

Preventing corruption and promoting public ethics at local and regional levels

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- Protection of whistleblowers

Congress of Local and Regional Authorities
of the Council of Europe



Conflicts of interest at local et regional levels

A complex and multifaceted concept, conflicts of interest are one of the most common forms of corruption, to which local and regional authorities are particularly exposed. To address this issue, the Congress proposes the establishment of independent ethics committees to examine members' financial activities, the adoption of declaration of interest and disclosure policies and clear procedures for identifying, treating and resolving conflicts of interest.

 http://bit.ly/congress-conflicts-interest_en



Transparency and open government

The concept of "open government" is an effective response to promote transparency, especially for budgeting, law-making and the provision of services to the population. It is based on three principles: transparency, which aims to make information available and understandable to the public; participation, which allows people to influence the functioning of their government, and accountability, which enables them to hold their government accountable for their actions.

 http://bit.ly/congress-transparency-open-government_en



Making public procurement transparent at local et regional levels

The public procurement process entails significant expenditure and a growing transfer of public resources to the private sector, with an increased risk of corruption. The establishment of internal controls, the constant use of evaluation mechanisms, the enhancement of transparency, the introduction of national standards and the systematic use of online public procurement, are among the measures that are proposed by the Congress.

 http://bit.ly/congress-public-procurement_en



Administrative resources and fair elections A practical guide for local and regional politicians and public officials



Over the past fifteen years, the Congress has observed over a hundred municipal elections. The misuse of administrative resources during elections is a recurring problem. This practical guide for politicians and local and regional public officials contains concrete examples of such unfair behaviour and explains why Council of Europe member States need to take this problem seriously, particularly at the local level.

http://bit.ly/congress-administrative-resources-elections_en

Fighting nepotism within local and regional authorities

The Congress calls on local and regional authorities to increase the transparency of recruitment and promotion processes by adopting clear procedures to ensure equality and fairness. It encourages them to put in place mechanisms for reporting possible cases of favouritism or conflicts of interest. In addition, the Congress emphasizes the need for governments to incorporate into their national legislations provisions that mitigate the risk of nepotism.

http://bit.ly/congress-fighting-nepotism_en



The protection of whistleblowers Challenges and opportunities for local and regional government



Whistleblowers often hold information that only they can detect and represent a unique added value compared to institutional control mechanisms. Whistleblower policies must ensure their legal protection and provide internal and anonymous reporting channels. The Congress encourages the establishment of specific independent institutions, such as local and regional ombudsmen, to oversee and process the disclosure of information.

http://bit.ly/congress-protection-whistleblowers_en

In its many forms, corruption is a major threat to local and regional governance and to democracy in Europe, that public authorities need to address as a matter of urgency.

To tackle this challenge and provide local and regional elected representatives with concrete tools, the Council of Europe Congress has adopted a "Roadmap to prevent corruption and promote public ethics at local and regional level".

The Congress Governance Committee has prepared six thematic reports to help local and regional elected representatives better understand the risks of corruption and to implement courses of action.

The publications in the "Public Ethics" series present the analysis and the recommendations of the Congress.

www.coe.int/congress-ethics
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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member States, including all 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 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 150,000 local and regional authorities.

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