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

15th meeting
21-22 April 2022
(Strasbourg and by videoconference)

ABRIDGED MEETING REPORT
Adopted on 22 April 2022

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At its 15th plenary meeting (21-22 April 2022, Strasbourg and by videoconference), the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG):

1. adopted the agenda of the meeting, which was chaired by Mr Paul Rowsell (United Kingdom).

Information

2. Heard a report by the Chair on the 23rd CDDG Bureau meeting (held on 24-25 March 2022, in hybrid format) and took note of the report of that meeting.
3. Held an exchange of views with Ms Claudia Luciani, Director of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance (DGII), on the implications of the exclusion of the Russian Federation from the Council of Europe and on the relevance of democratic governance in the current context of instability, hostility, and democratic backsliding in Europe.

Work in 2022

4. Heard an update by the Secretariat on the state of implementation of activities and the workplan for 2022.

Good democratic governance

5. Took note of the results of the 1st meeting of the Working Group on principles of good democratic governance (GT-BG) of 24-25 February and held an exchange of views on the draft recommendation produced by the GT-BG with a view to receiving feedback and further guidance from the CDDG for the working group.
6. Invited those wishing to make further contributions in writing to do so by 1 June.

Deliberative democracy

7. Held an exchange of views with Mr. Art O'Leary, Secretary General of the Electoral Commission and Secretary to the Citizens' Assembly, Ireland, and Mr George Papandreou, Chair of the sub-committee on Democracy, Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy of the Parliamentary Assembly, on the subject.
8. Heard a presentation on a Study on Deliberative Democracy by Dr Andy Williamson, Council of Europe Expert and information from the Secretariat of the Division of Elections and Participatory Democracy; held an exchange of views on deliberative democracy in order to provide feedback and guidance to assist the CDDG's Working Group on deliberative and participatory democracy (GT-DD).
9. Agreed in that context that the Committee should start working on the preparation of a draft recommendation on deliberative democracy, in addition to a report on the subject, provided that there is no objection from the Committee of Ministers.

Promoting democratic governance through shared experiences

10. Held an exchange of views with:
 - Mr Viacheslav NEHODA, Deputy Minister for Communities and Territorial Development, Ukraine (on-line) about the situation and work of local communities and authorities in the context of war. Expressed full support to Ukraine and took note of the call for the continuation of the Council of Europe project to strengthen local governance in Ukraine.
 - Ms Mzia GIORGOBIANI, Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia on regional developments and the decentralisation process in her country; the CDDG expressed full support for the reforms and offered assistance.
 - Mr Dumitru UDREA, General Secretary of the Government, Republic of Moldova; the CDDG expressed full support for the reforms and offered assistance.
11. Heard updates on legal and policy developments concerning territorial, administrative, electoral and other reforms in Azerbaijan, Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, Serbia and the United Kingdom.
12. Took note of the current status of signatures and ratifications of the seven treaties falling under the CDDG's responsibility, heard information from members on prospects of further ratifications, and decided that in future the CDDG carries out a review every two years.
13. Took note of a research project run by Prof Beck of the University of Applied Sciences in Kehl, Germany, on practical examples of administrative modernisation in European countries, for which information was being collected under the CDDG's Rapid Response Service; encouraged members to provide responses given the potential interest of the study for many member States.

Information on, and interaction with other Council of Europe bodies

14. Held an exchange of views with Ms Jelena Drenjanin, Chair of the Governance Committee of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities on its recent and on-going work of particular relevance to the CDDG, and about the importance of collaboration between the Congress and the CDDG; as well as with Mr Christoph Spreng, Vice-president of the Conference of INGOs.
15. Took note of information, priorities and plans of the current Italian, and the upcoming Irish presidencies of the Committee of Ministers and discussed the possible involvement of the CDDG, in particular through an event on deliberative democracy under the Irish presidency during this year's edition of the World Forum for Democracy (7-9 November 2022).
16. Took note of the invitation made to CDDG delegations to support the organising team of the Forum by disseminating the call for the submission of initiatives and by proposing speakers of particular relevance. Agreed to contribute to the Forum in the areas of good democratic governance and deliberative democracy (see para 15).

17. Heard information by the rapporteurs on gender mainstreaming, and on democracy and technology, and discussed a possible contribution of the CDDG to the work of the new Committee on Artificial Intelligence.
18. Took note of further information provided by the Secretariat concerning developments in various sectors of the organisation since the 14th meeting of the CDDG, in particular those closely related to its own activities such as the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance and the Division of Elections and Participatory Democracy.
19. Heard an update by the Chair and the Secretariat on the European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE), including recent decisions of the ELoGE Accreditation Platform; it noted with satisfaction the steadily increasing number of participating countries where accreditations have been delivered.

Elections

20. Thanked Ms Monika Kurian (Slovak Republic) and Ms Stefania Traustadottir (Iceland) for their long-standing contribution to the CDDG's work and elected, to complete their terms of office, Ms Puck Gorrissen (Netherlands) for the period 2022-2023, and Mr Georgios Chrysafis (Greece) for the period of 2022.
21. Agreed to suggest to the Committee of Ministers that in case Resolution (2021)3 is further revised, that the voting rules for the election of Bureau members are amended to eliminate the need for three rounds.

Other business

22. Took note of the request from the Committee of Ministers to provide comments on the Congress Recommendation 472 (2022) "Beyond elections: the use of deliberative methods in European municipalities and regions" and Recommendation 476 (2022) "The situation of independent candidates and the opposition in local and regional elections"; agreed to prepare and adopt such comments by written procedure within the deadline (15 June);
23. Took note of the request for possible comments and/or additional information, from the European Committee on Legal Cooperation (CDCJ), for a draft evaluation report on Recommendation CM/Rec(2014)7 on the protection of whistleblowers; agreed that the draft be circulated and possible inputs collected within the deadline (15 May).

Date and place of the next meeting; adoption of the abridged report

24. Agreed to hold its 16th plenary meeting on 28-29 November in accordance with the updated workplan for 2022, taking note of the Chair's call to resume as much as possible with the practice of in-person attendance.
25. Adopted the present abridged report.