



## **International Conference**

# **Multilevel Governance approaches to address environmental challenges: Overcoming institutional silos and developing cross-sector collaboration.**

13 June 2025

Kempinski Hotel, Gozo, Malta

## **Background**

In the Reykjavík Declaration “United around our values”, Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe committed “to securing and strengthening democracy and good governance at all levels throughout Europe” and to supporting “the essential role of multilevel governance” (MLG) in delivering on the Organisation’s vision. They also underlined “the urgency of additional efforts to protect the environment, as well as to counter the impact of the triple planetary crisis of pollution, climate change and loss of biodiversity on human rights, democracy and the rule of law.”

This Conference, organised under the Maltese Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, aims to pursue the commitments undertaken in the Reykjavik Declaration and build on the conclusions of the Multilevel Governance Conference organised in Vilnius (25 September 2024) under the Lithuanian Presidency of the Committee of Ministers.

## **Context**

Environmental challenges raise multi-dimensional governance issues requiring coordination and collaboration across levels of government, mobilising actors and stakeholders from different sectors.

In its recommendation CM/Rec(2022)20, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe encourages its 46 member States to consult sub-national entities, in particular cities and regions, highlighting their essential role in the protection of the environment. Regulation (EU)2018/1999 requires EU member states to establish multilevel climate and energy dialogue with local authorities and other relevant stakeholders.



In its Recommendation 484(2022), the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe acknowledges that local and regional authorities “bear their share of responsibility” in helping member states meet their multilateral commitments related to the environment.

The Conference will look to explore beyond traditional top-down governance models and serve to showcase enabling frameworks that encourage cooperation and optimal use of administrative and financial resources. It will identify inclusive and participatory MLG decision-making processes; recognise the interdependence of different levels of governance in delivering policy coherence; and understand the roles and responsibilities of different actors in addressing environmental challenges.

Organised in cooperation with the Centre of Expertise for Multilevel Governance at the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, with the involvement of the Steering Committee on Democracy.

## Objectives of the Conference

- Showcase examples of good multilevel governance collaboration and cooperation in preparation and implementation of coherent policy to address environmental matters.
- Promote the integration of good democratic governance principles in environmental governance practices.
- Contribute to the raising awareness of the Council of Europe Strategy on the Environment.
- Explore frameworks for effective distribution of competences across levels of governance in the implementation of environmental policies.
- Identify participatory multilevel governance models to be pursued in follow up activities.





# Conference Agenda

## Friday 13 June 2025 - Kempinski Hotel, Gozo, Malta

08:30 - 09:00 | Registration & Coffee

### OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

09:00 - 09:10 | Mr Marc Cools, President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities  
Hon. Alison Zerafa Civelli, Parliamentary Secretary for Local Government

### Key note speech

09:10 - 09:30 | Multilevel governance challenges to developing coherent policy - from supra-national to local.  
**Louis Meuleman**  
Chair: Scientific Committee, European Environment Agency.

### PANEL DISCUSSION: Critical factors to ensure effective multilevel governance and balanced distribution of competences for policies to address environmental matters

09:30 - 10:45 | **Miquel Vidal-Bouver**  
Regional Development, Multilevel Governance, OECD  
**Aurora Florida**  
Parliamentary Network for a Healthy Environment, PACE  
**Meropi-Spyridoula Ydraiou**  
Congress Thematic Spokesperson on the Environment and Climate Change  
**Peter André**  
CDDEM rapporteur on Multilevel Governance  
**Davit Manukyan**  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Armenia  
**Abigail Mizzi**  
Senior Expert, Energy Cities, NECPlatform / NetZeroCities

10:45 - 11:15 | Coffee Break



## Break Out Groups

### Who has responsibility for what in multilevel governance for the environment?

Participants will split into three groups for a facilitated discussion to address key questions of responsibility and obligations. A designated rapporteur will share the outcome of discussions with the plenary group to contribute to Conference Conclusions.

11:15 - 12:15

**Legislative framework to ensure appropriate distribution of powers and responsibilities at different levels of governance.**

Facilitator: Senida Mesi, CEMG Expert

Rapporteur: Edwin Lefebvre, CDDEM

**Multilevel dialogue and effective consultation between levels of governance on environmental policies**

Facilitator: Emanuela Pisanó, AER

Rapporteur:  
Tineke Visscher, Min. of Housing and Spatial Planning, NL

**Consultation mechanisms to involve local residents in the elaboration of local plans, policies and regulations.**

Facilitator: Alisa Aliti Vlastic, CEMG Expert

Rapporteur:  
Anders Knape, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities



12:15 - 12:30	<b>Rapporteurs present feedback from breakout groups</b>
12:30 - 13:00	<b>Good practice in Malta</b> <b>Fabian Borg</b> Head, Research Innovation Unit, Malta from Resilience to Climate Command: Malta's Digital twin Assension to Multi Level Governance Leadership in the EU27 and Beyond <b>Juergen Attard</b> Senior Manager, Gozo Regional Development Authority - Achieving Climate Neutrality: A Plan for Gozo
13:00 - 13:30	Adoption of conclusions and way forward <b>Emil Vassallo</b> Director General Local Government
13:30 - 15:00	Lunch
15:15 - 16:45	Site Visits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New Water Management Project</li> <li>- Reverse Osmosis Plant</li> <li>- Rubble Walls</li> </ul>
17:00 - 19:30	Networking event

## List of Abbreviations

<b>CDDEM</b>	Steering Committee on Democracy, Council of Europe
<b>CEMG</b>	Centre of Expertise for Multilevel Governance, Council of Europe
<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>PACE</b>	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
<b>AER</b>	Assembly of European Regions