

Openness, citizen participation and anti-corruption: Latvian experience

Iveta Reinholde, asoc.prof.

Head of Political Science Department

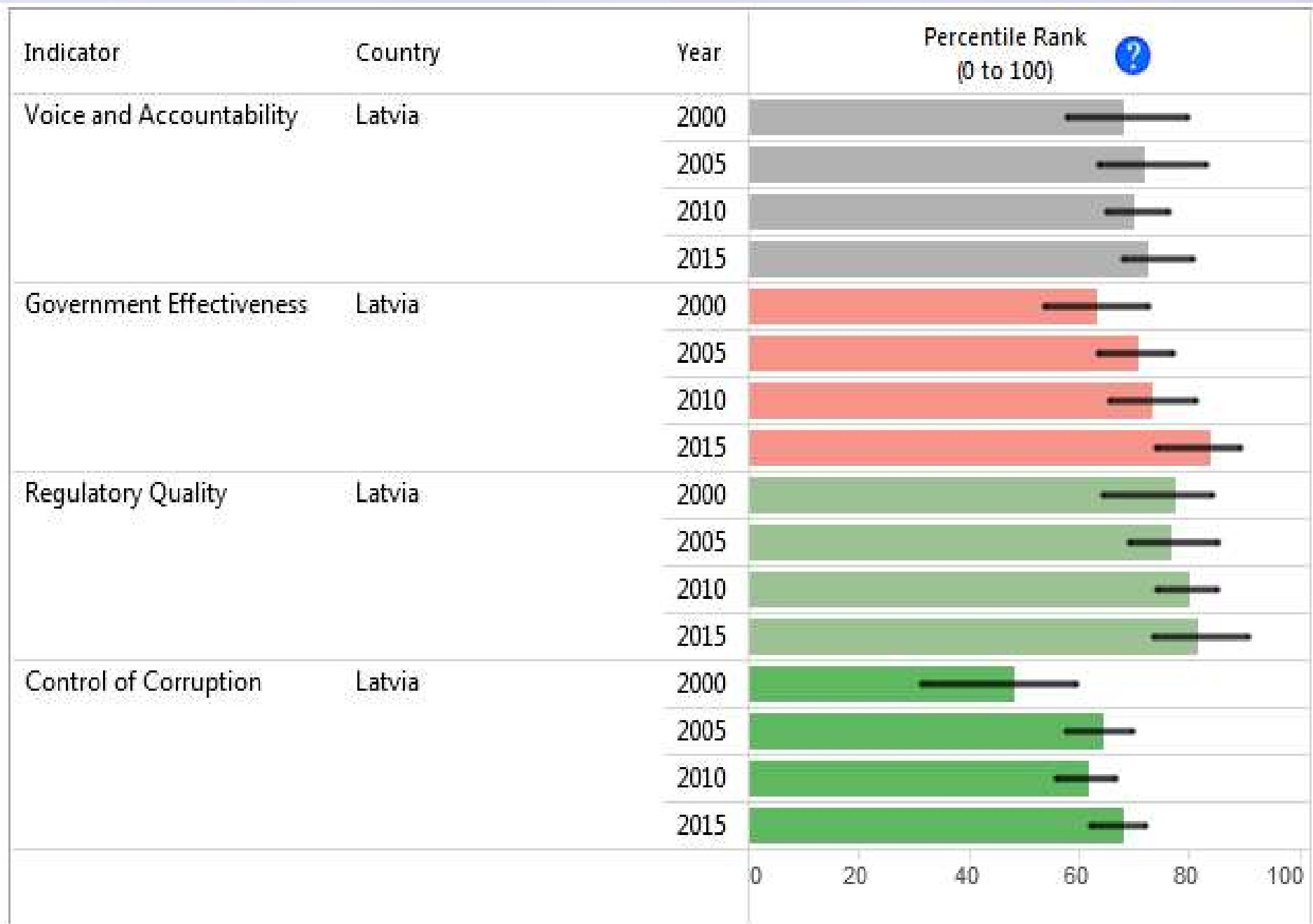
University of Latvia

Iveta.reinholde@lu.lv

- Independent expert at Congress of Regional and Local Municipalities, Council of Europe (Strasbourg)
- Expert on good governance at «Rule of Law» platform within EU-Central Asia Strategy
- Expert missions to Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kosovo, Ukraine
- Member of Public Council at National Audit Office(Latvia)

The point of departure

- The key direction of reforms since 1995:
 - Relations between the government and citizens;
 - Substantial reforms on policy tools
 - Substantial reforms on organisational processes within public administration



Source: <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx#reports>

Citizen participation

- + Detailed legal regulation on types of participation, a cascade of policy papers
- + Cooperation memorandum between the government and NGOs since 2005, from 57 NGOs to 404 now
- + Discussion papers (green papers)
- + All process of drafts laws are visible on internet <http://tap.mk.gov.lv/mk/tap/> and <http://titania.saeima.lv/LIVS12/SaeimaLIVS12.nsf/webAll?OpenView>

Citizen participation

- «Formal consultations» versus «real consultations» with citizens and NGO`s (e.g., full social tax for part time workers)
- Citizens can block/slow down/ask for more impact assessment on infrastructure development projects (Rail Baltic, pork production sites, waste utilisation sites)
- Individual «no» is stronger than public interests

Anti-corruption

- A special agency – Corruption prevention and Combating Bureau (KNAB)
- Accumulated considerable experience
- From to time, huge corruption scandals with arrested officials
- But weakened by internal staff conflicts and information leakage

Internal audit

- The system of IA since 2000 based on UK`s experience
- During 2009, internal audit was classified as a support function and centralized to ministries
- Now more pressure on risk management, risk-based auditing (especially in ESF) and performance auditing (National Audit Office)

E-government

- Higher degree of data accessibility at the central level, if data has been gathered at all
 - Increasing usage of IT applications for public service
 - Weak compatibility of public data bases across government levels
- «+» EDS (taxes); e-CSDD (vehicles)
- «-» E-health, e-signature

Some conclusions

- Tendency towards performance management – from an individual servant (NEVIS) up to the agency
- Tendency to overregulation «*if you have doubts – create a law, regulate and control*»



Thanks for your attention!