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

**WORKING GROUP ON PUBLIC ETHICS
(GT-EP)**

**REPORT ON THE SECOND MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP
4-5 OCTOBER 2018, COUNCIL OF EUROPE, STRASBOURG**

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

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The Chair, Mr Paul-Henri Philips (Belgium, Brussels-Capital Region), opened the meeting. The agenda was adopted as set out in Appendix I. Appendix II contains the list of participants.

The expert, Ms Aive Pevkur presented the draft "Ethical Frameworks for Public Organisations and Public Services: A management guide". The Chairman underlined that the guide should be comprehensive and useful for addressing questions of public ethics at local regional and national level. He congratulated the experts for the quality of the draft guide and invited members of the working group to share their observations on the draft. It was requested to make the guide more practical by adding examples of good and bad practice, to modify certain definitions and to reconsider carefully the target group and scope of the guide so that it would apply to all persons involved with public service.

The working group proceeded with a detailed examination of the draft guide and gave concrete instructions for the finalisation of the text. Several suggestions were put forward for the title of the guide - user manual, checklist for action, guide for practitioners – without taking a decision.

In the exchange of views concerning the objectives and content of the guidelines on public ethics, it was highlighted that they should contain recommendations to governments of Council of Europe member states on the principles and legislation as well as implementing measures for creating a regulatory and institutional framework and policy measures in relation to securing high standards of ethical conduct across the public sector.

It was recalled that the specific task of the CDDG related to public ethics were a direct result of the findings in the Secretary General's reports on the state of democracy, human rights and rule of law: The chapter on good democratic governance had shown that there was room for improvement in the field of ethics, transparency and accountability. Accordingly, the CDDG had three tasks:

- "develop guidelines on public ethics at all levels of government, taking into account the findings of GRECO and Committee of Ministers' Recommendation Rec(2000)10 on Codes of Conduct for Public Officials;
- update the 2004 Handbook of good practice on public ethics at local level, taking into account experience with the implementation of the revised Public ethics benchmark Toolkit of the Centre of expertise on local government reform, and extend it to cover all levels of government – local, regional and national;
- carry out a feasibility study on the preparation of a Council of Europe indicator framework to identify trends in public ethics and to allow member states to assess their performance".

The working group reflected on the aim and design of an indicator framework for public ethics. Working group members underlined that first it should be decided what the indicators shall measure (implementation of public ethics measures in member States? the situation as regards public ethics?) and why (to enable self-assessment by member states? to advise member states on action to be taken?).

Members recalled that such indicator frameworks and associated regular data collection and evaluation were costly and emphasised that the data gathered and work by other organisations, in particular the OECD and EUROSTAT, should be taken into account. Possibilities for cooperation with the OECD should be explored. It was underlined that the CDDG was asked to carry out a feasibility study and that any decision on introducing or not such a framework was up to the Committee of Ministers. A number of members of the working group shared their experience with providing data for surveys on the prevention of corruption and the promotion of ethics and integrity by the UN, OECD and EU or with conducting national surveys on attitudes of civil servants as regards public ethics or ethics management systems.

The working group agreed on the next steps:

- The expert, Mr Alan Doig, would prepare a revised guide which the Secretariat would send for comments to the members of the CDDG working group on public ethics and the CDDG Bureau;
- The CDDG Bureau would examine the draft guide, hold an exchange of views on the content of the guidelines on public ethics and discuss the question of a feasibility study on the preparation of a Council of Europe indicator framework at its meeting on 19 October;
- The CDDG, at its meeting on 28-30 November, would examine the draft guide and would give guidance to the working group on public ethics for the preparation of the guidelines on public ethics and the feasibility study.
- The Secretariat would communicate dates for the meetings of the working group on public ethics for 2019 in the light of the calendar of meetings of the CDDG, its Bureau, its other working groups, and the availability of meeting rooms.

APPENDIX I**AGENDA**

- 1. Opening of the meeting**
- 2. Adoption of the agenda** [GT-EP(2018)OJ2 rev.]
- 3. Adoption of the revised report on the first meeting of the working group** [GT-EP(2018)3]
- 4. Draft “handbook” on public ethics**
 - Presentation of the draft “Ethical Frameworks for Public Organisations and Public Services: A Management Guide” by Ms Aive Pevkur [GT-EP(2018)5]
 - Finalisation of the draft text to be presented to the CDDG
- 5. Guidelines on Public Ethics**
 - Exchange of views on the content of the future guidelines
 - Public Ethics principles adopted by other International Organisations: short overview [GT-EP(2018)6]
- 6. Feasibility of a Council of Europe indicator framework for public ethics**
- 7. Conclusions**
- 8. Other business**
- 9. Date and place of the next meeting**

APPENDIX II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

CHAIRMAN / PRESIDENT

M. Paul-Henri PHILIPS, Coordinateur pour les Organisations Internationales, Bruxelles International, Relations multilatérales et Organisations Internationales, BRUXELLES, Belgium
E-mail : phphilips@sprb.brussels

AUSTRIA / AUTRICHE

Mr Peter ANDRE, Expert for Legal Affairs, Ministry of Interior, WIEN, Austria
E-mail: peter.andre@bmi.gv.at

BELGIUM / BELGIQUE

Mr Edwin LEFEBRE, Ministry of the Flemish Community, Agency for Home Affairs, BRUSSELS, Belgium
E-mail: Edwin.lefebvre@kb.vlaanderen.be

BULGARIA / BULGARIE

Mr Valery NAYDENOV, Head of Department "Administrative territorial structure", Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, SOFIA, Bulgaria
E-mail: vnaidenov@mrrb.government.bg

Mr Mihail VASILEV, Department "Administrative territorial structure", Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, SOFIA, Bulgaria
E-mail: mvasilev@mrrb.government.bg

DENMARK / DANEMARK

Mr Jesper SCHAUMBURG-MÜLLER, Head of Division, Agency for the Modernisation, Ministry of Finance, COPENHAGEN, Denmark
E-mail: jessc@modst.dk

Ms Lejla AJANOVIC, Agency for the Modernisation, Ministry of Finance, COPENHAGEN, Denmark
E-mail: lejaj@modst.dk

FINLAND / FINLANDE

Apologised for absence / Excusé

GEORGIA / GEORGIE

Ms Eka SEPASHVILI, Adviser to the Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructure on development of local democracy and good governance, TBILISI, Georgia
E-mail: e.sepashvili@mrddi.gov.ge

GREECE / GRECE

Mr Georgios CHRYSAFIS, Directorate of Organisation and Functioning of Local Government,
Ministry of the Interior, ATHENS, Greece

E-mail: g.chrisafis@ypes.gr

ITALY / ITALIE

Mr Francesco GIUSTINO, Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, D.A.R.A. - Ufficio Attività
Internazionali, ROMA, Italy

E-mail: f.giustino@palazzochigi.it

SLOVAK REPUBLIC / REPUBLIQUE SLOVAQUE

Ms Michaela BUJNOVÁ, CoE desk officer, Ministry of Interior, BRATISLAVA, Slovak Republic

E-mail: michaela.bujnova@minv.sk

Mr Ctibor KOŠŤÁL, Office of the Civil Service Council, BRATISLAVA, Slovak Republic

Email: Ctibor.kostal@vlada.gov.sk

UKRAINE

Ms Nataliya GNYDIUK, Council of Europe expert in Ukraine

E-mail: hnydiuk@gmail.com

UNITED KINGDOM / ROYAUME-UNI

Mr Paul ROWSELL, Head of Governance Reform and Democracy Unit, Ministry of Housing,
Communities and Local Government, LONDON, United Kingdom

E-mail: Paul.Rowsell@communities.gov.uk

OTHER PARTICIPANTS / AUTRES PARTICIPANTS**CONFERENCE OF INGOS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE / CONFERENCE DES OING DU
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE**

Mr Stephen GATT, Ex Counselor in Balzan Local Council, Malta, Vice-President of the
European Union of Jesuits Alumni

E-mail: stephengatt430@hotmail.com

**CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE
/ CONGRES DES POUVOIRS LOCAUX ET REGIONAUX DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE**

Mr Andrew DAWSON, Member of the Governance Committee, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, CHESTER, United Kingdom

E-mail: Andrew.dawson@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Mr Tim LISNEY, Deputy Secretary of the Chamber of Local Authorities / Secrétaire adjoint de la Chambre des pouvoirs locaux – Secretary of the Governance Committee / Secrétaire de la Commission de la gouvernance

Tel: (33) 3.88.41.35.73; E-mail: tim.lisney@coe.int

Mr Christopher BECTON, Trainee/Stagiaire

Mr Ashton GREIG, Trainee/Stagiaire

COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS / COMMISSAIRE AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME

Apologised for absence / Excusé

OBSERVERS / OBSERVATEURS

**ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD) /
ORGANISATION DE COOPERATION ET DE DEVELOPPEMENT ECONOMIQUES (OCDE)**

Ms Carissa MUNRO, Public Sector Integrity Division, Public Governance Directorate, PARIS, France

Tel: (33) 3 85 55 60 63; E-Mail: carissa.munro@oecd.org

EXPERT-CONSULTANTS / CONSULTANT-EXPERTS

Ms Aive PEVKUR, TALLIN, Estonia

E-mail: aive@pevkur.ee

Mr Alan DOIG, DURHAM, United Kingdom

E-mail: doigdurham@msn.com

M. Yves-Marie DOUBLET, PARIS, France

E-mail : ymdoublet@assemblee.nationale.fr

SECRETARIAT

Mrs Jutta GÜTZKOW, Head of Good Governance Division / Chef de la Division de la bonne gouvernance – Secretary of the CDDG / Secrétaire du CDDG - Directorate of Human Rights, Equality and Governance / Direction de la dignité humaine, de l'égalité et de la gouvernance, Directorate General of Democracy / Direction générale de la démocratie

Tel: +33 (0)3 88 41 29 10; E-mail: jutta.gutzkow@coe.int

Mr Theo WELS, Administrator / Administrateur – Good Governance Division / Division de la bonne gouvernance - Directorate of Human Rights, Equality and Governance / Direction de la dignité humaine, de l'égalité et de la gouvernance, Directorate General of Democracy / Direction générale de la démocratie

Tel: +33 (0)3 90 21 53 04 ; E-mail: theo.wels@coe.int

Mme Isabelle ETTER - Assistant / Assistante

E-mail : isabelle.etter@coe.int

Mr Lasse LOHMANN – Trainee / Stagiaire

INTERPRETORS / INTERPRETES

Grégoire DEVICTOR

Katia DI STEFANO

Isabelle MARCHINI