

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 19 April 2021

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**13th PLENARY MEETING OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMITTEE ON DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE
(CDDG)
15-16 APRIL 2021, BY VIDEOCONFERENCE**

ABRIDGED MEETING REPORT

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At its 13th plenary meeting (15-16 April 2021, by videoconference), the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG):

1. adopted the agenda of the meeting, which was chaired by Mr Markku Mölläri (Finland), Chair of the Committee;

Information

2. took note of the meeting report of the Bureau of the CDDG (held on 29-30 March 2021, by videoconference);
3. heard a presentation by Ms Claudia Luciani, Director of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance (DGII), on Council of Europe developments in areas relating to the terms of reference of the CDDG;

Promoting democratic governance through shared experience

4. held an exchange of views with Mr Vyacheslav Nehoda, Deputy Minister for Territorial Development of Ukraine, on the progress with the decentralisation process in Ukraine;
5. held an exchange of views with Mr Frederic Vallier, Secretary General of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR), on various aspects relating to multilevel governance and the response to the Covid-19 pandemic;
6. heard information on law and policy developments in Belgium, Finland, Latvia and United Kingdom;

State of implementation of the CDDG activities according to its terms of reference 2020-2021

7. took note with satisfaction of the progress made in the implementation of its terms of reference 2020-2021;
8. discussed and approved a modified version of the work plan for 2021 including one additional meeting of each working group, and took note of the revised provisional calendar of meetings;

Democracy and technology

9. heard a presentation by Mr Almir Šahović (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Chair of the Working Group on democracy and technology (GT-DT), on the progress made by the working group;
10. heard an update from Mr Peter Andre (Austria), CDDG Rapporteur on democracy and technology and CDDG representative to the Ad hoc Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAHAI), on activities of the CAHAI and its working groups;

11. revised and approved in substance the study on the impact of digital transformation on democracy and good governance and agreed that it should be submitted for final approval by written procedure so as to allow members to submit additional amendments by 25 April 2021 at the latest;

12. considered the analysis of the replies to the questionnaire on new technologies and the different stages of the electoral process and held an exchange of views with the three expert consultants of the GT-DT: Ms Arditia Driza Maurer, University of Zurich, Switzerland; Mr Robert Krimmer, University of Tartu, Estonia; Ms Melanie Volkamer, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Germany;

13. held an exchange of views with Mr José Luis Vargas Valdez, Judge at the Federal Electoral Tribunal, and member of the Venice Commission, on the Study of the Venice Commission on "[Principles for a fundamental rights-compliant use of digital technologies in electoral processes](#)";

14. examined a preliminary version of the draft guidelines document on "new technologies and the different stages of the electoral process" and welcomed the document as a good working basis; agreed to examine a revised version of the document at its 14th meeting, in view of its final approval;

Democratic accountability

15. heard a presentation by the Secretariat on the progress made by the Working Group on accountability (GT-RE);

16. heard a presentation by, and exchanged views with Mr Jorge Valladares, research and policy expert on political integrity at Transparency International;

17. examined a preliminary draft recommendation for the Committee of Ministers on democratic accountability of elected officials and bodies at local and regional level; agreed to examine a revised version of the document at its 14th meeting, in view of its final approval;

Introduction of a 4-year Strategic Framework

18. was informed by the Secretariat on the implications of the 4-year Strategic Framework; held a discussion on possible deliverables to be included in the next 4-year terms of reference;

Activities of the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance

19. heard a presentation by Ms Alina Tatarenko, Head of the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance, on cooperation activities of the Centre and on the European Label of Governance Excellence (ELoGE), including recent decisions of the European Stakeholders' Platform to renew and grant new ELoGE accreditations; expressed appreciation for the work of the Centre of Expertise;

Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers

20. due to lack of time, postponed the item and asked the German and the Hungarian delegations to submit information on their respective presidencies in writing;

Activities of the Committee of Ministers and other Council of Europe bodies

21. took note of a Secretariat memorandum on activities of particular interest to the CDDG carried out by other Council of Europe bodies;

22. held an exchange of views with Ambassador Mårten Ehnberg, Permanent Representative of Sweden, Chair of the Committee of Ministers' Rapporteur Group on Democracy (GR-DEM);

23. heard a presentation by Mr Andreas Kiefer, Secretary General of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, and took note in particular of the Congress' plans and priorities for the next five years;

24. heard presentations by representatives of the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations (CINGO) and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on activities of these bodies of particular relevance to the CDDG;

25. heard updated information on the implementation of the 9th edition of the World Forum for Democracy (WFD); endorsed the proposals for the CDDG to contribute to the WFD 12 months campaign by means of short webinars on "the concept of 15-minutes cities" (April 2021), "public private partnerships for green city solutions (July 2021) and "green public administrations" (September 2021); took note of the call to CDDG members to provide input for these events;

Gender mainstreaming in the work of the CDDG

26. due to lack of time, postponed the item and decided to submit the guidelines on gender mainstreaming in the work of the CDDG for approval by written procedure;

Other business

27. None.

Date and place of the next meeting

28. took note that its 14th plenary meeting would be held on 29-30 November 2021, according to modalities to be defined.