



## United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration – 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting

Local public governance and administration for results  
Intergovernmental governance and regimes  
- Representative democracy at the local level and local cooperations –

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## Representative democracy at the local level

How to make most of the strenghts of representative democracy at the local level?



## Representative democracy at the local level

Democratic institutions founded on free elections as basis for the institutional-political dimension of governance

## Representative democracy at the local level

### 5 core elements for strengthening local representative democracy:

#### 1. Level of autonomy granted to local bodies

- substantial self-government

- financial autonomy
- comprehensive responsibility for decisions

- local governments with only limited autonomy

- major decisions made by national government
- autonomy may not cover citizen's local interests

⇒ clear allocation of responsibilities and authority between national and local democratic solutions!

## Representative democracy at the local level

2. Finding a balance between economies of scale (large local government districts) and democratic values of representativeness
3. Influence of position of the mayors and local administrators on the relevance of directly elected local councils
  - dualistic system: mayor appointed by and dependent on the national government / local representatives elected by the citizens
  - mayor dependent on the council's decision

## Representative democracy at the local level

4. dual role of local representatives: representing interests of citizens and of the administration (responsibility for local services)
  - maintaining political role of the representatives: only important decisions regarding administrative issues
  - individual issues left to professional administration
5. Well-balanced and transparent representative democracy
  - no capture of governance process by elites, but representation of ethnic and social minorities
  - accessibility of all documents and public local council meetings

## Representative democracy at the local level

Strengthening of representative democracy at the local level through implementing participatory instruments

Surrounding representative democracy by additional legitimation designs and cooperation with other actors

## Local cooperations

Well known: limits of local governments capabilities

→ searching for comprehensive strategies beyond privatization

Local governance: Necessity of setting out the goals and rationalities of the different parties clearly



## Local cooperations

- Civil society organizations
  - interests of the citizen
  - make the voices of the poorest and weakest heard
  - providing knowledge to the local government
  - modes of cooperation:
    - > sharing of information
    - > development of projects and implementation of strategies
    - > evaluation of results
    - > common learning process

## Local cooperations

- **Partnerships with business**
  - ensuring the non-domination of economic private interests
  - ensuring specific advantages of economic rationality
  
- **Cooperation between municipalities**
  - achieving economies of scale
  - risk for local governance: restricting the market for private companies

## Local cooperations

Who can how administer the local governance process?

- Only local government is democratically legitimized and responsible for the perspective of the citizenry as a whole
- Meta-governance: responsibility of the public network partners to initiate and maintain the network-governance

**Thank you for your attention!**