

BEST PRACTICE PROGRAMME FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN GREECE



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
Ministry of Interior
and Administrative Reconstruction

Funded
by the European Union
and the Council of Europe



EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Implemented
by the Council of Europe



E.E.T.A.A. A.E.

ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟ ΚΕΝΤΡΟ
ΤΕΧΝΙΚΗΣ ΑΣΥΜΜΕΤΡΙΚΗΣ

BEST PRACTICE PROGRAMME FOR MUNICIPALITIES IN GREECE

European Union - Council of Europe
Joint Project:

“Technical assistance
for institutional enhancement
of local government in Greece”

Best Practice Programmes
in the Public Sector

PROSPECTUS and APPLICATION FORM



SEPTEMBER 2016

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On the initiative of the Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction, the European Commission - Council of Europe joint project entitled "Technical assistance for institutional enhancement of local government" is being launched in Greece with the active participation of local government agencies.

In this context, it is with great pleasure that I inaugurate one of the actions of the project, "the Best Practice Programme" which aims at helping municipalities increasing their capacity with a view to delivering efficient services, boosting citizens' participation, sharing experience and yielding fruitful results at the level of local economic development.

Relevant local authorities through out the country could also adopt best practices, according to their needs in order to increase confidence and support among their local peoples.

In Greece, the cradle of democracy, we believe that strengthening the local authorities' operational capacity is the only way forward. In this respect, enabling the design and use of standard tools to help achieve coherent results can play an important role in enhancing sustainable economic growth in the country.

I wish to thank you all for supporting this effort and contributing to its success.

Panagiotis Kouroumplis

Minister of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction

On behalf of the Council of Europe, it is my pleasure to launch the selection procedure for the Best Practice Programme in Greece, in the framework of the joint programme of the European Union and the Council of Europe "Technical assistance for institutional enhancement of local government in Greece".

The Council of Europe's Best Practice Programme proved to be an excellent tool to raise standards of local governance by identifying, promoting and disseminating innovative and successful actions undertaken at local level and by encouraging positive competition among municipalities in delivering better services to citizens.

We strongly encourage Greek municipalities to participate in the programme and bring to the attention of others their good practices in local economic development in the fields of tourism, agriculture, renewable energy and new technology. We are convinced that good examples exist and only wait to be unearthed!

The Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform of the Council of Europe stands ready to support this initiative and more generally to assist Greek municipalities in delivering good democratic governance at local level and beyond.

Alfonso Zardi

*Head of Democratic Institutions and Governance Department,
Council of Europe*

Description of the Best Practice Programme

There are local communities in every country that achieve the highest standards in some aspects of their work. Identifying and sharing this best practice with other local communities can lead to effective learning and improvement without external expertise. Therefore, **best practice is about change and learning**. It allows to seek out excellence and to contribute to improving the quality of local government as a whole.

Best practice can be defined as the optimal method of solving a given problem or accomplishing a certain goal that can be shared and used by others.

The **Best Practice Programme** applies a systematic approach where best practices in selected themes are identified, celebrated, and disseminated to other communities. It is designed to recognise municipalities that have implemented successful initiatives or model projects in key areas of their activity with significant impact on the local community.

The Programme has been developed by the Council of Europe's Centre of Expertise on Local Government Reform and has been implemented successfully in a number of European countries. The Best Practice Programme for Municipalities in Greece was initiated by the Council of Europe in 2016, as a part of other actions of a joint project with the EU, that were asked for technical assistance by the Greek Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction. It is aimed at identifying, publicly recognising and disseminating best practices among municipalities in Greece.

Municipalities demonstrating best practices will be awarded with Best Practice Status for a period of one year. This will give the municipality the status of delivering quality / innovative public services. There will also be the opportunity for representatives of the municipality to undertake a study visit to other award winning municipalities in different countries that have demonstrated quality services. 'Best Practice' municipalities will be expected to share their best practice with the wider local government community through presentations to other interested municipalities, individual dissemination activities, open days and study visits.

Objectives of the Best Practice Programme in Greece are as follows:

- To raise standards in municipalities by identifying and recognising innovative and excellent practices in citizen engagement and service delivery by municipalities;
- To acknowledge and reward the best performing municipalities in key areas of local government work and to help them act as centres of excellence from which other municipalities can learn;
- To promote better public services, higher standards of service delivery, citizen participation and improved local government management;
- To promote innovations in various areas of local government responsibilities;
- To share ideas among central government institutions about how they might encourage good management practices in local government;
- To contribute to the creation of strong civil society through the promotion of effective de-

mocratic local government;

- To promote synergies among the different actors of local community and enhance dissemination among other municipalities;
- To assist municipalities self-assess their experience in order to detect possible good lessons or deficiencies that can improve in their next attempt.

Who is involved?

The Best Practice Programme for Municipalities in Greece is implemented with the help of the **Steering Committee**, which oversees the overall implementation of the Council of Europe Project “Technical assistance for institutional enhancement of local government in Greece” and a **Selection Panel** which is specifically composed for this purpose.

The **Steering Committee** includes representation of the Council of Europe, the Government of Greece (Ministry of Interior and Administrative Reconstruction) and Local Government Associations in Greece. The Steering Committee has a role of monitoring and evaluating the successful implementation of the programme, and of controlling the evaluation and selection of the best practice examples.

The **Selection Panel** is a group of independent experts recommended and selected by the Steering Committee of the Project. The role of the Selection Panel is to evaluate and to recommend the winning Best Practice municipalities to the Steering Committee by:

- Short-listing a small number of applicant municipalities to whom the Best Practice status could be awarded on the basis of a written evidence and documentation;
- Conducting verification visits to short-listed municipalities and, together with the Steering Group, listen to their presentations of Best Practices;
- Participate in developing various dissemination mechanisms and exchange of experience for identified best practices.

The Programme will be supported by:

- Hellenic Agency for Local Development and Local Government (E.E.T.A.A.) S.A.
- 4 Council of Europe International & National Experts
 - Mr Jon Barber, Great Britain
 - Mrs Chiara Bianchizza, Italy
 - Mr Rallis Gkekakos, Greece
 - Mr Konstantinos Karamarkos, Greece

Theme of Best Practice for 2016

The applications for the best practice status - 2016 will be for the following theme:

Local Economic Development in the fields of;

- agriculture;
- tourism;
- renewable energy;
- new technology

The purpose of local economic development (LED) is to build up the economic capacity of a local area to improve its economic future and the quality of life for all. It is a process by which public, business and nongovernmental sector partners work collectively to create better conditions for economic growth and employment generation.

Local economic development, in a world of fast technological evolution, is not based on big projects from international companies, but is rather rooted on the principle that sustainable economic activity:

- Involves private and/or public local actors
- Engages local stakeholders
- Implies a sustainable use of local resources, through an efficient use of financial as well as human and natural capital
- Is based on the actual local resources and values the human capital that support it
- Is based on innovation.

Local economic development (LED) offers local government, the private and not-for-profit sectors, financial institutions and local communities the opportunity to work together to improve the local economy. It focuses on enhancing competitiveness, increasing sustainable growth and ensuring that growth is inclusive. LED encompasses a range of disciplines including physical planning, economics, financial engineering and marketing. It also incorporates many local government and private sector functions including environmental planning, business development, infrastructure provision, real estate development and finance.

The practice of local economic development can be undertaken at different geographic scales. A municipality pursues LED strategies for the benefit of its jurisdiction, and individual communities and areas within a municipality's jurisdiction can also pursue LED strategies to improve their economic competitiveness. Such approaches are most successful if pursued in partnership with local government strategies. LED is thus about communities continually improving their investment climate and business enabling environment to enhance their competitiveness, retain jobs and improve incomes. Local communities respond to their LED needs in many ways, and a variety of approaches can be taken that include:

- Ensuring that the local investment climate is functional for local businesses;
- Supporting small and medium sized enterprises;
- Encouraging the formation of new enterprises;

- Attracting external investment (nationally and internationally);
- Investing in physical (hard) infrastructure;
- Investing in soft infrastructure (educational and workforce development, institutional support systems and regulatory issues);
- Supporting the growth of particular clusters of businesses;
- Targeting particular parts of the city for regeneration or growth (areas based initiatives);
- Supporting informal and newly emerging businesses;
- Targeting certain disadvantaged groups;
- Enhancing social cohesion;
- Efficient environmental protection.

With this definition in mind, the sectors of economic development chosen for the identification of best practices (agriculture, tourism, renewable energies and new technologies) are all linked and could potentially intersect with each other.

Examples of outcomes municipalities should use while describing their practices:

- Sustainable agricultural practices (in terms of energy or water efficiency);
- Use of new technologies deployed as means as water use efficiency in agriculture;
- Promotion of one specific agricultural local product that significantly supports the local economy;
- Re-introduction of traditional agricultural productions and/or of practices that result effective in terms of reduction in the use of fertilizers/pesticides;
- Existence of thematic routes for cultural/gastronomic/mountain tourism (also beyond the summer season);
- Public Private Partnership (PPP) schemes for the use of energy from renewable sources in public buildings;
- Innovative new technologies applied in the sustainable production of energy from renewables;
- PPP schemes for the provision of energy from renewable resources to cooperatives of consumers;
- Public incentives for the production of energy from renewables.

Examples of good practice could include;

New technology and tourism

The use of new technology in order to facilitate tourists and visitors by offering information concerning areas of interest and promote local culture and attraction e.g. Applications for smartphones or tablets, e-guides with city maps, suggested routes and weather forecast, on line tools for booking hotels or tickets for local events, connection to free Wi Fi networks.

New Technology

Automated road transport systems to achieve reduced emissions and energy consumption.

Intelligent Transportation System that includes digital information boards providing information about parking places and monitoring the vehicle fleet while offering data concerning the city's traffic.

New Technology and Agriculture

The installation and use of teleoperation / telemetry and leakages control system in water supply network.

Renewable energy and Agriculture

The production, management and processing of biomass in cooperation with farmers who have agricultural holdings which produce biomass. Used directly via combustion to produce heat, or indirectly to various forms of biofuel.

Agriculture (Gastronomy and wine Festivals)

Statutory annual city festivals that combine the promotion of local agri-food products, gastronomy and occasionally wine, associated with a strong brand name of the city.

Agriculture

Implementation of an Action Plan by the municipalities participants relating to the emergence of fine cuisine with recognized, certified and gourmet products from the region, aimed at highlighting the culinary tradition for the benefit of the rural economy and tourism.

Criteria for selecting Best Practices

In order to be eligible for Best Practice Status, the best practice should fulfil the following **criteria**:

- Relevance
- Efficiency
- Innovation
- Impact
- Sustainability
- Replicability
- Integration
- Capitalisation

- **Relevance**: the initiative has solved an important problem for the community;
- **Efficiency**: the activity had good results/costs ratio;
- **Innovation**: a new creative approach to the problem addressed has been found and applied;
- **Impact**: practical and clearly identifiable results have been recorded;
- **Sustainability**: the initiative prescribes into a broad and long-term perspective on the future of the local community along with a sense of what is needed for local development;
- **Replicability**: has the possibility to be implemented also in other communities;
- **Integration**: the initiative has created synergies that can result to multiplier effects;
- **Capitalisation**: the dissemination of the initiative aims to enhance, exchange and diffuse its achievements.

Besides the innovative practice, municipalities have to prove excellence by fulfilling the criteria and confirm their willingness to disseminate their best practice to other municipalities.

Application procedure

All municipalities in Greece are invited to apply for **Best Practice Status** in the theme presented above, where they believe they are performing well according to the criteria set out in the Prospectus.

All municipalities interested in taking part in the competition should fill out the application form which is a part of this Prospectus and send the completed form back by mail or e-mail to the Hellenic Agency for Local Development and Local Government (E.E.T.A.A.) S.A., no later than **15 November 2016**.

The applications should be submitted exclusively by persons who are authorised to represent the municipality.

There is no limit to the topics in which one local self-government unit can apply, i.e. **one municipality can apply for Best Practice Status in one or two subthemes**. However, the application for each sub theme should be sent separately. If a best practice covers two themes (such as new technology and agriculture) then one application should be submitted.

Please note that the best practice must have been implemented during **2010-2016** to be eligible for Best Practice Status.

Why should you apply?

Any municipality that believes it meets the criteria for Best Practice Status detailed in this Prospectus should apply.

Some of the benefits of local authorities applying for Best Practice Status are:

- opportunity to review current performance;
- opportunity to obtain feedback on performance;
- opportunity for local achievements to receive public recognition by publicity and official status;
- exchange experiences with other Greek municipalities;
- Opportunity for national recognition for being a best practice municipality;
- Opportunity to be involved in an international study trip.

In addition, the project will result in many valuable best practice examples that deserve to be disseminated on national and international level. Therefore, the awards for the best practice municipalities are primarily aimed at the acknowledgment and support of their work and at disseminating the information on their best practice among other municipalities, professionals and citizens.

All municipalities which apply for Best Practice Status and which fulfil the general criteria of the programme, will receive a **Certificate of Participation in the Programme**. The examples of best practice from all short-listed municipalities shall be described in the publication on best practice in local self-government.

Selection process and Awarding

On the basis of an evaluation of the application forms in the light of the criteria explained in this Prospectus, the Selection Panel will prepare a short-list of municipalities for further assessments. During the months of **November - December 2016**, the representatives of the Project's Selection Panel will visit the short listed municipalities for an on-site review of the functioning of their best practices and an assessment of the relevant documentation.

Based on their applications shortlisted and the conclusion of verification visits, the Selection Panel shall select 3 local authorities to be awarded the status of "Best Practice Municipality" in the area where they applied for. The decision on the final list of 3 award-winning municipalities will be endorsed by the Project's Steering Committee in December 2016. Other municipalities on the short-list will receive Certificates of Good Practice.

All municipalities that apply for Best Practice Status will be informed by mail of their results and of the short-listed municipalities in January 2017 and will be invited to attend the **Project's Awards Ceremony**.

The Best Practice municipality will be recognised at an **Awards Ceremony** with the presence of the representatives of the Government of Greece, the Council of Europe, the EU, Steering Committee members, municipalities and municipality staff who were personally responsible for the best practice, local government associations and other local and international organisations supporting the programme, press and electronic media.

The ceremony will take place in **February 2017** and will be an outstanding opportunity for all municipalities to inform the public about their achievements and raise significant media and public attention.

The winners of the Best Practice Programme will be offered a study tour to other internationally recognised municipalities.

Dissemination of Best Practices

The Best Practice municipalities will be provided with various opportunities for disseminating their best practices. The dissemination events will depend partially upon the demands from other municipalities for specific training, consultancy support and information, but also on the willingness and capacities of Best Practice municipalities.

Each Best Practice municipality will be encouraged, and assisted to, organise a number of best practice events. These events should be intensive learning processes for both the visitors and the host municipalities. They would allow open exchange of ideas and information. Visitors would benefit from new ideas and approaches that they could put into practice when they return to their own communities. Host municipalities should benefit from their visitors and receive feed-back. Dissemination activities will also consist of online publications and promotional events.

Should you be interested to participate in the Best Practice Programme

Please complete and submit the online Application Form which is available online:

<http://web3.eetaa.gr/quest/kalespraktikes>

and also send the completed Application Form by post with the official stamp and signature of legal representative of the Municipality by **15th November 2016**

to:

Hellenic Agency for Local Development and Local Government (E.E.T.A.A.) S.A.

Address: 73-77 Myllerou St, 104 36 Athens

The electronic version of the application form is also available on the website of EETAA:

www.eetaa.gr

For further information please contact us at the following telephone number:

2131320669-631

GREECE BEST PRACTICE PROGRAMME

APPLICATION FORM

**Best Practice Programme
for Municipalities in Greece
2016 / 17**

I. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE MUNICIPALITY

A) Name of the municipality:.....

B) Type of community: urban rural

C) Size: Population (number of residents)..... Territory (km2).....

D) Number of employees in the municipality:.....

E) Name of the Mayor:.....

F) Address (street, city, zip code).....

G) Tel:..... Fax:.....

H) E- mail:..... Web Page:.....

I) Contact person with reference to the practice presented (if different from above):

Name:..... Position:.....

Tel.:..... Email:.....

J) The theme in which the good practice is being presented (select one area):

Local Economic Development;

agriculture;

tourism;

renewable energy;

new technology

Combination of above themes

Hereby, I confirm that the information in this application form is correct.

Name

Signature

.....

Stamp

Date

Please submit the Application Form until 15-11-2016

II. DESCRIPTION OF PRACTICE

1. Name of the practice.....

2. Month and year in which the practice started to be implemented

.....

3. Summary of the practice (describe the essence of the practice) [1000 words limit]

.....

4. Please describe the issue addressed by the practice:

■ What was the issue you intended to solve/work on through this practice? [500 word limit]

.....

■ How much impact did the good practice impact have (all the community / part of the community / geographical area etc.)? [200 word limit]

.....

■ Any other information relevant to the description of the problem [500 word limit]:

.....

5. Please describe the practice:

■ Who has benefited from the practice? How many? Include direct and indirect benefits. [200 word limit]

.....

■ What were the main activities carried out as part of the practice? [1000 word limit]

.....

■ What actors participated in the planning and implementation (e.g. NGOs, businesses, media, universities, financial institutions, international cooperation schemes, etc) [200 word limit]

.....

■ What unexpected problems were encountered during the implementation of the practice? How did you solve those problems? [300 word limit]

.....

■ Can this initiative be considered as an integrated solution? What kind of synergies were applied and created during its implementation? [200 word limit]

.....

■ Any other information relevant to the description of the practice [500 words max]

.....

6. Changes observed at the community or local economy level:

■ Has the practice produced measurable results at the community level in regard to employment, new sources of income, reduction in emissions, resources and energy saving? (any quantitative indicators, figures, or statistics are welcome) [400 word limit]

.....

■ What are the qualitative changes/results produced by the practice at the community level in regard to entrepreneurship, social cohesion and quality of life? [300 word limit]

.....

7. Financial implications of the practice:

■ What were the costs of this practice? (include direct and indirect costs)

.....

■ Who has contributed resources in addition to municipal spending? And what share of the costs was co-financed by external actors?

.....

8. The sustainability of the project:

■ Has the practice taken into account the needs of future generations or does it fit into the community's longer-term development perspective? Has the practice proven to be viable since its implementation? [1000 words]

.....

■ How did any previous experience in managing and implementing similar actions assist in the implementation of the proposed one and it will have an added value (capitalization)? [200 word limit]

.....

9. What are the innovative elements of this practice? [300 word limit]

.....

10. Can this experience be useful to other Municipalities/local authorities in Greece and/or internationally? If so please indicate if you have already diffuse it to other Municipalities or how can it be shared with other municipalities. [500 words max]

.....

11. What are the lessons learned from this practice? (positive or negative lessons that might be useful to consider in the future) [500 words max]

.....

12. Has the practice been transmitted to other communities? And how do you think your experience can be shared with other municipalities? [200 word limit]

.....

13. What other kind of support would you require in order to initiate a new Best Practice or to expand or update this one? [300 word limit]

.....

Applicants are welcome to attach one or two photos if they feel this can help explain the practice or its impact for the community.



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