



Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at Local Level

**STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES FOR AWARDING
THE EUROPEAN LABEL**

I. REGULATIONS ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE STAKEHOLDERS' PLATFORM TO ACCREDIT NATIONAL PLATFORMS UNDER THE STRATEGY FOR INNOVATION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE AT LOCAL LEVEL AND TO AWARD ITS EUROPEAN LABEL

I. Joining the Strategy

1. Any Council of Europe member state may join the Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at Local Level. Joining the Strategy carries an undertaking by the state, and by the local authorities through the agency of their representative associations, to achieve the objectives of the Strategy and carry out such actions as may be necessary for that purpose.

In the case of states with a federal or regional structure, the above shall also be possible for the federate or regional entities. The following rules shall apply to them *mutatis mutandis*.

2. The Strategy may be joined at any time. This shall be signified by any document or declaration that clearly certifies the joint undertaking by the state of the one part and by the local and regional authorities of the other part, transmitted to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe by the Permanent Representation of the member state concerned. The Secretary General shall acknowledge receipt thereof.

3. The Council of Europe Stakeholders' Platform, hereinafter referred to as "European Platform" shall receive the declaration of intention to join and, if this is deemed to reflect a serious and lasting commitment, shall so inform the member state concerned through the agency of the Permanent Representation. The act of joining the Strategy shall become effective at that point in time

4. The European Platform and the member state joining the Strategy shall duly publicise the fact.

5. A member state which has joined may withdraw by means of a communication addressed to the European Platform under the same conditions as above, giving the reasons for withdrawal. The European Platform shall note and duly publicise the withdrawal.

II. National Stakeholders' Platform and European Label

1. A member state which has joined the Strategy may request the accreditation of one of its national institutions called National Stakeholders' Platform, hereinafter referred to as "national platform", which will thus be authorised to award the European Label of Innovation and Good Governance to authorities of that country.

2. The national platform shall look after the management of the procedure for granting the Label, take responsibility for it, and accept the consequences. Subject to compliance with the provisions of these regulations, legal arrangements for constituting the national platform shall be left for the partners concerned to make. The partners may seek the opinion of the Council of Europe and of the European Platform beforehand.
3. Procedure under which the European Platform accredits a national platform:
 - 3.1 Accreditation as a national platform shall be granted by the European Platform upon production of a file providing whatever documents, evidence or certification may be necessary to meet the following criteria and conditions:
 - 3.1.1 The national platform shall comprise persons jointly appointed by the ministries responsible for local and regional government and the associations of local authorities or of local elected officials. There may be provision for the co-optation of qualified individuals and interested citizens, in particular from NGOs. The composition of the national platform shall meet requirements of political representativeness, geographical balance, expertise in the field of local democracy, and high personal integrity of its members, of which appropriate evidence shall be provided. At least 30% of the members should be women;
 - 3.1.2 The national platform shall enlist the services of an operational secretariat for the conduct of its activities and in particular for the label award procedure. The secretariat may be an existing national or regional institution, or an ad hoc structure. The secretariat must give every assurance of stability through time and of operational capability, suitable evidence of which shall be provided;
 - 3.1.3 The national platform shall act in accordance with statutes to be included in the accreditation file. The statutes shall lay down rules as to members' appointment, term of office and replacement, functioning (convocation, organisation and decision-making), the budget, settlement of disputes, and dissolution of the platform;
 - 3.1.4 The accreditation file shall lastly give a definite indication of the financial and human resources for the functioning of the platform; it shall give evidence that assumption of the label is backed by adequate resources.
 - 3.2 The award of the Label to local and regional authorities which have joined the Strategy shall be made in accordance with a procedure whose details will be itemised in specific rules, to comprise:
 - firstly, the tools to be used in the country concerned for awarding the Label, that is a benchmark for the expected practices and the relevant documents, and questionnaires on the satisfaction of the elected officials and citizens of the authority concerned, and

- secondly, rules on information, access to documentation, terms of participation, scrutiny of replies, follow-up plans and decision to award – or refuse – the Label to any authority having submitted the application file in the manner and time prescribed.
- 3.2.1 The benchmark and the questionnaire(s) which the national platform intends to use shall be consistent with those adopted by the European Platform. Where the national platform wishes to diverge from them, it shall state and justify the fact. The European Platform may request changes to, or withhold validation of the national or regional benchmark and/or questionnaires where they do not cover all 12 European Principles, or remove or significantly alter any of the criteria or questions making up the Council of Europe benchmark and questionnaires, or where the proposed changes patently introduce a modification of the rules such as to prejudice equal opportunities and equal treatment of local and regional authorities across Europe.
- 3.2.2 The European Platform may have the tools, benchmark and/or questionnaires developed in the light of experience gained, and determine the conditions of their use.
- 3.2.3 The rules shall govern and ensure:
- generally available, accessible and unbiased information for local authorities; dissemination of the benchmark and other tools, and their presentation to local authorities;
 - the terms of participation based on: the local authorities' free and spontaneous initiative, equal opportunities, right to withdraw and to participate at another time, setting of reasonable deadlines, right to lay complaints, and dispute resolution procedures;
 - collection of files, scrutiny and possible inspection visits, and submission of findings, it being understood that the experts assigned these duties shall meet criteria of competence, independence and impartiality in the performance of their functions; these independent experts shall make a recommendation to the national platform on the award – or refusal – of the Label;
 - the procedures for the national platform's examination of the application files which shall be transparent. Decision whether or not to award the Label shall be reasoned, notified to the local authorities and made public. A decision contrary to the opinion of the independent experts shall require at least an absolute majority of members. However, should this be preferred, a qualified majority may be required. The national platform shall prepare and publish on a regular basis information about the results of the Label awarding procedure.

III. General provisions

1. Accreditation of the national platform shall be granted for a limited period determined by the European Platform, renewable on condition that the national platform lodges a fresh application giving the necessary evidence and assurances.
2. The decision to accredit the national platform shall be communicated to its backers through the agency of the Permanent Representation of the member state concerned to the Council of Europe. Accreditation shall become effective upon reception by the national platform.
3. National Stakeholders Platforms shall cooperate fully with the European Stakeholders Platform, regularly inform it of its activities and shall provide any information it requests.
4. The local authority being awarded the Label shall receive a crystal dodecahedron which has the twelve principles, the Council of Europe logo and the date of awarding engraved.
5. The European Platform may suspend a national platform's award of the Label at any time, pending further investigations. If at the conclusion of the investigations the European Platform finds serious breaches of the regulations, it shall withdraw the national platform's accreditation and may retroactively invalidate labels already awarded.
6. Documents submitted to the European Platform for approval or agreement shall be drafted in the language(s) of the state or region with translation by the member state concerned into one of the Council of Europe official languages. Any other communication, particularly with the Council of Europe or the European Platform, shall be made in one of the Council of Europe official languages.
7. The budgetary implications of the implementation the Strategy and the Label shall be borne by the member states, where relevant the regions, the national platforms and the local and regional authorities concerned, each according to its powers and responsibilities.
8. The European Platform reserves the right to amplify or modify the foregoing provisions in the light of experience gained. If so, the accreditations granted shall remain valid up to the expiry of the period for which they were granted and shall be subject to the new provisions if and when renewed.

II. BENCHMARK ON THE LABEL OF INNOVATION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

Explanation on how to use this benchmark

1. For each of the 12 Principles of good democratic governance detailed in the Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at Local Level, the following information is provided in this benchmark:
 - a. A description of the good governance Principle and a list of the activities that would typically help a municipality to deliver that Principle;
 - b. A self-assessment section where municipalities are asked to identify their level of maturity for that Principle.

The municipality level of maturity to the principle is assessed as:				
Not applicable	Very poorly	Quite poorly	Quite well	Very well
0	1	2	3	4
Not applicable, don't know, no opinion.	We are aware of the key issues to be addressed but currently have no or very few approaches or activities developed to address them.	We recognise key issues and are developing approaches or activities to address them, although there has been limited practical implementation so far.	We have well developed plans and activities to address key issues with significant examples of implementation.	We can show clear evidence of good practice which can be shared and are further developing our approach to ensure long-term and sustainable improvement.

- c. Evidence to support the self assessment provided by the municipality.
2. A municipality would be expected to:
 - a. read the information provided for each Principle;
 - b. consider the evidence they have available which would support the delivery of the Principle;
 - c. make a self-assessment of their maturity for that Principle; and
 - d. record the evidence they would wish to offer in support of their self-assessment.

3. The description of the *'indicators'* reflects a level of governance arrangements that would be consistent with a standard that would be appropriate for the European Label of Innovation and Good Governance. A municipality which is *'Quite well'* for a Principle of good governance is likely to be at the level required for the European Label of Innovation and Good Governance.
4. Information used as evidence to complete the self-assessment should be easily available to municipalities from a variety of sources, for example: existing policies, procedure documents, operating rules and guidance, internal audit and review reports and external audit, inspection and review documents. It is expected that the citizen survey required as part of the European Label of Innovation and Good Governance assessment will provide a useful source of evidence to support the self-assessment.
5. At the bottom of each Principle, you will find one *statement* which is taken from the citizen's questionnaire. This statement should also be assessed by the municipality and should be used to compare the answers from the municipality to the answers the citizens provide. If any difference between these statements is found, the follow-up plan (see below) should address actions of measures which can be taken to reduce these differences.
6. The Summary Maturity Matrix is used to determine if a municipality meets the criteria for the Label by totalling the individual scores for each Principle. (a) For each *indicator* in a given Principle, boxes are ticked and corresponding values (between 0 and 4) are noted. The average score for each Principle is the sum of values for all indicators divided by the number of indicators. If the resulting average is between 0 and 1.99, the Principle is not implemented and the Label shall not be awarded. If the result is 2 or more, this score is taken into account for the next step. (b) The scores for each *Principle* (2 or more) are summed up and divided by 12. If the result is 3 or more, the Label is awarded. If the result is lower than 3 the Label is not awarded. All scores will be calculated only on the indicators of the benchmark, not on the statements or the citizens and councillors questionnaires.
7. If a situation occurs where the results of the benchmark show an inexplicable difference with the results of the citizens and councillors questionnaires, national experts are strongly advised to cross-reference the outcome of the benchmark self-assessment and the citizens/ councillors questionnaires with additional evidence requested from the local officials. The difference of opinion between the self-assessment and the citizens/councillors questionnaires should act as the trigger to seek this additional evidence. Depending on the number of responses from citizens and councillors the national experts may, after cross checking the additional information of the local officials, request additional citizens and councillors questionnaires to cross check the outcome.

A higher number of responses from citizens/councillors would have greater significance and credibility than a small number. Following the review of any additional evidence, the judgement of the national stakeholder platform, and the reasons why it was made should be recorded in the documentation

8. Implementation of the benchmark can be country or region wide. Some questions in this benchmark may not be applicable for every region/country. Of course, efforts have been made in order to prevent this. Sometimes this could unfortunately not be overcome. It is therefore up to the National Stakeholders Platform¹ to propose (and for the European Platform to decide) if a question needs to be removed from this benchmark.
9. The purpose of the Maturity Matrix is to help Municipalities to assess their strong and weak points. There is an inherent “improvement” dynamic in the process. Failure to get the Label should prompt Municipalities to focus on weak points and take improvement action (follow-up plan) with a view to reapplying successfully. Municipalities having received the Label can still work on improving scores lower than average in order to get the Label with an higher average next time.

¹ For the role and responsibilities of the National Stakeholders Platform, please see document ‘Structures and procedures of attributing the label of innovation and good governance’.

			EVALUATION				
The municipality level of maturity to the principle is assessed as:			NA	VP	QP	QW	VW
PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	0	1	2	3	4
1. Fair Conduct of Elections, Representation and Participation	1. Local elections are conducted freely and fairly, according to international standards and national legislation, and without any fraud.	1. The municipality conducts elections according to laws which match international standards of best practice.					
	2. Citizens are at the centre of public activity and they are involved in clearly defined ways in public life at local level.	2. As part of a defined consultation process, the municipality actively publicises its plans and invites individual citizens, NGOs, businesses, local media and other groups to comment on these plans.					
		3. Municipalities strive to improve local regulations and practical arrangements concerning citizen participation in local public life.					
		4. The public is consulted in the initial phase of the decision-making process.					
	3. All men and women can have a voice in decision-making, either directly or through legitimate intermediate bodies that represent their interests. Such broad participation is built on the freedoms of expression, assembly and association.	5. There is an active programme of elected representatives engaging with citizens in decision-making.					
		6. There is an active programme for encouraging individuals to take on elected representational roles.					
	4. All voices, including those of the less privileged and most vulnerable, are heard and taken into account in decision-making, including over the allocation of resources.	7. Access to vote has been considered and actions taken to ensure no groups are excluded or disadvantaged.					
		8. There is an active programme to include those who are socially challenged in decision-making.					
	5. There is always an honest attempt to mediate between various legitimate interests and to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interests of the whole community and on how this can be achieved.	9. The municipality has identified key stakeholder groups (that includes NGOs, businesses, local media and other interest groups). This list is subject to review and updated.					
		10. The municipality has introduced techniques for deliberative process in the municipality (deliberative hearing, citizens' jury, participation budgeting etc).					
6. Decisions are taken according to the will of the many, while the rights and legitimate interests of the few are respected.	11. The demographic composition of the body of elected officials represents the demographic composition of the municipality.						
In this municipality people are satisfied with the opportunities they have to influence municipal decisions which are of interest to them.							

			EVALUATION				
The municipality level of maturity to the principle is assessed as:			NA	VP	QP	QW	VW
PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	0	1	2	3	4
2. Responsiveness	1. Objectives, rules, structures, and procedures are adapted to the legitimate expectations and needs of citizens.	1. Clear guidelines and procedures for officials and elected representatives exist in all decision-making processes.					
		2. Municipalities ensure that all elected representatives have the interests of local people at heart.					
	2. Public services are delivered, and requests and complaints are responded to within a reasonable timeframe.	3. An individual complaints procedure regarding the functioning of local public services and authorities, with response time targets, has been developed and implemented and there is evidence that it is being used.					
		4. Information relating to complaints made about the municipality and responses to the complaints including any resulting change is made available to employees, elected representatives and citizens.					
		5. If changes in policy and service delivery are required, they are made in response to research, reports, consultations, complaints and other methods of input. The changes made are publicised.					
		6. The municipality provides good 'customer' care by ensuring that services are provided by knowledgeable and well-trained staff who understand the needs of their population.					
	In this municipality, complaints over service provision are handled in a professional manner.						

			EVALUATION				
The municipality level of maturity to the principle is assessed as:			NA	VP	QP	QW	VW
PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	0	1	2	3	4
3. Efficiency and Effectiveness	1. Results meet the agreed objectives.	1. The municipality plans its activities and budget according to its strategic guidance plans at a strategic and an operational level.					
	2. Best possible use is made of the resources available.	2. Performance information is regularly collected and reviewed. The municipality acts to deal with gaps between expected and actual performance.					
	3. Performance management systems make it possible to evaluate and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of services.	3. The municipality develops and implements a performance management framework that covers all of its objectives, services and functions including appropriate indicators and reports regularly on its performance and its progress.					
		4. The municipality exchanges good practises with other municipalities and uses this information to improve its own efficiency and effectiveness.					
		5. The municipality develops a strategic and operational evaluation document for the evaluation of public policies.					
		6. The municipality takes into account the results of its evaluations on order to implement its future public policies.					
	4. Audits are carried out at regular intervals to assess and improve performance ² .	7. Procedures, performance reports and information systems are independently audited and the results reported to the councillors.					
		8. All major services and functions are regularly reviewed at appropriate intervals, to evaluate their performance and impact.					
		9. Municipalities keep appropriate records to ensure patterns can be identified and efficiency and effectiveness increased.					
	On the whole, people in this municipality are quite satisfied with the services offered by the municipality.						

² Audit refers to audits to improve the working of municipality.

			EVALUATION				
The municipality level of maturity to the principle is assessed as:			NA	VP	QP	QW	VW
PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	0	1	2	3	4
4. Openness and Transparency	1. Decisions are taken and enforced in accordance with rules and regulations.	1. The municipality has a clear and well understood legal framework which is widely publicised.					
		2. The municipality's legal framework includes a clear decision making scheme of delegation, setting out who has the responsibility for taking each decision, and how decisions will be taken, enforced and publicised.					
		3. The municipality takes and enforces decisions in a manner which is open, transparent, accountable and timely, and in accordance with rules and regulations and which matches international standards of best practice.					
		4. There is a process for appealing against decisions which is widely available and understood.					
		5. The opposition has the right to introduce propositions, amendments, and interpellations. The opposition also has the right to request meetings of committees of inquiry on certain topics and it has the right to be represented in some bodies of the local authority.					
	2. There is public access to all information which is not classified for well-specified reasons as provided for by law (such as the protection of privacy or ensuring the fairness of procurement procedures).	6. Municipalities ensure regular and easy contact between citizens with elected representatives.					
		7. Municipalities actively inform the population.					
		8. Municipality meetings are open to the public and media and agendas and documents are publically available.					
	3. Information on decisions, implementation of policies and results is made available to the public in such a way as to enable it to effectively follow and contribute to the work of the local authority.	9. The municipality has a 12 month rolling forward work programme that has received input from citizens and elected representatives, and is publicised widely.					
		10. The elected representatives show openness towards the media, and a willingness to provide the media with information.					
This municipality does a good job in informing citizens about issues on the local political agenda.							

			EVALUATION				
The municipality level of maturity to the principle is assessed as:			NA	VP	QP	QW	VW
PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	0	1	2	3	4
5. Rule of Law	1. The local authorities abide by the law and judicial decisions	1. The municipality complies with all applicable laws and regulations.					
		2. The municipality publicly reports any judicial decisions or sanctions taken under law of all offenses it has committed.					
	2. Rules and regulations are adopted in accordance with procedures provided for by law and are enforced impartially.	3. Rules and regulations are adopted in accordance with procedures provided for by law.					
		4. Rules and regulations are enforced impartially.					
	In this municipality, common interests of all residents do prevail, not the special interests.						

			EVALUATION				
The municipality level of maturity to the principle is assessed as:			NA	VP	QP	Q W	VW
PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	0	1	2	3	4
6. Ethical Conduct	1. The public good is placed before individual interests.	1. Public policies are decided taking in account the general welfare role of the municipality.					
		2. The local public interest guides the allocation of budgetary resources of the municipality.					
	2. There are effective measures to prevent and combat all forms of corruption.	3. Codes of conduct specify the ethical standards expected of elected representatives and officials. These include a requirement for interests, gifts and hospitality to be recorded in publicly available registers.					
		4. Specific procedures have been adopted for decisions in areas that are vulnerable to corruption including procurement, selling municipal assets and awarding permits and licences.					
		5. An annual review of anti-corruption arrangements is undertaken, for example by internal or external audit.					
		6. Personnel policies require staff to be appointed, promoted and rewarded on merit, and/or disciplined only in accordance with approved procedures.					
		7. Elected representatives and staff are required to declare any potential conflict of interest that could impact on decision taking and to abstain from taking part in relevant decisions making.					
	3. Conflicts of interest are declared in a timely manner and persons involved must abstain from taking part in relevant decisions.	8. Municipalities ensure an effective and efficient procurement and it uses pre-set selection criteria.					
		9. Municipalities ensure free access to public procurement documents and decisions with regard to the awarding of the contract.					
	In this municipality, all persons enjoy equal treatment irrespective of their connections with elected representatives or officials.						

			EVALUATION				
The municipality level of maturity to the principle is assessed as:			NA	VP	QP	QW	VW
PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	0	1	2	3	4
7. Competence and Capacity	1. The professional skills of those who deliver governance are continuously maintained and strengthened in order to improve their output and impact.	1. The municipality identifies the skills needed to deliver its services effectively and undertakes a skills audit to identify any gaps as part of a strategic workforce plan.					
		2. The municipality operates a system to implement personal development plans for its staff.					
	2. Public officials are motivated to continuously improve their performance.	3. Arrangements are in place to reward good performance and improve poor performance.					
		4. The municipality has a recruitment and selection policy and procedures that are made public and implemented consistently.					
		5. A training plan is developed, implemented and monitored to ensure that training needs are fully met, and professional skills continually developed before that become an obstacle for the service delivery and take evasive action hat the lack of training does not interfere with the efficiency of service delivery.					
		6. Municipalities review the implementation and outcomes of recruitment, training and promotion procedures and makes improvements based on that.					
	3. Practical methods and procedures are created and used in order to transform skills into capacity and to produce better results.	7. Selection criteria are defined for each post and communicated to all applicants. The criteria reflect the essential requirements of the job and do not exclude any social groups.					
		8. Staff receives regular appraisals of their performance and development as part of a systematic approach to performance appraisal and career development.					
	Most elected officials in this municipality are competent people who (usually) know what they are doing.						

			EVALUATION				
The municipality level of maturity to the principle is assessed as:			NA	VP	QP	QW	VW
PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	0	1	2	3	4
8. Innovation and Openness to Change	1. New and efficient solutions to problems are sought and advantage is taken of modern methods of service provision.	1. The municipality has a structured approach to innovation, research and development.					
		2. Municipalities take action to identify and implement examples of good practice and new solutions.					
	2. There is readiness to pilot and experiment new programmes and to learn from the experience of others.	3. The municipality is actively involved in a good-governance pilot project.					
	3. A climate favourable to change is created in the interest of achieving better results.	4. Elected representatives and staff are clearly committed to taking action to ensure that benefit is derived from new solutions and good practices.					
	In this municipality there are good procedures for handling citizen suggestions to improve public service delivery.						

			EVALUATION				
The municipality level of maturity to the principle is assessed as:			NA	VP	QP	QW	VW
PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	0	1	2	3	4
9. Sustainability and Long Term Orientation	1. The needs of future generations are taken into account in current policies.	1. The municipality has a structured approach to long term development.					
		2. The needs of the future generation is taken into account routinely in the planning process.					
	2. The sustainability of the community is constantly taken into account. Decisions strive to internalise all costs and not to transfer problems and tensions, be they environmental, structural, financial, economic or social, to future generations.	3. There is a clearly demonstrated high level commitment from politicians and senior management to achieving corporate sustainability.					
		4. Ensuring sustainability is an integral part of policy and strategy development, action planning and target setting within all departments, functions and service areas.					
		5. Specific resources and responsibility are affected to mainstream sustainability (for example, in a multi-functional working group).					
		6. It is routinely ensured that the municipality's processes such as performance management, audit and scrutiny provide mechanisms for feedback and challenge on sustainability in practice and performance.					
	3. There is a broad and long-term perspective on the future of the local community along with a sense of what is needed for such development.	7. There is a participatory approach to decision making for a sustainable development.					
		8. A capital financing plan exists that ensures the long term viability of the infrastructure and assets of the municipality.					
	4. There is an understanding of the historical, cultural and social complexities in which this perspective is grounded.	9. There is a structured approach on how to preserve historical, cultural and social aspect of the municipality.					
	In this municipality decision-makers involve citizens in attempts to find solutions to local problems and sustainability.						

			EVALUATION				
The municipality level of maturity to the principle is assessed as:			NA	VP	QP	QW	VW
PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	0	1	2	3	4
10. Sound Financial Management	1. Charges do not exceed the cost of services provided and do not reduce demand excessively, particularly in the case of important public services.	1. Elected officials are clear about the rationale and the basis for charges for services.					
	2. Prudence is observed in financial management, including in the contracting and use of loans, in the estimation of resources, revenues and reserves, and in the use of exceptional revenue.	2. Standing financial instructions identify the financial responsibilities that apply to everyone working for the municipality.					
		3. An internal audit function reviews financial transactions to ensure compliance with approved internal procedures.					
		4. Regular reports are presented to officials and elected representatives comparing actual income and expenditure with budget.					
		5. The accounts are audited by persons independent of the municipality.					
		6. The external audits and the annual audits are made public.					
		7. The annual audit includes a review of value money in the provision of services by the municipality.					
		3. Multi-annual budget plans are prepared, with consultation of the public.	8. Annual and multiyear budgets are adopted before the start of the relevant period. The budgets should outline key provisions of resources and its commitments.				
	9. The budget preparation process includes extensive consultation with external stakeholders.						
	10. Approved budgets, tax rates and an annual report including information on service outputs and outcomes, are made publically available.						
	11. A summary of the budget and taxes is made available to all citizens.						

	4. Risks are properly estimated and managed, including by the publication of consolidated accounts and, in the case of public-private partnerships, by sharing the risks realistically.	12. The municipality identifies and manages its financial and service delivery risks by either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accepting and recognising the risks; • avoiding the risks (e.g. by transferring an activity to another entity); • transferring the risks (e.g. by means of a public-private partnerships or obtaining commercial insurance); or • sharing the risks (e.g. working collaboratively with another municipality). 					
	5. The local authority takes part in arrangements for inter-municipal solidarity, fair sharing of burdens and benefits and reduction of risks (equalisation systems, inter-municipal co-operation, and mutualisation of risks).	13. The inter-municipal approach is a factor of progress in the management of the municipality.					
		14. The municipality takes part in an inter-municipality organisation in order to improve its performances and its services to the citizens.					
	This municipality does a good job in informing citizens about what taxpayers get for their money.						

			EVALUATION				
The municipality level of maturity to the principle is assessed as:			NA	VP	QP	QW	VW
PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	0	1	2	3	4
11. Human Rights, Cultural Diversity and Social Cohesion	1. Within the local authority's sphere of influence, human rights are respected, protected and implemented, and discrimination on any grounds is combated.	1. The municipality ensures that all different groups are involved and has implemented anti-discrimination measures and has defined targets which are put in the place in all policy areas.					
		2. Municipalities take action to protect all citizens from discrimination and exclusion.					
	2. Cultural diversity is treated as an asset, and continuous efforts are made to ensure that all have a stake in the local community, identify with it and do not feel excluded.	3. The municipality actively promotes diversity and cohesion as being in the best interests of all citizens by making resources available, supporting and subsidising the activities of non-governmental actors, promoting dialogue and encouraging partnerships between various key social actors.					
	3. Social cohesion and the integration of disadvantaged areas are promoted.	4. The municipality has set clear objectives to improve social cohesion and maximise the potential of cultural diversity by encouraging greater inter-cultural mixing and interaction.					
		5. The municipality has adopted individual plans for specific disadvantaged groups (i.e. Plan for self-sufficiency, Plan for the rights of the children and the youth, others).					
	4. Access to essential services is preserved, in particular for the most disadvantaged sections of the population.	6. Politicians and staff ensure, together with all strategic partners, that the equality targets are embedded in and translated into strategies, spatial plans, and public service delivery.					
	In this municipality human rights are observed and their implementation progresses for all segments of the population.						

			EVALUATION				
The municipality level of maturity to the principle is assessed as:			NA	VP	QP	QW	VW
PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	0	1	2	3	4
12. Accountability	1. All decision-makers, collective and individual, take responsibility for their decisions.	1. All decision makers are clear about their collective and individual responsibilities for the decisions they take and these are clearly set out in a legal framework and in their job descriptions.					
	2. Decisions are reported on, explained and can be sanctioned.	2. The council prepare regular public reports (at least annually) to account for the decisions they have taken.					
		3. The municipality's legal framework includes details of reporting, explaining and sanctioning decisions which is well understood by elected representatives, officials and citizens.					
		4. Reports and other documents will be accessible and made available.					
	3. There are effective remedies against maladministration and against actions of local authorities which infringe civil rights.	5. The municipality has a transparent and independent audit arrangement, as set out in the legal framework. The scrutiny arrangements are respected and considered as independent and are undertaken without fear or favour.					
		6. Auditors are clear who to hold to account for each decision and the relevant decision takers willingly present themselves for public scrutiny.					
		7. The municipality has a robust process as set out in its legal framework, to remedy against maladministration and against actions of local authorities which infringe civil rights, in accordance with rules, regulations and best practice.					
	In this municipality elected officials are good at explaining their decisions to residents.						

Summary Maturity Matrix

Principle	Headline Definition	Maturity Level					Statement
		Not applicable	Very poorly	Quite poorly	Quite well	Very well	
Principle 1	Fair Conduct of Elections, Representation and Participation						
Principle 2	Responsiveness						
Principle 3	Efficiency and Effectiveness						
Principle 4	Openness and Transparency						
Principle 5	Rule of Law						
Principle 6	Ethical Conduct						
Principle 7	Competency and Capacity						
Principle 8	Innovation and Openness to Change						
Principle 9	Sustainability and Long-term Orientation						
Principle 10	Sound Financial Management						
Principle 11	Human Rights, Cultural Diversity and Social Cohesion						
Principle 12	Accountability						
	Total Score						

III. ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL DEMOCRACY BASED ON SURVEYS OF CITIZENS AND LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS (COUNCILLORS)

Questionnaire for citizens organised according to the 12 principles of good democratic governance

*Telephone interview with **local residents**:*

Introduction

Hello, I am calling from N____ (name of a public opinion research organization). We are calling on behalf of X____ (name of municipality) in connection with a study of people's opinions about municipal politics and services being carried out by _____. We would like to hear about the experiences you have had and what you think about the municipality's activities. By taking part in this study and giving your opinions you can also improve local democracy in this municipality. We want you to know that participation in the study is voluntary, and that all information you provide will only be used in an anonymous form. It will not be possible to identify individual responses. The project will be concluded in _____.

NB: Register if the respondent refuses to participate, wishes to participate at a later time (to be noted), or is willing to be interviewed.

- 1) Refuses to participate
- 2) Wishes to be interviewed later: _____
- 3) Is willing to be interviewed now

Other information to be registered:

Gender:

- 1) Man
- 2) Woman

Number of municipality: _____

Date of interview: _____

People can have different opinions about local conditions. I will now read aloud some statements, and would ask you to say how well they apply to you and your experiences with the municipality in which you live. Do the statements apply very well, quite well, quite poorly or very poorly, or do you have no opinion?

To the interviewer:

The sentence "*Do the statements apply very well, quite well, quite poorly or very poorly, or do you have no opinion?*" can be repeated as necessary.

		Don't know, no opinion (0)	Applies very poorly (1)	Applies quite poorly (2)	Applies quite well (3)	Applies very well (4)
P						
1	Fair Conduct of Elections, Representation and Participation , to ensure real possibilities for all citizens to have their say in local public affairs;					
	I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to influence municipal decisions which are of interest to me.					
2	Responsiveness , to ensure that the local authority meets the legitimate expectations and needs of citizens					
	In this municipality complaints over service provision are handled in a professional manner.					
3	Efficiency and Effectiveness , to ensure that objectives are met while making the best use of resources					
	On the whole, I am quite satisfied with the services offered by the municipality.					
4	Openness and Transparency , to ensure public access to information and facilitate understanding of how local public affairs are conducted					
	This municipality does a good job in informing citizens about issues on the local political agenda.					
5	Rule of Law , to ensure fairness, impartiality and predictability					
	In this municipality, common interests of all residents prevail, not the special interests.					
6	Ethical Conduct , to ensure that the public interest is put before private ones					
	In this municipality, all persons enjoy equal treatment irrespective of their connections with elected representatives and officials.					
7	Competence and Capacity , to ensure that local representatives and officials are well able to carry out their duties					
	Most public officials in this municipality are competent people who (usually) know what they are doing.					
8	Innovation and Openness to Change , to ensure that benefit is derived from new solutions and good practices					
	In this municipality there are good procedures for handling citizen suggestions to improve public service delivery.					
9	Sustainability and Long-term Orientation , to take the interests of future generations into account					
	In this municipality decision-makers involve citizens in attempts to find solutions to local problems					
10	Sound Financial Management , to ensure prudent and productive use of public funds					
	This municipality does a good job in informing citizens about what taxpayers get for their money					
11	Human rights, Cultural Diversity and Social Cohesion , to ensure that all citizens are protected and respected and that no one is either discriminated against or excluded					
	In this municipality human rights are observed and their implementation progresses for all segments of the population.					
12	Accountability , to ensure that local representatives and officials take responsibility and are held responsible for their actions					
	In this municipality elected officials are good at explaining their decisions to residents.					

<p>13a. What is your primary occupation?</p> <p>READ ALOUD</p> <p>1) Employed in the public sector 2) Employed in the private sector 3) Independent business person 4) Student 5) Social security recipient, pensioner 6) Other</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>NB: Following question is only asked of those who are employed in the public or private sector – i.e. categories 1 and 2 in question 13a</p> <p>13b: We would ask you to indicate your opinion on the following:</p> <p>READ THE SCALE</p> <p>I am very satisfied with the possibilities I have to influence my own work situation. Does this statement apply very well, quite well, quite poorly or very poorly, or do you have no opinion?</p>	Don't know, no opinion (0)	Applies very poorly (1)	Applies quite poorly (2)	Applies quite well (3)	Applies very well (4)	
<p>14: In politics one often talks about “left” and “right”. On a scale where 0 represents those who are completely to the left politically, and 10 represents those who are completely to the right politically, where would you normally place yourself?</p>						

Background information

15	Age (in years)				
16	Highest completed education: 1) Elementary school 2) Secondary school 3) Occupational training school 4) University/ college	1	2	3	4	
17	USE A STANDARD OMNIBUS QUESTION Household income (note the amount to the nearest € 10.000)				
18	How many years have you lived in this municipality? (Number of years to be noted)				
19	Do you have daily responsibility for the care of children or other family members? 0) No 1) Yes	0	1			

Questionnaire for local elected officials (councillors) organised according to the 12 principles of good democratic governance

At the request of ____, ____, has developed a means of assessing the character of local democracy in a municipality. The approach involves questionnaires for both residents and elected officials. X__, X__ and X__ (names of municipalities) have agreed to be the first to try this approach. N__ (name of a public opinion research organization) will soon undertake telephone interviews with N__ (number) residents in each municipality. Results from the studies will provide a basis for considering how local democracy may be further developed. The questionnaire that you have in front of you is a survey we are conducting among elected officials. The questionnaire is to be returned in the envelop provided and the information you provide will be treated confidentially. It is voluntary to participate in the study. The study will be concluded in _____. Information gathered in the project will only be used in an anonymous form. It will not be possible to identify individual responses. Additional information may be obtained by contacting _____, who is responsible for the project, by the following means (telephone or e-mail etc.).

	<i>Please indicate to what extent the following statements correspond to your own experience as an elected official in xxxx municipality.</i>	Don't know, no opinion (0)	Applies very poorly (1)	Applies quite poorly (2)	Applies quite well (3)	Applies very well (4)
P						
1	Fair Conduct of Elections, Representation and Participation , to ensure real possibilities for all citizens to have their say in local public affairs;					
	In my function as an elected official I am in touch with individual citizens on a weekly basis.					
2	Responsiveness , to ensure that the local authority meets the legitimate expectations and needs of citizens					
	On the whole, I am quite satisfied with the services the municipality can offer our residents.					
3	Efficiency and Effectiveness , to ensure that objectives are met while making the best use of resources					
	I feel that I am doing something useful as an elected official.					
4	Openness and Transparency , to ensure public access to information and facilitate understanding of how local public affairs are conducted					
	This municipality does a good job in informing citizens about issues on the local political agenda.					
5	Rule of Law , to ensure fairness, impartiality and predictability &					
	In this municipality, common interests of all residents prevail, not the special interests.					
6	Ethical Conduct , to ensure that the public interest is put before private ones					
	In this municipality, all persons enjoy equal treatment irrespective of their connections with elected representatives and officials.					
7	Competence and Capacity , to ensure that local representatives and officials are well able to carry out their duties					
	The administration is quite attentive to political signals from elected officials.					

8	Innovation and Openness to Change , to ensure that benefit is derived from new solutions and good practices					
	In this municipality there are good procedures for handling citizen complaints and suggestions to improve public service delivery.					
9	Sustainability and Long-term Orientation , to take the interests of future generations into account					
	In this municipality decision-makers involve citizens in attempts to find solutions to local problems.					
10	Sound Financial Management , to ensure prudent and productive use of public funds					
	This municipality does a good job in informing citizens about what taxpayers get for their money.					
11	Human rights, Cultural Diversity and Social Cohesion , to ensure that all citizens are protected and respected and that no one is either discriminated against or excluded					
	In this municipality human rights are observed and their implementation progresses for all segments of the population.					
12	Accountability , to ensure that local representatives and officials take responsibility and are held responsible for their actions					
	In this municipality my colleagues are good at explaining their decisions to residents.					

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

a) Age (in years):

b) Gender

- 1 Man 2 Woman

c) Highest completed education

- 1 Elementary school 3 Occupational training school
 2 Secondary school 4 University or college

d) Position/workplace

- 1 Employed in the public sector
 2 Employed in the private sector
 3 Independent business person
 4 Student
 5 Social security recipient, pensioner
 6 Other

e) Which political party or list do you represent on the municipal council?

- 1 Name of party/list 1 5 Name of party/list 5
 2 Name of party 2/list 6 Name of party/list 6
 3 Name of party 3/list 7 Name of party/list 7
 4 Name of party 4/list 8 Name of party/list 8
 9 Other

f) Are you a member of the executive committee?

- 1 Yes, a regular member 2 Yes, a reserve member 3 No

g) Of which committee or main board are you a member?

Please give the committee or board name (leave blank if not a member):

h) How many terms have you been a regular member of the municipal council, including the present term? Make one mark.

- 1 One term
 2 Two terms
 3 Three or more terms

i) Are you a member of a board of any of the following types of organizations? Place as many marks as are appropriate.

- 1 Municipal company
 2 Private firm
 3 Voluntary association
 4 Foundation or fund