The State of Local Democracy in Central Europe

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Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative
FDI The Fiscal Decentralization Initiative

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Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative

Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative (LGI), as one of the programs of the Open Society Institute (OSI), is an international development and grant-giving organization dedicated to the support of good governance in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the Newly Independent States (NIS). LGI seeks to fulfill its mission through the initiation of research and support of development and operational activities in the fields of decentralization, public policy formation and the reform of public administration.

With projects running in countries covering the region between the Czech Republic and Mongolia, LGI seeks to achieve its objectives through:

- development of sustainable regional networks of institutions and professionals engaged in policy analysis, reform-oriented training and advocacy;
- support and dissemination of in-depth comparative and regionally applicable policy studies tackling local government issues;
- support of country-specific projects and delivery of technical assistance to the implementation agencies;
- assistance to Soros foundations with the development of local government, public administration and/or public policy programs in their countries of the region;
- publication of books, studies and discussion papers dealing with the issues of decentralization, public administration, good governance, public policy and lessons learned from the process of transition in these areas;
- development of curricula and organization of training programs dealing with specific local government issues;
- support of policy centers and think tanks in the region.

Apart from its own projects, LGI works closely with a number of other international organizations (Council of Europe, Department for International Development, USAID, UNDP and the World Bank) and co-funds larger regional initiatives aimed at the support of reforms on the subnational level. Local Government Information Network (LOGIN) and Fiscal Decentralization Initiative (FDI) are two main examples of this cooperation.
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Democracy is fragile in the post-communist countries of Central Eastern Europe, where the specter of authoritarianism and corruption is rising. Find out how some CEE countries are enjoying the fruits of democracy while others are struggling when you subscribe to World Politics Review. Even under the best of conditions, democracy-building is difficult and uncertain. Historical experience shows that failure is more common than success, even in periods when liberal democracy has few rivals. But the post-1989 transformations of Central and Eastern European countries (CEE countries) from communism