



Strasbourg, 7 April 2020

DG-SP(2020)6

**EUROPEAN STAKEHOLDERS' PLATFORM OF THE
STRATEGY FOR INNOVATION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE
AT LOCAL LEVEL**

**REPORT OF THE EUROPEAN STAKEHOLDERS' PLATFORM MEETING
HELD BY VIDEOCONFERENCE, 24 MARCH 2020**

1. Opening of the meeting by the Chair

Ms Monika Filipová, Chair of the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG), opened the meeting of the European Stakeholders' Platform of the Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance ('the European Platform'). She welcomed members and gave indications as regards the conduct of the meeting.

The Secretariat recalled that the meeting was taking place by videoconference because of the precautionary measures against Covid-19.

The list of participants appears in Appendix I.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as set out in Appendix II.

**3. Report of the third meeting of the European Stakeholders' Platform
(Strasbourg, 24 May 2019)**

The European Stakeholders' Platform took note of the report (DG-SP(2019)3).

**4. International Conference on the Twelve Principles of Good Democratic
Governance and the European Label of Governance Excellence (ELOGE)
(Strasbourg, 28 October 2019)**

The Chair and the Secretariat presented the programme and the conclusions of the Conference, referring to document CDDG(2019)12. Some of the recommendations included in the conclusions would be discussed under item 5, in the context of the review of the Regulations for ELOGE. It was important for events of this kind to be dynamic and to offer an opportunity for sharing good practice and experience in the implementation of ELOGE.

5. European Stakeholders' Platform

i. Review of the Regulations for the promotion of the Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at Local Level and the granting of ELoGE

The Secretariat presented the draft revised Regulations, referring to document DG-SP(2020)3. She drew the members' attention to the Appendix, which provided information on the entities which had been granted accreditation and the municipalities that had been awarded ELoGE. Another paper had been distributed, which listed existing Council of Europe prizes being awarded to local authorities (DG-SP(2020)5).

An exchange of views followed during which overall support was expressed for the draft revised Regulations, with some amendments. In addition, the following issues were raised:

- the participation of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in the work of the European Stakeholders' Platform would be welcome and should be foreseen in the Regulations;
- the inclusion of a provision on gender balance and the respect of equality and diversity throughout the ELoGE process was a positive development but more reflection should be given to the concrete ways to implement this provision;
- a greater effort should be paid to promote the visibility and outreach of ELoGE;
- ELoGE should continue to be awarded to municipalities while the possibility of awarding it also to entities of other levels of government (such as regions) could be considered at a later stage. This might require a modification of the ELoGE benchmark if this possibility was accepted.

During the discussion, the question was asked of how a member State could express objections against the accreditation. The Secretariat explained that, until now, the procedure was to inform the CDDG member of the country concerned of the accreditation request. In the lack of objections from his/her side, it was understood that the State had no objections.

The European Stakeholders' Platform approved the revised Regulations as they appear in Appendix III.

The Secretariat recalled that the revised Regulations would become immediately applicable.

ii. Review of the Rules of procedure of the European Stakeholders' Platform

The Secretariat presented the draft revised Rules of procedure, referring to document DG-SP(2020)4.

In the ensuing discussion, overall support was expressed for the draft revised Rules of procedure, with some amendments.

The European Stakeholders' Platform agreed its revised Rules of procedure as they appear in Appendix IV and decided to submit them to the CDDG for approval by written procedure, without delay. The Secretariat recalled that the revised Rules of procedure would become applicable only after the CDDG approval.

iii. Review of the ELoGE benchmark

Following an exchange of views, the following members were asked to examine the ELoGE benchmark and propose possible improvements or changes, if any:

- Mr Edwin Lefebre and Ms Siobhan Smyth, CDDG Rapporteurs on Gender Equality, as regards the issue of gender equality;
- Mr Gerhard Ermischer, representative of the INGO Conference, as regards civil society participation.

6. Renewal of accreditation

The Secretariat presented the request for renewal of accreditation by the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works of Bulgaria, referring to document DG-SP(2020)2.

In the ensuing discussion, the European Stakeholders' Platform praised the Bulgarian authorities and the Bulgarian national platform for their engagement and support to ELoGE.

The European Stakeholders' Platform decided to renew the accreditation of the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works of Bulgaria until 30 June 2023, in accordance with the applicable Regulations and the structures and procedures as set out in the request.

In taking this decision, the European Stakeholders' Platform recalled the need for accredited entities to take into account the principle of gender equality and to keep it informed in the event of changes to their functioning or composition as well as about their actions in regard of ELoGE.

7. New requests for accreditation to deliver ELoGE

This item was chaired by the First Vice-Chair, Mr Markku Mölläri.

Referring to document DG-SP(2020)1, the Secretariat presented the requests by:

- the Italian Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions – Friuli Venezia Giulia Federation (AICCRE FVG) – for implementing ELoGE in Friuli Venezia Giulia (Italy);
- the Training center *Dainava* for civil servants and local administration, Lithuania;
- the Good Civil Servant, Slovak Republic;
- the Federation of European Union Local Authority Chief Executive Officers (UDiTE) – for implementing ELoGE in Portugal.

Following an exchange of views, the European Stakeholders' Platform decided, in accordance with the applicable Regulations and the structures and procedures as set out in the respective requests:

- to grant accreditation to the Italian Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions – Friuli Venezia Giulia Federation (AICCRE FVG) for it to implement ELoGE in Friuli Venezia Giulia (Italy) until 30 June 2023. In taking this decision, the European Stakeholders' Platform underlined the need for the accredited entity to ensure the participation of representatives of national minorities and civil society in the implementation of ELoGE;
- to grant accreditation to the Training center *Dainava* for civil servants and local administration to implement ELoGE in Lithuania until 30 June 2023. In taking this decision, the European Stakeholders' Platform underlined the need for the accredited entity to ensure the participation of civil society in the implementation of ELoGE;
- to grant accreditation to the Good Civil Servant to implement ELoGE in the Slovak Republic until 30 June 2023;
- to grant accreditation to the Federation of European Union Local Authority Chief Executive Officers (UDiTE) to implement ELoGE in Portugal until 30 June 2022.

In taking these decisions, the European Stakeholders' Platform recalled the need for accredited entities to take into account the principle of gender equality and to keep it informed of their actions in regard to ELoGE as well as possible changes to their functioning or composition.

8. Other business

The European Stakeholders' Platform agreed that holding meetings by videoconference was an efficient second-best way to make progress with its work.

9. Date of the next meeting

The next meeting would be held as the need to examine new requests arises.

APPENDIX I**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS****CHAIR / PRESIDENTE**

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SECRETARIAT

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APPENDIX II

AGENDA

1. **Opening of the meeting by the Chair**
2. **Adoption of the agenda** [DG-SP(2020)OJ1]
3. **Report of the third meeting of the Enlarged Bureau** [DG-SP(2019)3]
(24 May 2019, Strasbourg)
4. **International Conference on the Twelve Principles of Good Democratic Governance** (Strasbourg, 28 October 2019) [CDDG(2019)12]
Debriefing
5. **European Stakeholders' Platform** Strategy [DG-SP(2020)3]
 - Review of the Regulations for the promotion of the Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at Local Level and the granting of ELoGE
 - Review of the Rules of procedure of the European Stakeholders' Platform [DG-SP (2020)4]
 - Review of the ELoGE benchmark
6. **Renewal of the previous accreditations** [DG-SP(2020)2]
 - Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, Bulgaria
7. **New applications for accreditation to deliver ELoGE** [DG-SP(2020)1]
 - Italian Association of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (AICCRE)
 - Training center *Dainava* for civil servants and local administration, Lithuania
 - Good Civil Servant, Slovak Republic
 - UDITE – for ELoGE in Portugal
8. **Date and place of the next meeting**

APPENDIX III

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 26 March 2020

ELoGE Regulations 2020

**EUROPEAN STAKEHOLDERS' PLATFORM OF
THE STRATEGY FOR INNOVATION AND GOVERNANCE
AT LOCAL LEVEL**

**(Revised) REGULATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE EUROPEAN
LABEL OF GOVERNANCE EXCELLENCE (ELOGE)**

As approved by the European Stakeholders' Platform
on 24 March 2020

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

This document is public

*Meeting report
[DG-SP(2020)6]*

I. Introduction

1. The Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at Local level (herewith 'the Strategy') was adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 26 March 2008, at the 1022nd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies.¹
2. The Strategy aims at promoting action and policies that establish or improve good governance, in particular at local level. These measures, however, can also be implemented at regional and national levels of government.
3. One of the tangible achievements of the Strategy is the establishment of the European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE),² a label which is awarded to municipalities having achieved a level of governance which is in line with the Twelve Principles of Good Democratic Governance of the Council of Europe.
4. The present Regulations govern the procedure for implementing ELoGE. They were adopted by the European Platform at its meeting on 18 May 2016 and amended on 24 March 2020.

II. The Strategy

5. Member States³ that wish to join the Strategy are invited to inform the Council of Europe and make their decision public. By joining the Strategy, Member States commit to implementing ELoGE. ELoGE, however, can be implemented irrespective of the relevant Member State joining the Strategy.

III. ELoGE

6. ELoGE can be awarded to municipalities of Council of Europe member States which achieve a high standard of governance, as measured against a national (regional) benchmark which is equivalent to the European Benchmark of the Centre of Expertise and based on the Twelve Principles of Good Democratic Governance.
7. ELoGE is awarded for one year. The physical distinction consists of a crystal dodecahedron the facets of which bear the Twelve Principles of Good Democratic Governance engraved. The Council of Europe shall provide the dodecahedron.
8. The procedure for implementing ELoGE consists of two stages: accreditation by the Council of Europe; and national (regional) implementation leading to awarding the label.

¹ <https://rm.coe.int/1680701699>

² <https://rm.coe.int/eloge-benchmark-en-17-09/16808d71d4>

³ In federal or regional states, where the competences and responsibilities about local government lie with the federated states or with the regions, the references to member States in these Regulations must be understood as referring to the federated states or regions.

IV. Accreditation

Entities which can request accreditation

9. The following entities can apply for accreditation from the European Stakeholder's Platform to award ELoGE:

i. an ad hoc national or regional stakeholders' platform comprising representatives of central or regional government, local government, civil society and social and economic actors in a balanced way, the composition of which shall be communicated to the European Stakeholders' Platform at the moment of applying for accreditation;

or

ii. an existing national or regional body or institution which is reputable and has substantial know-how, expertise and/or experience in the field of good governance, in particular at local level.

10. Accreditation requests can also be submitted by reputable transnational platforms, bodies or institutions with substantive know-how, expertise and/or experience in the field of good governance, in particular at local level, with a view to awarding ELoGE in one or more Council of Europe member States or regions where no national or regional stakeholders' platform, or any existing national or regional body or institution has been granted accreditation. The competence of such transnational entity to award the label in a country or region shall cease upon accreditation of a national (regional) body for the same purpose.

11. Upon submitting an accreditation request, the requesting entity shall submit a national (regional) benchmark for assessing the performance of municipalities with regard to the Twelve Principles of Good Democratic Governance, providing an explanation of its equivalence to the Council of Europe benchmark.

Granting or renewing accreditation

12. The European Stakeholders' Platform is the Council of Europe body responsible for granting the accreditation to implement ELoGE. It is composed of the Bureau of the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG) and two members of the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations (CINGO). Members of other Council of Europe bodies can be represented in the European Stakeholders' Platform according to the conditions established in its Rules of procedure.

13. Upon receiving an application from one of the bodies mentioned under Articles 10 and 11 above, the European Stakeholders' Platform will grant accreditation if it is satisfied that:

- the member State (or region) has no objection against the accreditation;
- municipalities are (or will be) adequately informed about and free to take part in the process leading to the awarding of ELoGE;
- the national (regional) benchmark for assessing the performance of the municipalities with regard to the Twelve Principles of Good Democratic Governance is equivalent to the Council of Europe benchmark. Any changes the requesting entity may deem necessary or desirable, at the level of the national (regional) benchmark, shall be approved by the European Stakeholders' Platform;
- the scoring of municipalities with regard to the benchmark will be verified by an independent body or person and supplemented by other information about the public's views of the performance of the municipality;
- the accredited entity has the capacity to administer the process for granting the label;
- equality and diversity, including the balanced participation of women and men at all stages of the process, will be taken into account in implementing ELoGE;
- the rules, procedures and decisions in relation to implementing and awarding ELoGE are taken according to a transparent procedure and can be subjected to review.

14. Accreditations to the entities listed under Article 9 i. and ii. can be granted for a maximum period of 3 years, which can be renewed upon the applicant's request for a duration to be decided by the European Stakeholders' Platform. Renewals of accreditation can be granted if the Stakeholders' Platform is satisfied that there has been no change in the circumstances that justified accreditation in the first place. Accreditations to entities listed under Article 10 can be granted for a maximum period of 2 years and can be renewed once.

15. The European Stakeholders' Platform may request additional information to be provided by the entity applying for accreditation or renewal of accreditation.

16. The European Stakeholders' Platform decides according to its Rules of procedure. Decisions of the European Stakeholders' Platform cannot be appealed. They will be communicated to the applicant without delay.

Suspension, withdrawal or refusal of accreditation

17. The European Stakeholders' Platform may suspend an entity's ability to award the Label at any time, in the event of suspicion of a breach of the applicable Regulations or other possible irregularities, pending further inquiries. If at the conclusion of the inquiries the European Stakeholders' Platform finds serious breaches of the Regulations, it shall withdraw accreditation and may take such other action as may be necessary to safeguard the reputation of the Label.

18. A decision not to grant accreditation is without prejudice to the right to submit further applications.

V. *Implementing and awarding ELoGE at national (regional) level*

19. The accredited entity is responsible for managing the process for awarding the Label, and for any actions and consequences as a result thereof. It commits itself to promoting the Label and the Twelve Principles of Good Democratic Governance and to implementing ELoGE in a meaningful number of municipalities within the period of its accreditation.

20. Accredited entities shall keep the European Stakeholders' Platform informed about their actions in regard of ELoGE and respond to requests from the European Stakeholders' Platform in a spirit of cooperation. On a regular basis, or at the latest before the end of their accreditation, they should provide a narrative report to the European Stakeholders' Platform describing its activities in relation to ELoGE.

21. Accredited entities shall bear the costs related to the process for implementing ELoGE.

VI. *Exceptional awarding of ELoGE by the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance in co-operation with a non-accredited entity*

22. With the agreement of the European Stakeholders' Platform, the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance may exceptionally award ELoGE in co-operation with a national, regional or transnational entity which is not accredited but is qualified to apply for accreditation, at the following conditions:

- no accredited entity can award ELoGE in the country or region concerned;
- the entity in question has the capacity, reputation and resources to become accredited and is interested in doing so;
- the municipalities in question have successfully run the ELoGE benchmark and have fulfilled all the conditions which are normally required for being awarded the label;
- the results of the benchmarking have been assessed by the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance in cooperation with the entity in question.

23. The above procedure can be resorted to with the same entity only for one round of ELoGE for any given country (or region). A refusal to grant ELoGE according to this procedure is without appeal.

VII. *Miscellaneous provisions*

24. All correspondence with the Council of Europe and the documentation relating to ELoGE shall be in one of the Organisation's official languages.

25. On a periodic basis, the European Stakeholders' Platform, in consultation with accredited entities, should assess the implementation of ELoGE, its effectiveness in promoting compliance with the Twelve Principles of Good Democratic Governance, and consider ways to improve it.

26. These provisions can be modified and supplemented at any time by the European Stakeholders' Platform in the light of the experience.

APPENDIX IV

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 26 March 2020

REFERENCE CDDG

**EUROPEAN STAKEHOLDERS' PLATFORM OF
THE STRATEGY FOR INNOVATION AND GOVERNANCE
AT LOCAL LEVEL**

DRAFT (Revised) RULES OF PROCEDURE

**As adopted by the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG)
at its meeting on 8 December 2015 and amended on 2020**

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

This document is public.

*Meeting report
[DG-SP(2020)6]*

Enlarged Bureau of the CDDG

The Enlarged Bureau of the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG) acts as the European Stakeholders' Platform of the Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at Local Level as per the Committee of Ministers' decision at the 1234th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies on 10 September 2015.

Composition

The Enlarged Bureau comprises the members of the Bureau of the CDDG and two members appointed by the Council of Europe Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations (CINGO). The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe may respectively appoint a representative who will be able to take part in the meetings and online consultations of the European Stakeholders platform as observers, without the right to vote.

The President of the CINGO, the Secretariat of the Congress and the Secretariat of the Assembly communicate to the Secretariat of the CDDG the names of their respective members and representatives – as appropriate – with the date of the beginning of their terms of office.

The duration of terms of office of the members and representatives shall be as follows:

- for CDDG Bureau members, the same as the membership of the CDDG Bureau;
- for members of the CINGO (and, if applicable, representatives of the Congress and/or the Assembly) two years from the date which is communicated to the Secretariat.

Chair and Vice-Chairs

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the CDDG shall also be Chair and Vice-Chair of the Enlarged Bureau. The Enlarged Bureau may elect a Second Vice-Chair from among the members appointed by the CINGO, for a two-years mandate.

Meetings

The Secretariat of the CDDG shall be responsible for the organisation of the meetings (convocations, agendas, working documents).

Meetings shall normally be held in conjunction with ordinary meetings of the CDDG Bureau.

When examining applications for the accreditation of national or regional stakeholders' platforms or of national (regional) institutions, the Enlarged Bureau may invite the applicants to present their case and answer questions.

The Secretariat may invite experts to attend meetings or parts thereof and contribute to the discussion of specific items on the agenda.

Quorum

The decisions taken by the Enlarged Bureau shall not be valid unless at least six of its members are present (two-thirds), at least one of whom shall be a member appointed by the CINGO.

Decisions may also be taken in writing between meetings, including by electronic/digital means and shall be subject to the quorum set out hereinabove.

Voting

Each member of the Enlarged Bureau shall have one vote. Decisions shall be taken by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.

Procedural matter shall be settled by a majority of the votes cast. Where the question arises as to whether or not a matter is procedural in nature, it may not be regarded as such unless the Enlarged Bureau decides to that effect by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast.

For the purposes of these Rules, "votes cast" shall mean the votes of members cast in favour or against. Members abstaining shall be regarded as not having cast a vote.

Decisions of the Enlarged Bureau are final and cannot be appealed.

Publicity

Meetings of the Enlarged Bureau shall be announced on the Council of Europe website. The reports of its meetings will be made public after adoption. The other documents of the Enlarged Bureau can be made public upon request, unless otherwise requested by their author or the Chair.

Defrayal of expenses

The costs for the participation of the representatives of the Congress and/or the Assembly will be borne by these respective bodies.

Other provisions

These Rules of procedure can be amended at any time by the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG).

For all cases not explicitly regulated by these Rules of procedure, the Rules of procedure of Council of Europe Intergovernmental Committees appended to CM Resolution (2011)24 shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.