



Strasbourg, 8 November 2023

ELOGE ACCREDITATION PLATFORM

REPORT OF THE 9th MEETING 20 October 2023, Strasbourg

1. Opening of the meeting

The meeting was opened with Paul Rowsell (United Kingdom, Chair of the CDDG) in the Chair. He welcomed the participants listed in Appendix 1.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted, as it appears in Appendix 2.

3. Report of the 8th meeting (24 March 2023)

The Secretariat presented the report of the 8th meeting [DG-AP(2023)3], and recalled the discussions and decisions taken by the Platform regarding, in particular, the review of important texts such as the ELoGE Benchmark, the ELoGE Accreditation Platform regulations, and the rules of procedure. The Platform members took note of the information.

4. Information by the Secretariat and Chair on recent developments, incl. [ELOGE progress and implementation in 2023](#)

Daniel Popescu, Head of the Department of Democracy and Governance provided information on the potential impact of proposed changes to the Secretariat structure and the Terms of reference of the intergovernmental committees following the [4th Summit of Heads of State and Government](#) (Reykjavik, Iceland, 16-17 May 2023). Discussions are still ongoing to address outstanding issues, including with regards to the ELoGE platform; the role and scope of activities implemented by the Centre of Expertise; and activities currently implemented in cooperation between the Centre of Expertise and CDDG. Members of the Platform expressed hope that the Centre of Expertise would be able to retain connection to the intergovernmental sector and that ELoGE would continue to be supported as a means of promoting and measuring good democratic governance practice based on the Council of Europe standards.

Progress on implementation of ELoGE in 2023 was presented by the Secretariat as outlined in document [DG-AP(2023)4], including recent and upcoming ELoGE ceremonies. The upcoming Conference in Vilnius will serve to raise awareness on Recommendations CM/Rec(2023)5 on the principles of good democratic governance and CM/Rec(2023)6 on deliberative democracy; of an ELoGE award ceremony for Lithuanian municipalities; and as an opportunity to exchange experience between ELoGE awarded municipalities from neighbouring member States.

5. Consideration of a draft revised ELoGE platform regulations (for adoption) and a draft revised rules of procedure (for approval by the CDDG)

The Secretariat presented a draft revised version of the ELoGE Platform regulations [DG-AP(2023)5 rev], and draft revised rules of procedure for the ELoGE Platform [DG-AP(2023)6 rev]. The main changes were emphasised, especially as regards the rules on voting and the quorum which needed to be simplified, the need for simpler wording to designate the bodies, the need for greater consistency across each document and between the two documents. The regulations were prepared for consideration and final approval by the Platform itself, whereas the rules of procedure needed to be subsequently approved by the CDDG as the body which had been given lead responsibility – through its Bureau - by the Committee of Ministers for the management and implementation of ELoGE.

The Platform agreed on some further amendments to the two documents. It approved the revised regulations, and endorsed the revised draft rules of procedure for subsequent approval by the CDDG at its 18th meeting on 23-24 November 2024.

6. Draft updated ELoGE Benchmark

The Secretariat of the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance presented an updated draft of the ELoGE Benchmark [document DG-AP(2023)7]. The original ELoGE Benchmark was prepared in 2009. This new version has been developed in light of 15 years experience of implementation and is based on Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)5 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the principles of good democratic governance and its explanatory memorandum, [adopted on 6 September 2023](#).

The revision process included a broad consultation of all ELoGE accredited bodies and a roundtable discussion held *en marge* of the Presidency Conference on Good Governance organised in Riga, Latvia, in May 2023.

The revised Benchmark has been simplified and made more user-friendly, it includes indicative lists of possible evidence to be used in support of applications. An online version is being finalised that will facilitate participation and data analysis. The Benchmark has also been drafted in a way that allow for it to be adapted to address all levels of government.

Members of the Platform welcomed the new tool and the overall improvements made, both with regard to the structure and to the content, and they sought further clarification on the meaning and use of the Benchmark matrix.

At the closure of discussions, the Platform endorsed the use of the document for producing assessments for the purposes of the ELoGE process. It invited the Centre of Expertise to make further revisions as appropriate, in the light of the piloting currently underway, and to present this new ELoGE Benchmark at the 18th plenary meeting of the CDDG on 23-24 November 2023.

7. Renewal and new requests of accreditations

The Platform examined accreditation requests presented by the Secretariat, as set out in document [DG-AP(2023)8]:

A. Requests for renewal

- after examining the request, the Platform agreed to renew the accreditation **for a further 3 years (1 January 2024 – 31 December 2026) to the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works of Bulgaria;**
- after examining the request, the Platform agreed to renew the accreditation **for a further 3 years (1 January 2024 – 31 December 2026) to the National Association of Local Authorities of Hungary;**
- after examining the request, the Platform agreed to renew the accreditation **for a further 3 years (1 January 2024 – 31 December 2026) to the Italian Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions – Friuli Venezia Giulia Federation (AICCRE FVG);**
- after examining the request, the Platform agreed to renew the accreditation **for a further 3 years (1 January 2024 – 31 December 2026) to EUDEL – Asociacion de Municipios Vascos (Association of Basque Municipalities**

B. New requests for accreditation

- after examining the request, the Platform agreed to grant accreditation **for 3 years (1 January 2024 – 31 December 2026) to the Association of Cities of the Republic of Croatia.** In taking this decision, the ELoGE Accreditation Platform underlined the importance of ensuring participation of representatives of civil society in implementation of ELoGE, and to take into account earlier experience with the implementation of ELoGE in Croatia by ALDA;

- after examining the request, the Platform agreed to grant accreditation **for 3 years (1 January 2024 – 31 December 2026) to the Union of Cyprus Municipalities**, also underlining the importance of ensuring participation of representatives of civil society in the implementation of ELoGE.

The Platform also considered a request from the Argüden Governance Academy to amend the composition of the National ELoGE Platform of Türkiye as presented in the accreditation request granted in March 2023 to the Academy in cooperation with the Union of Marmara Municipalities. The proposed new Platform will be organised by the Academy in cooperation with ALDA and Altinbas University. **The ELoGE Accreditation Platform agreed to this request** but encouraged the Argüden Governance Academy to explore opportunities to involve national associations of municipalities in the implementation of ELoGE in Türkiye.

APPENDIX 1**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS****CDDG BUREAU MEMBERS / MEMBRES DU BUREAU DU CDDG**

Mr Paul ROWSELL - *Chair /président*

Head of Governance Reform and Democracy Unit, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Local Government & Communities Directorate, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, LONDON

Mr Peter ANDRE, Ministry of Interior, Senior Expert for Legal Affairs, Vienna, Austria

Mr Georgios CHRYSAFIS, Directorate of Organising and Functioning of Local Government, Ministry of the Interior, Athens, Greece

Ms Gordana GAPIKJ-DIMITROVSKA, State Advisor, the Ministry of Information Society and Administration, Skopje, North Macedonia

Mr Edwin LEFEBRE, Deputy Director, Ministry of the Flemish Community, Agency for Home Affairs, Brussels, Belgium

Mr Markku MÖLLÄRI, Ministerial adviser, Department for Local Affairs and Regional Administration, Ministry of Finance, Helsinki, Finland

CONFERENCE OF INGOS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE / CONFERENCE DES OING DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Mr Christoph SPRENG, Representative of the INGOs Conference to the CDDG

CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES / CONGRES DES POUVOIRS LOCAUX ET REGIONAUX

(Apologised for absence / excusé(e))

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE / ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

(Apologised for absence / excusé(e))

SECRETARIAT

Mr Daniel POPESCU, Head of Democracy and Governance Department / Directorate of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance / Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity

Ms Alina TATARENKO – Head of the Democratic Governance Division / Secretary of the CDDG / Directorate of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance / Directorate General of Democracy

Mr Christophe SPECKBACHER, Administrator – Democratic Governance Division / Directorate of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance / Directorate General of Democracy

Mr Niall SHEERIN, Administrator – Democratic Governance Division / Directorate of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance / Directorate General of Democracy

APPENDIX 2

AGENDA

1.	Opening of the meeting by the Chair	
2.	Adoption of the agenda	[DG-AP(2023)OJ2]
3.	Report of the 8th ELoGE platform meeting (24 March 2023)	[DG-AP(2023)3]
4.	Information by the Secretariat and Chair on recent developments, incl. ELoGE progress and implementation in 2023	[DG-AP(2023)4] Link to news
5.	Consideration of: A. Draft revised ELoGE platform regulations, for adoption B. Draft revised rules of procedure, for approval by the CDDG	[DG-AP(2023)5 rev] [DG-AP(2023)6 rev]
6.	Draft updated ELoGE Benchmark in the light of the recent adoption of CM/Rec(2023)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the principles of good democratic governance (and its explanatory memorandum) For adoption	News and link to the CM texts [DG-AP(2023)7]
7.	Renewal and new requests of accreditations A. Renewal of accreditations - Bulgaria - Hungary - Italy - Basque Country B. New requests for accreditations - Croatia - Cyprus	[DG-AP(2023)8]
8.	Any other business	
9.	Next meeting	

APPENDIX 3



DG-AP(2023)5 rev.

ELoGE ACCREDITATION PLATFORM

**REGULATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE
EUROPEAN LABEL OF GOVERNANCE EXCELLENCE
(ELoGE)**

Adopted by the ELoGE Accreditation Platform on
18 May 2016 and amended on 24 March 2020, 15
October 2021, 24 March 2023 and 20 October
2023

I. Introduction

1. The [European Label of Governance Excellence](#) (ELoGE)¹ is awarded to municipalities which can demonstrate their compliance with the Twelve Principles of the Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the principles of good democratic governance, and further detailed in its explanatory memorandum and the ELoGE benchmark.
2. The present Regulations govern the procedure for implementing ELoGE. They were adopted by the ELoGE Accreditation Platform at its meeting on 18 May 2016 and subsequently amended on 24 March 2020, 15 October 2021, 24 March 2023 and 20 October 2023.

II. ELoGE

3. The ELoGE can be awarded to the municipalities² and other relevant public authorities of the Council of Europe member States, which demonstrate compliance with the twelve principles of good democratic governance, as measured against the European Benchmark based on the principles of good democratic governance set out in Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)5.
4. The ELoGE is awarded for up to three years, subject to a decision by the accredited entity³.
5. The procedure for implementing ELoGE consists of two stages: accreditation by the Council of Europe ELoGE Accreditation Platform; and national (regional) implementation leading to awarding of the label.

III. Accreditation

Entities which can request accreditation

6. The following entities can apply to the Platform for accreditation to award ELoGE:
 - i. an ad hoc national or regional stakeholders' platform comprising representatives of central or regional government, local government, civil society and social and economic actors in a balanced way, the composition of which shall be communicated to the Accreditation Platform at the moment of applying for accreditation;
 - or

¹ The Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at Local level (herewith 'the Strategy') was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 26 March 2008, at the 1022nd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies. It aims at promoting action and policies that establish or improve good governance, in particular at local level. These measures, however, can also be implemented at regional and national levels of government.

² Inter-municipal cooperation (IMC) entities can also apply for the awarding of the ELoGE label, in those member states where they have legal personality and competencies comparable to those of local authorities.

³ The physical distinction consists of a crystal dodecahedron the facets of which bear the above-mentioned Twelve Principles of Good Democratic Governance. Alternatively, the label can be awarded in form of a certificate.

- ii. an existing national or regional body or institution which is reputable and has substantial know-how, expertise and/or experience in the field of good governance.
7. Accreditation requests can also be submitted by reputable transnational platforms, bodies or institutions with substantial know-how, expertise and/or experience in the field of good governance, in particular at local level, with a view to awarding ELoGE in one or more Council of Europe member States or regions where no national or regional stakeholders' platform, or any existing national or regional body or institution has been granted accreditation. The competence of such transnational entity to award the label in a country or region shall cease upon accreditation of a national (regional) body for the same purpose.
 8. Upon submitting an accreditation request, the requesting entity shall submit a national (regional) benchmark for assessing the performance of municipalities with regard to the twelve principles of good democratic governance set out in Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)5, providing an explanation of its equivalence to the Council of Europe benchmark.

IV. Granting or renewing accreditation

9. The ELoGE Accreditation Platform is the Council of Europe body responsible for granting the accreditation to implement the awarding of the ELoGE. Its composition is determined by the Rules of Procedure. Members of other Council of Europe bodies can be represented in the ELoGE Accreditation Platform according to the conditions established in its Rules of procedure.
10. Upon receiving an application from one of the bodies mentioned under articles 6 and 7 above, the Accreditation Platform will grant accreditation if it is satisfied that:
 - the member State (or region) has no objection against the accreditation;
 - public authorities at the relevant level are (or will be) adequately informed about and free to take part in the process leading to the awarding of ELoGE;
 - the national (regional) benchmark for assessing the performance of the municipalities with regard to the principles of good democratic governance set by the CM/Rec(2023)5 is equivalent to the relevant Council of Europe benchmark. Any changes the requesting entity may deem necessary or desirable, at the level of the national (regional) benchmark, shall be approved by the Accreditation Platform;
 - the scoring of municipalities with regard to the benchmark will be verified by an independent body or expert and supplemented by other information about the public's views of the performance of the municipality;
 - the accredited entity has the capacity to administer the process for granting the label;
 - equality and diversity, including the balanced gender participation at all stages of the process, will be taken into account in implementing ELoGE;

- the rules, procedures and decisions in relation to implementing and awarding ELoGE are taken according to a transparent procedure and can be subjected to review.

11. Accreditations to the entities listed under articles 6 and 7 can be granted for a maximum period of 3 years, which can be renewed upon the applicant's request for a duration to be decided by the Accreditation Platform. Renewals of accreditation can be granted if the Accreditation Platform is satisfied that there has been no change in the circumstances that justified accreditation in the first place.
12. The ELoGE Accreditation Platform may request additional information to be provided by the entity applying for the accreditation or renewal of accreditation.
13. The ELoGE Accreditation Platform decides according to its Rules of procedure. Decisions of the Accreditation Platform cannot be appealed. They will be communicated to the applicant without delay.

V. Suspension, withdrawal or refusal of accreditation

14. The ELoGE Accreditation Platform may suspend an entity's ability to award the Label at any time, in the event of suspicion of a breach of the applicable Regulations or other possible irregularities, pending further inquiries. If at the conclusion of the inquiries the Accreditation Platform finds serious breaches of the Regulations, it shall withdraw accreditation and may take such other action as may be necessary to safeguard the reputation of the Label.
15. A decision not to grant accreditation is without prejudice to the right to submit further applications.

VI. Implementing and awarding ELoGE at national (regional) level

16. The accredited entity is responsible for managing the process for awarding the Label, and for any actions and consequences as a result thereof. It commits itself to promoting the Label and the principles of good democratic governance described in Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States. The accreditée also commits itself to implementing ELoGE in a meaningful number of municipalities within the period of its accreditation.
17. Accredited entities shall keep the Accreditation Platform informed about their actions regarding ELoGE and respond to requests from the Platform in a spirit of cooperation. On a regular basis, or at the latest before the end of their accreditation, they should provide a narrative report describing its activities in relation to ELoGE.
18. Accredited entities shall bear the costs related to the process for implementing ELoGE.

VII. Exceptional awarding of ELoGE by the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance in co-operation with a non-accredited entity

19. In exceptional circumstances, where there is no accredited platform and with the agreement of the ELoGE Accreditation Platform, the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance may award ELoGE in co-operation with a national, regional or transnational entity which is not accredited but is qualified to apply for accreditation, at the following conditions:
- no accredited entity can award ELoGE in the country or region concerned;
 - the entity in question has the capacity, reputation and resources to become accredited and is interested in doing so;
 - the municipalities in question have successfully run the ELoGE benchmark and have fulfilled all the conditions which are normally required for being awarded the label;
 - the results of the benchmarking have been assessed by the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance in cooperation with the entity in question.
20. The above procedure can be resorted to with the same entity only for one round of ELoGE for any given country (or region). A refusal to grant ELoGE according to this procedure is without appeal.

VIII. Miscellaneous provisions

21. All correspondence with the Council of Europe and the documentation relating to ELoGE shall be in English or French.
22. On a periodic basis, the ELoGE Accreditation Platform, in consultation with accredited entities, should assess the implementation of ELoGE, its effectiveness in promoting compliance with the principles under review (see Articles 3 and 16), and consider ways to improve it.
23. These provisions can be modified and supplemented at any time by the ELoGE Accreditation Platform in the light of the experience.