



**UDITE - COUNCIL OF EUROPE**  
**ELoGE Pilot Project**  
**FINAL REPORT 2017**

*UDITE, the European Association of Local Chief Executives responded to a call of the Council of Europe to work on Good Governance in Local Communities. In a first pilot project, several municipalities from different countries participated in a process, trying to obtain the European Label of Governance' Excellence.*



**CENTRE OF EXPERTISE  
FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM**

# GOOD GOVERNANCE

## COUNCIL OF EUROPE - UDITE

### INTRODUCTION

In 2015 UDITE started the idea to work with the program of the Council of Europe (CoE) on 12 Principles of Good Governance, in order to encourage Local Chief Executives in achieving the European label of Governance' Excellence, established by the CoE.

At the end of 2016 decision was made to organise a call for municipalities of the member national associations to participate in the first pilot project.

This call was organised, and candidates had to show interest before May 2017.

Several towns and cities of six different countries responded in a positive way: Watermael-Boitsfort (Belgium); Fleury-les-Aubrais(\*) and Metz (France); Cork(\*) and Limerick(\*) (Ireland), Naxxar(\*) and Qormi(\*) (Malta), Pombal, Agueda, (\*) Valongo, (\*) Sintra and Ponte da Barca (Portugal) Madrid, Barcelona and Parets del Valles(\*) (Spain).

In June 2017 a workshop for the candidates was organized in Barcelona, Spain to prepare them for the self-assessment that had to be done during the period July – Mid October.

Only the marked (\*) municipalities were present and could continue with the process (see also side bar)

During the sessions of the workshop little working groups discussed the principles of Good Governance and especially the indicators they had to use during the process. At the plenary sessions participants presented the results of their discussions.

Before 15 October participating municipalities submitted the results of their self-assessment process, accompanied by the necessary documents

This report reflects the outcome of these results per municipality.

## PARTICIPATING MUNICIPALITIES

- IRELAND
  - Cork
  - Limerick
- MALTA
  - Naxxar
  - Quormi
- PORTUGAL
  - Aguada
  - Valongo
- SPAIN
  - Parets Del Vallès

## Methodology

The self-assessment consists of three important parts:

- The self-assessment done by the municipality
- A survey amongst the councillors of the municipality
- A survey amongst a sample of the population of the municipality.

The evaluation of the submitted applications will observe two important elements:

- Are the scores supported by the evidences, given by the municipalities?
- Are the scores given by the councillors and by the citizens in line with the outcome of the self-assessment or are there important differences?

The scores were evaluated as detailed as possible, by using a pounded system. In that way it is possible to get more differentiations and detect the stronger ad weaker elements.

## **Good Governance**

*“For achieving Good Governance political will is necessary. Though role of civil society is critical, without political will and political process, sustainable good governance cannot be achieved”*

*Narendra MODI*

## **Good Governance**

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*“Aspiring dictators sometimes win elections, and elected leaders sometimes govern badly and threaten their neighbors. History demonstrates that democracy usually follows good government, not the reverse”*

*Rudy GIULLIANI*

## IRELAND

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### CORK

Cork County Council is using four pillars in their process:

- The self-assessment exercise by the organization
- The Elected Official Survey
- The Citizen Survey (done in 2015 but still relevant)
- The PPN: the Public Participation Network which is a permanent platform where the needs and concerns of the inhabitants have a voice.

The results of the self-assessment were confronted with the outcome of the exercise done in the other surveys. This is done for each of the twelve principles and supported by several internal and external documents and reports from the Internal Auditor, the Organizational Efficiency Committee, the Risk Oversight Committee, the Ethics Register, etc.

It is remarkable that the Citizen Survey shows that on certain items (Transparency, Human Rights-Cultural Diversity-Social Cohesion, Accountability) a high score was given by 'don't know', which is not the case in the PPN Survey. At the other hand, in the Elected Official Survey we find the highest scores in: Fair Conduct of Elections, Efficiency and Effectiveness and Ethical Conduct.

In the next table we compare the scores of the Self-Assessment, the Elected Official Survey, the Citizen Survey and the PPN Survey.

## CORK

Population: 416.000

Staff members: 2.200

Elected members: 55

Contact persons

Niall Healy – Niamh

O'Neill



Principle nr.	Principle	Self-Assessment	Citizen Survey	Elected Officials	PPN
1	Fair conduct of Elections	3,6	2,36	3,92	3,6
2	Responsiveness	3,5	2,93	2,87	3,6
3	Efficiency and Effectiveness	3,7	2,49	3,7	3,5
4	Openness and Transparency	3,6	2,32	2,61	3,0
5	Rule of Law	3,5	2,26	2,71	3,17
6	Ethical Conduct	3,9	2,15	2,73	3,5
7	Competency and Capacity	3,5	2,42	2,73	3,5
8	Innovation and Openness to Change	3,75	2,88	2,85	3,17
9	Sustainability and Long-Term Orientation	3,3	2,42	2,81	3,3
10	Sound Financial Management	3,85	1,96	2,65	3,11
11	Human Rights, Cultural Diversity, Social Cohesion	3,5	2,68	3,2	3,7
12	Accountability	3,42	2,52	2,54	2,82
	<b>Average Score</b>	<b>3,6</b>	<b>2,45</b>	<b>2,94</b>	<b>3,33</b>

#### REMARKS:

- The scores of the Self-Assessment and the scores of PPN are 'quite well', while the scores of the Elected Officials are coming close to that qualification.
- The scores of the Citizens are tending to rather 'quite poor'. This can be explained by the fact that the survey took place in 2015 and that the results were transformed into the ELoGE methodology, which includes a possible deviation. There could be a need in the future to consider this issue and either provide evidence for high scores, or work more on citizen participation
- The scores of the Citizens and Councillors are closer than the of these groups with the scores of the self-assessment done by the Municipality

OVERALL AVERAGE SCORE: 3,14

RANKING : 6/7

#### CONCLUSION

- Cork County Council achieves the standards of Good Governance.

# LIMERICK

Limerick used the benchmark model with every indicator explicitly described.

As a second document Limerick organised by Survey Money, a questionnaire about the 12 principles for elected officials. Returned questionnaires: 15 / 40 councillors. Executive councillors did not respond. It can be considered as a quite low response.

As other Irish municipalities, the city has a Public Participation Network, and is further relying on policy documents and processes that are guiding the councillors through their decision-making process: Corporate Plan, Sugar CRM (Customer Relationship Management), results of the National Oversight and Audit Commission, Local Government Act, Performance Management Development System.

A survey amongst the citizen was organised through the PPN. This is a group of approx. 35 citizens, representing different groups of local society.

In the next table, an overview is given of the scores of the self-assessment, the Councillors and Citizen Survey

## LIMERICK

Population: 192.000

Staff members: 1.450

Elected officials: 40

Contact Person:

Christy O'Connor

t



Principle nr	Principle	Self-assessment	Survey Councillors	Survey Citizens
1	Citizen participation, fair conduct of elections,	3	3	2,06
2	Responsiveness,	3,85	3	2,31
3	Efficiency and effectiveness	4	4	2,31
4	Openness and transparency	4	3	2,19
5	Rule of law	4	4	2,21
6	Ethical conduct	3,85	4	1,96
7	Competence and capacity	3	3	1,96
8	Innovation and openness to change	3,5	-	2,09
9	Sustainability and Long-Term orientation	4	4	2,11
10	Sound Financial Management	3,42	4	2,12
11	Human rights, cultural diversity and social cohesion	3,83	4	2,41
12	Accountability	4	4	1,96
	<b>Average score</b>	<b>3,72</b>	<b>3,27</b>	<b>2,14</b>

OVERALL AVERAGE SCORE : 3,04

RANKING: 7/7

COMMENTS :

- The given information and scores are not as detailed as those of other applicants.
- The scores are very quite high; the lowest score of the self-assessment exercise are 'citizen and 'sound financial management', while 'citizen participation', responsiveness', 'openness...' are the lowest scores of the Councillors



- The scores of the self-assessment are tending to 'very well'
- The scores of the Councillors Survey are tending to 'quite well'
- The scores of the Citizens are all tending to 'quite poor'. Even for the highest scores, given by Councillors and the Self-Assessment Team, the citizens gave very low scores (see: accountability: score 4 against score 1,96. Knowing that citizens are more critical than Councillors or local management, the deviation is too high. Further investigation is required about the validation of these scores, before making further conclusions.
- Based on the scores of the Self-Assessment team and the Councillors, the City of Limerick achieves the standard of Good Governance. It is recommended to review the relationship with the PPN in order to invest the relationship with the local community.

# MALTA

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## NAXXAR

In Malta, municipalities are rather small and the State of Malta has given fewer responsibilities to Local Government.

Naxxar is using a lot of procedures from or the National State or developed by the local council: The Local Government Act, the Manual for Procedures, the Auditing regulations, the E-procurement system, the Green Public Procurement Guidelines, the Human Resources regulations as well as the use of Management Letters...

Naxxar organised a survey with a Random Group of Residents (31 participants).

Naxxar uses extensively the indicators, carried by several documents, proving the validity of the results.

In next table a summary was made of the average scores per principle which gives a more detailed result, compared between the self-assessment and the survey results.

**NAXXAR**

**Population: 14.000**

**Staff : 10**

**Councilors: 9**

**Contact Person:**

**Paul Gatt**



Principle nr	Principle	Self-assessment	Citizen survey	Councillors survey
1	Citizen participation, fair conduct elections	3,61	2,57	3,25
2	Responsiveness	3,57	3,11	3,25
3	Efficiency and effectiveness	3,07	3,20	3,25
4	Openness and transparency	3,62	2,70	3,25
5	Rule of law	4	3,67	3
6	Ethical conduct	3,72	3,20	3,5
7	Competence and capacity	3,44	3,10	3
8	Innovation and openness to change	3,16	2,74	3
9	Sustainability and Long-Term Orientation	3,14	2,58	3,13
10	Sound Financial Management	3,64	3,00	3
11	Human Rights, Cultural Diversity, Social cohesion	3,00	3,03	3,25
12	Accountability	3,58	2,54	3,38
	<b>Average score</b>	<b>3,64</b>	<b>2,95</b>	<b>3,18</b>

#### COMMENTS

- The average score of the self-assessment is tending to 'very well', while the average score of the citizens is 'quite well'
- The top scores of the municipality are 'rule of law', 'ethical conduct' and 'openness,', while the highest scores given by the citizens are 'rule of law' , 'ethical conduct' and 'efficiency...', which means that those are in line;
- The lowest scores are given to 'human rights...', 'efficiency...' (self-assessment), 'accountability' and 'citizen participation'.
- All the Councillors participated in the survey and all their scores were tending to 'quit well'.

OVERALL AVERAGE SCORE: 3,25

RANKING : 3/7

#### CONCLUSION

- The city of Naxxar is achieving the standards of Good Governance

# Q O R M I

Referring to other Maltese municipalities, Qormi is, as Naxxar is, ruled by the Maltese State System.

A lot of methods are developed by the National State, which Local Councils must implement;

The Local Council Act is the basic act for Local Government in Malta.

Qormi strives to do more by using sub-committees for Councillors, implementing the Marketing and Communication Strategy, specific programs for Target Groups, training providing by the Maltese Institute for Public Services (based on Training Needs Analysis – TNA) and the audit done by the National Audit Office of Malta.

Furthermore, a Local Governance Board is installed the services of an Ombudsman as well.

In a very extensive way, indicators were developed to investigate how they touched the requested standards.

In the next table we compare the outcome of the self-assessment with other results.

## Qormi

Population: 17.000

Staff members: 16

Councillors: 11

Contact person:

Kenneth Brincat



Nr. Principle	Principle	Self-assessment	Citizen survey	Council survey
1	Citizen Participation, Fair Conduct of Elections, Representation	3,28	3,69	3,63
2	Responsiveness	3,12	2,76	3
3	Efficiency and Effectiveness	3,07	2,88	3,45
4	Openness and Transparency	3,52	2,43	2,81
5	Rule of Law	4	2,68	3,45
6	Ethical Conduct	3,82	3,29	3,36
7	Competence and Capacity	3,16	2,87	3,09
8	Innovation and Openness to Change	3,30	2,71	2,90
9	Sustainability and Long-Term Orientation	3,21	2,63	3,09
10	Sound Financial Management	3,70	2,74	2,81
11	Human Rights, Cultural Diversity, Social Cohesion	3,11	3	3,72
12	Accountability	3,64	2,76	2,90
	<b>Average Score</b>	<b>3,41</b>	<b>2,87</b>	<b>3,18</b>

#### COMMENTS

- All the scores are tending to 'quit well with a slight difference between three groups.
- The top scores are 'rule of law', 'ethical conduct' (self-assessment), 'citizens participation', and 'human rights'(citizens), which covers the top scores of the Councillors.
- The lowest scores are 'efficiency...', 'openness...', 'and sound financial management'
- The scores and the average scores are mostly in line: no great deviations are noticed.

OVERALL AVERAGE SCORE : 3,15

RANKING : 5/7

#### CONCLUSION

The city of Quormi achieved the standards of Good Governance

# PORTUGAL

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## AGUEDA

The city of Agueda is working under Portuguese law (i.e. Electoral Law of Local Organs)

Agueda goes forward in implementing several policy plans – Municipal Director Plan, Smart Specialisation Strategy, Strategic Development Plan, Risk Management Plan for Corruption and Related Offenses) and introduced a lot of management systems (ISO 9001 – Balanced Score Card – Audit Plan – Performance Evaluation System)

The scores were motivated extensively within the benchmark document.

In the next table, a summary of the self-assessment is being showed.

AGUEDA

Population: 47.721

Staff members: 412

Councilors:

Contact person:

Sonia Marques



Nr. Principle	Principle	Self-Assessment	Survey Councillors	Survey Citizens
1	Citizen Participation, Fair Conduct of Elections, Representation	2,9	3	3
2	Responsiveness	3,2	3	3
3	Efficiency and Effectiveness	3,8	3	3
4	Openness and Transparency	3,9	3	3
5	Rule of Law	3,0	3	3
6	Ethical Conduct	3,4	4	3
7	Competence and Capacity	3,4	4	3
8	Innovation and Openness to Change	3,8	3	3
9	Sustainability and Long-Term Orientation	3,4	3	3
10	Sound Financial Management	3,3	4	3
11	Human Rights, Cultural Diversity and Social Cohesion	3,2	4	3
12	Accountability	3,7	3	3
	<b>Average score</b>	<b>3,4</b>	<b>3,33</b>	<b>3</b>

#### COMMENTS

- Scores are quite high off all of the shown indicators: the maximum deviation in the Self-Assessment exercise is 0,9
- The average scores of the three pillars are all in line.
- It is to be noticed that no diversification appeared on the Citizen's Survey
- No evidence documents were submitted to validate the indicators. They are kept available by the municipality.

#### CONCLUSION

The city of Agueda achieves the standard of Good Governance

OVERALL AVERAGE SCORE: 3,24

RANKING: 4/7

# VALONGO

The City of Valongo is working under Portuguese law. The duties of the municipalities, described in the national regulations, have to be executed.

Besides these duties, the city developed several policy plans (Mobility Plan, Strategic Sports Plan, Municipal Education Plan, e.o.), more important is the developing of several management tools:

- Internal Control Plan,
- Code of Conduct
- Corruption and Related Offenses Plan
- Complaints handling Plan
- Use of Satisfaction Survey, Organisation of Reporting Weeks
- Audit and Internal Cost Calculation Methods
- Training Plan
- Use of Quality Handbook.

A group of 50 citizens were involved in a survey, as well as a group of councillors (5) in a separate one.

In the next table an overview is given of the maturity index of the benchmark exercise

# VALONGO

Population: 93.858

Staff Members: 537

Councillors: 9

Contact Person:

Paulo Esteves

Ferreira – Gisela

Barbosa





Principle nr	Principle	Self Assessment	Survey Councilors	Survey Citizens
1	Citizen participation, Fair Conduct of Elections, Representation	3,09	3	3
2	Responsiveness	3,33	4	4
3	Efficiency and effectiveness	3,66	4	4
4	Openess and Transparency	3,90	4	4
5	Rule of Law	3,25	3	3
6	Ethical conduct	3,44	3	3
7	Competency and Capacity	3,37	3	3
8	Innovation and Openess to Change	3,75	4	3
9	Sustainability and Long-term Orientation	3,44	3	3
10	Sound Financial Management	3,05	4	4
11	Human Rights, Cultural Diversity and Social Cohesion	4	4	3
12	Accountability	3,71	4	4
	<b>Average score</b>	<b>3,49</b>	<b>3,58</b>	<b>3,41</b>

#### COMMENTS

- The scores are high, pending between 'quit well' and 'very well'
- Remarkable to notice that the scores of the Councilors are higher than the other ones
- The scores are all in line
- The scores are validated by submitted evidence documents

#### CONCLUSION

The City of Valongo achieves the standard of Good Governance

OVERALL AVERAGE SCORE : 3,49

RANKING: 2/7

# SPAIN

## PARETS DEL VALLES

The City of Parets del Vallès is working under Spanish law.

This means that the Municipality has to fulfill the duties written in several official documents like the Organic Law 5/1985, the Rules of Participation and others.

Besides those basic documents the Municipality of Parets del Vallès is very active in the field of communication, in the field of outlining policies and programs like:

- Thematic Councils or subcommittees
- Installing the Office of Incendies
- Creation of a Municipal Action Plan
- Participating in the Bank of Good Practices in Catalonia
- Installing the Municipal Transparency Portal
- Use of training programs offered by the School of Public Administration of Catalonia

In the next table the average scores of each of the 12 principles are shown, delivered by the self-assessment team, the councilors and the citizens.

## PARETS DEL VALLES

Population: 18.837

Staff: 289

Councillors: 17

Contact person:

Paola Gratacos



Ajuntament de  
Parets del Vallès

Number Princ	Principle	Self-Assessment	Citizen Survey	Councilors Survey
1	Citizen Participation, Fair Conduct of Elections, Representation	3,27	3,06	4
2	Responsiveness	3,83	3,14	3,55
3	Efficiency and effectiveness	3,55	3,27	3,66
4	Openness and Transparency	3,60	3,09	3,33
5	Rule of Law	4	3,29	3,77
6	Ethical Conduct	3,88	3,20	3,88
7	Competency and Capacity	3,37	3,27	3,55
8	Innovation and Openness to Change	4	3,52	3,77
9	Sustainability and Long-Term Orientation	3,55	3,13	3,33
10	Sound Financial Management	3,42	3,22	3,44
11	Human Rights, Cultural Diversity and Social Cohesion	4	3,46	4
12	Accountability	3,28	3,11	3,66
	<b>Average score</b>	<b>3,64</b>	<b>3,23</b>	<b>3,66</b>

#### COMMENTS

- All the scores are tending between 'very well' (self-assessment and survey councilors), and 'quit well' (citizens' survey);
- Scores of the three groups are mostly in line;
- Even the lowest scores are 'quit well';
- The average scores are very close, showing the validity of the self-assessment

OVERALL AVERAGE SCORE : 3,51

RANKING : 1/1

#### CONCLUSION

The City of Parets del Vallès is achieving the standard of Good Governance.

## RANKING

1. Parets de Valles – Spain (3,51)
2. Valongo – Portugal (3,49)
3. Naxxar – Malta (3,25)
4. Agueda – Portugal (3,24)
5. Qormi – Malta (3,15)
6. Cork – Ireland (3,14)
7. Limerick – Ireland (3,04)

Municipalities with a score of 3 or higher, are awarded with the ELoGE label.

## FINAL CONCLUSIONS

- Started with 15 municipalities, the project ended with 7 final applications. They all achieved the objective to be awarded for their good governance. This means that a hard work is done by the municipalities to persevere in ongoing the way forward to excellent governance.
- The group of municipalities was very diverse: the smallest one has 14.000 inhabitants; the largest one 416.000 inhabitants. This proves that the benchmark can be used independent of the size of the municipality.
- Most of the scores of the self-assessment are in line with the scores of their respective councilor group. Councillors are acting close to the municipality and are in the best position to evaluate the functioning of their local government.
- The scores of the citizens are lower than these given by the self-assessment group and councilors. The reason is obvious.

*“Governance and leadership are the yin and the yang of successful organizations. If you have leadership without governance, you risk tyranny, fraud and personal fiefdom. If you have governance without leadership, you risk atrophy, bureaucracy and indifference”*

*Mark Goyden*

Citizens are very critical about the way their municipality is acting in delivering services to the community. At the other hand, it is not evident for citizens to totally understand the content of the principles.

- It was difficult to point out for all the participating municipalities which were the weakest and which were the strongest elements. Is the score low of one principle for a specific municipality, it can be the strongest one for the other municipality. In that way, we find 'Fair conduct of elections – citizen participation' and 'Sustainability and long term orientation' twice on the weaker side, but as well at the stronger side. At this stage, it shows the specificity of each municipality.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Good Governance is a never-ending story. It is a permanent task for officials, chief executives and staff members, to monitor the 12 principles in order to maintain and continuously improve the quality standards.
- It is therefore important to consider this exercise as a starting point for an ongoing process that starts with an improvement plan, that contains actions to be executed for the upcoming year. After the discovery of the weakest points in your local governance, it is necessary to spend attention to a next step.
- Participants are invited to share their improvement plans with their colleagues and organise peer reviews to compare and learn of the experiences every participant collected over the last year.
- It is an invitation to organise a come-back session in September-October 2018 to meet and have a workshop where knowledge can be shared and experienced can be exchanged.
- In this process of continuous improvement municipalities are invited to start a second self-assessment in **2019**. At that time, municipalities can evaluate the outcome of their improvement actions.

The Council of Europe and UDITE are willing to assist where their input is considered as valuable.

They can guide you to toolkits the Council of Europe developed in order to make your actions more successful: <https://coe.int/en/web/good-governance/toolkits>



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