



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 12 November 2019

CDDG-Bu(2019)21

**BUREAU OF THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE
ON DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE
(CDDG)**

MEETING REPORT¹

24-25 October 2019, Council of Europe, Paris

1. Opening of the meeting

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed members. The list of participants is set out in Appendix I.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The draft agenda was adopted as set out in Appendix II.

3. Information by Bureau members on recent activities

The Chair reported back on his participation in:

- the Conference on *Smart Cities: Democratic and Inclusive Cities*, organised by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (14 June 2019, Várpalota, Hungary);
- the *Round Table on Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Democracy*, organised by DG2 (Strasbourg, 20 September 2019);
- as well as the ceremony to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 1 October 2019).

He would report back more extensively on his participation in external events during the plenary meeting of the CDDG in December.

Mr Francesco Giustino (Italy), Vice-Chair, informed the Bureau of his participation in the Conference *Joint workshop on Family as a hub for social policies* (Rome, 9-11 October 2019), organised by the European Social Cohesion Platform of the Council of Europe.

¹ Prepared by the Secretariat.

4. Recent developments

The Secretariat briefly reviewed developments concerning the Council of Europe since the last Bureau meeting:

- the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Ms Marija Pejčinović Burić, had taken up her functions on 18 September 2019. She would soon announce her priorities;
- the Russian Federation had paid its contribution to the budget of the Council of Europe. As a result, the contingency plan had been put aside;
- finally, Mr Theo Wels, member of the Secretariat of the CDDG, had decided to leave the Council of Europe.

A discussion ensued during which the Bureau stressed the need for the CDDG to be adequately resourced to be able to deliver its terms of reference and live up to its standing.

5. Decisions by the Committee of Ministers of relevance to the work of the CDDG (from 1 June to 1 October 2019)

The Bureau took note of the Secretariat memorandum which listed the Committee of Ministers' replies to a number of recommendations from the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress which had been adopted in the reference period and were relevant for the work of the CDDG.

6. State of implementation of the CDDG activities according to its terms of reference 2018-2019

6.1. Public ethics

Information on the fourth meeting of the CDDG working group on public ethics (16-17 September 2019, Strasbourg)

The Bureau took note of the meeting report.

Guidelines on public ethics

The Bureau held an in-depth exchange of views on the draft Guidelines, including the changes that had been submitted by the members of the working group in writing after the last meeting of the working group, and other changes that had been submitted orally during the Bureau meeting. The main substantive changes included:

- updating the Preamble with the texts which had been adopted by the Assembly and the Congress since May 2019,
- deleting the definition of 'public ethics framework',
- distinguishing between 'principles' and 'standards of conduct' and specifying where the conduct was required only in the exercise of public mandates or functions,
- rationalising the structure.

The Bureau supported these changes and formulated additional drafting suggestions to improve the clarity and coherence of the text.

Given the importance of the work on public ethics, the Bureau decided to hold an extraordinary meeting prior to the next plenary meeting of the CDDG, to further examine the draft Guidelines and the Guide and ensure consistency between them. If possible, the Chair of the working group on public ethics could be invited to attend the discussion of these items.

Revised handbook (Guide) of good practice on public ethics

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that, after the last meeting of the working group, only a few proposed changes to the Guide had been received by the given deadline.

The Bureau postponed the consideration of the revised Guide to its next, extraordinary meeting, with a view to ensuring consistency with the final draft of the Guidelines.

Preparation of a feasibility study on a Council of Europe indicator framework on public ethics

The Bureau examined the feasibility study. It supported it and instructed the Secretariat to include possible changes that may be received by the given deadline, if any, and to submit it to the plenary CDDG meeting.

6.2. E-democracy

Information on the third meeting of the CDDG working group on e-democracy (12-13 September 2019, Strasbourg)

The Bureau took note of the meeting report.

Guidelines on e-democracy in the form of a toolkit: draft text

The Bureau was informed of the changes that had been agreed by the working group, during its last meeting. It also took note of a compendium of examples of good practice that had been transmitted by members of the working group, after the meeting of the working group, as well as of the provisional version of the revised glossary which had been drafted by the Secretariat upon the working group's instructions.

Review meeting on implementation of Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2017\)5](#) on standards for e-voting: results from the questionnaire

The Bureau held an exchange of views on the replies to the questionnaire. It decided that the review meeting should take place in conjunction with the plenary meeting of the CDDG in December 2019. It would be open to all members of the CDDG. Ms Ardita Driza Maurer, Jurist, independent consultant, Mr Gregor Wenda, Chair of the CAHVE, should be invited.

6.3. Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance

Promotion of the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance in member States

The Secretariat gave a brief overview of the projects that were being implemented by the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance.

Report on the third meeting of the European Stakeholders' Platform (23 May 2019)

The Bureau took note of the report.

Conference on The Twelve Principles of Good Democratic Governance and the European Label of Governance' Excellence (28 October 2019)

The Bureau took note of the draft programme.

7. The European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG) in 2020-2021

The Chair recalled that the terms of reference of the CDDG were under preparation.

In the ensuing discussion, Bureau members were invited to support the draft terms of reference, which would enable the CDDG to deal with very relevant issues within its domain of expertise.

7.1. New technologies and the electoral process

The Chair recalled that, subject to the Committee of Ministers' decision, this subject would be included in the terms of reference of the CDDG for the next biennium and that, at its last meeting, the Bureau had invited the Secretariat to organise an exchange of views with an expert in order to frame the issues.

Ms Ardita Driza Maurer, Jurist, independent consultant, presented her study, which described the impact of new technologies on the different stages of the electoral cycles and presented three possible scenarios for Council of Europe action.

Her presentation was followed by an exchange of views with Bureau members, with the participation of Mr François Friederich, Head of Electoral Assistance Division.

7.2. *The impact of the digital transformation on democracy and governance*

The Secretariat drew the Bureau's attention to the proceedings of the *Round Table on Artificial Intelligence*, which had been organised by DG2 to mark this year's International Day of Democracy. The Round Table had focused on three main topics: the impact of artificial intelligence on democratic institutions; use of artificial intelligence by the public administration; and how artificial intelligence could be used by civil society to enhance democratic oversight. These issues could be further developed by the CDDG in its terms of reference for the next biennium.

The Bureau took note of the proceedings as well as of a Secretariat memorandum providing an overview of the activities of other international organisations and fora in the area of artificial intelligence, democracy and governance.

7.3. *Ad hoc Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAHAI)*

The Bureau took note of the terms of reference of CAHAI and appointed the Chair of the CDDG to represent the CDDG at the first meeting of the CAHAI, to be held from 18 to 20 November 2019 in Strasbourg.

8. Developing tools on good democratic governance and supporting reforms

Centre of Expertise for Good Governance

Strategic Plan 2017-2022 of the Centre of Expertise: state of implementation and activities in 2019

Following brief oral information provided by the Secretariat, the Chair recalled that this item would be considered extensively during the plenary meeting of the CDDG in December.

9. Preparation of the 10th Plenary meeting of the CDDG

The Secretariat informed the Bureau about the high level personalities that would address the meeting.

The Bureau took note of the preliminary draft agenda.

10. Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers

Activities under the French Presidency

The Bureau took note of the memorandum prepared by the Secretariat.

11. Activities of other Council of Europe bodies

The Bureau took note of the memorandum prepared by the Secretariat.

12. Other business

The Bureau held an exchange of views on a report containing an evaluation of the intergovernmental committees which had been published by the Council of Europe Directorate of Internal Oversight. The references to the CDDG in this report deserved attentive consideration and possibly a reply. It was decided that the report would be included in the agenda of the next plenary of the CDDG. Ms Monika Filipova (Slovakia) volunteered to draft a memorandum to provide guidance to new members of the CDDG.

Following an exchange of views, the Bureau decided that the next meeting of the Stakeholders' Platform should be held in conjunction with the first Bureau meeting in 2020. It would consider new requests for accreditation, the renewal of already granted accreditations and the review of the ELoGE regulations.

13. Date and place of the next meeting

The Bureau decided to hold its next, extraordinary meeting on Friday 15 November 2019 in Paris.

APPENDIX I**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS****CHAIRMAN / PRESIDENT**

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APPENDIX II

AGENDA

- 1. Opening of the meeting**
- 2. Adoption of the agenda** [CDDG-Bu(2019)OJ2]
- 3. Information by the Chair on recent activities**
- 4. Recent developments**
 - Council of Europe: oral information by the Secretariat
 - Member States: exchange of views on the basis of information from delegations
- 5. Decisions by the Committee of Ministers of relevance to the work of the CDDG** [CDDG-Bu(2019)10 rev.]
- 6. State of implementation of the CDDG activities according to its terms of reference 2018-2019**
 - 6.1 *Public ethics*
 - Information on the fourth meeting of the CDDG working group on public ethics (16-17 September 2019, Strasbourg) [GT-EP(2019)7]
 - Guidelines on public ethics [CDDG-Bu(2019)11]
 - Revised handbook of good practice on public ethics
 - Preparation of a feasibility study on a Council of Europe indicator framework on public ethics [CDDG-Bu(2019)12]
 - 6.2 *E-democracy*
 - Information on the third meeting of the CDDG working group on e-democracy (12-13 September 2019, Strasbourg) [GT-ED(2019)7]
 - Guidelines on e-democracy in the form of a toolkit: draft text [CDDG-Bu(2019)13]
 - Review meeting on implementation of Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2017\)5](#) on standards for e-voting: results from the questionnaire [CDDG-Bu(2019)14]
 - 6.3 *Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance*
 - Promotion of the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance in member States Oral information
 - Report on the third meeting of the European Stakeholders' Platform (23 May 2019) [DG-SP(2019)3]
 - Conference on The Twelve Principles of Good Democratic Governance and the European Label of Governance' Excellence (28 October 2019) Programme

- 7. The European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG) in 2020-2021** [CDDG-Bu(2019)15]
- 7.1 *New technologies and the electoral process* [CDL-AD(2019)016]
 - *Information by the Secretariat* [CDDG-Bu(2019)16]
- 7.2 *The impact of the digital transformation on democracy and governance* [CDDG-Bu(2019)17]
 - Exchange of views with an expert [CDDG-Bu(2019)18]
- 7.3 *Ad hoc Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAHAI)* [CM/Del/Dec(2019)1353/1.5-
 - Appointment of a CDDG representative app]
- 8. Developing tools on good democratic governance and supporting reforms**
Centre of Expertise for Good Governance
 - Strategic Plan 2017-2022 of the Centre of Expertise: state of implementation and activities in 2019 Oral information
- 9. Preparation of the 10th Plenary meeting of the CDDG** [CDDG(2019)OJ1 prov.]
 - Preliminary draft agenda
- 10. Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers**
Activities under the French Presidency [CDDG-Bu(2019)19]
- 11. Activities of other Council of Europe bodies** [CDDG-Bu(2019)20]
- 12. Other business**
- 13. Date and place of the next meeting**