
Resolution CM/Res(2023)6 confirming the establishment of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 27 September 2023
at the 1476th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

The Committee of Ministers, in its composition restricted to the representatives of the States members of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (OHTE),¹

Having regard to the European Cultural Convention of 19 December 1954 (ETS No. 18) encouraging “the study of [...] languages, history and civilisation” between the Contracting Parties;

Having regard to Statutory Resolution Res(93)28 of the Committee of Ministers on partial and enlarged agreements;

Having regard to Resolution Res(96)36 of the Committee of Ministers establishing criteria for partial and enlarged agreements of the Council of Europe, as amended by Resolution CM/Res(2010)2;

Having regard to Resolution CM/Res(2020)34 establishing the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe;

Having regard to Resolution 2426 (2022) in which the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe considers that history teaching plays an essential role in enhancing young people’s skills to participate in and fully embrace democratic culture, and that the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (hereafter “the Observatory”) is intended to make an active contribution in this respect;

Having regard to the Declaration adopted at the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe in Reykjavík (16-17 May 2023), which specifically mentions history in the context of accessing information and the fight against hate speech and disinformation, in particular the instrumentalisation of history, with the desire “to overcome the past and create solid foundations to build unity in the spirit of harmony and co-operation with respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law”;

Considering that the Observatory makes it possible to share good practices and experience between the member States of the enlarged partial agreement, and to strengthen co-operation in the field of history teaching at European level;

Acknowledging that the Council of Europe has been working on history teaching, in particular through intergovernmental co-operation initiated more than 70 years ago, which establishes the Council of Europe as a key international organisation in the field of history teaching;

Considering that the Steering Committee for Education is invited to draw inspiration from the results of research produced by the Observatory and from the work and recommendations of the intergovernmental programme in implementing its 2024-2030 education strategy, which ensures that history teaching programmes illustrate the diversity present in societies, particularly with regard to history as an integral part of social cohesion;

¹ States concerned: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta, North Macedonia, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain and Türkiye.

Considering the quality of the Observatory's research, recognised by its Governing Board, particularly in the context of the first thematic report *Pandemics and natural disasters as reflected in history teaching* (2023), which raises awareness of issues of particular urgency and relevance in our modern European societies;

Considering the work on the Observatory's first general report on the state of history teaching in Europe, scheduled for publication in December 2023, which aims to present an accurate and impartial overview of the way in which history is taught to the younger generations and to identify good practices in this area;

Considering the activities of the Observatory carried out in particular through the joint programme between the European Union and the Council of Europe entitled "Transnational History Education and Co-operation Laboratory (HISTOLAB)", which contributes to reducing the gap between academic work and the teaching of history, and to supporting teaching innovation and the development of critical analysis tools for teachers and pupils;

Aware of the issues rising from Russia's aggression against Ukraine, including the disinformation, misinformation and manipulation of history, as well as the emerging challenges linked to new technologies and artificial intelligence, which undermine peace and democracy in Europe;

Convinced of the importance and relevance of the work carried out by the Observatory in relation to the priorities of the Council of Europe,

Consider that the activities of the Observatory should be pursued within the framework of the Council of Europe, by means of an enlarged partial agreement;

Decide to confirm the establishment of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe, governed by the appended statute;

Invite the other member States of the Council of Europe to become members of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe in the near future.

Appendix to Resolution CM/Res(2023)6

Revised Statute of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe

Article 1 – Aim and functions of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe

1.1. The aim of the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (hereinafter "the Observatory") shall be to promote practices encouraging history teaching and learning in order to strengthen and promote the values of the Council of Europe enshrined in its Statute (ETS No. 1).

1.2. Specifically, the task of the Observatory shall be to collect, process and make available factual information on the ways in which history is taught in all countries of the enlarged partial agreement (EPA). In doing so, the Observatory shall pay particular attention to ensuring that its activities are based on a solid scholarly and academic basis, take due account of the diversity of education systems in member States of the EPA and ensure complementarity with the Council of Europe's intergovernmental work on history education. It will not aim to harmonise curriculums.

1.3. To perform this task, the Observatory shall in particular:

- conduct a series of regular studies leading to reports on the ways in which history is taught in all member States of the EPA;
- conduct thematic studies leading to reports on specific issues of history teaching, with a view to exploring these issues more in depth and to considering topics not included in regular studies;
- organise meetings and conferences in order to assist in the preparation and dissemination of reports;
- serve also as a platform for the Observatory's partner institutes and European professional associations.

The regular and thematic studies, as well as the reports, shall be developed for information purposes and will not be binding upon the member States.

Article 2 – Accession and participation

2.1. Any member State of the Council of Europe or a Party to the European Cultural Convention (ETS No. 18) may join the EPA by notification addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

2.2. The Committee of Ministers, in its composition restricted to the representatives of States members of the EPA, may, by unanimous decision, invite any other non-member State of the Council of Europe to join the Observatory, following consultation of EPA member States which are not members of the Council of Europe.

2.3. Member States of the Council of Europe, other Parties to the European Cultural Convention not joining the EPA, as well as other States granted an invitation mentioned in Article 2.2, may request the status of observer with the EPA for a maximum period of one year, without any financial contribution. Decisions in such matters shall be made by the Governing Board of the Observatory. In the event of unforeseeable exceptional circumstances, the Governing Board may decide to modify the duration of observer status.

2.4. The following Council of Europe bodies – the Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) – may participate in the work of the Observatory, in accordance with Article 4.7 below.

2.5. The European Union and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) shall be entitled to participate, upon their request, in the work of the Observatory, without the right to vote. They may become members of the Observatory according to modalities to be agreed with the Committee of Ministers.

2.6. The Committee of Ministers, in its composition restricted to the representatives of the States members of the EPA, may, following consultation of EPA members which are not members of the Council of Europe, authorise the Observatory to invite other international organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or other bodies to participate in its work as observers, without the right to vote.

Article 3 – The Observatory's constituent bodies

The Observatory's constituent bodies shall be:

- the Governing Board;
- the Scientific Advisory Council.

Article 4 – Governing Board

4.1. The Governing Board of the Observatory shall be composed of one representative appointed by the competent public authority of each member of the EPA, two in the case of the member State of the EPA whose representative has been elected Chair of the Governing Board. The Chair of the Scientific Advisory Council shall have the right to participate in the meetings of the Governing Board, without the right to vote.

4.2. A member of the relevant intergovernmental committee shall be invited to participate in the meetings of the Governing Board.

4.3. The Governing Board shall:

- adopt the annual and the medium-term framework programmes of the Observatory and monitor their implementation, in accordance with the budgetary resources available;
- supervise the management of the Observatory's finances;
- elect members of the Scientific Advisory Council for a term of office of two years, renewable once;
- appoint experts and consultants for the studies conducted by the Observatory, after having consulted the Scientific Advisory Council;
- adopt and transmit to the Committee of Ministers an annual report on the activities of the Observatory, also containing an outline of its future activities, including their budget implications.

4.4. The Governing Board shall elect from among its members a bureau comprised of the chair, two vice-chairs and five other members, taking into account the geographical balance among its members, for a term of office of two years, renewable once.

4.5. The Governing Board may assign operational and other tasks to its bureau. The bureau shall be convened by the Chair of the Governing Board at least once a year.

4.6. The Governing Board shall adopt its decisions by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, with each member having one vote. Procedural matters shall be settled by a majority of the votes cast. In all other matters, the Governing Board shall adopt its own rules of procedure and any other arrangements required for the implementation of its activities. Decisions may also be taken in writing between meetings accordingly.

4.7. The Governing Board shall meet at least once a year. It may invite representatives of relevant Council of Europe bodies to attend its meetings or a part of its meetings, without voting rights, according to the items on its agenda. It may also invite experts to be present for specific items of its agenda, without the right to vote.

Article 5 – Scientific Advisory Council

5.1. Each EPA member State shall have the right to propose candidates for membership of the Scientific Advisory Council. The Scientific Advisory Council shall be composed of up to 15 members elected by the Governing Board, taking geographical, professional and gender balance into account. The list of candidates, comprising renowned persons in the field of history teaching and learning, will be drawn up according to a selection procedure and eligibility criteria defined by the Governing Board in the rules of procedure.

5.2. The Scientific Advisory Council shall be consulted on the Observatory's programme to ensure the academic, scholarly and methodological seriousness of its work, and on any other matter which the Governing Board deems it useful to refer to it. In giving its opinions, the Scientific Advisory Council may adopt recommendations to the Governing Board.

5.3. The Scientific Advisory Council shall adopt its opinions and recommendations by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, with each member having one vote. Procedural matters shall be settled by a majority of the votes cast. Opinions, recommendations and procedural decisions may also be adopted in writing between meetings accordingly.

5.4. The Scientific Advisory Council shall elect its chair from among its members and adopt its rules of procedure.

5.5. The Scientific Advisory Council shall hold one meeting a year. Further meetings may be convened by the Governing Board, either on its own initiative, or at the request of the Scientific Advisory Council.

Article 6 – Budget

6.1. The Observatory's resources shall comprise:

- annual contributions from each member of the EPA;
- any other payment, donation or bequest, subject to the provisions of paragraph 6.4 below.

6.2. Expenditure related to the implementation of the programme and common secretariat expenditure shall be covered by a partial agreement budget funded by the member States and non-member States participating in the EPA.

6.3. The budget and the scale of contributions shall be adopted annually by the Committee of Ministers, in its composition restricted to the representatives of the States members of the EPA.

6.4. In addition, the Observatory may receive voluntary and other contributions connected with the work of the Observatory, subject to the authorisation of the Governing Board prior to their acceptance. These contributions shall be earmarked for the objectives and tasks specified, which shall be consistent with the aims of the statute.

6.5. The Observatory's financial resources shall benefit from the provisions of the General Agreement on Privileges and Immunities of the Council of Europe (ETS No. 2).

6.6. The Financial Regulations of the Council of Europe shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the adoption and management of the EPA budget.

Article 7 – Secretariat

7.1. The secretariat of the Observatory, headed by an executive secretary, shall be provided by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and shall ensure organisational support to the work of the Governing Board and the Scientific Advisory Council.

7.2. The secretariat of the Observatory shall be located at the headquarters of the Council of Europe.

Article 8 – Amendments

The Committee of Ministers, in its composition restricted to the representatives of the States members of the EPA and after consultation with EPA member States that are not members of the Council of Europe, may, by unanimous decision, adopt amendments to this statute.

Article 9 – Withdrawal

9.1. Any member may withdraw from the EPA by means of a declaration sent to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

9.2. The Secretary General shall acknowledge receipt of the declaration and inform the members of the Observatory.

9.3. The withdrawal shall take effect:

- at the end of the financial year in which it is notified, if such notification is given before 1 June of that financial year;
- at the end of the following financial year, if notification of withdrawal is given on or after 1 June of the financial year.

9.4. In accordance with Article 18 of the Financial Regulations of the Council of Europe, the Governing Board shall examine the financial consequences of the withdrawal of a member and shall make the appropriate arrangements.

9.5. The Secretary General shall immediately inform the member concerned of the consequences of its withdrawal.