



Strasbourg, 24 November 2015

CDDG-Bu(2015)34

BUREAU OF THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE
ON DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE
(CDDG)

MEETING REPORT¹

6 November 2015
Council of Europe Office, Paris
Room 2

1. Opening of the meeting

The meeting was opened and chaired by Mr Paul-Henri Philips, Chair of the CDDG. The list of participants is set out in Appendix I.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda as adopted is set out in Appendix II.

3. Decisions of the Committee of Ministers of relevance to the work of the CDDG

The Bureau was informed that the Committee of Ministers, at its 1234th meeting on 10 September 2015 approved:

- the proposals for the CDDG for the simplification of the procedures for awarding the European Label of Governance Excellence and for the modification of the composition and functioning of the stakeholders' platform as set out in document CM(2015)99; as well as
- the revised version of the Appendix to Protocol No 3 to the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Cooperation, as it appears in document CM(2015) 99 add.

¹ Prepared by the Secretariat and approved by the Chair.

The Bureau further took note of the ongoing discussions on the CDDG's Terms of Reference for the period 2016-2017 in the Committee of Ministers and the relevant Rapporteur Groups.

On the proposal from the Chair, it decided to hold a discussion at the next CDDG meeting to set out the priorities for the period 2016-2017. To this end, the Secretariat was asked to transmit the new Terms of reference 2016-2017 once approved, accompanied by an explanatory note and a draft road map for possible action and activities for the period 2016-2017.

4. Developing tools on good democratic governance and supporting reforms

4.1 *Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance*

The Bureau took note of the decision by the Committee of Ministers to approve the proposals for the simplification of the procedures for awarding the European Label of Governance Excellence and the composition and functioning of the Stakeholders' Platform (document CDDG-Bu(2015)23).

The Bureau agreed to forward to the CDDG the proposed modalities for the accreditation of the national platforms, the appointment of specialised institutions and the granting of the label to individual municipalities, as well as the measures for the promotion of the Twelve Principles of Good Governance.

The Secretariat will draft the rules of procedure of the Enlarged Bureau, acting as Stakeholders' Platform, for adoption by the CDDG.

Ms Desislava Dragova informed the Bureau that her authorities had decided to host in the framework of the Bulgarian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe a conference on the Twelve Principles of Good Governance on 31 March 2016.

4.2 *Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform - Update on activities in 2015*

The Bureau took note of the information on the Centre's activities in 2015 presented orally, including the continued involvement of the Centre in the local governance reforms in Ukraine and the creation and operation of Regional Offices for Reform, the peer reviews conducted in Cyprus (intermunicipal cooperation) and the peer review on territorial planning foreseen in Albania.

Based on the experience of the peer reviews, the toolkit on Intra-Municipal cooperation was being updated whilst, at the next CDDG meeting, a concept paper on the preparation of a new toolkit on municipal amalgamation would be presented as well as key elements for the evaluation of the Centre's activities and evolution.

5. State of implementation of the CDDG's activities according to its terms of reference

5.1 *CDDG Work Programme*

The Bureau took note of the state of implementation of the CDDG's work programme as outlined in document CDDG-Bu(2015)24 and instructed the Secretariat to finalise it for the CDDG meeting in December. In view of reporting to the Committee of Ministers it should clearly outline achievements in relation to its terms of reference for the 2014-2015 and should be complemented by a specific report highlighting the impact of the CDDG's work in member states.

5.2 *Impact of the CDDG's work in member States*

In line with the decision by the CDDG "that the impact of the CDDG's work in member States should be highlighted in a specific report to the Committee of Ministers to be adopted at its next meeting", the Bureau examined initial elements for such a report presented in document CDDG(2015)25.

The Bureau agreed that such a concise report could be prepared on the basis of information set out in the appendix to the document above. Feedback should also be requested from member States on the usefulness of the thematic exchanges in the CDDG, the use of capacity building activities and/or legal advice by the Centre for Expertise and the Recommendations by the Committee of Ministers.

The Secretariat was asked to revise the questionnaire (self-assessment tool) in the document for the CDDG requesting members to provide such information in preparation of the next meeting of the CDDG on 7 and 8 December 2015.

5.3 *Compendium of Council of Europe texts in the area of democracy*

The Bureau took note of the information presented in document CDDG-Bu(2015)26 and the on-going consultations with the relevant services of the Council of Europe on the texts proposed for inclusion.

The Bureau, recalling the decision by the Ministers' delegations that the CDDG would "oversee the preparation of this compendium and [...] report to the rapporteur Group on Democracy (GR-DEM) before its completion and possible publication", examined the updated draft compendium and made a number suggestions in relation to the following:

- the introduction should explain the selection and hierarchy of the texts included and the format and structure of the presentation;
- the founding texts and statute of the Council of Europe should be included;
- references to texts needed to be specific in relation to the topics concerned and point to individual articles or chapters where possible;
- the procedure for possible future amendments to the compendium should be envisaged.

The Bureau instructed the Secretariat to complete the preparation of the Compendium for presentation at the next CDDG meeting taking into account its suggestions as well as the feedback received from the internal consultations.

5.4 Follow-up to the seminar on "Democratic Governance of cross-border areas"

The Bureau took note of the information, summary of debates and suggestions for action following the seminar held on 22-23 October 2015 in Saint-Louis (France) (document CDDG-Bu(2015)27) and agreed that, in light of the conclusions and areas of consensus at the seminar, further suitable work might include:

- an extended compilation of case studies;
- identifying "good practices" in citizen participation and involvement at cross-border level; and
- developing a toolkit on the basis of such case studies and practices or including relevant practices in existing toolkits.

5.5 E-Democracy and E-Governance

The Bureau took note of the information and elements for possible follow-up to the workshops outlined in document CDDG-Bu(2015)28 and underlined the need for speedy publication of the proceedings of the workshop and the contributions by member States.

The Secretariat, in cooperation with the rapporteurs, was instructed to prepare the publication in electronic format to be complemented by a synthesis of the individual interventions by delegations who had not submitted written contributions. Relevant recommendations of the Council of Europe in relation to e-democracy and e-governance could also be included.

Further detailed analysis of the presentations and contributions at both workshops should be considered in early 2016 with a view to preparing a toolkit or guidelines outlining fundamental principles to be taken into account in e-Democracy and e-Governance projects.

5.6 Conventions under the responsibility of the CDDG

The Bureau took note of the information presented in document CDDG-Bu(2015)29 and Addendum. Information to be presented to the CDDG should include:

- the Committee's Terms of Reference and the purpose behind the questionnaire;
- possible conclusions to be brought to the attention of Parties in relation to the signature and ratification of the conventions as well as the declarations and reservations expressed;
- member States should also be encouraged to share the benefits derived from signing a specific convention or protocol.

The Secretariat was instructed to prepare the document for the CDDG accordingly.

Preparation of the 4th meeting of the CDDG (7-8 December 2015)

6.1 Draft Agenda

The Bureau discussed the draft agenda and preparations for the CDDG's fourth meeting and arrangements for the thematic exchanges and expressed the wish, if possible, to have a round table in the presence of the ministers that were expected to attend.

6.2 Thematic exchanges of information, views and good practices

The Bureau discussed the arrangements for the thematic exchanges and invited the Secretariat to continue preparations along the lines proposed. It reiterated its request to forward relevant documentation to the national delegations at the earliest possible opportunity, outlining the contributions required from members or questions to be answered by them.

6.3 Democratic Governance of Metropolitan Areas

The Bureau took note of the findings of the responses to the questionnaire on democratic governance in metropolitan areas and the state of preparations for a preliminary debate on this issue at the next CDDG meeting (document CDDG-Bu(2015)31).

The Bureau expressed the wish that representatives from member States as well as from metropolitan areas should be invited to participate and share their experiences.

6.4 Promotion of inclusive societies

The Bureau took note of the contributions received so far by member States on initiatives to strengthen democratic participation and involvement as presented in document CDDG-Bu(2015)32. It recalled the request by the CDDG to present information on the No Hate Speech Campaign and the Intercultural Cities Programme at the next meeting and welcomed the suggestion by both the Congress and the Parliamentary Assembly to present their work relevant to this issue at the next CDDG meeting.

In order to facilitate in-depth exchanges on this issue, the Secretariat should invite the member States again to prepare information on initiatives in this area and to consider including in their delegation, personalities with direct responsibility for or specialist knowledge of the issues to be debated.

7. Information on the activities of other relevant bodies

The Bureau took note of the information set out in document CDDG-Bu(2015)33 and requested that information be presented to the CDDG on the work of the *Ad hoc Committee of Experts on Legal, Operational and Technical Standards for e-voting* and its recent meeting on 28-29 October 2015 in Strasbourg.

8. Other business and date of the next meeting

The Bureau suggested that it would be useful to hold the next meeting in February 2016 to prepare the work under the new Terms of Reference. The final date would be set by electronic means by the members newly elected to the Bureau, following verification of possible constraints by the Secretariat.

APPENDIX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

CHAIRMAN / PRESIDENT

M. Paul-Henri PHILIPS, Coordinateur pour les Organisations Internationales, Bruxelles International, Relations multilatérales et Organisations Internationales, Boulevard du Jardin Botanique, 20, B – 1035 BRUXELLES
Tel : (32) 2 800 32 77; Cel-phone: (32) 499 58 81 05;
E-mail : pphilips@sprb.irisnet.be

OTHER MEMBERS / AUTRES MEMBRES

Mr Alexander BALTHASAR, Head of the Institute for State Organization and Administrative Reform, Federal Chancellery of Austria, Ballhausplatz 1, A - 1014 WIEN
Tel: (43) 1 53115 202806 ; Fax: (43) 1 53109 202806;
E-mail: alexander.balthasar@bka.gv.at

Mrs Desislava DRAGOVA, Senior expert, Ministry of Regional Development, 17-19 St. Kiril I Metodii Str., 1202 SOFIA;
Tel : +(359) 2 9405 428 ; E-mail: ddragova@mrrb.government.bg

Mr Francesco GIUSTINO, Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, D.A.R. - Ufficio Attività Internazionali, ROMA
Tel. +39.06.6779.5130; E-mail: f.giustino@palazzochigi.it

Ms Inga NYHOLM, Ministerial adviser, Department for Local Government and Regional administration, Ministry of Finance, PO Box 28, FIN – 00023 GOVERNMENT
Tel: (358) 40 760 5524; E-mail: inga.nyholm@vm.fi

Mr Paul ROWSELL, Deputy Director, Democracy, Department for Communities and Local Government, 2nd Floor Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street, Westminster, LONDON SW1P 4DF
Tel: (44) 303 44 42568; E-mail: Paul.Rowsell@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Mrs Greta Ulland BILLING, Senior International Adviser, Department for Local Government, Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, Postbox 8112 DEP, N - 0032 OSLO
Tel: (47) 22 24 72 25; Mobile: (47) 92 61 37 27; Fax: (47) 22 24 27 35;
E-mail: greta.billing@Kmd.dep.no

SECRETARIAT

Mr Alfonso ZARDI, Head of Democratic Institutions and Governance Department / Chef du Service des institutions et de la gouvernance démocratiques - Directorate of Democratic Governance / Direction de la gouvernance démocratique, Directorate General of Democracy / Direction générale de la démocratie
Tel : +33 (0)3 88 41 39 06; Fax : +33 (0)3 88 41 27 84; E-mail : alfonso.zardi@coe.int

Mr Theo WELS, Administrator / Administrateur - Directorate of Democratic Governance / Direction de la gouvernance démocratique, Directorate General of Democracy / Direction générale de la démocratie
Tel: +33 (0)3 90 21 53 04 ; Fax: +33 (0)3 88 41 27 84; E-mail: theo.wels@coe.int

APPENDIX II

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda [CDDG-Bu(2015)OJ3]
3. Decisions of the Committee of Ministers of relevance to the work of the CDDG [CDDG-Bu(2015)22]
4. Developing tools on good democratic governance and supporting reforms
- 4.1 *Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance*
- Modalities for the simplification of the procedures for awarding the EloGE Label [CDDG-Bu(2015)23]
- 4.2 *Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform*
- Activities in 2015: oral presentation
5. State of implementation of the CDDG activities according to its Terms of Reference
- 5.1 *CDDG work programme (2014-2015)* [CDDG-Bu(2015)24]
- 5.2 *Impact of the CDDG's work in member States* [CDDG-Bu(2015)25]
- 5.3 *Compendium of Council of Europe texts in the area of democracy: update* [CDDG-Bu(2015)26]
- 5.4 Follow-up to the Seminar on "*Democratic governance of cross-border areas*", Saint-Louis, Alsace (22-23 October 2015) [CDDG-Bu(2015)27]
- 5.5 *E-Democracy and E-Governance*
- Workshops organised by Belgium and Austria: reports [CDDG-Bu(2015)28]
- 5.6 *Conventions under the responsibility of the CDDG*
- An appraisal of responses from member States and proposals to the Committee of Ministers [CDDG-Bu(2015)29 + Addendum]

6. Preparation of the 4th meeting of the CDDG (7-8 December 2015)
- 6.1 *Draft agenda* [CDDG(2015)OJ2prov.]
- 6.2 *Thematic exchanges of information, views and good practices*
- Recent territorial reforms in Norway and Serbia (with the participation of ministers) [CDDG-Bu(2015)30]
- 6.3 *Democratic governance of metropolitan areas* (with the participation of a minister from Italy - *tbc*) [CDDG-Bu(2015)31 + Addendum]
- 6.4 *Strengthening democratic participation and involvement:*
exchange on contributions by member States on initiatives to promote inclusive societies [CDDG-Bu(2015)32]
7. Information on the activities of other relevant bodies [CDDG-Bu(2015)33]
8. Other business and date of the next meeting