



Declaration by the Committee of Ministers on the Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 21 October 2009
at the 1068th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

The Committee of Ministers,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity among its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage;

Considering the essential role of checks and balances played by NGOs in facilitating the active participation of citizens in public affairs;

Recalling the Madrid Declaration adopted at the 119th Session of the Committee of Ministers on 12 May 2009, which underlined that the development of interaction with civil society, with the help of the Conference of INGOs, remained one of the priorities of the Committee of Ministers;

Recalling that participants in the Sigtuna/Stockholm session of the Forum for the Future of Democracy in 2007 called on the Conference of INGOs to elaborate a Code of Good Practice;

Noting with satisfaction that the Conference of INGOs involved all stakeholders in the Council of Europe "Quadrilogue" in the elaboration of the Code and that the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe welcomed the Code of Good Practice;

Recognising the importance of the Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation, which underpins the general principles, guidelines, tools and mechanisms for active participation of NGOs in the decision-making process, as a reference document for the Council of Europe, and as a basis for a possible further development of the framework for the empowerment of citizens to be involved in conducting public affairs in European countries,

Calls on governments, parliaments, local and regional authorities in the member states to take due account of the Code of Good Practice on Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process, when developing NGO participation in the decision-making process and when drawing up and implementing e-tools, capacity-building activities, structures and framework agreements for co-operation between NGOs and public authorities.