EUROPEAN COMMITTEE ON DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE (CDDG)

CENTRE OF EXPERTISE FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE
STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2025

Secretariat Memorandum
prepared by the
Directorate General of Democracy
Democratic Governance Division

**Centre of Expertise
for Good Governance**

Strasbourg, October 2021

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Strategic Plan 2022-2025

The present document was prepared by the
Centre of Expertise for Good Governance
Directorate General II – Democracy

Centre of Expertise for Good Governance
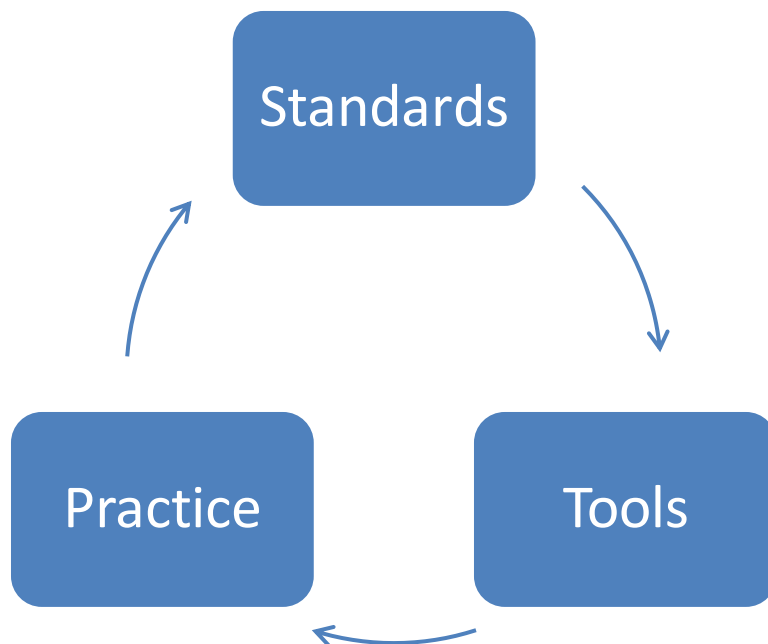# CEGG

Our Vision

The Centre of Expertise for Good Governance is the European reference point for good governance cooperation projects based on best practice, tools, and standards. It is an incubator of ideas for better governance and a repository of good practice.

Our Mission

To promote respect for the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance by building capacities of governance actors of all levels and delivering legal and policy advice in line with European standards and best practice.

Our Working Methods:

Legal and policy advice, peer reviews, capacity-building tools, network of experts.

Standards

Tools

Practice

CONTEXT

The Centre of Expertise was established in 2006 as the Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform following a decision by the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe at the 3rd Summit in Warsaw in 2005 with a mission to deliver good local and regional governance by promoting European standards and best practice. It has been seeking to do this through continuous investment in research and expertise; creating and developing partnerships and networks with national and international stakeholders; developing impact-oriented practical tools and implementing country-specific programmes.

In 2017, it was renamed   Centre of Expertise for Good Governance (CEGG), toreflect the evolution of its areas of intervention to support good governance at all levels of government with an emphasis on promotion of the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance. The change also acknowledged the ever closer links between the Centre of Expertise and the Council of Europe intergovernmental Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG), which offers it ready access to high-level government officials from the 47 member States with a reservoir of knowledge and expertise in governance reforms.

Through its links to the CDDG, the Centre of Expertise benefits from a multi-stakeholder platform for dialogue, awareness-raising, and peer exchange. The Centre of Expertise can now offer cutting-edge expertise, best practice and support on multi-level governance to partners and beneficiaries. It aims to support member States in developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels based on inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

The virtuous circle of intergovernmental standard-setting work, cooperation activities, and the monitoring of the implementation of standards is central to the strategic framework of the Council of Europe. The CEGG's cooperation projects and targeted interventions are designed to promote Council of Europe standards; address issues and fill gaps that have emerged through monitoring; and support on-going processes of public administration and local government reforms and the modernisation of democractic institutions in member States. The cooperation activities of the Centre of Expertise thus exemplify the "dynamic triangle" of the Council of Europe.

The Centre of Expertise promotes and builds on a unique set of European standards such as the **European Charter of Local Self-Government, Committee of Ministers' Recommendations** in this field**,** and the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance. Its programmes are designed around implementation of the specific toolkits whose templates are easily adapted to respond to local needs and deliver quality, impact-oriented projects based on benchmarks, evaluation instruments and innovative methodologies. These tools represent a practical crystallisation of the Council of Europe standards developed through multilateralism and intergovernmental cooperation, and are a compilation of exchange of experience and best practice in Europe. Currently the Centre of Expertise has a repertoire of **24 capacity-building and training tools** which are grouped around **5 areas:**

- **democratic participation;**
- **modern and effective human resource management and leadership;**
- **institutional capacity and quality public services;**
- **sound financial management;**
- **territorial and cross-border cooperation**.

The tools are the state-of-the-art instruments and serve as templates for projects. . They have been implemented successfully in several different situations and can be adapted quickly and effectively to any national circumstance in order to promote positive change. The toolkits are regularly revised and updated, and new tools developed in response to emerging needs. For example, in 2021 a revised edition of the Performance Management tool was prepared, and new toolkits on Teleworking and on Resilience Building Strategies were developed with contributions from the CDDG as a response to the impact of COVID-19 on public administration.

Since the reform of the Democracy and Governance Department in 2020 and the consolidation of cooperation activities in the fields of elections and civil participation under the Elections and Participatory Democracy Division, the Centre of Expertise continues to co-operate with this Division, helping to increase its capacity to deliver democratic participation projects. In the future, this Division will be in charge of such projects, while the CEGG will offer them only as a complement to other, bigger, projects. The co-operation between the Centre of Expertise and the Participatory Democracy Division will continue.

The Centre of Expertise relies on external experts (academics and practitioners) and peers (members of the CDDG or other representatives of ministries) for the provision of legal and policy advice and the implementation of its toolkits. All country-specific capacity-building activities are implemented in close cooperation with a broad spectrum of national partners, including governmental agencies, associations of local authorities and institutes ("amplifying institutions").

In addition, a broad network of partnerships has been developed with international actors such as the European Union, United Nations, Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and bodies such as the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, the European Association for Local Democracy, the European Association of Local Chief Executives etc.

The Centre of Expertise publishes regular Activity reports on its [website](#).

FUTURE PROSPECTS

Going forward, the Centre of Expertise will continue to mobilise and involve stakeholders from all levels of governance and its broad network of national and international partners in programme design and implementation. This will help improve the impact of its programmes; reinforce commitment to the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance across Europe; and help adapt tools to the domestic contexts and emerging needs, as identified in the Secretary's General [2021 Annual Report](#), and in the [Strategic Framework of the Council of Europe for 2022-25](#).

The **emerging challenges** to be addressed include backsliding of democracy and need to strengthen democratic governance, digitalisation of governance and public administration, delivering governance which is environmentally sustainable, tackling the Covid-19 pandemic and its aftermath in line with fundamental principles of democratic governance, social issues and inequalities, and strengthening of democratic resilience and preparedness in the face of new emergencies.

The **priorities** of the Centre of Expertise are also aligned with the new [2022-2025 Terms of Reference of the CDDG](#), which include the drafting of a Recommendation on the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance applicable to all levels of governement, developing Recommendations and guidelines on multilevel governance, and publishing reports on green public administration, the use of technology, including artificial intelligence in the public sector, and delivering social services at local level.

As the UN's Agenda 2030 comes into focus over the coming years, the activities of the Centre of Expertise will also be geared towards meeting those targets. Its projects strive to develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels based on inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making. By addressing the environmental sustainability of public action and disseminating good practice and guidance on the greening of public administration, it will also contribute to sustainable urbanisation.

CEGG Action Plan 2022-2025

In 2016, following 10 years of activity, the Centre of Expertise launched an external evalution of its work as a form of stocktaking and planning exercise. A first strategic plan for 2017-21 was developed based on the recommendations of this evaluation, involving the participation of all staff and key experts and in consultation with the CDDG and other relevant stakeholders. As a result, the vision, mission, long term objectives and priorities for the CEGG were established. This current Strategic Plan of the Centre of Expertise builds on the process and outcomes of the first plan, and aims to adapt the strategy to emerging trends and developments outlined above.

Therefore, the **CEGG's next 4-year development objectives are:**

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	INDICATORS
Focus on priorities	Promote 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance: Build on existing and develop new pathways to raise awareness of 12 Principles through networking, stakeholder mobilisation, and ICT; Stress importance of good multi-level governance as key to developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels: ➤ Ensure central and/or local/regional dimension to all projects; Mobilise CDDG members to participate in CEGG activities; Use ELoGE as both a capacity-building and needs assessment tool: ➤ Generate and support requests for ELoGE accreditation from member States and relevant organisations; ➤ Use ELoGE reports as diagnostic tool to identify additional needs; ECLSG, MOC[1], CM Recommendations and other relevant Council of Europe standards: ➤ Use CEGG projects and activities as vectors to disseminate Council of Europe standards, in particular the most recent ones prepared by the CDDG.	• Number of events / activities where CEGG is represented. • Number of ELoGE accreditation / renewal requests. • Number of Peer Review Reports delivered to central government. • Number and range of topics for requested legal and policy advice. • Number of times CDDG members participate in CEGG activities. • Additional activities / projects implemented in light of ELoGE reports. • Number and frequency of Toolkits implemented in activites / projects. • Frequency of reference to Council of Europe standards in policy documents.

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[1] ECLSG - European Charter on Local self-government, MOC – Madrid Outline Convention on Transfrontier cooperation

Address new challenges	Promote resilience as key to good democratic governance: ➤ ReBuS toolkit as a reponse to impact of pandemic and other crises; Contribute to the work of the CDDG on multi-level-governance, green public administration, social services and digitalisation: ➤ CEGG activity reports feed in to CDDG working groups; ➤ Expand database of CEGG experts; Develop new toolkits based on case studies and best practice: ➤ Harvest case studies and best practice from CDDG members to contribute to development of relevant CEGG toolkits.	• Number of times ReBuS toolkit is implemented. • Number of CEGG contributions to CDDG work. • Number of highly qualified new experts added to CEGG pool. • Number of new toolkits developed in cooperation with CDDG. • Number of MS where CEGG activities are implemented annually.
Upgrade means	Stabilise existing core human and financial resources: ➤ New staff regulations, contractual policy, and quadri-annual budgeting facilitate medium-term planning; ➤ Develop staff competences through in-house and Toolkit trainings; Improve resource mobilisation to boost external funding sources: ➤ Strengthen links with ODGP and improve project proposal writing; ➤ Offer channel for non-earmarked funding to support CEGG activities such as R&D and thematic conferences; Strengthen links with partners and donors: ➤ Develop cooperation with EU, OECD and other relevant partners; ➤ Maintain and develop long-term partnerships with key donors.	• Increased stability / reduced turnover of staff. • Number of training activities for staff and experts. • Number of validated project proposals. • Validation of a non-earmarked funding to support CEGG activities. • Number of staff funded through ordinary budget. • Number of partnerships established with core donors

Improve recognition and strengthen outreach of CEGG	High-level endorsement of CEGG as specialist Council of Europe operational unit / think tank on Good Governance: &#10；➢ Reinforce links with CDDG; ➢ Leverage stakeholders, beneficiaries, and member States as ambassadors to promote CEGG tools and practice. ➢ Highlight place of CEGG at the heart of the "dynamic triangle" of standard-setting, monitoring, and cooperation activities; Develop networking capacity for experts, officials, beneficiaries within CEGG: ➢ Expand EDEN platform to facilitate networking among stakeholders and serve as an online repository for good practice; ➢ Improve web-site as an information channel and repository of good practice and standards; Offer external accreditation for toolkit implementation: ➢ Grant accreditation to external organisations to deliver capacity-building based on CEGG Toolkits.	• Number of connections between experts and officials established through networking platform. • Number of annual news items published on website. • Number of downloads of CEGG toolkits. • Number of users of CEGG online learning tools and activities. • Number of annual participants in CEGG capacity building activities. • Number of active followers on social media platforms.
Develop regional / thematic projects	Promote peer learning and intergovernmental cooperation through regional or thematic projects: ➢ Increase representation of Good Governance projects / chapters in country and/or regional Action Plans ➢ Continue regional cooperation in Eastern Europe; ➢ Develop regional activities and projects in Western Balkans and/or Baltic states and the Mediterranean. Cooperate with Elections and Participatory Democracy Division (EPDD): ➢ Contribute to democratic participation activities and mobilise EPDD experts in CEGG activities where relevant.	• Number of activities of a regional dimension organised. • Number of activities involving representatives from 3 or more member States. • Number of regional actions launched as an outcome of CEGG activities. • Number of joint activities organised with colleagues in EPDD.