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## **EUROPEAN COMMITTEE ON DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE (CDDG)**

### **ACTIVITIES OF OTHER COUNCIL OF EUROPE BODIES**

**For information and action**

Secretariat Memorandum  
prepared by the  
Directorate General of Democracy  
Democratic Governance Department

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## Introduction

This document aims to provide the CDDG with information on recent as well as forthcoming events taking place within Council of Europe and other bodies active in the field of democracy. Relevant links to such information are set out below. CDDG members are invited to visit the websites to get access to the information required.

### The 2018 World Forum for Democracy

Under the title "[Gender Equality: Whose battle?](#)" the [World Forum for Democracy 2018](#) took place in Strasbourg from 19 to 21 November 2018. It focused, in particular, on women's public, political and economic participation and combating violence against women.

The Plenary Sessions addressed the following topics:

- Women and power: moving towards 50/50;
- Time to stop sexism, discrimination and violence against women!;
- Women, Security and Democratisation.

Questions debated in various Labs (with relevant links) as well as in roundtable discussions included:

- [Better representation through higher female participation in elections](#);
- [Can political parties make parity a priority?](#);
- [Participatory democracy: a necessary boost for women's power?](#);
- Has democracy failed women? New democratic practices and women's participation;
- National policy approaches to achieving gender equality.

Further information on the programme and results of the Forum are available on the website of the [World Forum for Democracy 2018](#).

### Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)

The third and fourth parts of the 2018 session were held from 25-29 June and from 8-12 October 2018 respectively. The part sessions included, among other topics:

- The report on the role of national parliaments in successful decentralisation processes which examined decentralisation as a tool for ensuring that everyday needs are met, for developing trust in authorities and for building peaceful societies. The Parliamentary Assembly also adopted [Resolution 2242 \(2018\)](#) in which it reaffirms the essential role of decentralisation in making public service more responsive to local needs, promoting an accountable exercise of power and building trust in public authorities.
- The report on new restrictions on non-governmental organisations' (NGO) activities in Council of Europe member states regarding concerns about new legislative restrictions imposed on the activities of NGOs and the adoption of [Recommendation 2134 \(2018\)](#) as well as [Resolution 2226 \(2018\)](#) which reiterated the importance of NGOs for the development and realisation of democracy, the rule of law and human rights.

Further information on sessions (agenda, working documents, reports, recommendations, resolutions, speeches and other documents) can be found on the following website: <http://assembly.coe.int>.

### **Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (Congress)**

At the 34<sup>th</sup> Session of the Congress from 27 to 28 March 2018, under the theme "Rights-based governance at local and regional level", a debate was held on the Council of Europe's "smaller member States" and local democracy and on the Common challenges faced by smaller States in implementing the European Charter of Local Self-Government.

The 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the Congress took place from 6 to 8 November 2018 under the theme: "Integrity and ethical behaviour of local and regional elected representatives".

Issues with a bearing on the work of the CDDG and that may present a particular interest to its members include:

- The revision of the European Code of Conduct for all Persons Involved in Local and Regional Governance - [Resolution 433 \(2018\)](#);
- Conflicts of interest at local and regional level - [Recommendation 423 \(2018\)](#) and [Resolution 434 \(2018\)](#);
- Transparency and open government - [Recommendation 424 \(2018\)](#) and [Resolution 435 \(2018\)](#);
- Coping with the debt burden: local authorities in financial difficulty - [Recommendation 427 \(2018\)](#) and [Resolution 438 \(2018\)](#);
- Consultation of local authorities by higher levels of government - [Resolution 437 \(2018\)](#); as well as
- The new modalities of organisation of the European Local Democracy Week (ELDW) - [Resolution 430 \(2018\)](#).

Information on past and upcoming sessions of the Congress can be found on the following website: [www.coe.int/congress-and-documents](http://www.coe.int/congress-and-documents).

Reports on the Activity Report of the Congress (April to October 2018) presented by the Secretary General of the Congress at the 1327<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (document CG34(2018)24) and on cooperation activities of the Congress in member States and neighbouring regions (document CG/BUR21(2018)INF49) were transmitted separately to the members of the CDDG.

## **Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe**

*- International Day of Democracy*

On 19 September 2018, the [Directorate General of Democracy](#) and the Conference of INGOs organised a conference and debate entitled: [Democracy and "The People"](#). The debates dealt with the value of our democratic institutions and focussed on the themes of (i) ensuring that liberal democracy lives up to our expectations (ii) the role of people power to defend democracy and hold it accountable and (iii) renewing the faith of citizens in democratic institutions and democracy itself.

The CDDG Chairman was invited to the session on "making representative democracy more participatory" he presented the guidelines on civil participation in political decision making and how the fundamentals and principles that should apply to ensure that civil participation are effective.

The programme of the International Day of Democracy Conference, additional information on this event and other activities carried out by the Conference can be found on the following website: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo>.

### **Committee of the Regions (COR)**

<https://cor.europa.eu/en> - see "events"

### **Assembly of European Regions (AER)**

<http://www.aer.eu> - see "events"

### **Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)**

<http://www.ccre.org/en> - see "calendar"

### **European Council of Spatial Planners (ECTP-CEU)**

<http://www.ectp-ceu.eu/index.php/en/>

## **Action required**

The CDDG is invited to take note of the work of the above-mentioned bodies and the information presented as well as to formulate proposals for follow-up and instruct the Secretariat as may be required.