



## Localising human rights in Georgia: strengthening capacities of local authorities

Forum of Exchange – First meeting

Day 1 - 25 March 2022 13.00-16.00 (Tbilisi time zone, GMT+4)

Day 2 - 28 March 2022 12.30-15.00 (Tbilisi time zone, GMT+3)

Format: Online sessions on ZOOM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86483812164>

### Context

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe organises the first meeting of the Forum of Exchange “Localising human rights in Georgia: strengthening capacities of local authorities”. This two-day meeting is the first gathering of the thirteen selected municipalities, who will work jointly to strengthen participatory democracy and human rights at the local level in Georgia. The Forum serves as an opportunity to address challenges for improving social inclusion, promoting equal opportunities and incorporating a gender perspective in local political action, in order to eliminate discrimination.

The Forum of Exchange will discuss day-to-day action in local authorities and highlight the human rights dimension of their governance. The Forum will be held as a two-day online event with the participation of mayors and local councillors, as well as municipal staff. It will be an opportunity for peer exchanges with European counterparts on ways to include a human rights perspective in local decision-making and for launching baseline assessments and discussing the follow-up steps and capacity development needs of local authorities in Georgia.

*This event is organised in the framework of the project “[Strengthening Participatory Democracy and Human Rights at Local Level in Georgia](#)”, implemented by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and the Directorate General of Democracy, Division of Elections and Participatory Democracy, within the [Council of Europe Action Plan for Georgia 2020-2023](#) with the financial contribution of the Austrian Development Cooperation. The project aims to strengthen institutional frameworks for citizen participation, support local authorities and their national association in their efforts to protect and promote human rights and ensure that civil society organisations have real impact on local decision making.*

### Contacts

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## PROGRAMME

Day 1 - 25 March 2022

13.00 - 13.20

### Opening statements

**Harald BERGMANN**, Spokesperson on Human Rights, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Council of Europe (TBC)

**David MELUA**, Executive Director of the National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG)

*Moderated by Marité MORAS, Secretariat of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.*

13.20 - 14.10

### The Forum of Exchange: opportunities and needs

**Nino TSAGAREISHVILI**, Senior Project Officer, Council of Europe Office in Georgia

Intervention from Mayors of the thirteen municipalities

Open discussion

*This session aims to introduce the objectives of Forum of Exchange, as a tool for peer-to-peer exchange, joint work and advocacy, as well as piloting tools and initiatives for human rights protection and promotion at the local level.*

14.10 - 14.30

### Localising Human Rights: relevance and good practices

**Keynote intervention by Klaus STARL**, Director, International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels under the auspices of UNESCO, Graz (Austria)

Open discussion

*This session explores human rights as a system of laws, set of values and a vision for good governance; the role of local government in the fulfilment of Human Rights and concrete benefits of a human rights-compliant behaviour. Human Rights City Graz will be presented as an example of civil society participation (via Councils consisting of voluntary members).*

14.30 - 14.50

### Experiences by peer local authorities in Europe

**Marina RIERA**, Communication's Officer, Human Rights Resource Centre, City of Barcelona (Spain)

Open discussion

*Moderated by Klaus STARL, Director, International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels under the auspices of UNESCO*

*This session explores different human rights solutions and approaches at the local level implemented by European peers.*

14.50 - 15.50

### Tools for building strong human rights-based policies

**Isabella MEIER**, International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels under the auspices of UNESCO

Open discussion

*Moderated by Klaus STARL, Director, International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels under the auspices of UNESCO*

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*This session provides a brief introduction to the baseline assessments, equality plans and data collection as tools for enhanced decision-making and advocacy. This session gives also an opportunity to discuss follow-up steps within the Forum of Exchange and capacity development needs of local authorities in Georgia.*

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**15.50 – 16.00**

**Conclusion and ways forward for the forum**

**Marité MORAS**, Secretariat of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

12.30 - 12.50

**Opening statements and key findings of Day 1**

**Marité MORAS**, Secretariat of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe

**David MELUA**, Executive Director of the National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG)

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12.50 - 13.10

**Approaches and methods to strengthening capacities of local authorities in Georgia**

**Keynote intervention of Klaus STARL**, Director, International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels under the auspices of UNESCO, Graz (Austria)

Open discussion

*This session aims to provide insights into human rights as a system of laws, set of values and a vision for good governance; the role of local governments in the fulfilment of Human Rights and concrete benefits of a human rights-compliant behaviour; definitions and terminologies underlying the importance of HR for local governance.*

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13.10 – 13.30

**The Forum of Exchange: opportunities and needs**

**Nino TSAGAREISHVILI**, Senior Project Officer, Council of Europe Office in Georgia

Open discussion

*This session aims to introduce the objectives of Forum of Exchange and focus on the future capacity development activities.*

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13.30 – 14.00

**A Baseline Assessment as a tool for policy-making**

**Isabella MEIER**, International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels under the auspices of UNESCO, Graz (Austria)

Open discussion

*This session gives a brief introduction to the baseline assessments, the aims, methodology, and the role of municipal staff.*

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14.00 – 14.50

**Practical arrangements to launch the baseline process**

**Nino TSAGAREISHVILI**, Senior Project Officer, Council of Europe Office in Georgia

**Isabella MEIER**, International Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights at the Local and Regional Levels under the auspices of UNESCO, Graz (Austria)

Open discussion

*This session explores the institutional frameworks of future cooperation including the practical steps regarding the planned activities.*

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14.50 – 15.00

**Closing remarks and ways forward**

**Marité MORAS**, Secretariat of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe