



2nd meeting of the Community of Practice on local democracy in the Eastern Partnership Countries

13 - 14 October 2016,
Meeting room 11, Palais de l'Europe, Strasbourg

Context

The thematic programme “Strengthening institutional frameworks for local governance” is part of the CoE/EU Eastern Partnership Programmatic Co-operation Framework (PCF) during 2015 – 2017 in the Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus). It is implemented by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress), in close co-operation with the Directorate General for Democracy.

The Community of Practice on local democracy in the Eastern Partnership countries was established with the aim to strengthen the capacities of local elected representatives to implement best practices in their communities, and in particular:

- to advise on the potential for implementation of the study recommendations¹;
- to provide a platform for mayors and local authorities to share examples of good practices, initiate peer exchange and network between themselves – **(networking)**;
- to support mayors in promoting more ethical and transparent governance, especially using new modalities, tools and techniques which will foster active citizen participation in local decision making processes – **(ethics and participation)**;
- to guide mayors to successfully apply “lessons learnt” through implementation of the pilot projects on efficient, transparent and ethical governance – **(coaching)**.

The Community of Practice involves experts and practitioners in the fields of local governance and ethics, representatives of national associations of local authorities, members of the Congress, and civil society. It aims to ensure consistent communication on national developments and contribute to the programme activities in their support to the on-going process of reform of local government and promotion of ethical behaviour by locally elected representatives in the region, whilst fostering citizen participation.

¹ A study on the roles and responsibilities of mayors and local councillors in the Eastern Partnership countries was disseminated in the countries concerned and serves as a basis for the activities of the programme.

The main objectives of this study are:

- to analyse the situation of local government in the participating countries, based on the review of the respective national legislation and their practical application;
- to determine common problems and obstacles and to develop policy recommendations to improve local self-governance;
- to promote mutual learning at the local level.

Agenda

Thursday 13 October 2016

14:30 – 14:45 **Welcome and introduction**

14:45 – 16:15 **Developments in the field of local democracy**

- update on the state of local government reform in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus
- discussions on the Study on roles and responsibilities of mayors and local councillors recommendations and their implementation

16:15 – 16:45 Coffee break

16:45 – 18:00 **From activities to implementation in the municipalities**

- overview of activities for mayors, lessons learnt and added value
- discussion on ways to address the needs of local authorities for enhanced transparency and accountability

Friday 14 October 2016

09:30 – 11:15 **Citizen participation**

- main aspects of legislation and policies on citizen participation in the region
- discussion on the regional seminar on citizen participation

11:15 – 11:45 Coffee break

11:45 – 13:00 **Leading change through local initiatives**

- summary of ideas and topics of interest expressed during and following the Regional seminar “Local public ethics: from vision to action”
- presentation on the local initiatives and discussion on the support scheme and peer reviews

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch break

14:30 – 15:30 **Wrap-up session: next steps, date and topics of 3rd Meeting**

List of participants

Experts

1. Gheorghe CARASENI, Moldova
2. Ratka COLIC, Serbia
3. Paolo CRUGNOLA, Switzerland
4. Giorgi MESKHIDZE, Georgia
5. Sorin IONITA, Romania
6. Armine TUKHIKYAN, Armenia
7. Nino TVALTVADE, European Association for Local Democracy (ALDA), Georgia

Associations of local and regional authorities and observers organisations

8. Liza KONSTANYAN, Assistant to the President of the Communities Association of Armenia (CAA), Armenia
9. Natalya LAPAURI, Executive Director, Communities Association of Armenia (CAA), Armenia
10. Davit MELUA, Executive Director, National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG), Georgia
11. Alexandru OSADCI, Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova (CALM), Moldova
12. Mykola POIEDYNOK, Executive Director of the Association of Village and Settlement Councils of Ukraine (VASSR), Ukraine
13. Ostap ZDOROVYLO, Ukrainian Association of Villages and Settlement Councils (VASSR), Ukraine

Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

14. Maria OCHOA-LLIDO, Head of the Department of Co-operation and External relations
15. Marité MORAS, Head of the Co-operation Activities Unit
16. Svetislav PAUNOVIC, Project Co-ordinator
17. Anna ONIPENKO, Assistant
18. Olwen BYRNE, Project Assistant
19. Karine MOREAU, Project Assistant

Council of Europe Office in Chisinau

20. Ion BESCHIERU, Programme Manager
21. Violeta FRUNZE, Senior Project Officer