

A new MRP publication on "Good Governance in Multiethnic Communities"

The Ethnocultural Diversity Resource Center (Romania) has put together a publication which serves as an instrument to promote a common understanding of the concept of good governance, as well as a guide to apply good governance in multiethnic communities.

Endorsing participation in public life, providing equal access to public goods and services provided by the state, and practices of good governance in multiethnic communities are becoming more and more frequently part of the public agenda in Southeast Europe. There is however no overview of good practices at the regional level, nor discussions about what are the most relevant aspects, and what could be the standards of good governance in multiethnic communities.

These questions were the focus of a regional conference entitled "Good Governance in Multiethnic Communities", which aimed to share good practices from the region and to identify common standards and principles for local good governance in multiethnic communities. The conference was held in Cluj Napoca, on March 9-10, 2006, hosted by the Ethnocultural Diversity Resource Center, as part of the "Minority Rights in Practice in Southeast Europe" programme of the King Baudouin Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and the Open Society Foundation.

The first chapter is an endeavour to define good governance in the context of the multiethnic communities. The definition is encompassed by eight principles: accountability, responsiveness, transparency, rule of law, equity and inclusiveness, consensus-seeking, participation, efficiency and effectiveness.

Before discussing how good governance can be attained, a series of preconditions must first be met. The second chapter emphasizes that without security, talking about practices of good governance is superfluous. Furthermore, recognition of diversity is the basis for accommodating it, just as decentralization represents the sine qua non for any debate about local good governance. If recognition of diversity and decentralization give the frame for action, then the capacity to take action comes as another important precondition.

A series of case studies are presented and discussed in the third chapter with the purpose of illustrating the concept and its application in the Southeast European context.

The last chapter includes a series of recommendations designed to help practitioners improve the quality of local governance in relation to ethno cultural minorities. Questions and indicators will guide the reader step-by-step and principle-by-principle in an evaluation of the current status, and in steps to be taken in the desired direction.

More information:

Monica Caluser
Ethnodiversity Resource Center
mcaluser@edrc.ro
www.edrc.ro