

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 29 November 2022

CDDG(2022)24

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

16th Plenary meeting
28-29 November 2022, Strasbourg

ABRIDGED MEETING REPORT
Adopted on 29 November 2022

www.coe.int/cddg

At its 16th plenary meeting (28-29 November 2022, Strasbourg), the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG):

1. adopted the agenda of the meeting, which was chaired by Paul ROWSELL (United Kingdom), Chair of the Committee;

Information

2. took note of the report of the 24th CDDG Bureau meeting (held on 13-14 October 2022);
3. heard a statement from the Chair in relation to his recent letter to all CDDG members on the importance of the committee in the current context and of the role of all committee members, and took note of his reminder on the general rules for the official designation of committee members through the permanent representations;

Exchange of views on recent developments

4. held an exchange of views with:
 - Mr Thorvardur THORSSON, Deputy Permanent Representative of Iceland (on behalf of the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers);
 - Ambassador Svetlana GELEVA (Chair of the Rapporteur Group of the Ministers' Deputies on Democracy);
 - Mr Rafael BENITEZ (Director of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities);
 - Ms Claudia LUCIANI (Director of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance)

on the recent report of the High-Level Reflection Group, the preparation of the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe, priorities of the Icelandic Presidency and of the Congress, and other matters;

5. noted that the 4th Summit would be held in Iceland on 16-17 May and that the preservation of democracy and the promotion of democratic governance could feature prominently in this context;

State of implementation of the CDDG activities in 2022 and workplan for 2023

6. heard presentations by the chair of the Working Group on Principles of Good Democratic Governance (GT-BG) and the vice-chair of the Working Group on Deliberative Democracy (GT-DD) on recent work and progress made;
7. considered and approved in principle, the text of a draft recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on the Principles of Good Democratic Governance;

8. gave first consideration to a draft explanatory memorandum to that recommendation and agreed that members and participants would submit in writing any additional comments by the end of the year with a view to the final adoption of the two drafts at the 17th CDDG meeting in April 2023 subject to subsequently taking into account, if needed, important considerations stemming from the upcoming Summit;
9. considered and approved a draft report on deliberative democracy;
10. considered the text of a draft recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on deliberative democracy in the light of the results of a recent public consultation on the draft and entrusted the working group on deliberative democracy (GT-DD) to finalise the draft recommendation (and to hold for that purpose an informal on-line meeting in January/February 2023), with a view to the draft being ready for final adoption at the 17th CDDG meeting in April 2023;
11. noted with satisfaction that the specific tasks 1 and 2 of the CDDG's terms of reference, due for completion by the end of 2023 (draft recommendation on principles of good democratic governance and draft report and recommendation on deliberative democracy) are thus on the right track and could be forwarded to the Committee of Ministers well before the deadline;
12. considered and approved a workplan for 2023, including a provisional calendar of meetings;
13. agreed, in that context, to create two new working groups to deal with task 3 (report on green public administration) and task 5 combined with task 6 (draft recommendation on multilevel governance - including in response to emergencies) and approved their terms of reference; invited countries interested to propose by 18 December 2022 nominations of experts with the expected background for the future Working Group on Green Public Administration (GT-A) and future Working Group on Governance (GT-G);
14. entrusted the Bureau with the assistance of the Secretariat to prepare a list of those working group members whose costs would be borne by the Council of Europe, for approval by the CDDG by written procedure;
15. agreed the outline for the organisation of a conference on "The Need for Green Public Administration in the Context of Good Democratic Governance: Exchange of Best European practice" under the aegis of the Icelandic Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, to be held in Strasbourg on 26 April 2023, just before the 17th meeting;
16. took note, in this context, of the call for the submission by the end of February, of speakers from the national or infra-national level with relevant expertise in the fields covered by the conference;

17. agreed to carrying out a third review of implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)5 on standards for e-voting and to carry out a review of Guidelines on the use of ICT in the electoral process, and to therefore organise a dedicated event to be held on 16 June 2023 together with other relevant Council of Europe bodies and partner organisations; agreed an outline for that event (notably the use of a hybrid format and the circulation of a questionnaire to collect relevant information prior to the event);

Promoting democratic governance through shared experience

18. heard an update on domestic reforms and held a subsequent exchange of views with:

- Mr Viacheslav NEHODA, Deputy Minister for Communities and Territorial Development, Ukraine (online), and reiterated its readiness to support Ukraine's on-going reforms in the CDDG's area of expertise,
- Ms Slavica GRKOVSKA, Deputy President of the Government in charge of good governance policies of North Macedonia,
- Mr Vache TERTERYAN, Deputy Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of Armenia,
- Ms Mzia GIORGOBANI, Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia,
- Ms Hon. Alison ZERFA CIVELLI, Parliamentary Secretary responsible for Local Government, Malta;

19. Heard further reports on pertinent developments by the delegates of Belgium, Finland, France, and United Kingdom;

20. heard a presentation by Mr Sam VAN DER STAAK, Head of Europe Programme, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) on IDEA's upcoming Report on the Global State of Democracy 2022, followed by an exchange of views;

21. took note of information from the Secretariat on the current state of play of the CDDG's Rapid Response Service (RRS), and expressed appreciation for the mechanism;

Activities of the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance

22. received and took note of presentations on the annual report 2022 of the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance, as well as on the implementation and progress of the European Label of Governance Excellence (ELOGE) in 2022; expressed also appreciation for the work of the Centre;

Activities of the Committee of Ministers and other Council of Europe bodies

23. heard an update on activities of the Division on elections and participatory democracy and a presentation of the new Council of Europe portal on elections and the BePART platform which have been developed together with other Council of Europe bodies;

24. held an exchange of views on the work of the Committee on artificial Intelligence (CAI), with Mr Kristian BARTHOLIN, Secretary of the CAI;

25. heard information from the Secretariat on the World Forum for Democracy regarding its recent 10th edition (7-9 November 2022, "Democracy: a new hope?") and the draft conclusions;

26. took note of a general overview of developments since the 15th meeting, including the fact that the Committee of Ministers was likely to soon solicit comments from the CDDG (deadline 1st of February) on the following recent Congress recommendations:

- Recommendation 478 (2022) – "Hate speech and fake news: the impact on working conditions of local and regional elected representatives";
- Recommendation 480 (2022) – "Smart cities and regions – prospects for a human rights-based governance approach";
- Recommendation 483 (2022) – "Regional identities: promoting dialogue and diversity in unity";
- Recommendation 484 (2022) – "A fundamental right to the environment: a matter for local and regional authorities – towards a green reading of the European Charter of Local Self-government";

Elections

27. elected by acclamation, all for a one-year term: as Chair: Mr Paul ROWSELL (United Kingdom); as Vice-Chair: Mr Edwin LEFEBRE (Flanders, Belgium); as Bureau member: Mr Georgios CHRYSAFIS (Greece).

Other business

28. None.

Date and place of the next meeting

29. Agreed to hold its 17th plenary meeting on 27-28 April 2023, in accordance with the workplan approved for 2023.