



Political accountability under citizen scrutiny Practical case in crowdsourcing

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Estonia in Freedom House index: Democracy

Nations in Transit Ratings and Averaged Scores

| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Electoral Process | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 1.75 |
| Civil Society | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 1.75 |
| Independent Media | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 |
| National Democratic Governance | 2.25 | 2.25 | 2.25 | 2.25 | 2.25 | 2.25 | 2.25 | 2.25 | 2.25 | 2.25 |
| Local Democratic Governance | 2.50 | 2.50 | 2.50 | 2.50 | 2.50 | 2.50 | 2.50 | 2.50 | 2.50 | 2.50 |
| Judicial Framework and Independence | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 | 1.50 |
| Corruption | 2.50 | 2.50 | 2.50 | 2.50 | 2.50 | 2.50 | 2.25 | 2.25 | 2.50 | 2.50 |
| Democracy Score | 1.96 | 1.96 | 1.96 | 1.93 | 1.93 | 1.96 | 1.93 | 1.93 | 1.96 | 1.96 |

People's Assembly process in 2012 – 2013: the trigger



The problem: ruling
Reform party
accepts anonymous
donations

The whistleblower
Silver Meikar,
former MP,
Reform party



Public protests in 2012

- Street demonstrations and keen media coverage
- Petition collects 17,000 signatures
- Public resentment and mistrust towards all politicians; disengagement from party politics
- Investigation by the Prosecutor's Office on several cases of illegitimate donations

Donations to Reform party decline

President calls for civic participation

Five main issues outlined at stakeholder meeting, called upon by the President:

- Barriers to political movements
- Financing and financial reporting of political parties
- Public participation in policy making
- Electoral system regulation
- Political patronage and corruption

Teamwork by Civil Society activists: building the process for crowdsourcing

- Phase 1: 6,000 proposals and comments on web
- Phase 2: collating and analysis of web content
- Phase 3: impact assessment and expert opinion on proposed amendments
- Phase 4: stakeholder deliberation on main 5 issues
- Phase 5: grass-root participation, Deliberation Day
314 participants or 62% of recruited sample select proposals to be sent to the Parliament

Deliberation Day



Role of the Parliament

- President hands over all proposals created in deliberation process
- Parliament Constitutional Committee deliberates
- Parliament fractions form their opinion on proposals
- Committee starts drafting legislative changes
- Committee fails in its communication about the process

Results achieved 1 year after

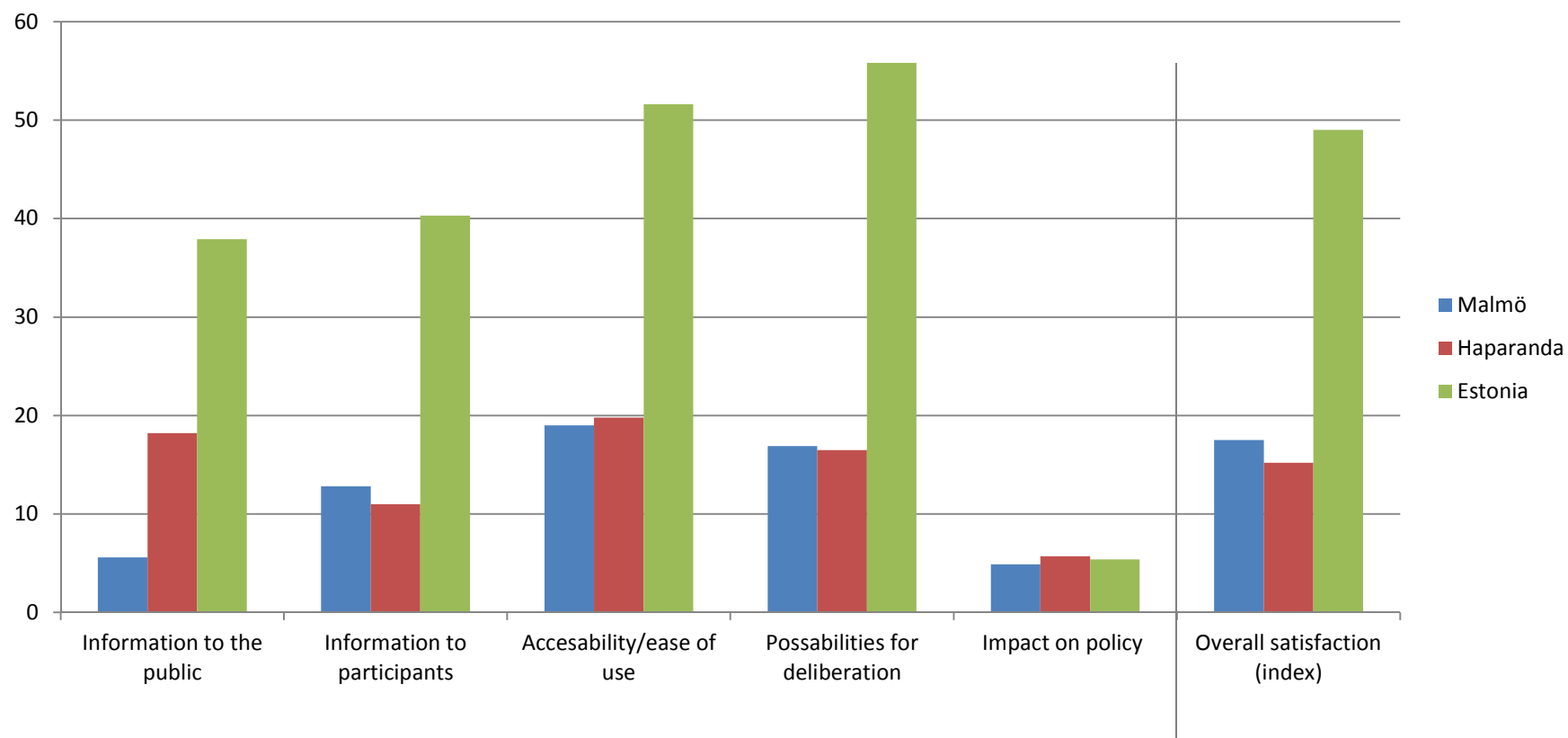
Out of final 15 proposals, 3 have made their way into legislation + 4 have been partially adopted

Civic participation found its place in political agenda

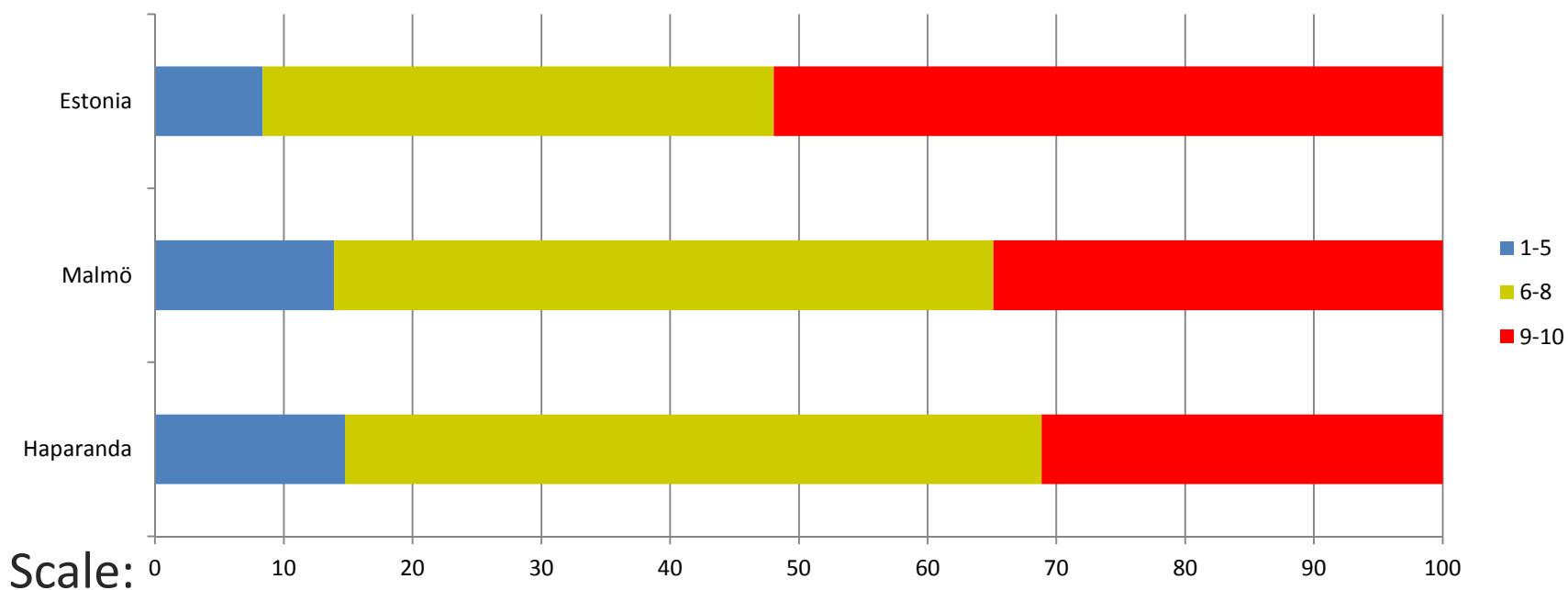
- The amount of financing from the state budget to the political parties that did not meet the election threshold was increased
- A monetary fine will be imposed for accepting prohibited donations.
- The power of the Political Party Funding Supervision Committee to check the finances of parties was increased
- **Legal act adopted for popular initiatives and presenting collective petitions to Parliament**

Evaluation of the participation process

Share of participants who were satisfied with the process.
Comparison of 2 Swedish cities and People's Assembly
(Surveys by University of Örebro and Praxis)



Attitudes towards citizen participation



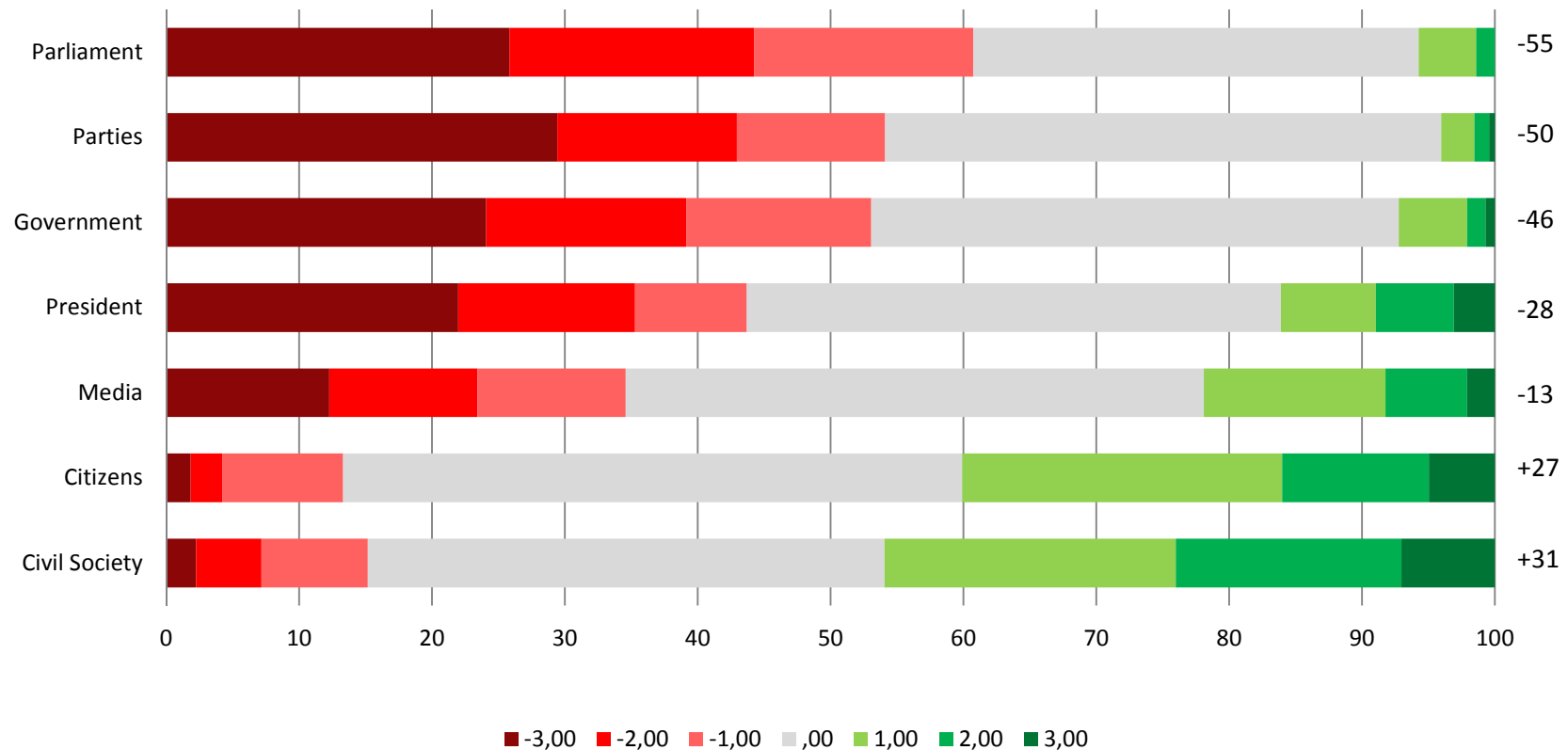
Scale:

1-5 Citizens should have less or the same level of influence on political decisions

6-10. Citizens should have more influence on political decisions

Change in trust vs social capital

- Decreasing trust for institutions
- Increasing trust for citizens and civil society



Effects on political landscape

- The first law was adopted, originating from collective petitioning
- For national elections (1.03), several political platforms include Assembly proposals that were not yet adopted
- 2 new parties gained from Assembly proposals
 - lower mandatory deposit for setting up candidates, parties saved 50,000 EUR
 - only 500 members are required to form a Party, instead of previous 1000 persons