

What happened in „Local Government Best Practice Programme” in 2014 in Hungary?



I. Activities:

The Best Practice exchange call for proposal -the Local Government Best Practices Programme- has been implemented since 2008 with the support of the Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform of the Council of Europe and in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, Hungarian Village Association, the Association of Hungarian Local Governments and Representatives; the Department of Social Cohesion of the Ministry of Human Resources and the Prime Minister’s Office also joined the programme.

This year our Local Government Best Practices Programme as well as the other Council of Europe Programmes integrated into the Knowledge Programme of the TÖOSZ were promoted in the framework of an international conference that was held **on 20 November, 2014 in the Marble Room of the Ministry of Interior**. A publication “**TÖOSZ Programmes providing help for Local Governments with the support of the Council of Europe**” was written and published to present and promote how the Council of Europe’s knowledge programmes are adopted by TÖOSZ, a further promotional material titled the “**Knowledge Programmes of TÖOSZ**” which is bilingual English and Hungarian was also issued to give an overview of the Council of Europe’s programmes.



II. Publications:

The publication “**TÖOSZ Programmes providing help for Local Governments with the support of the Council of Europe**” of **80 pages** was wrote and published in English in **250 copies and in Hungarian in 1000 copies**. The aim of the publication was to promote the knowledge programmes of the Council of Europe and TÖOSZ and thereby strengthen local government skills, contribute to decentralization processes in Hungary and promote peer-learning and bench learning in the local scene.

The topics dealt with in the publication among others were the following:

1. Best Practice Programme and other initiatives of the Council of Europe’s Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform
3. The knowledge programmes of TÖOSZ
4. Leadership support Programme – the benchmarks of local government leadership and strategic management
5. Leadership Academy – leadership training in groups three times in three days
6. On The Best Practices competition – Local Government Best Practices Programme in Hungary
7. Other Capacity Building Programs of TÖOSZ

The publication “**Knowledge Programmes of TÖOSZ**” which is 11 pages long and is bilingual – English and Hungarian -, was printed in **2000 copies** to also promote the Council of Europe’s programmes and to give a brief and yet extensive overview of all the tools the Hungarian local governments may make use of when improving their service-provision and management skills as well as when aspiring towards cooperation with other local governments in order to resolve their occurring problems and find solutions to given difficult dilemmas.

III. Conference:

In the international conference 124 people, mostly mayors from all around the country participated, 9 international speakers were invited from 3 countries, Austria, Slovakia, France to talk about the local government best practice collection and use in the respective countries. The Council of Europe’s Centre of Expertise for Local Government reform was represented by **Gennadiy Kosyak** who presented the Local Government Best Practice Programme of the Council of Europe as well as other successful knowledge programme of the Council of Europe. The attached Agenda contains the programme of the conference.



Tibor Pogácsás, the State Secretary in the Ministry of Interior acted as the Hungarian host and sponsor of the event. In his intervention, he called TÖOSZ's best practice programme to assess, collect local government best practices a well functioning initiative. He stressed the importance of peer-learning, bench-learning. He stated that new solutions, developments of service provision all contribute to the improvement of the life of citizens and that of the local government operation. He emphasized that the local government system in the last 24 years proved that it is one of the most important pillar of the Hungarian democracy.

In his opening speech **Jenő Schmidt, the president of TÖOSZ** talked about the fact that in the



course of the last period the Hungarian National Association of Local Authorities (TÖOSZ) besides its traditional interest-representative, interest-promotional activities has been dealing with programmes supporting local authorities in a gradually extended circle and a depth. In this service of strengthening and transmitting local government knowledge, TÖOSZ has received the professional support and help of the Council of Europe from the very beginning. At the

same time, the various bilateral, international partnerships of the Association also contributed to the fact that we could provide interested local governments with good examples and solutions that can be implemented in the various fields related to local governance and local government leadership work. If local governments all around the country get to know and adopt efficient methods, the living standards of many municipalities in other parts of the country may also be improved. It is now evident for the local government leaders that life-long learning is a must.



Gennadiy Kosyak, the expert of the Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform held a presentation on the Council of Europe's capacity-building and knowledge programmes. The Centre is widely recognised for the quality and modernity of its programmes, for its impact orientation and for the success of its approach. It pioneers an innovative business model for capacity-building in local authorities, which incorporates highly effective and impact-oriented programmes and draws on the very best of European experience in order to develop effective democratic local government. Through legal assistance programmes, it has supported all central and eastern European countries in their efforts to decentralise and, through capacity-building programmes, to reinforce the institutional capacity of their local authorities thus improving the quality of local and regional governance. It has also offered assistance to local authorities in several Western and Nordic countries. Currently 32 full programmes are being implemented across 20 countries.

The international speakers who presented international good practices, the methods of their collections and their results were from:

-Slovakia, **Barbara Gindlová**, director of international relations, the Association of Towns and Communities in Slovakia

-Austrian towns, **Mag.Dipl.-Ing. Dr. Guido Dernbauer**, expert of Sustainability, Climate Change, Waste-Management, **Mag. Alexander Lesigang**, the Austrian Association of Cities and Towns, Expert of European and International relations

-in Austrian communes, **Mag. Lucas Sobotka**, Manager Director, Kommunalnet, **Mag.Nicolaus Drimmel**, Deputy Secretary-General, the Austrian Association of Municipalities



The results of the five year long period of the Best Practice Programme of TÖOSZ and the themes of the next call for proposal for 2014-2015 were presented by dr. Gábor Zongor, Secretary-General of TÖOSZ, he also presented the “**TÖOSZ programmes helping local governments with the support of the Council of Europe**” publication.



Zsuzsa Sebestyén, coordinator of equal opportunities in the Ministry of Human Resources held a presentation on the Local Equal Opportunity Plans. She stressed that Local Equal Opportunity Plans reflect on the National Social Cohesion Strategy that support the local implementation of equal opportunity criteria. Its focuses are: people living in poverty, Roma population, children, elderly, women and those living with disadvantages. She presented the BPP of the Ministry of Equal Opportunities for 2014-2015 which will be: **“The best practices of the cooperation of municipal local government and the Roma minority local government”**.

Dr. Imre Hoffmann Imre - Deputy Secretary of State responsible for public employment and



water supplies gave a presentation on public employment and its future roles. He spoke about the fact that public employment has several advantages for municipalities, thanks to this system the municipalities become more ordered, cleaner, public security and citizens values protection are more easily maintained. He also thinks that work for the communities and the acknowledgement of human work is increased thanks to the public employment programme. He therefore finds it extremely

useful that a new call will be launched in the framework of **the Local Government Best Practice Program** as a result of which Hungarian municipalities may present their knowledge, skills and practices.

dr. Tamás Benedek from deputy-head of department, Agrarian-Municipal Development Deputy State-Secretariat, EMVA Department, Prime Minister’s Office talked about the current situation, problems and tasks of small municipalities and also presented the “Managing municipality” approach and its modes of application in order to resolve given problems.



In the second part of the conference, the leading role was taken up by historical towns. First **Gizella** architect, member of the Presidency of the Cultural Heritage Department of the Hungarian Urbanist Society talked about the possibilities of “European Cultural Capital Call for Proposal” presenting the example of Bologna.

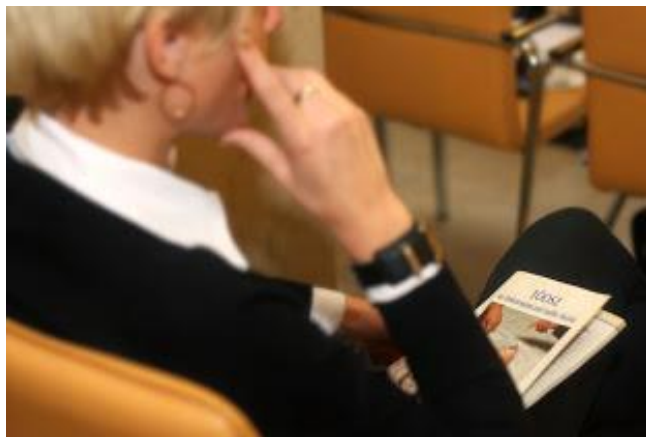


Then **Frédérique Schulthess**, leading expert of culture, tourism, cultural heritage in Chalons-en-Champagne town, representative of the Association National des Villes et pays d'Art et d'Histoire talked about the best practices in cultural heritage protection in France, the French system of Label.

The conference was closed down by the **renewal of the Presidency of the TÖOSZ Chamber of Historical Towns and Municipalities**. **Mr. Gyula Porga**, Mayor of Veszprém town with county rank became the president, **Mrs. Anikó Lénártné Benei**, Mayor of Abasár and **Mr. Tibor Garaguly** mayor of Etyek were elected the Co-Presidents of the Chamber.

IV. Dissemination of Results:

Our event and the relevant publications, promotional materials were supported by the Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform of the Council of Europe. **The publications were distributed at the conference to 124 participants** and will be further disseminated **at our 19 county meetings** that will take place from February-May, 2015, where we are expecting the participation of around **950 mayors**, local government representatives. All the documentations and publications connected to the event will be made available via Internet to a wide public and all local governments (**3170 municipalities**) and we also promoted our results through our e-Newsletter that we sent out to all member municipalities (**1700 local authorities**) right after the conference.



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A Legjobb Önkormányzati Gyakorlatok Programja

