



COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Innovation strategy and 'good governance at local level. Presentation of the 12 principles for good governance

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Introduction



Political commitment to ensuring good governance within the Council of Europe expressed during the 14th session of the Conference of Ministers responsible for local and regional government in Budapest on 24-25 February 2005

At the conference the ministers adopted the Declaration and Agenda on the provision of good local and regional governance.

INTRODUCTION (continued)



- Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance has been approved by the Conference of European Ministers responsible for local and regional authorities during the 15th session in Valencia (Spain), 15-16 October 2007
- It was later adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 26 March 2008
- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe supports the Strategy in resolution 239 (2007 AD). Support also came from the Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on 28 March 2008.



INTRODUCTION (continued)

In 2007 the Government of the Republic of Bulgaria approved the Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at local level IS and gives consent to participate in the pilot implementation of the strategy. So Bulgaria is defined as a pilot country for its implementation, together with Belgium, Spain, Italy and Norway.

Responsible for implementing the strategy is the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works in partnership with the National Association of Municipalities in Bulgaria.

The strategy



Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance should encourage joint action by the central and local governments to improve the quality of governance at all levels, starting from the level that is closest to citizens where strongly and effectively rooted democracy is essential .



Range

Good governance is a requirement for all levels of public administration.

At the local level, it is of fundamental importance because local government is closest to the citizens and provides them with basic services for their life, and at that level they can feel clearly belonging to take action for the benefit of society as a whole.

GOAL



The main goal of the Strategy is to mobilize and stimulate action by stakeholders at national and local level, so that the citizens of all European countries benefit from good democratic governance by constantly improving the quality of local public services, engagement of the population in society and policies that meet their legitimate expectations of the people.

immediate objectives



In pursuit of the main objective, the Strategy has the following three objectives:

1. Citizens are placed at the center of all democratic institutions and processes;
2. Local authorities constantly improve their governance in accordance with the 12 Principles of good governance;
3. Member to create and maintain the institutional preconditions for the improvement of local government, based on existing commitments under the European Charter of Local Self-Government and other standards of the Council of Europe.



The 12 principles of good governance

First principle 1. FAIR elections, representativeness and participation of citizens

- Local elections are conducted freely and fairly in accordance with international standards and national legislation.
- Citizens are at the center of public activity and they are involved in clearly defined ways in local public life.
- All men and women are entitled to rights in decisions directly or through legitimate intermediate bodies that represent their interests.

PRINCIPLE 2. RESPONSIVENESS



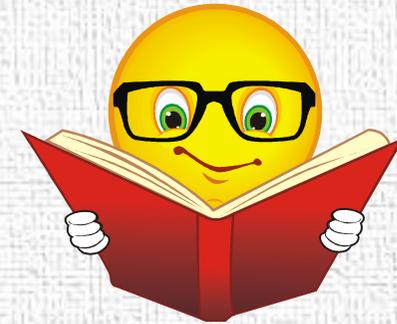
- Objectives, rules, structures, and procedures are adapted to the needs and legitimate expectations of citizens.
- Public services are delivered and give response in a reasonable timeframe for requests and complaints.

Principle 3. Efficiency and Effectiveness



- Results meet the objectives for which public consensus.
- Best possible use is made of existing resources.
- systems for performance management to evaluate and enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of services.
- Regular audits are carried out to assess and improve performance.

PRINCIPLE 4. OPENNESS AND TRANSPARENCY



- Decisions are taken and enforced in accordance with rules and regulations.
- There is public access to all information which is not classified for certain reasons and procedure established by law (for example - protection of privacy or ensuring the fairness of procurement procedures).
- There is public access to information on decisions, implementation of policies and results in a way that allows to control effectively and contribute to improve the performance of local authorities.

Principle 5. Rule of Law



- Local authorities comply with the law and judicial decisions.
- Arrangements and regulations, in accordance with procedures provided by law are impartially enforced.

Principle 6. Ethical conduct



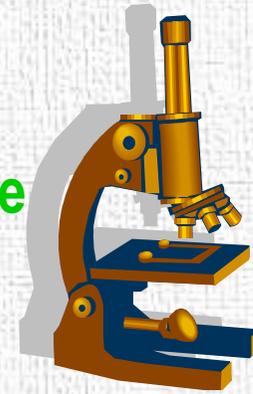
- The public good is placed before individual interests.
- There are effective measures to prevent and combat all forms of corruption.
- Timely declare conflicts of interest and those who are involved in them, should refrain from taking part in relevant decisions.

Principle 7. COMPETENCE AND CAPACITY



- The professional skills of those involved in the management processes are continuously growing in order to improve their output and performance.
- Public officials are motivated to continuously improve their performance.
- are created and used practical methods and procedures in order to transform skills into capacity and to produce better results.

Principle 8. Innovation and openness to Change



- Seek new and efficient solutions to problems and priority is given to modern methods of providing services.
- There is readiness to pilot and experiment new programs and to the experience of others.
- create a climate favorable to change in the interest of achieving better results.

Principle 9. Stability and long-term orientation



- The needs of future generations are taken into account in current policies.
- constantly taken into consideration sustainability of the community. Decisions strive to cover all costs, the goal is not to transmit to future generations tension and problems - be they environmental, structural, financial, economic or social.
- There is a broad and long-term perspective on the future of the local community as think about what it needs to achieve a better future.
- There is an understanding of the historical, cultural and social complexities in which this perspective is grounded.

Principle 10. Sound financial management



- The prices of the services provided do not exceed the value and don't reduce demand excessively, particularly in the case of important public services.
- Prudence is observed in financial management, including in the contracting and use of loans, in the estimation of resources, revenues and reserves, and the use of additional revenue.
- Prepare multi-annual budget plans with broad public discussion.



Principle 10. Sound financial management (continued)

- Risks are properly estimated and managed, including by publication of consolidated accounts and, in the case of public-private partnerships, by sharing the risks realistically.
- The local authority takes part in arrangements relating to the inter-municipal solidarity, fair sharing of burdens and benefits and reduction of risks (equalization systems, inter-municipal cooperation, sharing of risks, etc.).



Principle 11. Human rights, cultural diversity and social cohesion

- Human rights in the sphere of influence of the local authority are to be respected, protected and fulfilled, and take measures to combat discrimination on any basis.
- Cultural diversity is treated as an asset and continuous efforts are made all have a stake in the local community, identify with it and do not feel isolated.
- Social cohesion and the integration of disadvantaged areas.
- Access to essential services, especially for the most disadvantaged sections of the population.

Accounting principle 12.



- All decision-makers, collective and individual, take responsibility for their decisions.
- Decisions are reported on, explained and can be sanctioned.
- There are effective remedies against maladministration and against actions of local authorities which infringe civil rights.



Stakeholder platforms to the Council of Europe

Purpose - to provide guidance on the implementation of the Strategy.

Staff – representatives of:

- Committee of Ministers;
- Parliamentary Assembly;
- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities;
- European Committee on Local and Regional Democracy.



Stakeholder platforms to the Council of Europe

- Providing support to national and regional governments and associations of local authorities, if necessary, to establish action programs in support of the provision of good democratic governance for the implementation of the Strategy
- Adopts a program of action;
- Continued development of the European Label of Innovation and Good Governance in the light of experience of testing by governments and associations that have volunteered to do so;

Stakeholder platforms to the Council of Europe

- Subsequently promote the **European Label of Innovation and Good Governance across the continent**;
- Approve arrangements for awarding the Label to local authorities within individual member states and, if necessary, provide technical assistance for the development of such procedures.





Thank you for your attention