



DRAFT PROGRAMME

Citizen participation: an essential tool in local democracy

Chisinau, Moldova, 16 – 17 November 2016

Context

Involving mayors, associations of local and regional authorities and members of the Congress, this seminar will build on the previous exchanges held, between October 2015 and June 2016, during “Mayors, leaders for change” workshops and the regional seminar on “Local public ethics: from vision to action”. The aim will be to reinforce the accountability of local authorities, and to provide a platform for exchange on the challenges and solutions when engaging citizens in local decision-making.

The seminar is organised by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress) within the thematic programme “Strengthening institutional frameworks for local governance”, implemented jointly with the Council of Europe Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform, Directorate General of Democracy. This programme is funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe, and implemented by the Council of Europe, through the Programmatic Co-operation Framework for 2015-2017 for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus.

Interpretation will be provided in English, Russian and Romanian, with working groups in English and Russian only.

Contacts

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*The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation.
It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union.
The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities is an institution of the Council of Europe,
responsible for strengthening local and regional democracy in its 47 member states.
Composed of two chambers – the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions – and three committees, it brings
together 648 elected officials representing more than 200 000 local and regional authorities*

<http://www.coe.int/t/congress>

Programme

Wednesday 16 November

09:30 *Welcome coffee*

10:00 *Registration of participants*

10:30 *Opening and welcome*

Moderation: Marité Moras, Head of Co-operation Activities Unit, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

- Dorin Chirtoaca, Mayor of Chisinau, Vice-President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
- Pirkka Tapiola, Head of the European Union Delegation to Moldova
- Jose-Luis Herrero, Head of the Council of Europe Office in Chisinau

11:00 *Introduction of the aims and programme of the seminar*

11:10 *Plenary session I: Introduction to citizen participation and international standards*

Moderation: Ratka Čolić, international expert

Citizen participation as the foundation for improving local governance

Giovanni Allegretti, international expert

The European perspective on citizen participation

Roberto Falanga, international expert

Discussions

The floor will be open to questions and feedback from the audience.

12:10 *Plenary session II: Citizen participation: experience in the Eastern Partnership countries*

Moderation: Roberto Falanga, international expert

From legal frameworks for citizen participation to practice

Ratka Čolić, international expert

Factors affecting participation: the challenges and opportunities in Eastern Partnership countries

Antonella Valmorbida, European Association for Local Democracy

Discussions

The floor will be open to questions and feedback from the audience.

→ Lunch (13:10 – 14:30)

14:30 ***Thematic work in groups session I: Fostering citizen participation at local level***

Facilitation by: Roberto Falanga, Ratka Čolić and Sorin Ionita

Participants will be divided into three working groups. Discussions will focus on specific approaches, methods and processes.

→ Coffee break (16:10 – 16:30)

16:30 ***Feedback from the work in groups in plenary***

→ Joint dinner (20:00, “Roata vremii” restaurant, 8, Hristo Botev Str., Chisinau)

Thursday 17 November

9:00 ***Plenary session III: good examples on citizen participation***

Moderation: Sorin Ionita, international expert

- *Vladimir Prebilič, Mayor of Kočevje, member of the Delegation of Slovenia to the Congress*
- *Roberto Falanga, international expert*

Congress members will present their experience in engaging citizens in local decision-making.

Participants will then be presented with a series of case studies related to: participatory budgeting, service delivery and urban regeneration.

10:00 ***Thematic work in groups session II: Fostering citizen participation at local level***

Participants will be divided into three working groups: participatory budgeting, service delivery and urban regeneration. Discussions will focus on the ways to address the challenges identified and how examples of good practice can be applied in their respective communities.

→ Interrupted by coffee break (10:45 – 11:00)

Each working group will appoint a rapporteur (a mayor) to report on the conclusions made by the respective group in the plenary.

→ Lunch (13:00 – 14:30)

14:30 ***Feedback from the work in groups in plenary***

The rapporteurs will present the conclusions. Participants from other groups may share their considerations.

→ Coffee break (16:10 – 16:30)

16:30 ***Conclusions, evaluation and next steps***

Facilitation: Ion Beschieru, Programme Manager, Council of Europe Office in Chisinau