

About

Democratic governance is facing a historic challenge as autocratic trends undermine the hard-won global gains of the 20th century. To ensure that FCDO posts are resourced with information, analysis, and advice on supporting democratic governance in their contexts, FCDO has launched the UK Democratic Governance Centre of Expertise (DemGov CoE).

Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD), FCDO's arms-length body, is the primary partner delivering CoE services alongside FCDO's Development and Open Societies Directorate (DOSD). For more than 30 years, WFD has worked in partnership with political parties, parliaments, electoral bodies, and civil society organisations (CSOs) around the world to create more inclusive, accountable, and transparent democratic systems.

What we deliver

Recognising the importance of democratic resilience in the face of global challenges, the CoE supports the FCDO network to deliver against the upcoming Open Societies, Democracy and Human Rights strategy. It serves as an authoritative source of expertise and insight, drawing on WFD's accumulated knowledge and evidence and on input from networks of partners and collaborators. The CoE provides information resources, technical support, and policy-relevant analysis to help FCDO posts understand the local democracy context and advance UK's strategic priorities in ways that strengthen freedom and democratic resilience. While the CoE can provide funded technical input – for example through rapid

research initiatives, evidence reviews, training for FCDO staff, and programmatic advice – it cannot provide programme funding. The CoE also cannot write FCDO business cases and cannot substitute for work that should normally be carried out at post or by Desk Officers.

The work of the Centre of Expertise is in three primary areas:

1. Thematic policy guidance and tools that support the “doing development democratically” programme needs of FCDO posts
2. Technical advice, analysis, and programmatic services tailored to needs of individual posts on elections and democracy support
3. Bespoke evidence and learning derived from the above that supports learning across the FCDO network.

How we deliver it

FCDO posts request expert support from the CoE through an online form. The FCDO team in the UK determines the appropriate level of response for each request – whether requests would benefit from existing resources or materials; whether they require internal FCDO support and expertise; or whether the request should be directed to WFD to develop a response. Building upon WFD's existing in-house expertise, continuous learning programmes, and research partnerships, FCDO's CoE team, WFD's CoE team, and Posts work together to produce high-quality tailored products and activities.