



Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

PPSD (2015) 09

15 April 2015

CONFERENCE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIGHT TO FREE ELECTIONS: the challenge of applying election legislation and the Council of Europe standards

organised in co-operation with
the National Assembly of France
and the Venice Commission

DRAFT PROGRAMME

PARIS

4-5 June 2015

Venue:

*Assemblée nationale
Immeuble Jacques Chaban-Delmas
(Salle Lamartine)
101 Rue de l'Université – 75007 Paris*



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*Programmatic Cooperation Framework
in the Eastern Partnership countries*

Funded
by the European Union



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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Implemented
by the Council of Europe

1. Objectives

Starting from 2015, the Parliamentary Assembly participates in the implementation on Parliamentary level of a joint framework agreement between the Council of Europe and the European Union, the so called **2015 – 2017 EU-CoE Eastern Partnership Programmatic Co-operation Framework (PCF)**. This programme aims at providing assistance to the reinforcement of democratic reforms in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus.

Under the priority '**promoting democratic governance**', the Assembly will undertake activities on ways and means to improve (regional) parliamentary co-operation in electoral matters by organising regional parliamentary seminars and conferences. This conference will be the first of this series of conferences and will focus on:

- the standards of the Council of Europe concerning democratic elections and monitoring mechanisms in this field
- possibilities for improving legal frameworks and electoral practice with regard to certain recurrent issues identified during observation missions by the Parliamentary Assembly
- best practice in the field of elections.

2. Participants

Members of six Parliaments, representatives of election administrations, non-governmental organisations involved in election observations, as well as members of PACE, experts from the Venice Commission, other Council of Europe relevant bodies and international organisations will participate in this first conference.

3. DRAFT PROGRAMME

9.00 – 9.30 am

OPENING SESSION

Welcome by:

Mr René ROUQUET, Vice-President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and Chairperson of the French delegation to the PACE

NN, High-level invited speaker

Mr Gianni BUQUICCHIO, President of the European Commission for the Democracy through Law - Venice Commission, Council of Europe (Venice Commission)

Mr Michael Georg LINK, Director, Office for Democratic Elections and Human Rights of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (ODIHR/OSCE)

9.30 am – 12.30 pm

INTRODUCTORY SESSION – The Council of Europe standards in the field of elections

Chairperson: Mr René ROUQUET, Vice-President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Ensuring greater democracy in elections

Mr Jean-Charles GARDETTO, former PACE member and Rapporteur on “Ensuring greater democracy in elections”

Soft law of the Council of Europe in the field of elections

Mr Peter PACZOLAY, Professor of Constitutional Law, Honorary President of the Venice Commission, Former President of the Constitutional Court of Hungary

Council of Europe Electoral Assistance Programmes

Ms Claudia LUCIANI, Director of Democratic Governance, Directorate General of Democracy, Council of Europe
Exchange of views

10:45 - 11:15 *Coffee break*

Chairperson: Mr/Ms....., PACE member, Chairperson of the ad hoc committee for the observation of elections¹

The case-law and execution of judgements of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in the field of elections

Ms Inna SHYROKOVA, Registry of the European Court of Human Rights

Exchange of views

12:30 - 14:15 *Lunch offered by the Parliamentary Assembly*

2.15 – 3.30 pm

SESSION 2

How to improve legal frameworks and overcome difficulties in their application by the relevant authorities?

Chairperson: Mr Stefan SCHENNACH, Chairperson of the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States (Monitoring Committee), PACE

Monitoring mechanisms of the Parliamentary Assembly

Mr Stefan SCHENNACH, Chairperson of the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States (Monitoring Committee), PACE

Opinions of the Venice Commission

Mr Thomas MARKERT, Director, Secretary of the Venice Commission

Reports of the election observation missions of the ODIHR/OSCE

Ms Beata MARTIN-ROZUMIŁOWICZ, Head of the Election department, ODIHR/OSCE

¹ Sessions will be chaired by PACE members having chaired the ad hoc committees for the observation of the elections in the countries concerned.

Exchange of views

15:30 – 16:00

Coffee break

4.00 - 5.15 pm

SESSION 3 Election campaigns: between use and abuse of administrative resources. What legal and practical solutions?

Chairperson: Mr Thomas MARKERT, Director, Secretary of the Venice Commission

Mr Serhii KALCHENKO, Expert of the Venice Commission

Mr Richard GHÉVONTIAN, Professor of Constitutional Law, Vice-President of the University of Aix-Marseille (France), Election Expert of the Venice Commission

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| Friday 5 June 2015 |
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9.30 - 10.45 am

SESSION 4 Inaccuracies in voter lists and difficulties related to the vote of citizens residing abroad. What legal and practical solutions?

Chairperson: Mr Christopher CHOPE, PACE member, Chair of the ad hoc committee for the observation of elections

Mr Evgeni TANCHEV, Vice-President of the Venice Commission, Professor, Judge at the Constitutional Court of Bulgaria, Former President of the Constitutional Court

Ms Tatyana BOGUSSEVICH, Deputy Head of the Election department ODIHR/OSCE

Mr Jos WIENEN, Chairman of the Council for Democratic Elections/Venice Commission, Congress' Thematic Spokesperson on observation of local and regional elections

Exchange of views

10.45 am – 11.15 pm Coffee break

11.15 – 12.30 pm

SESSION 5 Functioning of electoral administrations: the challenge of neutrality and impartiality

Chairperson: Mr Andreas KIEFER, Secretary General of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

Ms Tamar ZHVANIA, Chairperson of the Central Election Commission of Georgia

Ms Daria PAPROCKA, Election Expert of the Venice Commission

Exchange of views

12.30 – 1.00 pm

CLOSING SESSION

Conclusions and closing remarks by:

Mr Nicolas KACZOROWSKI, Country Director, International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) Tunisia

Exchange of views

1:00 -2:30 pm

Lunch break

2:30 – 4:30 pm

Visit of the Constitutional Council of France

4. SECRETARIAT

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE (PACE)

Parliamentary Project Support Division (PPSD)

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National Assembly

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