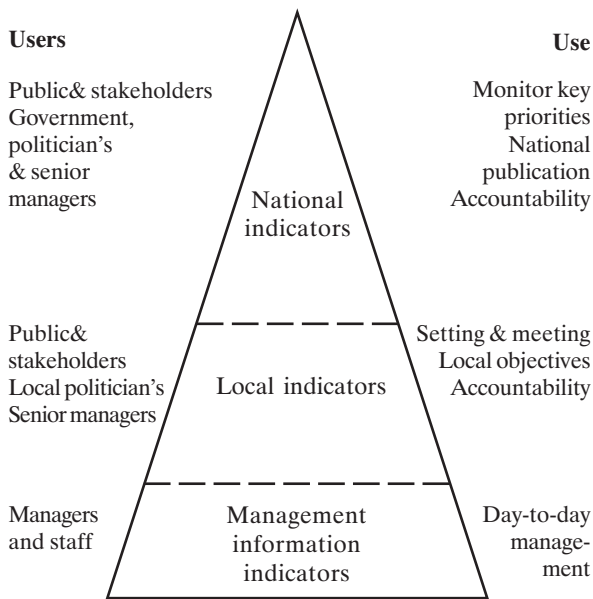


Figure 2. The different users and uses of indicators [1]

* **Focus.** Performance information should be focused in the first instance on the priorities of the organisation – its core objectives and service areas in need of improvement. This should be complemented by information on day-to-day operations. Organisations should learn how indicators affect behaviour, and build this knowledge into the choice and development of their performance indicators. Organisations need to be clear about their priorities. They should understand which objectives and activities are important, and establish criteria. Two problems may be encountered when considering and organisation's objectives, first, objectives may have been expressed in terms that do not lend themselves to measurement, and secondly, objectives may never have been set, or may be unclear. An organisation that has never formally identified its objectives, or is unclear what they are, should analyse the activities that it undertakes, challenge what it is doing, and ask "What do we want to achieve?", "Why are we doing this?", and "Is this the most effective way of achie-

ving our aims?" Such a challenge is an integral part of best value service reviews in local government, but can be applied with equal validity to any service. The best way of measuring performance may not be easy to identify. This is particularly true where two or more organisations have to work together to provide a seamless service. In these circumstances it is better to focus on a few indicators initially and be prepared to improve them in the light of experience. In other cases it may be necessary to use other ways of assessing performance, for example through inspection. A performance indicator can focus senior management attention on a particular service. This scrutiny can change staff behaviour and ways of working, leading to an improvement in performance. However, the rate of improvement will diminish over time. Once good performance has been achieved, it may no longer be necessary to report the performance measure to senior management, although operational managers should continue to monitor performance, reporting to senior managers on an exception basis to ensure that performance does not drift. This will allow senior managers to focus on current priorities. Management attention can also have an adverse effect, skewing performance to those services being scrutinised to the detriment of other services. Senior managers should be aware of this risk, and take steps to minimise it.

* **Alignment.** The performance measurement system should be aligned with the objective – setting and performance review processes of the organisation. There should be links between the performance indicators used by managers for operational purposes, and the indicators used to monitor corporate performance. Managers and staff should understand and accept the validity of corporate or national targets. Performance measurement should be at the heart of the organisation's management. Organisations will have general goals which will set the framework for their strategic objectives. These strategic objectives should be communicated so that each manager understands how the targets that he or she is working to contribute to the effective performance of the organisation. These will need to be coordinated with the operational service measures developed by managers to form a coherent whole. The performance measurement system will therefore have a hierarchy of objectives, action plans and indicators, reflecting the structure of the organisation. It is often possible to "cascade" core objectives into activities that can be measured. This can be done by repeatedly asking the ques-

tion “what will be done to achieve the objective?” alignment of performance measurement with the management of the organisation has two benefits. First, performance is more likely to be “owned” by the managers and staff concerned, making it more likely that opportunities for service improvement will be identified and acted upon. Secondly, regular use of information will increase its reliability and accuracy. Not linking the performance measurement system to existing management and budgeting systems will create parallel, non-integrated and resource – consuming systems.

* **Balance.** The overall set of indicators should give a balanced picture of the organisation’s performance, reflecting the main aspects, including outcomes and the users’ perspective. The set should also reflect a balance between the cost of collecting the indicator, and the value of the information provided. The performance measurement system should take a balanced view of the whole organisation. Systems that focus on only a part of the organisation’s activities, or on a narrow aspect of performance such as cost, are likely to lead to distortions in service delivery. Managers will focus their attention on achieving a good performance on the measured part of the service, to the detriment of the remainder. There are a number of ways of measuring activities or services that can be used to develop a balanced set of indicators:

- * using economy, efficiency and effectiveness/outcomes indicators, with a mix of financial and non-financial data;
- * measuring cost, time and quality;
- * the best value themes: strategy, cost/efficiency, outcomes, quality and fair access;
- * the performance assessment framework areas: health improvement, fair access, effective delivery of appropriate healthcare, efficiency, patient/carer experience and health outcomes;
- * “the balanced scorecard”: looking at service user issues, internal management issues, identifying improvements, and financial issues.

Performance information should also seek to balance short-and long-tem issues, and quantitative and qualitative data.

* **Regular refinement.** The performance indicators should be kept up to date to date to meet changing circumstances. A balance should be struck between having consistent

information to monitor changes in performance over time, taking advantage of new or improved, and reflecting current priorities. Public services are undergoing continual changes due to both internal and external factors, and as a result of consultation with service users. It is important that performance indicators react to these changes. Change might occur if local or national political priorities have changed, the demand for services has changed, or a programme or development has been completed. Changes or additional indicators may also be necessary if the indicators originally chosen are found to be flawed, or if consultation with key stakeholders has led to better indicators. Organisations also need to respond if the performance indicators suggest that objectives are not being met, by developing action plans which may require additional performance indicators to monitor their implementation. The performance measurement system should not only report performance but also incorporate an evaluation and review process to consider whether it is measuring the right things in the right way. But indicators should not be amended too often otherwise long-term trends and comparisons will be lost.

* **Robust performance indicators.** The indicators used should be sufficiently robust and intelligible for their intended use. Independent scrutiny, whether internal or external, helps to ensure that the systems for producing the information are sound. Careful, detailed definition is essential; where possible, the data required should be needed for day-to-day management of the services. An effective performance measurement system needs robust performance indicators. There are a number of general characteristics of performance indicators that should be checked to ensure that they will be useful, informative and effective. Indicators should:

- * be relevant to the aims and objectives of the organisation;
- * be clearly defined, to ensure consistent collection;
- * be easy to understand and use;
- * be comparable, and sufficiently accurate to allow comparisons between organisations and over time;
- * be verifiable, by senior managers, auditors

and inspectors. Independent verification of performance is required for national indicators, and reduces the likelihood that organisations will risk trying to manipulate the data;

- * be statistically valid, so that false conclusions are not made;
- * be cost effective to collect, so that the benefits of using the information outweigh the cost of collection. This is most likely to occur when the information is used routinely for operational management;
- * be unambiguous, so that it is clear what constitutes good performance;
- * be attributable, so that the responsibility for achieving good performance is clear;
- * be responsive, to reflect changes in performance clearly;
- * avoid perverse incentives and the risk of skewing outcomes, and encourages behaviours leading to service improvement;
- * allow innovation in service delivery; and
- * be timely, so that the information is not out of date. This will depend on the use made of the data. Data used in operational management may be collected on a weekly or even daily basis, whereas data used for strategic and long-term planning may be collected only annually.

Many indicators will fail to satisfy all the characteristics. It may be necessary to begin with indicators that meet only some, and work towards improving the indicators as the process develops. However, the importance of each characteristic will vary according to the use being made of it. For example, while a clear definition is always important, an indicator published at the national level is likely to require a more precise definition to ensure fairness than an indicator for internal use.

5. Types of performance indicators

Performance measurements indicate how much or how well agency is doing. Ideally, they track the agency's progress towards achieving its objectives. The approach adopted for developing the performance measurement system is based on the inputs-outputs efficiency outcomes framework. The components of the inputs-outputs efficiency outcomes framework adopted are defined as follows.

1. Inputs. The number of resources used. Indicate the level of effort but not a measure of performance.

2. Outputs. Level of services provided or amount of work done. These measure performance in terms of how much, not how well or how efficiently. A program's outputs are expected to lead to desired outcomes, but outputs do not by themselves tell you anything about the outcomes of the work done. To help identify outcomes that you should track, you should ask yourself what result you expect from a program's outputs.

3. Efficiency. Relate outputs to inputs. These indicators are central to performance measurement but they do not measure the extent to which the agency's objectives are achieved. Traditionally, the ratio of the amount of input to the amount of output or outcomes is labelled "efficiency". The inverse, which is the ratio of the amount of output or outcome to the amount of input, is labelled "productivity". These are equivalent numbers.

4. Outcomes. Indicate the degree to which programme objectives are achieved and measure value of services from the perspective of the end-user. Outcomes do not indicate the quantity of services provided, but the results and accomplishments of those services. Outcomes provide information on events, occurrences, conditions, or changes in attitudes and behaviour that indicate progress toward achievement of the goals and objectives of the program. Outcomes affect groups of citizens (e.g. students or elderly persons) or to other organizations (e.g. individual schools and businesses) that are affected by the program or whose satisfaction the government wishes to attain.

Performance indicators should inform us whether we are reaching set goals and fulfilling the mission statement. In preparing a set of performance indicators for reaching goals and targets, particular attention should be paid to the fact that the performance measurement method pays more attention to outcomes than to outputs. To maintain this consistency of focus, both efficiency and effectiveness indicators are developed for each major goal or target.

The utility of specified indicators will be the greater and quality of information increases. Additionally, as the quality of information increases, the greater its use will be for making appropriate decisions. That is, you should keep a balance between the value and the costs of the information collection. In selecting the final set of performance indicators and mission, the selection criteria presented in Table 2 may prove helpful.

Table 1. Examples of performance indicators [8]

	Examples of performance indicators
Input	Number of positions required for a program Cost Supplies used Equipment needed Number of clients eligible for services Number of entities subject to inspection or regulation Number of license applications received
Output	Number of classes Number of projects Number of people served Number of letter answered Number of applications processed Number of inspections made Number of clients served Number of license applications processed
Outcome	Crime rate Employment rate Number of graduates Number of rehabilitations Percentage of clients rehabilitated Percentage of entities in compliance with requirements Percentage of licensees with validated complaints
Efficiency	Cost per kilometre of road repaired (output based) Cost per million litre of drinking water delivered to citizens (output based) Cost per school building that was improved from “poor” to “good” condition (outcomes based) Average cost per client served Average cost per inspection Average time to process license applications

Table 2. Criteria for selecting performance indicators

Relevance	Choose indicators that are relevant to the goals and objectives of the program and to what they are supposed to measure
Importance	Select indicators that provide useful information on the program and that are critical to the accomplishment of the department or programs goals
Availability	Choose indicators for which data are accurate and readily available
Ease of implementation	Use indicators for which measurement is easy to design, conduct, analyze, and report
Validity	Select indicators that address the aspect of concern and for which changes in the value can be easily interpreted as desirable or undesirable and directly attributed to the program
Uniqueness	Use indicators that provide information not duplicated or overlapped by other indicators
Timeliness	Choose indicators for which you can collect and analyze data in time to make decisions
Ease of understanding	Select indicators that the citizens and government officials can easily understand
Costs of data collection	Choose indicators for which the costs of data collection are reasonable
Privacy and confidentiality	Select indicators without privacy or confidentiality concerns that would prevent analysts from obtaining the required information

Lithuanian local authorities' performance indicators will be used to measure:

- cost;
- level service;
- productivity;
- quality;
- demand, and;
- availability.

Performance indicators are also used for measuring against pre-set targets, and for inter-authority and year on year comparisons.

Different kinds of indicators are used to measure different aspects of any one service. Generally, indicators of unit cost and efficiency are easier to develop than indicators of quality and effectiveness.

In essence, performance indicators are used to measure how well local authorities are doing their job, i.e. they are a means by which the achievement of objectives are measured and assessed.

However performance indicators can only give a general overview of a service and do not on their own give a complete view of local authorities' performances. They show the differences between authorities on specific aspects of a service but do not explain how those differences arise. The indicators are intended to raise questions and to provoke as response, rather than to provide answers. Indicators can be influenced by local circumstances such as:

- population size;
- population density;
- social and economic differences;
- geographical differences (remote rural areas have different needs from urban areas);
- historical differences (a local authority may have to live with the consequences of decisions made previously);
- regional pay and other cost differences;
- impact of tourism or commuters.

Considering adoption of sustainability indicators in Lithuania we can say that the *Lithuanian complex environment protection scheme* that was prepared in 1984 and can be considered as the first attempt to evaluate impacts on the environment. The main objective of this scheme – to ground the main strategic directions of reasonable use of environmental resources, economic development and environment protection.

The scheme had analysed the environmental situation in Lithuania and evaluated possible environmental impacts of industry and agriculture. In particular, the following works were made:

- analysis of Lithuanian economy development influence on environment;
- analysis and prognosis of main environmental compounds: air, water and soil;
- identification and evaluation of main problems of environment protection;
- strategic substantiation of rational economic development and use of environmental resources;
- substantiation of local and common means of environment protection (protected areas, natural framework).

Impacts on the environment are to be assessed while preparing documents of strategic planning, like the following ones [18]:

- 1) general plan of the territory of the Republic of Lithuania (to be approved by the Parliament and the Government);
- 2) general plan of a county territory (to be approved by the county governor of governmental institutions);
- 3) general of a municipality territory (to be approved by the council of the municipality);
- 4) general plans of some specific territories of a municipality (to be approved by the council of the municipality).

For the moment, there are going on discussions about what kind of environmental impact assessment procedures should be applied to evaluate regional development plans, spatial plans and industries development plans.

Concerning environmental indicators and those of sustainable development the most essential thing would be a decision to apply Common European Indicators of Sustainable Development while estimating situation in Lithuania (see Table 3). Some non-governmental institutions in Lithuania working in the field of Sustainable Development and Environmental Technologies are already using the Common European Indicators in their work and recommend them to be used by other institutions, including municipalities and governmental institutions. A good example of such a non-governmental institution could be ECAT-Lithuania – the centre of environmental management and technologies. Anyway some imperfections might arise while adopting the Common European Indicators (CEI) in Lithuania despite real merits of using this method.

Table 3. Using of Common European Indicators in Lithuania [18]

N°	Indicators	Object of measurement	Unit of measurement	Merits of the indicator	Imperfections of the indicator
1	2	3	4	5	6
The main indicators (Compulsory Indicators)					
A.1	CITIZEN SATISFACTION WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY	Level of citizen satisfaction in general and with regard to specific features in the municipality	Distribution of different satisfaction levels in %: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In general; • With regard to specific features of the municipality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This indicator is the most complex, i.e. reflects satisfaction on life quality in the local community; • Indicator provides information about citizen's attitudes to projects implemented in the municipality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This indicator is based on public opinion only. The public opinion is influenced by many other factors from outside political opinion, for example); There are no particular physical units to express satisfaction; • Necessity for a system of weighting for the different variables
A.2	LOCAL CONTRIBUTION TO GLOBAL CLIMATIC CHANGE	CO ₂ equivalent emissions (total value and variation)	Tons per year and % variation (with respect to reference year)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to express in physical data and compare with previous data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This indicator is affected by different levels of accuracy depending on the availability of data; • Difficult to collect data about emissions of private consumers that produce big amount of CO₂ emissions in Lithuania
A.3	LOCAL MOBILITY AND PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION	a) Number of daily trips and time taken per capita by type of trip and by mode of transport; b) Total average daily distance covered per capita by type of trip and by mode of transport	a) Total number of trips (split into type of trip, systematic vs. unsystematic, mode of transport), average time taken for trips; b) Km per capita per day, percentage of each mode, percentage of each type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides important data about changes in personal mobility within particular community; Indicates how the situation in some cases might be easily improved; • Gives information to city planners and transport organisations how to improve transport system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to choose target groups that represent the most relevant (statistically significant) clusters of transport users; • Costly and time-consuming survey; • Shortage of homogenous data

1	2	3	4	5	6
A.4	AVAILABILITY OF LOCAL PUBLIC OPEN AREAS AND SERVICES	Citizen access to nearby public open areas and other basic services	Number of inhabitants living within 300 m of open areas or services / total number of inhabitants = % of population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicates sites within particular area that need to be improved; Easy to measure if GIS is used 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problematic to decide what sites can be “open areas or services”; Necessary to determine the optimal list of services to be achieved in the particular area; Very few municipalities in Lithuania have got GIS
A.5	Quality of Local Ambient Air	<p>a) Number of times that the limit values for selected air pollutants are exceeded;</p> <p>b) Existence and level of implementation of air quality management plan</p>	<p>a) Number of times that the limit value is exceeded for each selected air pollutant. The number of times is calculated in accordance with the period defined by the limit value: daily, 8 hour period and hourly;</p> <p>b) Existence (yes/no) and level of implementation of air quality management plan / programme (%)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows the main polluters in each particular area; Air quality becomes more and more actual in some cities of Lithuania; This indicator provides very specific data about various air pollutants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only measurement data are to be used; Requires many expensive measurements; Lack of measurement capacities in municipalities of Lithuania; Absence of air quality management programmes in Lithuania This indicator evaluates just outside air quality without paying attention to air quality inside rooms
Additional indicators (Selective Indicators)					
B.6	CHILDREN'S JOURNEY TO AND FROM SCHOOL	Mode of transport used by children to travel between home and school	% of children travelling by each mode. (The indicator is expressed in % value by diving values by mode and (if available) by reasons determining the choice of a particular mode of transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Values of this indicator does not change very rapidly; Survey data can be very easily applied in spatial planning process; Information from surveys show the most problematic points in transport system concerning children's journeys within the particular area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many children in Lithuania attend other than the closes schools to their living sites; Necessity to decide until what age the pupils can be estimated as “children” and when they become “adults”

1	2	3	4	5	6
B.7	SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AND LOCAL BUSINESSES	Share of public and private organisations (large enterprises and SMEs) adopting and using environmental and social management procedures	% of total number of organisations in the municipality area, separately for environmental and social management procedures, and split into different types and sizes (and also split into, if information is available) number of certified/beginning organisations. On the local level, the absolute number of organisations should also be considered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very complex indicator reflecting the management quality in the community; • Shows positive (negative) changes in management systems and consequently lets to make prognosis on social stability of a particular area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of information concerning businesses and their real activities in Lithuania, including implementation of progressive management systems in enterprises; • More indicates some positive intentions to implement environment protection means, but not achievement of the sustainable development in general
B.8	NOISE POLLUTION	<p>a) Share of population exposed to long-term high level of environmental noise;</p> <p>b) Noise levels in selected areas of the municipality;</p> <p>c) Existence and level of implementation of noise action plan</p>	<p>a) % of population exposed, broken down into different value bands of L_{day} and L_{night};</p> <p>b) % of measurements corresponding to different value bands of indicators L_{day} and L_{night};</p> <p>c) Existence (yes/no) and level of implementation of noise action plan/programme (%)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very clear indicator with a possibility to express it by particular physical data; • Indicator directly influences health and work efficiency of inhabitants of a particular dwelling area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costly and time consuming to measure; • There are no data from the past – no comparison and tendencies available; • Absence of noise action plans in Lithuanian municipalities
B.9	SUSTAINABLE LAND USE	<p>a) Artificial areas (in % of total municipal area);</p> <p>b) Derelict and contaminated land (in area, m^2);</p> <p>c) Intensity of use (number of inhabitants/km^2)</p> <p>d) New development (edification taking place on greenfield and on contaminated land in % per year);</p>	<p>a) Artificial surface of the total municipal area in %;</p> <p>b) Extent of derelict land (m^2) and contaminated land (m^2);</p> <p>c) Number of inhabitants per 1 ha;</p> <p>d) Newly built areas on greenfield and on contaminated land in %;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects attractiveness of a particular area to potential inhabitants, investors and tourists; • Basis for planning of territories (spatial planning) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too complex and difficult to evaluate; • There are no enough specific data about land use in Lithuania; low level of implementation of GIS

1	2	3	4	5	6
		e) Restoration of urban land (renovation of buildings in m ² , redevelopment of derelict land in m ² , cleaning of contaminated land in m ²); f) Protected areas as a percentage of total municipal area	e) Renovation of urban land (renovation of derelict buildings (in m ²), redevelopment of derelict land (in m ²), cleaning of contaminated land (in m ²); f) % of protected areas of total municipal area		
B.10	PRODUCTS PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY	a) Share of eco-labelled, organic, energy-efficient, fair-trade, certified timber products in total consumption; b) Availability and market supply of eco-labelled, organic, energy-efficient, fair-trade, certified timber products in total consumption	a) % of eco-labelled, organic, energy-efficient, fair-trade, certified timber products in total consumption; b) % of retail outlets selling eco-labelled, organic, energy-efficient, fair-trade, certified timber products in total consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes ecological land use and implementation of ecologically friendly agricultural and production technologies; Supports achievement of positive values of other indicators of sustainable development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very difficult to measure (costly survey, imprecise information); There is no methodological clarity how to implement survey according to this indicator

6. The difference between output and outcome indicators

An important element of performance measurement is that differentiates between outputs and outcomes (see Table 4). In measuring what government does, the traditional focus has been on tracking expenditures, number of employees, and sometimes their physical outputs. The outcome focus of performance measurement connects performance indicators with specific gov-

ernment objectives. For example, performance measurement may not concern with the number of teachers employed, but with the reduction in the dropout rate in secondary schools. Of course, focusing on outcomes does not mean that you neglect outputs. Instead, a focus on outcomes provides a framework for you to analyze output in a meaningful way. Measuring the performance of programs targeted at decreasing the dropout rate would then tell you how successful or unsuccessful these programs are.

Table 4. Contrast between output and outcome indicators

Outputs	Outcomes
1. Number of clients served 2. Kilometres of road repaired 3. Number of training programs held 4. Number of crimes investigated 5. Number of calls answered	1. Clients whose situation improved 2. Percentage of kilometres in good conditions 3. Number of trainees who were helped by the program 4. Conviction rates of serious crimes 5. Number of calls that led to an adequate response

7. Measuring Both Efficiency and Effectiveness

Performance measures look at two dimensions of service delivery—efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency measures provide information on the cost of delivering services. For example, we can measure the day to day costs of treating drinking water. This provides a standard measurement that applies to all municipalities, regardless of population.

However, efficiency measures tell only part of the story. Residents also want to know about the quality of service. Effectiveness measures describe performance relative to a goal. Together, the efficiency and effectiveness measures provide a more complete picture of what is spent and what is achieved given local conditions. Many municipalities include a brief description of local circumstances in their report to taxpayers. Local circumstances affect results and should be considered in any comparison of outcomes between municipalities. For example, geography and micro-climate are factors influencing the efficiency and effectiveness measures for winter maintenance of roadways.

8. Performance measurement importance for local authorities

Local authority's decision-makers want to be efficient and deliver value for local services. Taxpayers need to know how their tax dollars are spent and how their services compare both year-to-year and in relation to others. Governments choose to use performance measurement for four main reasons.

1. *Measurement helps improve performance.*

Sports teams track scores and important performance statistics to make the changes they need to win. Businesses monitor costs, production, customer satisfaction and profit to stay in business, earn reasonable rates of return and report results to their shareholders. It is the same in government. Government programs exist to provide services and improve the quality of life. Performance measurement identifies ways for local authorities to provide high-quality, efficient and effective services. Measurement systems that support performance improvement tend to set the measurement activities within a broader framework for results management. Performance improvement is linked to the strength of the organizations human resource management systems, particularly its capacity for innovation, reflection

and learning. This capacity is measured as part of the learning and growth perspective in the balanced scorecard approach. Most jurisdictions recognize that their chosen measures should identify not only downstream results, but also the determinants of performance.

2. *Performance measurement strengthens accountability.* Government today is very complex, so it is important that elected officials and public servants inform taxpayers what the government plans to achieve, what it is actually accomplishing and what public services cost. With this information, taxpayers can make informed decisions about the level of services they desire. This notion of accountability is fundamental to our form of government. Measuring performance and setting targets effectively establishes an understanding between municipal staff and council, under which all parties develop a clearer understanding of the expected results or standards for each service area. The result is a shared accountability framework between staff and council, which benefits everyone. It helps focus council's decision-making and helps municipal staff understand the level and type of service delivery required. For the most part, municipalities already serve their taxpayers well, and that is something the public has a right to know. Performance measurement demonstrates to taxpayers how they are being served and the value they are receiving for their tax dollars. Public accountability is the notion that government must answer to their citizenry to justify the raising of public resources and the purposes for which they are used. Internal accountability is the notion that departments must answer to their directors to justify the decisions made and strategies followed in the organization. Departments are accountable for policies, programs, processes and compliance with laws and regulations. A performance measurement system that is developed for accountability purposes is typically oriented toward reporting on the efficiency and economy in municipal operations. But beyond making information available, the expected outcomes of the public accountability objectives are not always clear (as compared to internal accountability). The challenge for local governments understands how citizens can use the performance data in public debates or decision-making process. Politicians in all jurisdictions studied were concerned with the potential misuse of the performance data by journalists and political opponents.

3. *Performance measurement stimulates productivity and creativity.* Performance measures can

be used to create new incentives and rewards to stimulate staff creativity and productivity. In fact, many municipalities have been able to cut costs while maintaining or even improving service because they implemented the creative ideas of staff directly involved in service delivery.

4. Performance measurement improves budget processes. Performance measures can help municipalities develop budgets that are based on realistic costs and benefits, not just historical patterns. Performance measurement can also improve the monitoring of municipal budgets by measuring whether the budget and expected service levels are being met.

Benefits of performance measurement are:

- enables local authorities to ascertain the cost of services, to control expenditure and to ease financial pressure;
- facilitate better budgeting and helps to make the best use of limited resources;
- aids comparisons with other local authorities and identifies trends within an authority;
- helps identify weakness and improve the quality of management;
- aids the development of best practice and improves performance;
- provides a basis for continual improvement;
- can be used to demonstrate customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction; and
- promotes accountability and transparency.

9. Performance management versus performance measurement

It is important to distinguish between performance measures and a performance management system. Performance measurement refers to the system of developing indicators to better understand the performance of public agency programs or services, organizations, or individuals. Performance management adds the critical element: use of performance information from the performance measurement process in policy making, resource allocation and service delivery. Performance management itself needs to be broadened to include the use of performance information, not only by managers in making decisions but also by elected officials, citizens and other interested parties.

Performance management is based on two main principles. First, it concentrates on program outcomes, or actual results, rather than only the quantity of service that an agency provides. Second, in defining outcomes, it focused on the needs of citizens served.

Performance measurement, in the form of units of measurement called indicators, provides decision-makers with more information to make better decisions and shows why they made those decisions. Using performance measurement, local government can demonstrate their commitment to providing quality service. Performance indicators not only tailor future activities, but also enable governments to compare the success or failure of their operations to past operations. To the extent that local governments adopt similar performance measures, indicators also allow comparisons of the effects of actions taken by several local authorities.

10. Measures, methodologies and approaches

Local authorities have tended to define their performance through a small number of integrated approaches. These include *the balanced scorecard approach, the logic model, and performance benchmarking*. These tools help local authorities build a usable framework for the organization and selection of measures.

The balanced scorecard approach was introduced in the early 1990's as a way for private sector companies to describe the essentials of what they do. The approach highlights the key perspectives that are needed to understand success (see Table 5). The original scorecard took four perspectives into account in measuring how well the organization fulfils its vision and mission and achieves its strategic goals:

* *Financial perspective* – to succeed financially, how should we look to our shareholders?

* *Customer perspective* – to succeed with our vision, how should we look to our customers?

* *Internal business process perspective* – to satisfy our shareholders and customers, at what internal business process must we excel?

* *Learning and growth perspective* – to succeed with our vision, how shall we sustain our capacity to learn and grow?

The balanced scorecard approach provides a comprehensive framework of measures. It covers the quality and efficiency of providing municipal services, but it broadens the range of measures by attempting to link short-term operational control in the organization to the long-term vision and strategy for success. Many municipal systems examine administrative performance, while others measure governance processes and citizen satisfaction with services. The broadened framework only increases the utility

Table 5. The balanced scorecard approach

Financial Measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue Growth • Profitability • Value 	Customer Measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Quality • Services • Price/cost
Business Process Measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Quality • Productivity • Cost 	Human Resources Measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation • Education and training people • Intellectual assets

of the system for capacity building and improvement in the organization.

Logic Model. The logic model is a basic tool in result management. It is a planning model to use in articulating a performance logic or performance theory that will unfold in a process over time. For municipal performance, the logic is often simply that municipalities use resources to deliver goods and services that will benefit people in local communities. This logical structure is translated into a language of inputs and outputs with appropriate measures for performance at all points along the results – chain. The logic model articulates short-term and long-term goals for performance and builds causal links among budgets, planned activities, and expected results.

- **Inputs** – the quantity and quality of resources used.
- **Processes** – the delivery of the goods and services.
- **Outputs** – the quantity and quality of the goods and services.
- **Outcomes** – the societal effect (benefit) of the goods and services.

Performance benchmarking. Performance mea-

surement must necessarily be accompanied performance benchmarking, otherwise it becomes difficult to judge how well or how poorly the agency is currently performing and what types of corrective action are required. Performance benchmarks provide a point of reference for drawing conclusions from a performance measurement exercise. Performance benchmarking is a third approach to defining municipal performance. Often municipalities will

compare their current performance with historical performance, or against their own established targets. Many will compare themselves so to other similar municipalities or to national or international standards for performance in particular service areas. Municipalities will sometimes rely on existing framework (used by professional associations) for the selection of indicators. This will garner support for the measurement program and facilitate its integration with existing data systems. It will also support benchmarking and improvement efforts. Best by class method classifying and screening municipalities by distinguishing practices in particular service areas. Most systems collect explanatory information to help understand the performance data. The explanatory information can put performance in context by identifying factors outside the control of the organization, such as environmental or demographic characteristics, as well as factors over which the organization has significant control, such as staffing patterns and business processes. It can help explain performance with narrative information that is important for comparisons for identifying unintended effects of a service, and for use in the process of improving the performance measures (see Table 6).

Table 6. Summaries of three measurement approach

Approach	Characteristics	Strengths	Shortcomings
Balanced scorecard	Integration focused Key stakeholder focused Organization perspective	Vision and strategy Human, friendly, customer focus Team approach	Primarily conceptual model Not necessarily program oriented
Logic Model	Investment oriented Strategic and tactical Short-term and long-term	Implementation oriented Looks at processes Theoretical, analytical and causal links	Too cumbersome and complex Too much attention to administration and management Not inherently cyclical
Performance benchmarking	Evidence based Involves other organizations Municipal best practices	Facilitates goal setting Supports communication in sector Fosters excellence and continuous learning	Uses principle of catching up Fair comparisons are tricky Creates public competition among municipalities

Measuring performance. Municipalities rely on a combination of assessment methodologies when measuring performance. These methods may be viewed as either internal, external, user or peer assessment. Most municipalities recognize the value of self-assessment especially as a consensus building exercise within strategic processes. While objectivity in data collection remains an important issue, the focus is clearly on the learning process not the final report. Organizations also rely on other perspectives and approaches in data collection. These include the use of citizen satisfaction surveys, the use of outside auditors or experts, and the use of professional tools for measuring performance against service standards.

- **Internal assessment** – in this approach, the local authorities examine their own performance in corporate or self-assessment processes.
- **External assessment** – external auditors assess performance through service inspections or compliance assessments.
- **User assessment** – the user assessment is linked to customer perspective. It involves customer or citizen satisfaction surveys.
- **Peer assessment** – the assessment of professional standards, peers or colleagues, using standardized measurement tools such as ISO 9000, employee surveys or peer review.

Conclusions

1. Performance measurement is an integral part of good local governance. It is an effective process to help local governments and citizens communicate, collaborate and make choices.

2. The local authority performance measurement systems trend to measure the volume, quality, efficiency and outcomes of local authorities services within a result management framework.

3. Performance measurement is part of a continuous learning system in an organization. The right framework, culture and capacity will support the learning process.

4. The most significant challenges to developing and using performance measurements systems are process and institutional issues more than technical and methodology issues.

5. Citizen involvement in measurement need to be better understood and strengthened.

6. The benefits of performance measurement to municipalities can be grouped in three categories: stronger result management, improved

customer service, improved communication.

7. Developing, implementing and using Lithuanian local authorities performance measures requires a commitment on the part of elected municipal officials and municipal staff. Once this commitment is made, the benefits of performance measurement can be realized:

7.1. Performance measurement can help a municipality set effective priorities. Activities can be prioritized and resources allocated (including the time and attention of managers) according to the contributions they make toward meeting client needs and expectations.

7.2. Performance measurement changes a municipality's whole outlook. Results become the focus, rather than the activities conducted in the past. Service delivery can be regularly altered or tuned to respond to current resident needs. A focus on client needs causes organizations to rely more on co-operation and partnership.

7.3. Performance measurement encourages innovation. The primary focus for managers is not on how the job is done but rather on what is achieved. This frees managers to truly manage and motivates employees to develop or try new ideas that will achieve the stated objectives.

7.4. Accountability to council, senior management and taxpayers is improved because these stakeholders can be told about a service area's achievements succinctly. Municipal officials, therefore, have an enhanced ability to make more informed decisions. By the same token, performance measurement allows managers to delegate authority with greater confidence, because their expectations are clearly set and they have a method for reviewing actual performance. Moreover, the public better understands how its tax dollars are being spent.

7.5. Performance measurement helps to improve municipal performance in local service delivery. It helps to set targets and allows those targets to be monitored effectively. Managers can be alerted to situations that should be improved or that might be copied by other parts of the municipality. Improvements in performance often occur simply by setting clear, measurable performance targets.

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VEIKLOS VERTINIMAS IR VIETOS SAVIVALDOS INSTITUCIJOS

Santrauka

Straipsnyje analizuojami šie klausimai: 1. Veiklos vertinimas literatūroje. Veiklos vertinimas vaidina svarbų vaidmenį efektyviam ir veiksmingam organizacijos valdymui. 2. Veiklos vertinimas vietos institucijose. Vietos valdžia naudoja veiklos vertinimo sistemą paslaugų, tokių kaip gaisrinė, geriamasis vanduo, vanduo, keliai, transportavimas, sveikata, namų ūkis, rekreacija ir socialinės paslaugos, srityse. Savivaldybių veikla vertinama nustatant, kaip savivaldybė veikia, kada prekes ir paslaugas teikia visuomenei. 3. Principai, sudarantys efektyvų veiklos vertinimą. Efektyvi veiklos vertinimo sistema yra grindžiama šešiais pagrindiniais principais: tikslų aiškumu, dėmesio sutelkimu, pasiskirstymu, balansu, reguliariu tobulinimu, gerais veiklos rodikliais. 4. Veiklos rodiklių tipai. Veiklos vertinimas parodo, kiek ir kaip institucija veikia. Metodas, priimtas plėtojant veiklos vertinimo sistemą, yra pagrįstas indėlio-išėigos-efektyvumo-rezultatų schema. 5. Veiklos vertinimo reikšmė vietos institucijose. 6. Veiklos valdymo palyginimas su veiklos vertinimu. 7. Priemonės, metodologija ir požiūris.

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