

## Online event on Deliberative Forms of Civil Participation at Local Level

*17 February 2022*

13.00 – 15:30 (Tbilisi Time)

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom-join-link>

## Background

This event aims to introduce jointly with the **Center for Blue Democracy**<sup>1</sup> in Poland to the representatives of local authorities and CSOs a specific format of civil participation, [the Citizens' Assemblies](#).

Participative democracy is one core element of active democratic processes in municipalities, which enables citizens to participate in and influence decision-making processes in their communities. Among the different forms of participation and engagement of citizens in political decision making, throughout Europe there is an increasing development of deliberative formats of participation, such as the Citizens Assemblies.

A Citizens' Assembly consists of a randomly selected group of citizens, which is formed taking into account demographic criteria such as gender, age and others, to make a thorough analysis of a given subject, hold discussions of various solutions, analyse pros and cons and then deliver final recommendations or decisions to the political decision-makers.

The Citizen Assembly, presented during the event and developed by the **Center for Blue Democracy**, proposes a methodology for organizing city assemblies, which allows citizens to be better engaged in decision-making, learn about the topic of consultation from the field experts, and exchange the views of local stakeholders. This Citizen Assembly model has already been successfully implemented in several countries of Europe such as Austria, Germany, Ireland, Spain.

The goal of the event is to present the concept of the Citizens' assemblies in general and to give an overview of how the process is conducted.

Participants include representatives of local authorities, civil society organisations, experts, representatives of the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia and NALAG.

This event is organised in the framework of the project “[Strengthening participatory democracy and human rights at local level in Georgia](#)”, implemented by the Directorate General of Democracy (DG II) and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities within [Council of Europe Action Plan for Georgia 2020-2023](#) with the financial contribution of the Austrian Development Cooperation.

<sup>1</sup>Marcin Gerwin, PhD - he is a specialist in deliberative democracy and sustainability. He designs democratic processes and runs citizens' assemblies; he is a coordinator of the Center for Blue Democracy. A political science graduate, the topic of his doctoral dissertation focused on sustainable development in the context of global challenges. He is an author of "Citizens' Assemblies: Guide to democracy that works", as well as "A Constitution Created by the Citizens" and a co-author of "Rivendell Model".

The project aims to strengthen institutional frameworks for citizen participation, support local authorities and in their efforts to protect and promote human rights and enhance civil society organisations to have real impact on local decision making.

## PROGRAMME

### **13:00 – 13:20    Opening remarks:**

Daniel POPESCU – Head of Department of Democracy and Governance,  
Directorate General of Democracy (DG II), Council of Europe

Alexander KARNER – Head of Coordination Office for Technical Cooperation,  
Austrian Embassy, Tbilisi

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

*Moderation: Cornelia PERLE, Senior Programme Adviser, Division of Elections  
and Participatory Democracy, Council of Europe*

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### **13:20-13:30    Short overview on the DG II component of the project – “Strengthening Participatory Democracy and Human Rights at Local Level in Georgia”**

Pelagia MAKHAURI, Project Officer, Council of Europe Office in Georgia

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### **13:30-13:50    Deliberative forms of participation at the local level in Georgia – existing forms, challenges and recommendations**

Koka KIGHURADZE – Council of Europe Expert

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### **13:50 – 15:05    Presentation of the Citizens’ Assemblies**

What is a Citizens’ Assembly?

How to organize a Citizens’ Assembly?

How is it different from regular public consultations?

Q/A

Marcin GERWIN, Center for Blue Democracy

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### **15:05 – 15:30    Discussion and conclusions**