



Istituto di Sociologia Internazionale
Institute of International Sociology
Gorizia

**ELoGE – European Label of Governance
Excellence**

2025

PROGRAMME GUIDE



ELOGE – European Label of Governance Excellence is a Council of Europe program that promotes the 12 principles of democratic good governance at the local level.

ISIG – Institute of International Sociology of Gorizia – is a research institute that supports local authorities and partner institutions in the implementation of the program. In this role, ISIG provides scientific expertise, methodological guidance, and training activities, assuming full editorial responsibility for this manual. The content does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Council of Europe.



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ISTITUTO DI SOCIOLOGIA INTERNAZIONALE
INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGY
GORIZIA

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Culture, Development, and the Impact of Cultural

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1 INTRODUCTION

The European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE) is a recognition awarded by the Council of Europe to local authorities that demonstrate a high level of compliance with the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance. Over the past decade, ELoGE has been implemented in more than a dozen member States, adapting its methodology to different national contexts while remaining anchored in the Council of Europe's Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at Local Level (2008) and the Committee of Ministers' Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)5 on the Principles of Good Democratic Governance.

This manual has been drafted by the Institute of International Sociology of Gorizia (ISIG) as practical guidance for local authorities and accredited entities engaged in the implementation of ELoGE. It aims to provide clear, step-by-step support on how to join the programme, use its tools, and benefit from the evaluation process, while ensuring alignment with the official standards of the Council of Europe.

The manual builds on:

- Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)5 and its Explanatory Memorandum;
- The Regulations for Implementing ELoGE adopted by the Council of Europe (2024);
- The official European Benchmark (2024) and standardised questionnaires;
- Lessons from ten years of ISIG's experience supporting ELoGE implementation in Italy and internationally, including methodological guides, Evaluation Committee practices, and national adaptations (such as in Malta).

1.1 A PRACTITIONERS' MANUAL

It is important to stress that this manual is a practitioners' tool, not a Council of Europe normative document. The procedures and guidance it contains are based on ISIG's applied experience in the field and are intended to help municipalities and accredited entities navigate the programme effectively.

The official reference documents for ELoGE remain those adopted by the Council of Europe:

- The Regulations for Implementing ELoGE (Council of Europe, 2024);
- The European Benchmark and standard questionnaires (Council of Europe, 2024);
- Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)5 and related texts.

These can be consulted directly on the Council of Europe website (www.coe.int).

1.2 SCOPE OF THE MANUAL

This manual is designed to:

- Present the conceptual framework of ELoGE and the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance.
- Clarify the roles of actors (Accreditation Platform, accredited entities, Evaluation Committees, municipalities, citizens/residents).
- Explain the procedures for enrolment, use of the tools, evaluation, and awarding of the Label.
- Provide practical annexes (templates, thresholds, communication tools, reporting formats) to support implementation.
- Include national annexes (e.g. [Malta](#)) with country-specific adaptations.

By combining the official Council of Europe framework with practical experience from implementation, the manual seeks to offer a clear and operational guide for municipalities that wish to strengthen their governance through ELoGE.

Disclaimer on AI Assistance

This manual received limited assistance from AI tools, used exclusively to refine language, ensure consistency, and improve the clarity of existing content. No new concepts, methodologies, or original ideas were generated by AI.

All substantive content, structure, and methodological guidance are the result of ISIG's applied research and experience in implementing the ELoGE programme. The author(s) carried out thorough reviews and edits of all AI-assisted outputs and take full responsibility for the final content of this manual.

The following tools were used:

- ChatGPT (OpenAI, GPT-5) – to support drafting, editing, and harmonisation of text.

The preparation of this manual respected relevant ethical and legal frameworks, including:

- The Council of Europe's Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law (2024);
- The UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of AI (2021);
- The EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

2 CONCEPT AND FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS ELOGE?

The European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE) is a recognition awarded by the Council of Europe to local authorities that demonstrate a high level of compliance with the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance.

ELoGE is not only a symbol of excellence, it is also a practical tool for improvement. By combining a structured self-assessment (benchmark), surveys of citizens/residents, staff, and elected representatives, and an independent review by a national Evaluation Committee, municipalities obtain a balanced view of their governance performance.

The programme is anchored in Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the Principles of Good Democratic Governance. It builds on the Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at Local Level (2008) and is overseen by the ELoGE Accreditation Platform, established under the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe.

2.2 THE 12 PRINCIPLES OF GOOD DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

The ELoGE process assesses municipalities against the following principles, grouped into four fundamentals:

Fundamental 1 – Democracy, Human Rights and Rule of Law

1. Democratic participation
2. Human rights
3. Rule of law

Fundamental 2 – Public Ethics and Integrity

4. Public ethics
5. Accountability
6. Openness and transparency

Fundamental 3 – Good Administration

7. Efficient, effective and sound administration
8. Leadership, capability and capacity
9. Responsiveness

Fundamental 4 – Quality of Services and Wellbeing

10. Sound financial and economic management
11. Sustainability and long-term orientation
12. Openness to change and innovation

(A full explanation of each principle, based on CM/Rec(2023)5, is provided in [Annex 1](#).)

2.3 ACTORS AND ROLES IN ELOGE

The ELoGE process involves a clear hierarchy of bodies and actors:

2.3.1 ELoGE accreditation platform (Council of Europe)

- Grants accreditation to national or regional entities to implement and award ELoGE.
- Safeguards the methodology, integrity, and reputation of the Label.
- Oversees compliance with the official Regulations.

2.3.2 Accredited entity (National or Regional stakeholders' platform)

- A body accredited by the Council of Europe to run ELoGE in a country or region.
- May be an association of local authorities, an academic/public institution, or a multi-stakeholder platform.
- Responsibilities:
 - Coordinate the ELoGE cycle nationally.
 - Support municipalities in implementing the tools.
 - Establish and manage the (National) Evaluation Committee.
 - Report to the Accreditation Platform in Strasbourg.

2.3.3 (National) Evaluation Committee

- Independent committee of experts appointed by the accredited entity.
- Balanced composition (academics, practitioners, local authority representatives, civil society).
- Functions:
 - Review and validate survey and benchmark results.
 - Assess evidence submitted by municipalities.
 - Apply both quantitative scoring and qualitative judgement.
 - Make final recommendations on awarding ELoGE.

2.3.4 Local authorities (Municipalities)

- Applicants to the programme.
- Responsibilities:
 - Form a local working group (mayor, councillors, staff, opposition).
 - Administer citizen/resident, staff, and elected representatives' questionnaires.
 - Complete the benchmark with evidence.
 - Submit results to the accredited entity.

2.3.5 Citizens/residents, staff, and elected representatives

- Provide their perceptions of governance through questionnaires.
- Ensure that the assessment reflects diverse viewpoints from within the community.

3 JOINING THE PROGRAMME

3.1 ENROLMENT AND ELIGIBILITY

Participation in ELoGE is open to local authorities in Council of Europe member States where an accredited entity has been authorised to run the programme.

To be eligible, a municipality must:

- Adopt a [formal act of application](#) (e.g. council resolution or executive board decision) confirming political will to participate.
- Commit to completing the benchmark and administering the three questionnaires (citizens/residents, staff, elected representatives).
- Respect the minimum thresholds for participation (see [Annex 2](#)).
- Nominate a local contact point to coordinate the process internally.

3.2 ESTABLISHING THE LOCAL WORKING GROUP

Each participating municipality sets up a working group to oversee the process. This should include:

- The Mayor or Council President.
- One or more members of the executive.
- At least one member of the opposition.
- Senior municipal staff.

The working group ensures that:

- The benchmark is completed collectively.
- Evidence is collected and documented.
- Questionnaires are disseminated widely.
- Results are submitted to the accredited entity.

3.3 TIMELINE OF THE ELOGE CYCLE

The ELoGE cycle is structured in successive phases:

1. Application and enrolment

- Municipality adopts a formal act (council resolution/executive decision).
- Application submitted to the accredited entity.
- Local working group established.

2. Preparation

- Accredited entity provides training or briefing.
- Adaptation of questionnaires and benchmark (if required by national context) is carried out exclusively by the accredited entity, with approval from the Council of Europe.

3. Data collection

- Questionnaires disseminated to citizens/residents, staff, and elected representatives.
- Benchmark completed by the working group, with supporting evidence.

4. Submission

- All data transmitted to the accredited entity by the set deadline.

5. Evaluation

- Results reviewed and validated by the (National) Evaluation Committee.
- Composite score and qualitative assessment finalised.

6. Awarding

- Councils achieving the required standards are granted ELoGE.
- Ceremony and public recognition.

7. Follow-up

- Municipality receives structured feedback.
- Results can be used for improvement plans and citizen/resident dialogue.

3.4 5 KEY BENEFITS OF JOINING ELOGE

1. Structured Self-Assessment

By joining ELoGE, municipalities gain a unique opportunity to reflect on their governance practices through a rigorous self-assessment based on the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance. This helps identify strengths, gaps, and areas for targeted improvement.

2. Capacity Building & Improvement

The evaluation process generates concrete recommendations to enhance institutional performance. Municipalities benefit from practical tools and guidance to strengthen transparency, accountability, citizen participation, and effective service delivery.

3. Enhanced Credibility & Access to Funding

ELoGE provides official recognition of compliance with European governance standards. This strengthens the municipality's legitimacy with citizens, peers, and external partners — and serves as a powerful asset when applying for EU or other international funding opportunities.

4. Recognition & Visibility

The ELoGE crystal is not only a certificate, but a visible mark of excellence. Municipalities that achieve the label gain greater visibility at local, national, and European levels, demonstrating a strong commitment to democratic governance.

5. Citizen Trust & Peer Learning

The ELoGE process actively involves residents, staff, and stakeholders, reinforcing dialogue and trust between institutions and citizens. Municipalities also join a European network of local authorities, where they can exchange good practices and learn from each other's innovations.

4 THE TOOLS

The ELoGE process is based on four official tools provided and validated by the Council of Europe. Together, they ensure a comprehensive, 360° evaluation of local governance:

1. The **benchmark (self-assessment matrix)** completed by the municipality.
2. The **citizens/residents' questionnaire**.
3. The **staff questionnaire**.
4. The **elected representatives' questionnaire**.

4.1 THE BENCHMARK (SELF-ASSESSMENT MATRIX)

The benchmark is the core self-assessment tool. It is completed by the municipal working group and provides a structured reflection on governance performance against the 12 Principles.

Structure

- For each principle:
 - Three objectives.
 - Two indicators per objective (six per principle in total).
 - Guiding questions help municipalities assess their performance.
- Each indicator is scored on a 1–4 scale:
 - 1 = Not at all
 - 2 = Partially
 - 3 = Sufficiently
 - 4 = Fully
- A final statement per principle summarises the municipality's overall position.

Evidence

Each score must be supported by documentary evidence, such as regulations, reports, minutes, communication outputs, or participation records. The benchmark is only valid when accompanied by adequate evidence.

Scoring

- Indicator scores are averaged into a principle score.
- All principle scores are converted to a 0–1 scale.
- The overall benchmark contributes 60% of the final ELoGE score.

4.2 QUESTIONNAIRES

The questionnaires capture the perceptions of those who experience governance directly: citizens/residents, municipal staff, and elected representatives.

4.2.1 Structure

Each questionnaire includes:

- Section 1 – Privacy notice and consent (mandatory).
- Section 2 – ELoGE Assessment: one question for each of the 12 Principles, scored on the same 1–4 scale as the benchmark.
- Section 3 – Socio-demographic or professional profile (optional).
- Section 4 – Additional questions on participation, work satisfaction, or volunteerism (optional).

Only the responses to Section 2 (12 Principles) are used in the calculation of the final ELoGE score.



4.2.2 Administration

- The accredited entity provides the official versions of the questionnaires, adapted nationally and approved by the Council of Europe.
- Municipalities are responsible for disseminating them (online and/or paper) and encouraging participation.
- Minimum thresholds of participation apply (see [Annex 2](#)).

4.3 METHODOLOGICAL NOTE ON THRESHOLDS

The ELoGE questionnaires are **not scientific surveys** but participatory tools. Thresholds are intended as minimum safeguards:

- They prevent results from being based on too few voices.
- They allow comparability across municipalities of different sizes.
- They balance ambition and feasibility: smaller municipalities can mobilise a larger proportion of their population, while larger municipalities are asked for feasible but still meaningful absolute numbers.
- They are minimum requirements: municipalities are encouraged to exceed them.

4.4 INTEGRITY OF THE TOOLS

- **Municipality role:** carry out the benchmark and administer the questionnaires.
- **Accredited entity role:** provide the official tools, monitor their correct use, and support municipalities.
- **Evaluation Committee role:** review questionnaires and benchmark results, validate evidence, and ensure consistency and fairness.

5 THE EVALUATION

5.1 THE (NATIONAL) EVALUATION COMMITTEE

The (National) Evaluation Committee is appointed by the accredited entity to ensure neutrality and credibility in the ELoGE process.

5.1.1 Composition

- Independent experts (academics, practitioners, governance specialists).
- Representatives of local authorities or their associations.
- Civil society voices where appropriate.
- Balanced in terms of gender and perspectives.

5.1.2 Mandate

- Validate the results submitted by each municipality.
- Review the benchmark and its supporting evidence.
- Examine participation levels in the three questionnaires.
- Apply both quantitative scoring and qualitative judgement.
- Make final recommendations on awarding ELoGE.

5.2 HOW THE EVALUATION WORKS

Step 1 – Data consolidation

- Municipalities submit:
 - Completed benchmark with supporting evidence.
 - Results of the three questionnaires.
- The accredited entity consolidates this material for review.

Step 2 – Normalisation of scores

- All questionnaire and benchmark scores use the same 1–4 scale.
- To ensure comparability, scores are converted to a 0–1 scale.

Step 3 – Weighted composition

The final ELoGE score is a weighted average of the four tools:

$$\text{Final Score} = (B \times 0.60) + (C \times 0.20) + (S \times 0.10) + (E \times 0.10)$$

Where:

- B = Benchmark average (0–1)
- C = Citizens /residents' questionnaire average (0–1)
- S = Staff questionnaire average (0–1)
- E = Elected representatives' questionnaire average (0–1)

Step 4 – Eligibility threshold

- A municipality is eligible if its final score is ≥ 0.67 (two-thirds compliance).
- Scores below 0.33 on individual principles are flagged as weaknesses.



Step 5 – Committee review

The Evaluation Committee reviews:

- Quality and completeness of benchmark evidence.
- Credibility of the final statements.
- Adequacy of questionnaire participation.
- May apply a qualitative adjustment of ± 0.1 .

Step 6 – Final validation

The adjusted score becomes the validated final score.

- Municipalities above the threshold are recommended for the Label.
- Municipalities below the threshold do not receive the Label but still receive feedback.

5.3 OUTPUTS OF THE EVALUATION

- **Award decision** – Eligible municipalities are granted the ELoGE crystal dodecahedron or certificate in a public ceremony.
- **Feedback report** – Each municipality receives structured feedback highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Improvement pathway** – Results can be used to develop action plans, reforms, and further dialogue with citizens and residents.

6 AFTER THE AWARD

6.1 RECOGNITION AND VISIBILITY

Awarded municipalities are entitled to:

- Display the ELoGE crystal dodecahedron and/or certificate.
- Publicly communicate their achievement in official channels.
- Join the network of municipalities that have received ELoGE across Europe.

This visibility strengthens the credibility of the municipality with citizens/residents, partners, and funding institutions.

6.2 USING RESULTS FOR IMPROVEMENT

ELoGE is also a diagnostic tool. Municipalities are encouraged to:

- Use the feedback report to identify priorities.
- Translate results into an improvement plan with actions, timelines, and responsibilities.
- Continue engaging citizens/residents, staff, and elected representatives in discussions on identified gaps.

6.3 PEER LEARNING AND NETWORKS

Awarded municipalities become part of a European learning community, with opportunities to:

- Exchange practices and innovations.
- Participate in events organised nationally or by the Council of Europe.
- Inspire other municipalities by sharing experiences.

6.4 CONTINUITY AND RENEWAL

The ELoGE Label is granted for a limited period (normally one year). Municipalities are encouraged to:

- Maintain the standards achieved.
- Reapply in future cycles to demonstrate progress.
- Embed improvements into long-term strategies and daily practices.

7 ANNEXES

7.1 ANNEX 1 – THE 12 PRINCIPLES OF GOOD DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

The ELoGE process is anchored in the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance, adopted by the Council of Europe in Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)5.

7.1.1 Fundamental 1 – Democracy, human rights and rule of law

- **Principle 1 – Democratic participation** Local authorities ensure free and fair elections, inclusive decision-making, and opportunities for citizens and residents to influence policies, including marginalised groups.
- **Principle 2 – Human rights** Local governance is grounded in fairness, dignity, equality, and respect for all, in line with European and international standards, including recognition of environmental rights.
- **Principle 3 – Rule of law** Local decisions respect legality, predictability, equality before the law, and safeguards against arbitrariness and misuse of power.

7.1.2 Fundamental 2 – Public ethics and integrity

- **Principle 4 – Public ethics** Highest standards of integrity are observed. Codes of conduct, ethics committees, and anti-corruption measures ensure decisions serve the public good.
- **Principle 5 – Accountability** Public officials take responsibility for actions and decisions, report on them transparently, and accept proportionate consequences for failures or omissions.
- **Principle 6 – Openness and transparency** Decision-making is open, understandable, and accessible, including through digital tools, while respecting privacy and proportionality.

7.1.3 Fundamental 3 – Good administration

- **Principle 7 – Efficient, effective and sound administration** Public resources are managed responsibly, processes are clear and fair, and services are delivered efficiently and without discrimination.
- **Principle 8 – Leadership, capability and capacity** Local authorities invest in leadership and staff skills, ensuring that institutions are innovative, learning-oriented, and capable of addressing community needs.
- **Principle 9 – Responsiveness** Authorities respond in a timely and appropriate way to citizens/residents' needs, feedback, and complaints, adapting policies and services accordingly.

7.1.4 Fundamental 4 – Quality of services and wellbeing

- **Principle 10 – Sound financial and economic management** Municipal finances and economic policies are sustainable, transparent, and equitable, ensuring resources are used optimally for the benefit of all.
- **Principle 11 – Sustainability and long-term orientation** Decisions take account of their impact on future generations, balancing immediate needs with long-term environmental, social, and economic sustainability.
- **Principle 12 – Openness to change and innovation** Authorities proactively embrace innovation and adapt to new realities, drawing on good practice and engaging with external partners.

7.2 ANNEX 2 – THRESHOLDS FOR PARTICIPATION

7.2.1 Purpose

In ELoGE, the questionnaires are **not scientific surveys** but participatory tools. Thresholds act as minimum safeguards to ensure credibility, comparability, and feasibility.

7.2.2 General thresholds

Citizens/residents' questionnaire – minimum responses by population size

Population of municipality	Minimum responses	Approx. % of population
< 1,500	25	~10%
1,501 – 2,500	50	~5%
2,501 – 5,000	100	~3–4%
5,001 – 10,000	150	~2–3%
10,001 – 20,000	200	~1–2%
20,001 – 50,000	250	~0.5–1%
50,001 – 100,000	300	~0.3–0.6%
100,001 – 250,000	400	~0.2–0.4%
> 250,000	500	<0.2%

Staff questionnaire

- At least **60%** of municipal staff should respond.
- In large municipalities, a minimum of **30%** may be accepted.

Elected representatives' questionnaire

- At least **60%** of councillors should respond.

Note: Thresholds may be adapted nationally by accredited entities, subject to approval by the Council of Europe (see [national annexes](#)).

7.3 ANNEX 3 – BENCHMARK TEMPLATE

The European Good Democratic Governance benchmark is a mandatory tool for all municipalities applying for ELoGE.

- Objectives and indicators are **fixed by the Council of Europe** and cannot be changed.
- Municipalities must:
 - Score each indicator on the 1–4 scale.
 - Provide evidence justifying the score.
 - Draft a final statement for each principle.

7.3.1 Structure of the benchmark

- 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance.
- 3 Objectives per Principle.
- 2 Indicators per Objective (6 per Principle).
- Scoring scale (1–4).
- Evidence required for each indicator.
- Final statement at the end of each principle.

Template table

Principle	Objective	Indicator (fixed by CoE)	Score (1–4)	Evidence / Source
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Example excerpt (Principle 1 – Democratic participation)

Principle 1	Objective	Indicator (fixed)	Score	Evidence
Democratic Participation	Objective 1	Voter turnout supported by council action	3	Turnout statistics, awareness materials
		Mechanisms for citizen/resident consultation exist	4	Records of consultations, minutes

Final Statement: *Short narrative summarising overall performance and evidence for the principle.*

Note: The full Benchmark (with objectives and indicators) is provided as a separate document.

7.4 ANNEX 4 – QUESTIONNAIRES

7.4.1 Overview

Municipalities must administer three standardised questionnaires, provided by the accredited entity in the approved format:

- Citizens/residents' Questionnaire
- Staff Questionnaire
- Elected Representatives' Questionnaire

7.4.2 Structure

Each questionnaire contains:

- Section 1 – Privacy notice and consent (mandatory).
- Section 2 – ELoGE Assessment (12 questions, one per principle, scored 1–4).
- Section 3 – Socio-demographic or professional profile (optional).
- Section 4 – Additional questions on participation, work satisfaction, volunteerism (optional).

Only Section 2 is used for scoring.

7.4.3 Administration

- Municipalities disseminate questionnaires online and/or on paper.
- Multiple channels (municipal offices, events, associations) are encouraged.
- Participation thresholds apply (see Annex 2).

7.4.4 Use in evaluation

- Citizens/residents' questionnaire: 20% of final score.
- Staff questionnaire: 10%.
- Elected representatives' questionnaire: 10%.
- Results from Section 2 are averaged, converted to 0–1, and combined with benchmark results.

7.5 ANNEX 5 – COMMUNICATION MATERIALS

Clear and transparent communication is essential for the success of ELoGE. Municipalities are encouraged to inform citizens/residents, staff, and elected representatives about the purpose of the exercise, why their participation matters, and how results will be used.

This annex provides examples of communication materials that can be adapted locally.

7.5.1 Invitation to citizens/residents – sample text

Dear Resident,

Our municipality is participating in the **European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE)**, a programme of the Council of Europe. The aim is to assess how we apply the **12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance** and to identify areas where we can improve together.

We invite you to complete the **ELoGE Citizens/residents' Questionnaire**. Your views are essential to ensure that this evaluation reflects the experience of our community.

- The questionnaire takes about 10 minutes.
- Your answers are anonymous and confidential.
- Results will be used to improve our services and governance practices.

Thank you for contributing to this important process.

Sincerely,

The Mayor and Municipal Council

7.5.2 Invitation to staff – sample text

Dear Colleague,

As part of our municipality's participation in the **European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE)**, we ask for your contribution by completing the **ELoGE Staff Questionnaire**.

Your perspective as a member of the municipal administration is crucial. The questionnaire will help us evaluate our practices against the **12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance**.

Your answers are confidential and will only be used for aggregated analysis. The results will help us identify areas for improvement and strengthen our capacity to serve the community.

Thank you for your support and active participation.

7.5.3 Invitation to elected representatives – sample text

Dear Councillor,

Our municipality has joined the **ELoGE programme of the Council of Europe**, which evaluates local governance against the **12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance**.

We kindly ask you to complete the **ELoGE Elected Representatives' Questionnaire**. Your perspective as a member of the municipal council is essential to ensure a balanced and credible evaluation.

The results, together with citizens', residents' and staff input, will be used to build a comprehensive picture of our governance and to guide future improvements.

Thank you for your contribution.

7.5.4 Press release – sample template

[Municipality name] participates in the European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE)

[Municipality name] has joined the **ELoGE programme of the Council of Europe**, a recognition awarded to local authorities that achieve a high standard of democratic governance.

Participation will involve:

- A **benchmark self-assessment** conducted by the municipal working group.
- **Questionnaires** addressed to citizens/residents, staff, and elected representatives.
- An independent review by a **national Evaluation Committee**.

Mayor [Name] stated: *“This initiative allows us to reflect on our strengths, identify areas for improvement, and show our commitment to transparent, accountable, and democratic governance.”*

Results will be reviewed nationally, and municipalities achieving the required standard will receive the **ELoGE Label** in [date].

7.5.5 Notes for Municipalities

- Communication must be clear, accessible, transparent.
- Stress that participation is voluntary and anonymous.
- Use multiple channels (digital, print, local media).
- Emphasise both **European recognition** and **local benefits**.

7.6 ANNEX 6 – EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

7.6.1 Inputs

- Benchmark = 60%
- Citizens/residents' questionnaire = 20%
- Staff questionnaire = 10%
- Elected representatives' questionnaire = 10%

7.6.2 Scoring

- All tools scored 1–4.
- Converted to 0–1 scale for comparability.

Formula:

Final Score=(B×0.60)+(C×0.20)+(S×0.10)+(E×0.10)

7.6.3 Thresholds

- Minimum overall score: 0.67.
- Principle scores below 0.33 flagged as weaknesses.
- Questionnaire thresholds (see Annex 2) must be met.

7.6.4 Role of Evaluation Committee

- Validates benchmark evidence.
- Reviews final statements.
- Checks questionnaire participation.
- May adjust score by ±0.1.

7.6.5 Outputs

- Award decision.
- Feedback report.
- Public recognition.

7.7 ANNEX 7 – REPORTING AND FEEDBACK TEMPLATES

Reporting and feedback are essential to ensure transparency, comparability, and continuity after the ELoGE cycle.

This annex provides suggested templates for use by:

1. **Municipalities** (information sheet, improvement reflections).
2. **Accredited entity / Evaluation Committee** (feedback to municipalities).

7.7.1 Municipality information sheet (to be completed at enrolment)

Field	Information required
Municipality name	
Population	
Mayor / Council President	
Contact point for ELoGE	Name, email, phone
Number of councillors	
Number of staff	
Local working group composition	(names, roles)
Previous participation in ELoGE	Yes / No (year)

7.7.2 Benchmark reporting template (summary for submission)

Principle	Average score (1–4)	Supporting evidence provided (Yes/No)	Final statement submitted (Yes/No)
Principle 1			
Principle 2			
...			
Principle 12			

7.7.3 Feedback report (from Evaluation Committee to municipality)

Section	Content
Municipality	Name
Overall score	Final validated score (0–1)
Award decision	Eligible / Not eligible
Strengths identified	Short narrative (linked to principles)
Weaknesses identified	Short narrative (linked to principles)



Recommendations	Priority areas for improvement
Comments	Additional remarks from the committee

7.7.4 Improvement plan template (for municipalities, post-award)

Priority area (linked to principle)	Planned action	Responsible body	Timeline	Resources needed	Indicators of progress
e.g. Transparency in decision-making	Publish council decisions online within 7 days	Municipal Secretariat	2025–26	IT support, staff time	% of decisions published on time

7.7.5 Notes for use

- The **municipality information sheet** ensures all participants start with a comparable baseline.
- The **benchmark reporting template** simplifies consolidation by the accredited entity.
- The **feedback report** provides municipalities with concrete input, beyond the award decision.
- The **improvement plan template** helps municipalities turn evaluation results into tangible actions.

7.8 ANNEX 8 – TEMPLATE OF FORMAL ADHESION TO ELOGE

Municipality of [Name] [Region / Country]

Council / executive resolution no. [Number] Date: [DD/MM/YYYY]

Object: Adhesion to the European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE) Programme

Preamble

- Considering that the Council of Europe has established the European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE) to recognise municipalities that demonstrate compliance with the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance, as set out in Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)5;
- Recognising that the ELoGE programme helps municipalities reflect on their governance practices through a benchmark self-assessment, questionnaires to citizens/residents, staff, and elected representatives, and an independent evaluation;
- Acknowledging that the programme promotes citizen/resident trust, transparency, accountability, and innovation in local governance;
- Taking into account that participation in ELoGE does not entail direct financial obligations for the municipality, other than internal organisational commitment;

Declaration of Reference Data

For the purposes of calculating participation thresholds in the ELoGE questionnaires, the Municipality of [Name] declares the following reference figures:

- Population (residents): [number] (official latest census / registry)
- Number of municipal staff: [number] (permanent and fixed-term employees)
- Number of elected representatives: [number] (members of the Municipal Council)

These figures will serve as the basis for verifying compliance with the participation thresholds established in Annex 2 of this Manual.

Resolution

The [Municipal Council / Executive Committee], with unanimous vote,

RESOLVES:

1. To adhere to the European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE) programme, coordinated nationally by the accredited entity designated by the Council of Europe.
2. To participate in all phases of the programme, including:
3. Completing the Benchmark (Self-Assessment Matrix) with supporting evidence;
4. Disseminating the questionnaires to citizens/residents, staff, and elected representatives, ensuring minimum participation thresholds based on the declared figures above;
5. Collaborating with the (National) Evaluation Committee during the evaluation process.

6. To designate the Mayor [Name] (or other appointed representative) as the official contact point of the municipality for the ELoGE process.
7. To commit to using the results of ELoGE, including feedback received, to improve local governance practices in line with the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance.

For immediate execution.

Signed, [Mayor / Council President] [Secretary / Clerk]

7.9 ANNEX 9 - MALTA-SPECIFIC DETAILS (2025–2026 CYCLE)

This annex provides the national adaptations and organisational details for the implementation of ELoGE in Malta. It complements the general guidance in this manual.

7.9.1 National actors

- **Accredited entity:** Local Councils' Association (LCA)
 - Responsible for coordinating the ELoGE cycle in Malta.
 - Provides municipalities with official tools, training, and support.
 - Establishes and manages the Evaluation Committee.
- **Scientific partner:** ISIG – Institute of International Sociology of Gorizia
 - Provides methodological guidance and scientific expertise.
 - Supports the adaptation of ELoGE tools to the Maltese context.
 - Assists in data analysis and evaluation reporting.
- **Evaluation Committee:**
 - Appointed by LCA.
 - Composed of independent experts and representatives ensuring balance and neutrality.
 - Validates results, applies both quantitative and qualitative assessments, and makes recommendations on awarding ELoGE.

7.9.2 Malta-specific thresholds for citizen/resident participation

Population of Local Council	Minimum responses
< 1,000	50
1,001 – 5,000	100
5,001 – 10,000	150
10,001 – 20,000	200
> 20,001	250

For staff and elected representatives, the general thresholds apply (minimum 60% participation, with staff reduced to 30% in large councils).

7.9.3 National timeline (indicative)

- September 1–2, 2025 – Programme Launch
 - Online workshop introducing methodology, tools, and objectives.
- October 3rd, 2025 – In-Person Training and Exchange
 - Training of trainers for regional facilitators.
 - Bilateral exchange with Italian mayors (AICCRE).
 - Practical sessions on ELoGE tools, stakeholder engagement, and municipal support.

- December 9th, 2025 (TBC) – Online Seminar
 - Programme launch.
 - Opening of Municipal registration.
- Beginning of 2026
 - Implementation of the programme.
 - Monitor and peer learning sessions.
 - Review of progress by participating councils.
- June 2026 – Evaluation and Awarding
 - Submission of benchmarks and questionnaires.
 - Review by the national Evaluation Committee.
 - Award ceremony for councils achieving the Label.

7.9.4 Useful links and contacts

- **Local Councils' Association of Malta (LCA):** www.lca.org.mt
- **ELoGE Malta 2025–2026:** www.lca.org.mt/eloge
- **Council of Europe – Centre of Expertise for Good Governance:** www.coe.int
- **EloGE Malta 2025 – ISIG materials:** isig.it/eloge-malta

- **Contact:** Local Councils' Association of Malta
 - Email: lca@lca.org.mt
 - Tel: (+356) 25968000

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