

## **Background Information for Online Meeting**

**Date:** July 20, 2023

**Topic:** Collaboration between The Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society and the Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy.

**Introduction:** In this online meeting, we will discuss the potential collaboration between The Office of the Plenipotentiary of the Government of the Slovak Republic for the Development of Civil Society and the Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy. Specifically, our focus will be on **evaluating the public involvement process** used in shaping the "Principles and Rules of Participatory Public Policy Making" document. Additionally, we will **explore the opportunity to formalize this collaboration** through a form of Memorandum of Cooperation that would be mutually beneficial for both parties.

**Overview:** The "Principles and Rules of Participatory Public Policy Making" document aims to establish a framework for involving the public in the policy-making process in Slovakia. It emphasizes the importance of engaging citizens and civil society organizations in shaping public policies. To ensure the effectiveness of this document, it is crucial to evaluate the public involvement process used during its development.

The Competence Centre on Participatory and Deliberative Democracy is a recognized institution with expertise in participatory governance and democratic processes. Its involvement in the evaluation of the public involvement process can provide valuable insights, guidance, and recommendations for improving the effectiveness and inclusivity of the process.

**Formalizing Collaboration:** During the meeting, we will also discuss the possibility of formalizing the collaboration between The Office of (...) and the Competence Centre through a **Memorandum of Cooperation**. This agreement would outline the areas of collaboration, mutual responsibilities, and shared objectives. It would provide a framework for possible ongoing cooperation, knowledge exchange, and joint initiatives related to participatory public policy making.

**The Participatory Unit Project:** At the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, there are plans to establish a "Participatory Unit". This project represents a unique endeavor in the history of the Slovak Republic and the Central European region. The Participatory Unit will consist of team of professionals whose role will be to design participatory processes within ministries and implement controlled participation within the state ecosystem.

### **Benefits of Collaboration. Collaborating offers several benefits, including:**

**Expertise and Guidance:** The Competence Centre can provide specialized knowledge, methodologies, and best practices in participatory governance and deliberative democracy.

**Evaluation and Improvement:** The Competence Centre's involvement in evaluating the public involvement process can help identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement, ensuring the process is robust and inclusive.

**Capacity Building:** Collaborating with the Competence Centre can enhance the capacity of The Office (...) and relevant stakeholders in effectively implementing participatory public policy making initiatives.

**Knowledge Exchange:** The collaboration offers opportunities for knowledge sharing, learning from international experiences, and staying updated on emerging trends and innovations in participatory democracy.

**Enhanced Legitimacy:** Partnering with an esteemed institution like the Competence Centre can add credibility and legitimacy to the public involvement process and the "Principles and Rules (...)" document.