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ACTIVITIES OF OTHER COUNCIL OF EUROPE BODIES

For information

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

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1. Introduction

The overall aim of the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG) is to contribute to strengthening democratic institutions, public administration reform, decentralisation and good governance, with particular emphasis on enhancing citizens' participation and strengthening public ethics.

As the committee which steers the Council of Europe's intergovernmental work in the field of democracy and democratic governance, the CDDG has a broad mandate and several partners within the Organisation.

The present document aims to provide the CDDG with brief information on the Council of Europe work in the field of democracy and governance since the CDDG's plenary meeting of 28-30 November 2018.

2. Secretary General of the Council of Europe

In his last annual report [Ready for Future Challenges – Reinforcing the Council of Europe](#), Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland urged Council of Europe member states to reinforce the Organisation, to ensure that it is properly financed and to develop new standards to help tackle a number of emerging challenges to human rights and democracy, notably artificial intelligence and modern slavery, as well as taking additional measures to promote economic and social inclusion.

On 18 September, [Marija Pejčinović Burić](#) took up her functions as Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

3. Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

During the reference period, the Assembly adopted, [amongst others](#), the following texts:

- Assembly [Resolution 2300](#) and [Recommendation 2162](#) (2019) on Improving the protection of whistle blowers all over Europe
- Assembly [Resolution 2273](#) and [Recommendation 2151](#) (2019) on Establishment of a European Union mechanism on democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights

Reports currently under preparation in the Assembly include:

Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

- Need for democratic governance of artificial intelligence (Rapporteur: Ms Deborah Bergamini)
- Democracy hacked? How to respond? (Rapporteur: Mr Frithjof Schmidt)
- Setting minimum standards for electoral systems in order to offer the basis for free and fair elections (Rapporteur: Mr Hendrik Daems)
- Transparency and regulation of donations to political parties and electoral campaigns from foreign donors (Rapporteur: Mr Konstantin Kuhle)

Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

- Fighting corruption – General principles of political responsibility (Rapporteur to be appointed)
- Should politicians be prosecuted for statements made in the exercise of their mandate? (Rapporteur: Mr Boriss Cilevičs)

4. Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

During the reference period, the Congress published two activity reports:

[Activity Report \(Mid-April – Mid-October 2019\)](#)

[Activity Report \(Mid-October 2018 – mid-April 2019\)](#)

It also published a [note](#) to illustrate how its work contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

On the occasion of the [37th session of the Congress](#), a new online tool [CARTA-MONITOR](#) was launched. This database presented the reports on the application of the provisions of the [European Charter of Local Self-Government](#). The database allows to consult the analysis, article-by-article and paragraph-by-paragraph, made during the monitoring missions, as well as to make comparative analysis of several provisions and countries.

During the reference period, the Congress adopted, [amongst others](#), the following texts:

Congress [Resolution 452](#) (2019) on the Revised Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-making Process

Congress [Resolution 451](#) (2019) on the Principles on the Protection and Promotion of the Ombudsman Institution (“The Venice Principles”)

Congress [Resolution 449](#) and [Recommendation 438](#) (2019) on Fair distribution of taxes in transfrontier areas: Potential conflicts and possibilities for compromise

Congress [Resolution 444](#) and [Recommendation 435](#) (2019) on The Protection of whistle blowers: Challenges and opportunities for local and regional government

Congress [Resolution 443](#) and [Recommendation 434](#) (2019) on Financial compensation of local and regional elected representatives in the exercise of their office

Congress [Resolution 441](#) and [Recommendation 428](#) (2019) on Fighting nepotism within local and regional authorities

5. European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission)

The Venice Commission adopted a report on the recall of mayors and local elected representatives ([Report CDL-AD \(2019\)011 rev](#) (2019)).

It also adopted a joint report with the Directorate of Information Society and Action Against Crime of the Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law (DG1) on digital technologies and elections ([Report CDL-AD \(2019\)016](#) (2019)).

6. Group of States against Corruption (GRECO)

During the reference period, in addition to the reports that are mentioned in the Appendix, GRECO adopted its [19th General Activity Report \(2018\)](#) – Anti-corruption trends, challenges and good practices in Europe & the United States of America (Adopted by GRECO 82 in March 2019, published in June 2019).

7. Ad Hoc Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAHAI)

On 11 September 2019, the Committee of Ministers set up the CAHAI. The Committee will examine the feasibility and potential elements of a legal framework for the development, design and application of artificial intelligence, based on Council of Europe’s standards on human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

The CAHAI held its [first meeting](#) on 18-20 November 2019.

[Terms of reference of the CAHAI](#)

8. Civil society: Conference of INGOs

The [autumn session of the Conference of INGOs](#) took place in Strasbourg from 28 to 31 October 2019 under the theme of migration.

During the reference period, the Conference of INGOs adopted a number of texts, which can be found [here](#). Special mention should be made of the adoption of the [Revised Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process](#), which aims at facilitating NGO participation in the political decision-making process at local, regional and national level. In support of the Revised Code, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities adopted the [Resolution 452](#). In order to promote its implementation in practice both the Conference and the Congress have launched a broad appeal for case studies on experiences with civil participation which can be used as examples, inspiration and educational tools for the use of the Revised Code and improving civil participation in general.

Also in 2019, the Conference visited a number of member states in order to discuss the situation of NGOs and their experience of civil participation. The [reports](#) have contributed to national discussions about participation in public policy-making as well as to the debates in the Conference itself.

In 2019 the Conference also adopted a new [Code of conduct](#) for its members.

Upcoming and ongoing civil society projects include:

[Strengthening freedom of association in Council of Europe Member States](#)
[Promoting civil participation in democratic decision-making in Ukraine](#)

9. World Forum for Democracy

The [World Forum for Democracy 2019](#) (Strasbourg, 6 - 8 November 2019) was dedicated to **information and democracy** under the title "Is democracy in danger in the information age?"

The Forum discussed the issues of the reliability and accessibility of information, which are essential conditions for citizens' participation in democratic processes. The plenary sessions addressed the following topics:

- democracy dies in darkness: do we have all the information we need?
- restoring trust in the media
- information and technology: friends or foes?
- freedom of expression and protection of journalists
- a multilateral response

The Forum also featured numerous Labs and Forum talks as well as side events. In particular:

- [LAB 2 – Rebuilding trust in institutions](#) discussed how can transparency be truly achieved in times of disconnect and distrust between citizens and governments.
- [Forum Talk 6 – Strengthening democracy in the 21st](#) focused on issues of lower trust in institutions, increasing political apathy, political polarisation and fragmentation. Especially, it discussed the challenge for democracy in the 21st century of how to find the right means to protect the freedoms that come with more access to information, while limiting the risks that go along with them.

10. Electoral Assistance Division

Within DG 2, the [Electoral Assistance Division](#) develops long-term electoral assistance projects aimed at the successful reform of electoral legislation and the strengthening of institutional capacities in member states. It works in coordination with other Council of Europe bodies, including the Venice Commission, the Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities.

In 2019, the Division worked on three main areas:

- strengthening the institutional capacity of election administration,
- awareness-raising,
- research and development of tools.

Examples of projects include developing a strategic plan for the Electoral Commission of the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia in the Republic of Moldova; the publication of training manuals for electoral commissioners in Bosnia and Herzegovina; creating a toolkit on resolving electoral disputes for the use of judicial professionals, electoral administrations, national observers, political parties and all stakeholders involved in the electoral process; and setting up a training and certification programme for members of local electoral commissions in Albania.

In 2019, the Electoral Assistance Division launched [ElecData](#), a database of electoral data of the 47 member states of the Council of Europe which can be consulted online by means of interactive maps and graphics. It also finalised the [European Electoral Performance Index](#) and developed a new methodology for electoral cooperation based on usefulness, relevance, sustainability and ownership by the beneficiary (URSO).

APPENDIX

Council of Europe country-specific monitoring in areas relevant for the terms of reference of the CDDG

Member State/Observer State	Council of Europe text	Topic
Armenia	Assembly, Election Observation report – parliamentary elections (9 December 2018)	Parliamentary elections
Austria	GRECO, Compliance Report – Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (17 July 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Azerbaijan	GRECO, Second Compliance Report - Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (18 June 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Belgium	GRECO, Second Interim Compliance Report – Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (11 September 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
	GRECO, Second Addendum to the Second Compliance Report – Transparency of Party Funding (16 January 2019)	Transparency of party funding
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Congress Recommendation 442 (2019) on Local and regional democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Local and regional democracy
	Congress Recommendation 432 (2019) on Elections of the Cantonal Assemblies in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (7 October 2018)	Local elections
	GRECO, Second Compliance Report – Transparency of Party Funding (22 February 2019)	Transparency of party funding
Bulgaria	Assembly Resolution 2296 (2019) on Post-monitoring dialogue with Bulgaria	Anti-corruption
Croatia	GRECO, Second Compliance Report - Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (29 January 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Czech Republic	GRECO, Compliance Report - Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (28 February 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials

Denmark	GRECO, Second Compliance Report – Transparency of Party Funding (4 September 2019)	Transparency of party funding
	GRECO, Evaluation Report – Preventing Corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies (4 September 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Estonia	GRECO, Evaluation Report – Preventing Corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies (7 December 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Georgia	Assembly, Election Observation report – presidential election (28 October and 28 November 2018)	Presidential elections
	GRECO, Second Addendum to the Second Compliance Report – Transparency of Party Funding (19 December 2018)	Transparency of party funding
Germany	GRECO, Second Compliance Report – Corruption Prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (12 August 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
	GRECO, Second Addendum to the Second Compliance Report – Transparency of Party Funding (4 June 2019)	Transparency of party funding
Hungary	GRECO, Second Addendum to the Second Compliance Report – Transparency of Party Funding (1 August 2019)	Transparency of party funding
	GRECO, Compliance Report – Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (1 August 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
	GRECO, Interim Compliance Report – Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (1 August 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Iceland	GRECO, Addendum to the Second Compliance Report – Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (26 June 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Italy	GRECO, Compliance Report – Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (13 December 2018)	Corruption prevention public officials

Latvia	GRECO, Second Compliance Report - Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (3 June 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Lithuania	GRECO, Second Compliance Report – Preventing Corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies (26 August 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Luxembourg	GRECO, Interim Compliance Report - Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (26 March 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Malta	GRECO, Evaluation Report - Preventing Corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies (3 April 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Republic of Moldova	Assembly Resolution 2308 (2019) on The functioning of democratic institutions in the Republic of Moldova	Public ethics, transparency of funding in election campaigns
	Congress Recommendation 436 (2019) on Local and regional democracy in the Republic of Moldova	Local and regional democracy
	GRECO, Compliance Report – Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (24 July 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
	Assembly, Election Observation report – parliamentary elections (24 February 2019)	Parliamentary elections
Netherlands	GRECO, Evaluation Report - Preventing Corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies (22 February 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
North Macedonia	Assembly Resolution 2304 (2019) on Post-monitoring dialogue with North Macedonia	Public ethics, anti-corruption
	Assembly, Election Observation report – presidential election (21 April and 5 May)	Presidential elections
	GRECO, Evaluation Report - Preventing Corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies (27 June 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials

Norway	GRECO, Second Compliance Report - Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (3 April 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Poland	Congress Recommendation 431 (2019) on Local and regional democracy in Poland	Local and regional democracy
	GRECO, Evaluation Report - Preventing Corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies (28 January 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Portugal	GRECO, Interim Compliance Report - Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (28 June 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Romania	GRECO, Interim Compliance Report - Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (9 July 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
	GRECO, Follow-up Report to the Ad hoc Report on Romania (Rule 34) (9 July 2019)	Judicial reform
Russian Federation	Congress Recommendation 440 (2019) on Local and regional democracy in the Russian Federation	Local and regional democracy
	GRECO, Second Addendum to the Second Compliance Report - Transparency of Party Funding (3 September 2019)	Transparency of party funding
San Marino	GRECO, Compliance Report - Transparency of Party Funding (18 March 2019)	Transparency of party funding
Serbia	GRECO, Interim Compliance Report - Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (2 April 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Slovak Republic	GRECO, Evaluation Report - Preventing Corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies (22 August 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
	GRECO, Addendum to the Second Compliance Report - Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (26 March 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials

Spain	GRECO, Evaluation Report - Preventing Corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies (13 November 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
	GRECO, Second Interim Compliance Report - Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (13 November 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Sweden	GRECO, Evaluation Report - Preventing Corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies (3 May 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
	GRECO, Second Addendum to the Second Compliance Report - Transparency of Party Funding (13 December 2018)	Transparency of party funding
Switzerland	GRECO, Sixth Interim Compliance Report - Transparency of Party Funding (17 September 2019)	Transparency of party funding
	GRECO, Compliance Report - Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (13 June 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
Turkey	Congress Resolution 450 (2019) and Recommendation 439 (2019) on Local elections in Turkey and Mayoral re-run in Istanbul	Local elections
	GRECO, Interim Compliance Report - Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (28 June 2019)	Corruption prevention public officials
	GRECO, Turkey, Addendum to the Second Compliance Report - Transparency of Party Funding (28 June 2019)	Transparency of party funding
Ukraine	Assembly, Election Observation report - presidential election (31 March and 21 April)	Presidential elections