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Region – EmPaci”

Documentation of 2nd Finnish PB pilot

Riihimäki (Finland)

(for the full report of all pilot municipalities, see main document)

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Riihimäki/Finland

Note: This was the 1st PB pilot in the City of Riihimäki by the EmPaci project (no 2nd PB pilot).

1. Situation before the PB implementation

Municipality-related factors

1. The PB is implemented for

- ☐ District ☒ Municipality ☐ Planning region

2. The budget cycle of the public authority is

- ☒ Annual ☐ Bi-annual

3. The financial situation of the public authority characterised by

- ☐ Excess revenues ☒ Nearly balanced revenues and expenses ☐ Excess expenses

4. With respect to the repayment of incurred debt, the public authority is confronted with

- ☒ No difficulties ☐ Difficulties to repay debts over an extended period of time

5. In the public authority, the council always has the final decision right about the implementation of voted PB projects (by local/national) laws and regulations:

- ☒ Yes ☐ No
- If yes,
- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| It is prescribed by local/national laws. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| It is prescribed by an own PB regulation. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Citizen-related factors

6. The citizenry is composed as follows:

6a. Number of citizens: 28 710

6b. Share of females (% of citizens): 50,5 %

6c. Share of persons aged below 15 (% of citizens): 15,4 %

6d. Share of persons aged 64 and above (% of citizens): 22,8 %

6e. Share of unemployed persons (% of citizens in workforce): 10,4 % (05/2021)

6f. Share of unemployed females (% of unemployed persons): 43,6 % (05/2021)

6f. Particularities of the population are the following :

The unemployment rate of Kanta-Häme, the region of which Riihimäki is a part of, has decreased from 2020. The number of unemployed persons has however declined in a slow pace compared to the rest of the country with the unemployment rate decrease in Kanta-Häme being the third slowest in the whole country. The rise

in employment is seen as a positive sign of bouncing back from the COVID-19 -crisis, which affected especially those working in the service and hospitality sectors. (https://www.temtyollisyyskatsaus.fi/Textbase/Tkat-15/Pdf/Tkat_fi.pdf)

PB process-related factors

7. PB is prescribed by law in the country / public authority:

☐ Yes ☒ No

8. PB was implemented before the EmPaci PB pilot:

☒ Yes ☐ No

8a. How many PB cycles have been completed before the EmPaci PB pilot in 2020?

1 completed cycle

8b. Does an own PB regulation/statute (before the EmPaci project involvement) already exist?

☒ Yes ☐ No

8c. The PB process of previous PB cycles is:

Riihimäki completed its first round of PB in 2019 with a budget of 50 000EUR. The municipality asked its citizens to bring up different ideas in which to distribute the 50 000EUR in the municipality. The project yielded 119 different PB proposals from the public of which 64 were selected as plausible. The ideas were collected using an electronic participation platform and via paper forms in a two-month period. The public got to vote on the 64 PB-ideas with the minimum age-limit of voting being 12 years. The most popular plan got 121 votes in total, and it involved transforming a local stream into a river. The other eight winning ideas got 59-110 votes each, respectively. Categorically, the winning ideas dealt with common issues such as city cleanliness, holiday activities and health and safety. No category of the municipality's operation was prominently represented in the winning group of ideas. The municipal manager validated the winners, and the nine plans were implemented by the municipality in 2019-2020.

8d. PB was initiated based on the initiative of the following persons or group of persons:

The Riihimäki city council approved in 2017 a city strategy spanning to the year 2030. One of the main themes of this strategy was the sense of community. This strategy was updated in 2019 with an amendment that stated that the residents of Riihimäki should have more opportunities to influence city decisions concerning their own day-to-day life. The participatory efforts in the city of Riihimäki are based on an additional participation programme approved by the city council in June 2018. In this programme, the city determined different ways the municipality will try to get the citizens more involved in the preparation processes of municipal issues. In October 2018, a city council initiative was filed that proposed the initialization of PB in

Riihimäki. In September 2019 the city council approved the set-up of a multi-year PB-fund which held 1 million EUR. During the same time the principals of PB in Riihimäki were approved. The first round of PB was allocated 50 000 EUR from the PB fund; for the following rounds the sum was upped to 100 000 EUR per PB round.

8e. The main actors in implementing previous PB cycles were:

The PB was run by a small group of city officials from different departments such as communications and coordinated by development manager, Merja Viitanen, from the administration department – a part time resource for PB. The chair of city council, Mia Nahkuri, was an invited member of the working group.

7f. The main success factors of previous PB cycles?

There is currently no official data available on this matter. One can say that the successful implementation of the PB round within the planned timeframe and with the planned resources is a mark of success. City representatives were satisfied with the turnout of 1st PB round, that can be summed in these details:

- 50 000 EUR budget
- 119 ideas in total
- 64 feasible ideas approved for voting
- 7 ideas implemented in 2019-2020

The municipality can benefit from the first successful round of PB in the following PB rounds, as it is expected that there will be similar propositions from the citizens and the municipal workers are now prepared to evaluate them more efficiently with the help of the previous assessments made.

8g. The main hindrances and limitations experiences during previous PB cycles were:

Ideas submitted by citizens dealt mainly with parks and green areas, thus resulting in a shortage of resources during the idea feasibility check by those municipal departments. Overall, the amount of ideas given by citizens can be considered to be rather low. Also, there were some difficulties with the Decidim online platform. The platform did not allow the gathering of any data concerning the citizens submitting the ideas or voting for them. This created hindrances but also knowledge gaps in developing PB in the city. For the second round some minor changes were made on the platform. However, data gathering is still not possible at all when using the Decidim platform.

2. Development of the 2nd PB pilot

Citizen- and PB process-related factors

9. PB is implemented to realize the following objectives:

The city council of Riihimäki approved a new city strategy for 2030 in June 2017, where one of the main themes is community spirit or sense of community. As a general strategic aim, Riihimäki wants its citizens to be active in planning, designing and creating city operations and services. Also, new approaches, such as PB, are promoted. The city strategy was updated in the autumn of 2019. Opportunities for citizens to participate and collaborate were included in the city vision. There are no specific goals or objectives defined for PB at this time.

9a. Which objectives have changed compared to the 1st PB pilot (here Lahti / Gatchina)? Have objectives been added or abandoned?

Since no changes were made in the second round of PB in Riihimäki, no specific goals were set. Also in Lahti, there were only general aims to offer opportunities to participate and influence in city operations for citizens.

10. The following target groups are aimed to be involved in PB, and why:

Riihimäki has not specified any target groups for the PB. The rules of the PB regulate that all participants must be residents of Riihimäki and over 12 years old.

11. In case a citizen survey has been conducted before developing the PB pilot, these needs (e.g. online and/or offline, topics for PB) of citizens were taken into account for PB implementation:

Does not apply here.

PB process-related factors

12. The following steps were undertaken to develop ideas and concepts for the PB process:

There is only limited data available on this matter. After the first round of PB, there was a change in the staff and the person responsible of coordinating PB left the city organization. The task was at this point given to a development manager Katja Törrönen without allocating actual work time resources. Some minor changes were made in the online platform: in order to move on to the feasibility check, ideas must get 10 'likes' in the platform. This was seen within the municipality as a way to reduce the workload in the city departments.

The online platform was also updated in a way that it shows the vote count for each idea in real time during the voting phase. The city council also updated the PB rules by determining that if two or more ideas get the same vote count in the voting phase, but the PB budget can't fit them all, the idea that will get implemented

is chosen by a draw. The city council also noted that the different municipal branches must allocate enough resources to evaluate the feasibility and expenses of the citizens' ideas in the fall of 2020.

13. Citizens were involved in the development of the PB cycle the following way<:

There was no citizen involvement in the development of the PB cycle.

14. Citizens were informed about PB initiation in the following way:

Riihimäki followed the same media-plan layout in their second round of PB as in their first ever PB. The Public Relations regarding the first PB was conducted mainly in channels that were quite cost-effective. The PB message was spread out in the municipality's website, municipal social media channels and in a free newspaper distributed in the municipality. The local media also did some stories regarding the PB and its processes.

15. These were the (internal and external) main promoters and success factors in the development of PB:

The goals for the Riihimäki PB were laid out already during the first round of PB, where the municipality assessed that the main goals for the PB is to get the citizens involved. The municipality has determined that the PB development can be seen as a success in terms of the amount of citizens reached during these two PB rounds. The second PB run was in a technical sense a success regarding the Decidim online platform, with no bigger issues regarding the use of the platform. Naturally the COVID-19-pandemic caused some difficulties in this second round of PB, but the round was still successfully processed.

15a. Has an Advisory Board been installed to develop the PB? If yes, please describe composition and organisation: No.

15c. These were the role models that were used as an inspiration for own PB

There is no specific data available regarding this, but Riihimäki municipal workers have been introduced to various Finnish PB-projects before they implemented their own PB. Specifically, the municipality of Tuusula in Southern Finland was an important benchmarking experience for Riihimäki personnel, and they had good and insightful conversations with Tuusula employees during the process of developing their own PB. Workshops in the TtT-programme strengthened the understanding and skills concerning participative methods and interaction with citizens. The TtT-programme shared information and insights concerning the experiences of PB processes.

16. These were the main opponents and hindrances in the development of PB and it was coped with these in the following way:

The tight timeframe and lack of sufficient personnel resources can be seen as having had an impact also on the development of the Riihimäki PB. The municipality lost a key worker in between their first and second round of PB, so there was no one appointed employee developing and planning the PB before the second round. Also, the planned timeframe for the PB meant that the second round had to get started quite quickly after the first round.

17. A project team for the PB development was formed:

☒ Yes ☐ No

17a. If yes, the project team was composed of the following functions and it was organized as follows:

The PB was run by a small working group of city officials from different departments such as communications and coordinated by development manager, Katja Törrönen, from the administration department – a part time resource for PB. The chair of city council, Mia Nahkuri, was an invited member of the working group. The working group was responsible of the development of PB.

18. For the IT part / online implementation of the PB, the following considerations and steps were taken

The municipality of Riihimäki opted for the open-source online tool Decidim to conduct their PB with. The main reasons behind this were that it is easy to use, and it won't add unreasonable costs to the PB. Riihimäki also considered other online options, but two main reasons mentioned were the reason that Decidim was the ultimate choice. Other Finnish municipalities have also had good experiences using Decidim as their online PB-platform.

In case PB existed before the pilot by the EmPaci project:

19a. The following suggestions for changes were made from the EmPaci team to improve the process:

The EmPaci team encouraged Riihimäki to collect as much data from the PB participants as possible. The team also raised the question of target groups and wider inclusion. There were also suggestions that Riihimäki could try out thematic PB, which focuses on one or more target group or a certain theme within the municipality's operations in one round of PB. This way different citizen groups, age groups or themes within the municipality's operations (such as exercise or arts, for example) could get more visibility per PB round.

19b. Of these suggestions, the following were implemented in the PB pilot: /

19c. Of these suggestions, the following were not implemented in the PB pilot due to the following reasons:

Due to the specific online platform being used, the municipality could not collect any additional background information from the PB-participants, so this suggestion did not bear fruit. Scarce resources and a tight

timeframe meant that the city did not want to specify target groups for this run, but considered the ideas for future PB rounds. Instead, it was regarded important that participation would be as wide and unrestricted as possible.

20. The following documents, manuals, regulations were developed and used during the development of the PB process: PB regulation

3. Implementation of the 2nd PB pilot

21. These are the general steps of the PB process after final approval

- brainstorming phase (autumn 2020),
- implementation and cost evaluation phase (autumn 2020),
- voting phase (winter 2020/2021),
- the municipal manager affirmed the voting results (winter 2020/2021),
- idea implementation phase (winter 2021 – end of 2021) and
- process evaluation and further development phase (winter/spring 2021).

21a. Total annual PB budget: 100 000 EUR

21b. Annual PB budget per citizen: 3,5 EUR

21c. Budget earmarked for related internal work, communications etc.: This information is not available.

21d. The PB has been designed as direct democratic tool (citizens' vote = final decision):

☒ Yes ☐ No

City council affirms the voting turnout of the implemented ideas. City council has a ceremonial role here.

21e. The PB is designed for

☐ Region/City projects only ☐ District projects only ☒ Both

21f. Persons eligible participating in the PB:

Age limits: 12 years old

Definition of persons: only residents can participate

Number of eligible persons (in total): 12 656 (Turnout: Brainstorming phase: 42, Voting phase: 740)

Number of person (% of citizens): 44,1 % (Turnout: Brainstorming phase: 0,14 %, Voting phase: 2,5 %)

21g. The following actions were taken to ensure that only eligible persons made proposals / voted:

The online platform required registration through Facebook or Gmail. The user had to approve of terms of use that stated that all users must be over 12 years old and a resident of Riihimäki. There were no other measures taken to assure that users were eligible to the PB process.

22. These were the specific dates planned for the PB process after final approval of the PB development:

- Brainstorming phase 1/9 – 11/10/20
- Implementation and cost evaluation phase 1/9 – 9/11/20
- Voting phase 10/11 – 13/12/20
- The city manager affirmed the voting result before the publication of the voting result
- Publication of the voting results 14/12/20
- Implementing ideas, evaluation and process development 4/1/21– to end of 2021

23. As key learnings from the 1st PB pilot in another municipality (i.e. City of Lahti/Finland), these aspects were considered when implementing the PB pilot in a new pilot municipality.

The TtT-material provided by the Finnish EmPaci-team was a good way to transfer learnings from the first PB in Lahti over to the municipality of Riihimäki. With the TtT-material and trainings the Riihimäki municipal workers got much needed support for the PB process in a way that didn't burden the municipality financially, as it has scarce resources. The TtT-events organized by the Finnish EmPaci team were free of charge for the Riihimäki municipal workers, and they were held by a professional event manager.

24. For citizen involvement in the PB-phases (e.g. information, proposal, voting phase), the following steps were taken and events organized:

The COVID-19 –pandemic influenced heavily the involvement of citizens in the PB-phases in Riihimäki in 2020-2021. No face-to-face events could be held, so the only involvement the citizens could have with the process was submitting their ideas for the PB, commenting other's ideas on the PB-online platform and voting their favourite idea to be implemented by the municipality.

25. For the activation of specific target groups of the PB, the following steps were taken and events organized:

Riihimäki has not specified any specific target groups for the PB.

26. The following actions were taken to provide information about PB in a citizen-friendly manner:

The municipality utilized different media outlets (social media, local newspaper) as well as the city's web page in distributing information about the PB and its processes. The municipality also gathered as much information as possible regarding the PB in the Decidim online platform. The information regarding past PB rounds is also still available at the Riihimäki Decidim platform. All in all, the first round of PB was seen as a success also regarding the information available to citizens, so the municipality did not see that the process needed many alterations for the second PB round.

27. The following actions were especially taken to achieve a high participation rate:

The first PB round was disseminated actively by the Riihimäki municipality. For example, the local newspaper in Riihimäki did news stories about the first round as a way of encouraging people to get involved in the second round of PB. The Finnish EmPaci-team also shared online as much as possible of the online news and materials produced by Riihimäki municipality. This was done as to increase the visibility of the second round of PB. The Finnish EmPaci-team also organized the TtT-events for the municipal workers of Riihimäki as a way of giving them the tools to get citizens and municipal employees interested in and excited about the PB in Riihimäki.

28. The following steps were taken to train the own actors for PB:

The municipal workers attended a two-day TtT (Train the trainer)-event organized by the Finnish EmPaci team and an external company in the fall of 2020 to learn more about citizen participation. The attendees were municipal workers involved in the day-to-day affairs of Riihimäki's PB. The workers also had access to Teams platform, which consisted of different training materials, that were produced by Finnish EmPaci partners. The platform was maintained by the Finnish EmPaci partners and it was a part of the TtT-programme.

29. If applicable, the following steps were taken to train actors in other municipalities (outside EmPaci-project):

Riihimäki took part in the first PBbase-event organized by the Finnish EmPaci-team as a way of disseminating their PB successes and to inform other PB actors, Finnish and international, in how they have successfully conducted their PB. The event was held on 18th of March in 2021, and it had about 40 attendees. The CFO of Riihimäki municipality Kari Ora presented the attendees the key figures of Riihimäki's PB and their biggest learnings from it.

4. Results of the 2nd PB pilot

31. The PB was limited to certain areas of the budget or priorities of programmes:

☐ Yes ☒ No

If yes: *(otherwise please skip this part)*

31a. Proposals and votes were limited to the following areas / priorities:

Proposal phase:

32a. The proposal phase was implemented in the following way:

If the proposals were to be submitted online:

Number of Online Accounts: 42 including all citizens registered. The total number of “thumbs up” left on the platform is 1 244, but this figure does not evolve on the number of accounts behind these “likes”.

Number of interrupted proposal procedures: This data is not available

32b. Number of citizens participating: This cannot be determined from the data available (42 including all citizens registered)

32c. Participation rate (% of citizens): No data

Percentage of females (% of proposers): No data

32d. Number of proposals received in total: 45

Submitted online (number and % of total proposals): 45

Submitted by paper-and pencil (number and % of total proposals): not in use

Submitted otherwise? How? (number and % of total proposals): not in use

Innovativeness of proposals

Number of “new” proposals: not available

Number of resubmitted proposals (previously submitted during earlier cycles, if applicable): -

Co-Creation of proposals

If applicable, number of originally not feasible proposals that were reworked together with the proposer: not available

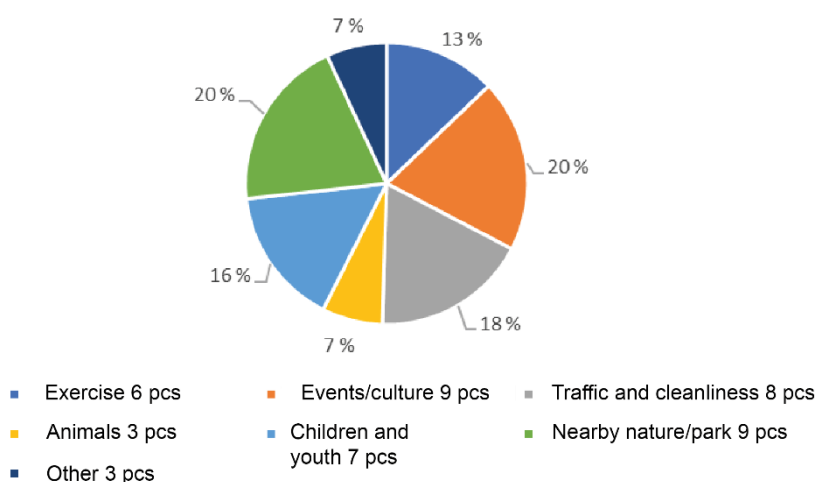
If applicable, number of proposals that were reworked together with the proposer: not available

32e. Main categories of proposals:

- Exercise/Sport 13 %
- Animals 7 %
- Other 7 %
- Events/culture 20 %
- Children and youth 16 %
- Traffic and cleanliness 18 %
- Nearby nature/park 20 %

(pieces = pcs)

Distribution of Riihimäki's PB 2020 ideas into themes (45 in total)



32f. Information provided to citizens after completion of the proposal phase:

Number of positive comments on implementation (if applicable): -

Number of negative comments on implementation (if applicable): -

Feasibility check:

33a. A feasibility check of proposals or voted projects was implemented:

☒ Yes, of the proposals ☐ Yes, of the voted projects ☐ No

Number of feasible proposals: 17

Percentage of feasible proposals (% of proposals received in total): 37,7 %

33b. The feasibility check was implemented in the following way:

The municipal workers went through every idea and compared it to the framework set for the PB in advance. There was no specific tools or steps designed for this and the work was done manually in a way suited for the municipal department in case. The evaluation done by the EmPaci team revealed that this step in the PB process could in some cases be time consuming depending on the department and the number and quality of the submitted ideas. The municipality could streamline this process in the future by for example making a better guide and toolkit for workers going through the ideas.

33c. If applicable, political decision-makers were involved in the feasibility check in the following way:

The feasibility check was done by municipal workers, so the politicians were not involved.

33d. If applicable, citizens making specific proposals were involved in the following way:

Some of the municipal workers had contacted a few of the citizens about their proposals in order to clarify the idea or understand it better. No systematic citizen involvement was however implemented in the timeframe between the submitting of the ideas and the voting-phase, and there is no data available on the number of citizens contacted by the municipal workers in the PB process.

33e. The difficulties that became apparent through the feasibility check:

The time and effort required for the feasibility check differentiated between different municipal department so that it was more demanding for others.

33f. As a result of the feasibility check, the PB process should be changed as follows:

A clear guide and a set of evaluative tools for the proposed ideas could be set up in the municipality.

33g. As a consequence:

Number of feasible proposed projects /feasible voted projects (Number of passed checks): 17

Number of not feasible proposed projects /feasible voted projects (Number of failed checks): 28

Voting phase:**34a. The voting phase was implemented in the following way:**

Additional for online tools: The voting phase was carried out online on Riihimäki's own participation platform. The service was a website that citizens had to log in to make an impact. It was possible to register for the service with new IDs or log in with Facebook or Google IDs. As many projects were voted as possible within the budget (100 000 EUR).

Number of Online Accounts: 740

Number of discontinued voting procedures: This data is not available.

34b. Each citizen was given the following number of votes: Each citizen could vote multiple ideas until the total sum (EUR) of PB was met.

34b. Number of citizens voting: 740

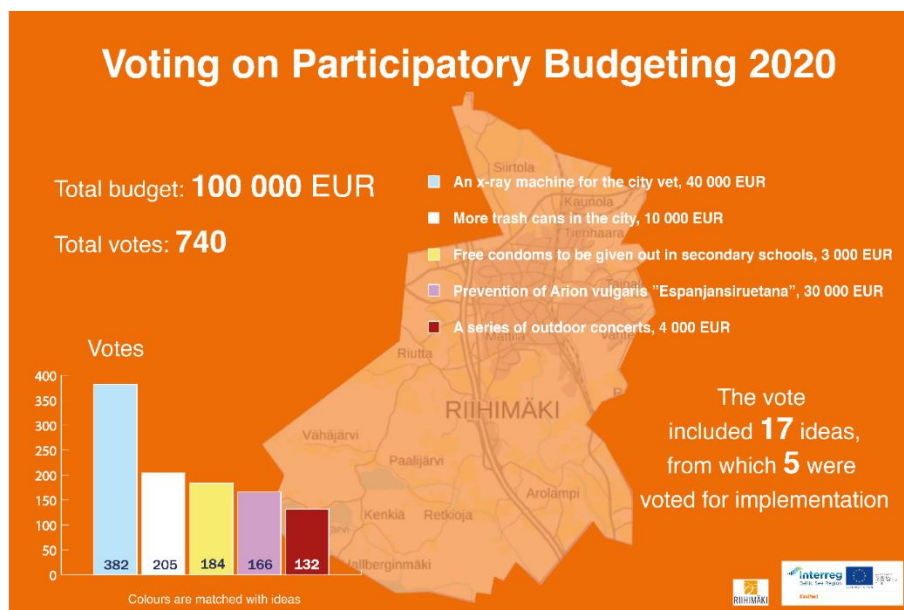
Ratio of females of total (%): No data.

34c. Participation rate (% of citizens): 2,5 %

34c. Number of votes received in total: 1 887

34d. Results of the votes (which projects with which amounts and votes were winning):

- An x-ray machine for the city vet, 382 votes, 40 000 EUR
- More trash cans in the city, 205 votes, 10 000 EUR
- Free condoms to be given out in secondary school, 184 votes, 3 000 EUR
- Prevention of *Arion vulgaris* "Espanjansiruutana" (Spanish slug), 166 votes, 30 000 EUR
- A series of outdoor concerts, 132 votes, 4 000 EUR
- **87 000 EUR in total**



34e. Total PB budget realized / implemented: Total budget 100 000 EUR of which 87 000 EUR was used.

34f. Was part of the total PB budget unused?

☐ No ☒ Yes, unused ☐ Yes, otherwise designated

Why was part of the budget unused?

If the municipality had accepted the first runner-up of the ideas that didn't get implemented, the total amount set aside for the PB round would have been exceeded. If the next idea with enough votes had been cheaper to be implemented, it would have fit in the budget and therefore would have proceeded to the implementation phase. The amount of money left in the budget after the last idea that went through was 13 000 EUR, and the first runner-up idea, which was a skate-hall, would have cost the municipality 55 600 EUR, therefore exceeding the budget by 42 600 EUR.

34f. Information provided to citizens after completion of the voting phase:**Number of delayed proposal implementations /feasibility checks:**

None of the proposal implementations have been delayed from their original timetable.

34g. Extent to which the approved projects can be realized:

All the approved projects can and will be realized 100%. The process of implementation is currently underway accordingly.

34h. Timeframe planned to realize the approved projects: 01/04/2021 - 31/12/2021**34i. Extent to which citizens were involved in the realization of the approved projects:**

The citizens are not involved at this stage of the PB process.

35. Citizens were informed about the completion of the 2nd PB pilot in the following ways: Please post link to accountability report and include a screenshot:

Riihimäki followed the same media-plan layout in their second round of PB as in their first ever PB. The PR regarding the first PB was conducted mainly in channels that were quite cost-effective. The PB message was spread out in the municipality's website, municipal social media channels and in a free newspaper distributed in the municipality. The local media also did some stories regarding the PB and its processes.

36. Other actors involved (e.g. local council) were informed about the completion of the 1st PB pilot in the following ways: Local council was not specifically informed about the completion of the PB pilot.**36a. Number of increased contacts outside of the PB process:** No data.

5. Assessment of PB pilot and potential for enhancements

37. Objectives for PB as specified in Question 9 were reached as follows: Does not apply here.**38. Besides the objectives for PB as specified in Question 9, the following additional issues can be seen as a success for the PB pilot:**

The fact that the municipality got through the PB in the middle of the COVID-19-pandemic can be seen as a definite success, as it caused the municipality to quickly organize the PB in a way that involved no physical contacts or live events.

39. Some objectives for PB as specified in Question 9 were not reached due to the following reasons: -**40. To our knowledge, the following elements of the PB process are innovative compared to other PB initiatives in the BSR:**

Riihimäki established a specific fund used only for PB in upcoming years (see question 8d). Originally the capital for the PB fund was taken from the funds acquired from the sale of the municipally owned energy

company. Local council made the decision to create this fund for long-term utilization for PB. The council has not set up specific time frame for the use of this PB fund, however the use of the capital is restricted to PB use only.

41. The PB benefitted from the transnational approach of the EmPaci project in the following way:

The PB benefitted especially from the evaluation done in the spring of 2021. This comprehensive evaluation provided the municipality and its employees valuable information regarding their PB processes and ideas on how they could improve things in their future PB-rounds. The municipality also gained new insights and new information in the Train the Trainer-workshops organized by the Finnish EmPaci team.

42. These changes are recommended for future PB processes to better reach objectives of PB:

The Finnish EmPaci-team recommends that Riihimäki considers appointing a fixed employee to handle the PB and to take ownership in the processes. We also recommend that they re-consider how they distribute their PB-budget and what kind of information they collect from the citizens who take part in the PB.

43. These changes are recommended for future PB processes to better involve target groups or to better represent the eligible persons:

EmPaci project suggested that existing networks (e.g. schools, NGOs) should be actively and systematically utilized.

44. The pilot municipalities plans to run PB also in the future

☒ Yes ☐ No

If no, provide reasons of why / which hindrances: