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

**WORK PROGRESS OF THE
WORKING GROUP ON DEMOCRACY AND TECHNOLOGY**



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


Introduction

The present document provides information on the state of implementation of specific tasks i. and ii. of the [Terms of reference](#) of the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG) for the biennium 2020-2021.

For the implementation of these specific tasks, a working group on democracy and technology (GT-DT) has been set up. In addition, a rapporteur on democracy and technology has been appointed. A [restricted webspace](#) has been set up to ensure that all CDDG members can have access to the working documents of the working group and contribute to its activities remotely. All publications can be found there, including additional documents such as the presentations by experts, current research studies and contributions made available by the member States themselves.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the workplan of GT-DT had to be adapted to take into consideration changes of working methods (with the organisation of videoconference meetings) and schedule.

Specific task		Planning of future work	Coordination with other Council of Europe bodies
<p>(i) Building on its previous work on e-democracy and taking into account the outcome of the 129th Session of the Committee of Ministers in Helsinki, prepare a study on the impact of the digital transformation, including artificial intelligence and automated decision-making, on democracy and good governance, also with a view to contributing to the work of the CAHAI.</p>	<p>The preparation of the study is under way.</p> <p>The working group held its first meeting on 27-28 January 2020. Hearings were organised with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr Thorsten Thiel, Research Group Lead, Weizenbaum Institute for the Networked Society, Berlin, Germany, on <i>Digitalisation and democracy</i>, and - Ms Gabriela Viale Pereira, Department for E-Governance and Administration, Danube University Krems, Krems a.d. Donau, Austria, on <i>Smart cities and good governance</i>. <p>The four working documents below were discussed:</p> <p>1) Draft outline of the study</p>  <p>GT-DT(2020)2E-Study.doc</p> <p>2) Brief overview of national artificial intelligence strategies and regulatory initiatives</p>  <p>GT-DT(2020)3E-AI national framework:</p>	<p>During its second meeting, to take place on 23 September 2020 online, GT-DT will consider a preliminary draft study.</p> <p>The study will be further developed during the third meeting of GT-DT that will take place in October 2020 depending on budgetary resources.</p> <p>The approval of the study is scheduled for the 12th CDDG plenary meeting in November 2020.</p>	<p>The GT-DT Rapporteur, Mr Peter Andre, participated in and contributed to the 2nd CAHAI Plenary, 6-8 July 2020, and will be taking part in the meetings of the CAHAI Policy Development Group on 21-22 September and 12-13 October.</p> <p>On 29 January, GT-DT participated in a hearing organised by the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, in the context of the preparation of the report on Need for democratic governance of Artificial Intelligence by Ms Deborah Bergamini (Italy, EPP/CD).</p> <p>The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and the Conference of INGO actively participate in the GT-DT.</p>

	<p>3) A brief overview of ongoing work by other international organisations</p> <p>4) Proceedings of the Round Table on Artificial Intelligence and the future of democracy.</p>		
<p>(ii) Develop standards on new technologies and the different stages of the electoral process (including voter registration, transmission and tabulation of results, etc.) in the form of a Committee of Ministers' recommendation or guidelines as a follow-up to the Secretary General's reports on the State of Democracy, Human Rights and Rule of Law and taking into account the outcome of the 129th Session of the Committee of Ministers in Helsinki as well as the work of the Venice Commission in this area.</p>	<p>At its first meeting, the working group on democracy and technology held hearings with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr Patrick Penninckx, Head of the Information Society Department (DGI), on <i>New technologies and the electoral process</i>; - Mr Pierre Garrone, Head of the Division of Elections and Political parties, Venice Commission, presented the current work of the Venice Commission with regards to use of digital technology in elections and e-voting. <p>It also discussed the paper below by Ms Ardita Driza Maurer, expert consultant, setting out the issue, and held an exchange with her:</p> <p>New technologies in the electoral cycle. Guidance from the Council of Europe</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>GT-DT E-ElectProc DrizaMaurer 202001</p> </div>	<p>A third meeting of GT-DT to make progress with this task is scheduled to take place in October 2020, subject to the availability of budgetary resources.</p> <p>The finalisation of the task is foreseen in 2021.</p>	<p>A number of Council of Europe bodies are currently working on relevant issues, namely:</p> <p>Venice Commission is preparing <i>Principles on the use of digital technologies and elections</i>, which should focus on the stage of the electoral campaign.</p> <p>The Committee of Convention 108 is currently preparing a study by an expert on <i>Personal Data Processing by and for Political Campaigns: The Application of the Council of Europe's Modernised Convention 108</i>.</p> <p>A new Expert Committee on Freedom of Expression and Digital Technologies (MSI-DIG) has been set up to explore the impact of digital technologies and AI on freedom of expression (terms of reference and composition)</p>

**LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON DEMOCRACY
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