DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN DIGNITY
DIRECTORATE FOR DEMOCRACY

DEPARTMENT OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND FREEDOMS

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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13 February 2026

STEERING COMMITTEE ON MEDIA AND INFORMATION SOCIETY

(CDMSI)

28th Plenary meeting

3-5 December 2025

MEETING REPORT

1. Opening of the meeting

The Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI) held its 28th Plenary meeting in Strasbourg at the Palais de l'Europe, from 3–5 December 2025, in a hybrid format. The meeting was formally opened by the Chair, Ms Maja Zarić (Serbia), who welcomed members, observers and participants and introduced Mr Matjaz Gruden, Director for Democracy, Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity, to deliver the opening address.

Mr Gruden commended members for their relevant and timely contributions to the evolving agenda of the Council of Europe and their role in advancing democratic values in a period marked by technological transformation, societal challenges, and democratic backsliding. He highlighted the importance of the CDMSI's work as part of the broader process towards a New Democratic Pact for Europe, underlining how the activities and deliverables of the CDMSI, particularly on artificial intelligence, disinformation, media literacy, and the safety of journalists, are crucial to the shared European agenda. He informed that the Pact's ambition was to translate political commitments into concrete, better coordinated policy actions and encouraged contributions from all stakeholders to shape the future direction of European democracy. The Director emphasised the relevance of the deliverables to be discussed during the Plenary, including the draft Recommendation on Online Safety and Empowerment of Content Creators and Users, the draft Guidance Note on the Implications of Generative Artificial Intelligence on Freedom of Expression, the policy documents on disinformation, on media literacy and on virtual realities, and the progress of the ongoing *'Journalists Matter'* Campaign on the Safety of Journalists. He concluded by expressing his gratitude to the outgoing Chair and Vice-Chair for their leadership.

2. Adoption of the agenda and order of business

Ms Artemiza-Tatiana Chisca, Secretary to the CDMSI and Head of the Freedom of Expression and CDMSI division, briefly presented the agenda and order of business, highlighting the meeting's focus on the adoption/approval of key deliverables elaborated during the 2024-2025

biennium and clarifying the procedures for the elections and appointments for the Committee's leadership and Expert Committees for the upcoming biennium.

The CDMSI adopted the meeting agenda, available in Appendix 1. The list of participants and information on gender distribution appear in Appendix 2.

3. Future work of the CDMSI / Terms of reference of the CDMSI and its expert committees (biennium 2026-2027)

The Secretariat reminded about the process through which revised terms of reference for the CDMSI and its future expert committees had been developed and approved by the Committee of Ministers and presented the deliverables expected for the 2026-2027 biennium.

The members were informed that another initially foreseen deliverable, in the format of a report on countering foreign information manipulation and interference and their harmful effects on public debate and the integrity of democratic processes, had been deleted from the terms of reference of the CDMSI in view of the Secretary General's initiative to draft a potential legal instrument on this topic. In this sense, a new Committee of Experts on Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (PC-FIMI) was established under the Council of Europe's Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC) to prepare a feasibility study on the possible elaboration of such a legal instrument. In this context, the Secretariat clarified that, as foreseen by the terms of reference of PC-FIMI, the CDMSI was expected to appoint a representative to participate, without the right to vote, in PC-FIMI meetings and will be consulted on the draft feasibility study before its adoption by the CDPC. The Secretariat also noted the establishment of the Steering Committee for New and Emerging Digital Technologies (CDNET). The members highlighted the importance for the CDMSI to closely follow the work of PC-FIMI.

CDMSI members also encouraged a further participatory approach to future consultations on CDMSI's mandate. The Secretariat informed that a recent change to the *CM/Res(2021)3 Resolution on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods* now entrusts steering committees with the proposals for future terms of reference – as opposed to steering committees in the past only being consulted on the matter. Also, during the exchange held, members stressed the importance of greater flexibility in the allocation of discussion time for substantive documents in future meetings.

4. Committee of Experts on the Implications of Generative Artificial Intelligence for Freedom of Expression (MSI-AI)

The CDMSI discussed the draft Guidance Note on the Implications of Generative AI for Freedom of Expression, presented by Mr Andrin Eichin, Chair of the Expert Committee tasked to draft the document (MSI-AI), together with the drafting co-rapporteurs Ms Murielle Popa-Fabre (in person), Ms Iva Nenadic and Ms Patricia Shaw (online). They reported on the outcome of the fourth meeting of the MSI-AI, held in Strasbourg on 15-16 October 2025, as well as on the public consultations conducted over the summer period. They also provided a final overview of the draft Guidance Note, as agreed by the Committee of Experts, and informed about envisaged follow-up steps aimed at raising awareness of the document.

The members discussed the draft Guidance Note and reviewed it section-by-section. They agreed that the document offers a thoughtful and balanced analysis of the benefits and risks to the freedom of expression associated with the developments in the field of generative AI and its use throughout society. Some amendments were proposed, including to avoid overly

prescriptive language, to ensure full account of emerging and diverse national approaches to AI monitoring and regulation, and to add sources where needed. The CDMSI discussed the proposed amendments and incorporated these in the text as agreed.

The CDMSI adopted the Guidance Note on the Implications of Generative AI for Freedom of Expression.

5. Committee of Experts on Online Safety and Empowerment of Users and Content Creators (MSI-eSEC)

Ms Nicole Stellou, Chair of the MSI-eSEC reported on the outcomes of the last meeting of MSI-eSEC, held in Strasbourg on 21-22 October 2025, and Mr Martin Husovec, drafting co-rapporteur, briefly presented the draft Recommendation, as agreed by the MSI-eSEC.

The CDMSI discussed the draft Recommendation section by section. The representative of the EC informed the Plenary that the Council of the European Union had endorsed a common position on the text of draft Recommendation, which is binding under EU law for the EU member states, and presented a number of remaining amendment proposals.

The CDMSI discussed the amendments proposed by the EC representatives as well as by some of its members and introduced a number of changes to the draft. The CDMSI further discussed the draft Explanatory Memorandum to the future recommendation and, upon amendment proposals, agreed on several modifications. It subsequently approved the text of the draft Recommendation, as revised and adopted the revised Explanatory Memorandum.

The Committee decided to submit the approved draft Recommendation and its Explanatory Memorandum to the Committee of Ministers, inviting it to adopt the Recommendation and to take note of the Explanatory Memorandum.

6. Co-operation with UNESCO

The Chair welcomed Mr Andrea Cairola, Senior Programme Specialist, Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists, UNESCO**,** for an exchange of views on UNESCO's current priorities and co-operation with the Council of Europe. Mr Cairola underlined the importance of inter-organisational collaboration in a rapidly evolving information environment and highlighted ongoing cooperation in areas such as freedom of expression, artificial intelligence, media and information literacy, and the safety of journalists. He referred in particular to UNESCO's work on AI and generative AI, namely the Guidance for generative AI in education and research, the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, initiatives addressing gender-based threats against women journalists, the SLAPPS - initiatives such as the "misuse" of the judicial system to attack freedom of expression, and the report on Strategic lawsuits against freedom of expression: How justice can respond -, media viability, platform governance, and national-level cooperation, including with judicial and law-enforcement authorities; concrete engagement in Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, and Southeast Europe was mentioned.

The CDMSI took note of the information provided and acknowledged, inter alia, the strong complementarity between UNESCO's work and the *Journalists Matter* Campaign. Members expressed interest in further strengthening regular exchanges and co-ordination, including on technical issues and ongoing initiatives, as well as in enhanced co-operation among relevant Groups of Friends for the safety of journalists and media freedom that have been formed

across other multilateral international organisations, such as the ones in Paris and Geneva. The Chair reaffirmed the CDMSI commitment to continued co-operation with UNESCO.

7. Country-specific developments in the field of freedom of expression. Implementation of existing standards

CDMSI members provided written contributions regarding country-specific developments in the implementation of freedom of expression standards.

Luxembourg informed about its ongoing comprehensive reform of national media legislation, aimed at safeguarding fundamental rights and ensuring free and democratic public discourse. The draft Media Act, submitted in October, establishes core principles for all media service providers, including freedoms of communication, reception, retransmission, provision of media services, and editorial independence, while allowing for proportionate and strictly necessary restrictions. The reform seeks to strengthen media pluralism and independence. In parallel, Luxembourg launched the DAB+ broadcasting on 1 December 2025, with 12 channels selected through a public call to promote a diverse and complementary radio landscape.

The Republic of Moldova provided information regarding recent and forthcoming legislative measures aimed at strengthening the protection of journalists and media freedom. These include amendments to the Criminal Code criminalising intentional obstruction of media activity and intimidation of the press, as well as the introduction of new provisions in the Administrative Code. Moldova also reported amendments to the Code of Audiovisual Media Services to reinforce the independence of the audiovisual regulator and public broadcaster governance, in line with Council of Europe recommendations.

Ukraine informed about recent assessments and ongoing efforts to advance media reform and safeguard freedom of expression in the context of European integration and ongoing security challenges. Ukraine highlighted the launch in April 2025 of Phase II of the Council of Europe project on safeguarding freedom of expression and media freedom, aimed at aligning legislation and practice with European standards, protecting journalists and public broadcasting, and promoting balanced media coverage. Reference was also made to progress in transposing key European instruments, the need to balance freedom of expression with national security under martial law, and ongoing measures to counter disinformation and propaganda.

8. Resisting Disinformation: 10 Building Blocks to Strengthen Information Integrity

Mr Konrad Bleyer-Simon and Mr Urbano Reviglio, consultants, presented the draft policy document on “Resisting Disinformation: 10 Building Blocks to Strengthen Information Integrity”. They clarified that, in line with the related tasks in the Terms of reference of the CDMSI, the document is intended as a strategic, accessible tool for member States to design and implement national strategies against disinformation, grounded in existing standards and adaptable to various domestic contexts. They explained that, while the overall approach was maintained, the title and structure of the document were revised following an expert consultation workshop, and a particular focus was put throughout the document on the preservation of the integrity of the information space and related necessary policies and measures.

During the ensuing discussion, it was stressed that the document aligns with the Organisation’s priorities under the New Democratic Pact for Europe and agreed to reflect this

in its introduction. Delegations provided information on their domestic efforts to counter disinformation. Several proposals were made to improve the clarity and relevance of the policy document, with clearer terminology, stronger safeguards for freedom of expression and more practical approaches to stakeholder engagement. These suggestions were discussed and agreed by the Plenary, resulting in several textual adjustments.

The CDMSI adopted the document, as revised.

9. Guidelines for National Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Strategies - Practical Steps and Indicators

The Secretariat informed about the outcome of the online thematic expert workshop held on 29 September 2025 to gather feedback on the draft policy paper.

Mr Brian O'Neill, consultant, presented the document, emphasising that it consolidates two decades of Council of Europe work on MIL and offers detailed guidance on how member States can most effectively develop MIL strategies. He noted that, to this end, the document is also accompanied by an explanatory report, a set of practical indicators, and a list of useful resources. The CDMSI reviewed the document section-by-section. Members' proposed amendments were incorporated into the text.

The CDMSI adopted the document and its explanatory memorandum.

The CDMSI Chair noted that this document represents one of the CDMSI's contributions to the New Democratic Pact for Europe and will be launched alongside the "Resist Disinformation: 10 Building Blocks to Strengthen Information Integrity" document at a high-level conference that will take place in Chisinau, Moldova, on 20 March 2026, under the auspices of the Moldovan Presidency of the Committee of Ministers.

10. Exchange of views with the Secretariat of the European Platform of Regulatory Authorities (EPRA)

Ms Emanuelle Machet, Head of the EPRA Secretariat, delivered an update on EPRA's activities, particularly its autumn meeting in Yerevan, Armenia (22–24 October 2025), hosted by the Commission on TV and Radio of Armenia, which brought together around 115 participants from 45 regulators, permanent observers, including the Council of Europe, and invited experts. The meeting addressed media pluralism in the digital age, with a focus on the impact of online platforms and artificial intelligence.

Ms Machet underlined EPRA's close co-operation with the Council of Europe, stressing the relevance of recent and future deliverables for regulators and outlined EPRA's ongoing and upcoming activities, including the resumption of the AI and Regulators online roundtable, the regular meetings of the Taskforce on Media and Information Literacy "EMIL", and the forthcoming meetings in Tirana (20–22 May 2026) and Dublin (October 2026).

11. Exchange of Views with Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

The Chair welcomed Stewart Dickson, Rapporteur of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, who presented the Congress Recommendation 525(2025) and Resolution 508(2025) on Foreign Interference in Electoral Processes at Local and Regional Levels. Mr Dickson underlined the increased scale and sophistication of foreign interference, often targeting less regulated local and regional elections. Key risks included disinformation

campaigns, manipulation of information spaces, and targeted propaganda, all of which threaten social cohesion and the right to freely formed opinion.

The Congress calls, in the above-mentioned documents, for improved monitoring, transparency, legal frameworks for electoral processes, targeted regulation on campaign funding, and enhanced education and resilience-building at the grassroots. Mr Dickson stressed the importance of robust local media for trustworthy news and the risks of foreign agent laws being abused to suppress legitimate opposition. He concluded by encouraging CDMSI members to support comprehensive, multi-layered responses at domestic level.

12. Exchange with News Media Coalition

Mr Andrew Moger, Chief Executive Officer of the News Media Coalition, presented the results of a News Media Coalition Newsgathering Survey. Resulting trends highlighted increasing restrictions on journalistic access to information, due in particular to legislative control, copyright claims, and the strategic use of accreditation and credentialing. The survey noted challenges to primary source journalism in the fields of sports, entertainment, and political reporting, where access is increasingly controlled by private actors and non-transparent practices.

Mr Moger called the attention to the critical importance of “primary source journalism” in ensuring information authenticity and resilience against disinformation. CDMSI members discussed definitions of professional journalism, while also cautioning against generalised or politically determined “reliable news” labels.

13. Elections

The CDMSI was informed by the Secretariat on rules and nominations for the elections of the CDMSI leading organs for 2026–2027.

Aikaterini Polyzou (Greece) was elected Chair and Maya Zarić (Serbia) was elected Vice-Chair of the CDMSI for the year 2026.

The CDMSI also elected five Bureau members: Ms Céline Flammang (Luxembourg), for the year 2026, Mr Serge Robillard (Monaco), Ms Inge Welbergen (the Netherlands), Mr Marius Jitea (Romania) and Mr Andrin Eichin (Switzerland), for the years 2026-2027.

The CDMSI also designated, for the forthcoming terms of reference of the CDMSI (2026-2027), member states’ representatives in the two new committees of experts subordinate to the CDMSI:

- For the Committee of Experts on Safeguarding Media Pluralism in the Online Environment (MSI-ePLU): Mr Michael Kogler (Austria), Ms Nicole Stellou (Greece), Ms Claudia Sartori (Italy), Ms Aneta Gonţa (Republic of Moldova), Ms Fenna van Haeften (Netherlands), Mr Candaş Aynagöz (Türkiye), Ms Raphaela Cueni (Switzerland).
- For the Committee of Experts on Media Regulators in a Platform-Based Environment (MSI-REG): Ms Katerina Mantzou (Greece), Ms Stephanie Comey (Ireland), Mr Mark D. Cole (Luxembourg), Mr Audun Aagre (Norway), Mr Michael Hradicky (Slovakia), Mr Salih Karabulut (Türkiye), Ms Rowena Burke (United Kingdom).

The CDMSI then appointed as rapporteurs on mainstreamed perspectives, for the forthcoming terms of reference of the CDMSI (2026-2027): Ms Maja Zarić (Serbia) on the rights of the child, Mr Marius Jitea (Romania) on youth, and Mr Martin Željko Sampor (Slovakia) on gender equality.

Finally, the CDMSI appointed Ms Inge Welbergen (the Netherlands) as CDMSI representative to the PC-FIMI.

14. Council of Europe *Journalists Matter* Campaign for the Safety of Journalists

The CDMSI took note of the presentation of the Mid-Term Evaluation Report of the *Journalists Matter* Campaign, prepared by Mr Peter Noorlander, independent expert, at the midpoint of the five-year Campaign launched in October 2023.

The aim of the Report is to assess progress achieved so far, identify strengths and weaknesses, and outline options for the second half of the Campaign and its possible continuation beyond 2027. The evaluation was based on desk research, a stakeholder survey, and 17 anonymous interviews with key actors, complemented by 34 survey responses, following the Council of Europe's standard evaluation criteria.

The evaluation highlighted the catalytic impact of the Campaign despite limited resources, notably through the establishment of national focal points and committees, increased visibility of journalists' safety as a Council of Europe priority, and improved dialogue between journalists and authorities.

It also identified challenges, including uneven engagement at national level, the need to better animate existing structures, limited involvement of certain stakeholders, and the importance of addressing further emerging threats, including online harassment, gender-based abuse, strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs), and political and economic pressure on journalism.

CDMSI members welcomed the evaluation and held a *tour de table* to share updates about national experiences. They underlined the value of focal points and committees as coordination mechanisms, reported concrete follow-up activities at national level, and expressed broad support for continued work on journalist safety beyond 2027, including consideration of permanent co-ordination arrangements. The Chair concluded that the evaluation provides a valuable basis for guiding the next phase of the Campaign and will inform further work within the CDMSI, as well as discussions at the forthcoming Focal Points Meeting and Annual Conference in Moldova in 2026. The CDMSI endorsed the mid-term evaluation of the Campaign.

The Secretariat informed the CDMSI about relevant developments, including the outcomes of the Training of Trainers on SLAPPs held on 9-10 October 2025 in Prague; and next steps and activities, notably the Fourth meeting of the National Focal Points and the Annual thematic conference *Defending truth - Comprehensive approaches to journalistic safety and quality journalism* focusing on the "Prevention pillar" of the Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)4 on the protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors, both to be held under the Moldovan Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, in Chișinău, on 22 and 23 April 2026, respectively. The CDMSI also took note of the event *Youth Facing Disinformation - Why*

Journalists Matter, to be held under the Monaco Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, in the framework of the Campaign, on 9-10 November 2026, at the European Youth Centre, in Strasbourg.

15. Co-operation with Group of Friends on the Safety of Journalists and Media Freedom

The CDMSI exchanges with Ms Kari H. Riisøen, Deputy Permanent Representative of Norway**,** representing the Presidency of the Group of Friends on the Safety of Journalists and Media Freedom (formed of a number of Council of Europe member States' ambassadors). Ms Riisøen provided an overview of the Group's recent activities and priorities. She underlined the Group's continued support for Council of Europe standard-setting and close co-operation with the Platform for the Protection of Journalism and Safety of Journalists, as well as with external partners such as the OSCE, UNESCO, the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists, and the Media Freedom Coalition. She highlighted the Group's focus on at-risk journalists, including women journalists and journalists in exile, the role of media organizations and media owners, and the importance of media freedom and democracy in countering disinformation, notably in the context of the Moldovan Presidency.

During the discussion, several CDMSI members welcomed the work of the Group of Friends in support of freedom of expression. Several delegations underlined the importance of enhanced co-ordination between similar groups of friends across international organisations and better information-sharing on respective activities. The Group of Friends expressed openness to strengthening co-ordination with relevant partners.

16. Platform to Promote the Protection of Journalism and Safety of Journalists

Ms Flutura Kusari (European Centre for Press and Media Freedom) and Ms Joanna Szymańska (ARTICLE 19), representing partner organisations of the Platform to Promote the Protection of Journalism and Safety of Journalists, presented recent developments and key trends emerging from the Platform's work, including elements of the forthcoming Annual Report. They reported a continued deterioration of the safety environment for journalists in 2025, including a rise in alerts related to detention of journalists, violence during protests, online harassment, criminal prosecution and an alarming increase in cases of transnational repression, involving misuse of international policing mechanisms, financial retaliation and cyberattacks. Particular attention was drawn to gender-based threats against women journalists, which will be the subject of a dedicated thematic focus in the next Platform's Annual Report. Positive developments were also noted, including strengthened dialogue between the Platform and member states.

The Platform representatives further highlighted developments related to SLAPPs, noting increased legislative activity in member states to implement the Council of Europe Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to the member States on countering strategic lawsuits against public participation (CM/Rec(2024)2) and the EU Directive 2024/1069 on protecting persons who engage in public participation from manifestly unfounded claims or abusive court proceedings, and encouraged comprehensive transposition to address both cross-border and domestic cases. Concerns were also raised about the growing use of "foreign agent" laws and similar legal instruments to restrict media freedom and civil society.

CDMSI members welcomed the Platform's alert tools and practical engagement and referred to national improvements inspired by Council of Europe standards. The CDMSI underlined the continued importance of co-operation with the Platform and encouraged sustained dialogue and follow-up at national level.

17. Feasibility Study on Benefits and Challenges to Freedom of Expression in Immersive Realities

Ms Brittan Heller, consultant, presented the draft Feasibility Study on Benefits and Challenges to Freedom of Expression in Immersive Realities (XR), prepared, under the CDMSI terms of Reference, as a follow-up to the joint Council of Europe/IEEE work: *The Metaverse and its Impact on Human Rights, Rule of Law, and Democracy*. Ms Heller noted that the study examines how XR technologies, characterised by immersion, embodiment and presence, affect the exercise and protection of freedom of expression under Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, highlighting both opportunities (such as new forms of storytelling, inclusion and civic participation) and risks (including intensified harassment, pervasive data collection, complex moderation challenges and unequal access).

The CDMSI took note of the study's conclusions, notably that, while existing Council of Europe's legal frameworks remain robust, and applicable to virtual realities, they may require context-sensitive interpretation to address the specific risks of immersive and embodied environments. The study therefore proposes two complementary tracks for future work within the CDMSI mandate: awareness-raising (through exchanges and workshops with potentially relevant actors, including the European Court of Human Rights), and a structured review of existing standards to identify any genuine gaps and possible need for further guidance. The CDMSI endorsed the proposed next steps and adopted the Feasibility Study.

18. Exchange of views with the Secretariat of the European Audiovisual Observatory

The Chair welcomed Ms Pauline Durand-Vialle, the newly appointed Executive Director of the Observatory, and Ms Sophie Valais, Deputy Head of the Legal Department. The Executive Director underlined the importance of Ukraine joining the Observatory as a member. She outlined the 2026 workplan, which includes, inter alia, a conference on jurisdiction of audiovisual services and a new workstream on the video game sector. Ms Valais informed about the work of the Legal Department in 2025, in particular the published reports, in the four clusters covering: authors and creation (status of artists), audiovisual works (state aid and the audiovisual sector, commercial communications and governance and funding of public service media), audiovisual services and platforms (jurisdictional challenges in audiovisual regulation and societal issues (impact of digital technologies on news sector and resilience to FIMI). She also underlined the continuing relevance of the various databases managed by the Observatory.

The CDMSI congratulated the Observatory on its work and welcomed continued collaboration with the Steering Committee.

19. Council of Europe Co-operation Activities on Freedom of Expression

Ms Alina Tatarenko, Head of the Division for Cooperation on Freedom of Expression, presented an overview of 2025 projects and priorities. Cooperation activities covered 22 countries and beneficiaries, aimed at providing support in enhancing policies, legislation, and

capacities related to freedom of expression, media, access to information and protection of information integrity. Related activities included the Council of Europe Training Programme on Countering the use of SLAPPS and projects relevant to EU accession processes. The new project RESIST – Strengthening Societal Resilience to Disinformation in Europe, funded by the Norway Grants, was launched with the participation of 10 EU member States. Further details on the activities in 2025 are available in the related annual report. The CDMSI welcomed continued participation and offers for national engagement.

20. World Forum for Democracy

Ms Irena Guidikova, Head of Democratic Institutions and Freedoms Department, Council of Europe, presented the outcomes of the World Forum for Democracy *Democracy at risk: how can we revive it?*, which took place in Strasbourg, on 5-7 November 2025.

The Forum convened participants from 61 countries and 122 speakers to discuss democracy's current challenges, notably focusing on culture and media. Key concerns included global democratic backsliding and threats to freedom of expression, particularly through artificial intelligence and disinformation. Creative, citizen-driven and state-supported solutions were highlighted, including ethical AI, art, games, and relevant media regulation. The forum emphasised the importance of citizen engagement, innovation in traditional media and stronger presence of democratic narratives online. The CDMSI members noted convergence between the Forum's recommendations and recent CDMSI deliverables, particularly on AI, public-interest journalism and the regulatory challenges of digital platforms.

In the framework of the Forum, the Secretariat organised the "Time for ideas" panel, "Who said boring? Journalism, art, and games against disinformation". Speakers from academia and media explored how creative approaches, such as art, satire, gaming, and tailored communication, can more effectively engage diverse audiences and counter disinformation, providing context for the presentation of three innovative initiatives selected by the Forum.

21. Contribution of CDMSI to the New Democratic Pact for Europe

The CDMSI discussed the Steering Committee's role in contributing to the New Democratic Pact for Europe, as presented by Irena Guidikova and Director Gruden. Several CDMSI members and observers encouraged further reflection on the importance of clarifying the boundaries of professional journalism and media actors in the digital age. Suggestions included revitalising discussions on the Council of Europe Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to the member States on a new notion of media (CM/Rec(2011)7) and launching a campaign on media and information literacy.

Ms Urška Umek, Head of the Democratic Institutions and Civil Society Division, presented the 'Parameters to facilitate the application and implementation of the Reykjavík Principles for Democracy', adopted by the Steering Committee on Democracy (CDDEM) at its 4th Plenary meeting, on 26-28 November 2025, with a specific focus on references to freedom of expression, media pluralism, and digital literacy. She clarified that the parameters are intended both as a practical tool for self-assessment and for the basis of future reviews of democratic performance at national or regional level. The Secretariat confirmed ongoing co-ordination between the CDDEM and the CDMSI.

22. Participation in events of relevance for the CDMSI

The CDMSI agreed that the Secretary would submit brief written summaries of events' participation following the plenary. Relevant participations include the following:

- European Audiovisual Observatory Workshop "Regulating audiovisual commercial communications across AVMS, VSPs and influencers", European Youth Centre, Strasbourg, 21 November 2025
- Panel on "Countering misinformation in climate action" at the seminar "Equipping Youth with Skills for Climate Action: Youth Engagement and Effective Information Sharing", Strasbourg, 11-13 November 2025
- World Forum for Democracy, Strasbourg, 5-7 November 2025
- 62nd EPRA Meeting, Yerevan, Armenia, 22-24 October 2025
- IPI World Congress and Media Innovation Festival 2025 – ipi.media, Vienna, 23-25 October 2025
- Informal meeting of the Ministers' Deputies - Freedom of Expression - Disinformation and Elections: The Role of Media in Election Integrity (CM Room), Strasbourg, 17 October 2025
- Transversal Reflection of the Institutional Networks of the Francophonie (OIF): The integrity of information and democratic processes in the age of digital technology and artificial intelligence, Paris,16-17 October 2025
- EU Media Literacy Expert Group meeting, online, 13 October 2025
- High-Level Conference: Building Democratic Resilience to Disinformation, hosted by Council of Europe and Malta's Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Tourism under Malta's Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, Malta, 17 September 2025
- EMIL - EPRA's Media and Information Literacy Taskforce: thematic discussion on the topic of Media Literacy and Influencers/Content Creators, online, 12 September 2025
- Open Forum "AI and Disinformation: Countering the Threats to Democratic Dialogue", Internet Governance Forum (IGF) 2025, Lillestrøm, Norway, 23-27 June 2025

23. Any other business

The CDMSI agreed to hold its next plenary meeting on 17-19 June 2026 in the premises of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

The CDMSI adopted by written procedure the present meeting report.

Appendix 1

AGENDA

3 DECEMBER – Morning session 09:30 - 12:30
1. Opening of the meeting Matjaz GRUDEN, Director, Directorate for Democracy, Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity, Council of Europe
2. Adoption of the agenda and order of business Information point about elections

3. Future work of the CDMSI / Terms of reference of the CDMSI and its expert committees (biennium 2026-2027)
- CDMSI - Terms of reference adopted by the Committee of Ministers:
  - CDMSI
  - Committee of Experts on safeguarding media pluralism in the online environment (MSI-ePLU) - Terms of reference and expected deliverable
  - Committee of Experts on media regulators in a platform-based environment (MSI-eREG) - Terms of reference and expected deliverable
  - Further expected deliverables
Resolution CM/Res(2021)3-addfinal on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working method
Information provided by Artemiza-Tatiana CHISCA, Secretary of the CDMSI
For information and discussion

Coffee break 10:30 – 11:00

4. Standard-setting - Committee of Experts on the Impacts of Generative Artificial Intelligence for Freedom of Expression (MSI-AI) o Draft Guidance Note on the Implications of Generative AI for Freedom of Expression Presentation by Andrin EICHIN, Chair of MSI-AI, Murielle POPA-FABRE, Iva NENADIC and Patricia SHAW, drafting co-rapporteurs *For discussion and possible adoption*

Lunch Break 12:30-14:00

Afternoon session 14:00 - 17:30

5. Standard-setting – Committee of Experts online safety and empowerment of content creators and users (MSI-eSEC)

o Draft Recommendation on Online Safety and Empowerment of Users and Content Creators

Presentation by Nicole STELLOU, Chair of MSI-eSEC, Martin HUSOVEC and Peter NOORLANDER, drafting co-rapporteurs of the recommendation

For discussion and possible approval

15:50 - 16:20 Coffee Break

6. Co-operation with UNESCO

Exchange of views with Andrea CAIROLA, Senior Programme Specialist, Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists Section, UNESCO

For information and discussion

7. Country-specific developments in the field of freedom of expression. Implementation of existing standards

Presentation by CDMSI members and other participants

For information and discussion

17:30 - 18:30 Cocktail

4 DECEMBER – Morning session 09:30 - 12:30

8. Standard setting - Resist Disinformation: 10 Building Blocks to Strengthen Information Integrity

Presentation by Konrad BLEYER-SIMON and Urbano REVIGLIO, Research Associates at the Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom, European University Institute

For discussion and possible adoption

9. Standard setting - Guidelines for National Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Strategies - Practical Steps and Indicators

Presentation by Brian O'NEILL, PhD, Emeritus Professor at Technological University Dublin, Ireland

For discussion and possible adoption

10:50 – 11:20 Coffee break and XR device testing (virtual reality)

10. Exchange of views with the Secretariat of the European Platform of Regulatory Authorities (EPRA)

Information provided by Emmanuelle MACHET, Head of the EPRA Secretariat

For information and discussion

11. Exchange of views with Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

Recommendation 525(2025), Resolution 508 (2025) Foreign interference in electoral processes at local and regional levels

Presentation by Stewart DICKSON, Rapporteur, United Kingdom (R, ILDG)

For information and discussion

12. Exchange with News Media Coalition

Newsgathering Survey and practical proposals to support Primary Source Journalism

Presentation by Andrew MOGER, Chief Executive Officer, News Media Coalition

For information and discussion

Lunch Break 12:30-14:00

Afternoon session 14:00 - 17:30

13. Elections

- Election on the CDMSI leading organs:
  - Election of the CDMSI Chair
  - Election of the CDMSI vice-Chair
  - Election of 4 members of the CDMSI Bureau
- Election of 7 members of the MSI-ePLU
- Election of 7 members of the MSI-eREG
- Appointment of transversal rapporteurs (gender equality, the rights of persons with disabilities, children, young persons and on equality and the environment)

For decision

14. Council of Europe 'Journalists Matter' Campaign for the Safety of Journalists

- Mid-term Evaluation Report - Presentation by Peter NOORLANDER, consultant

For discussion and possible endorsement of conclusions

Steps taken by member states - Information by CDMSI members (*Tour de table*)

Updates and future steps under the Campaign - initiatives under the 'prosecution' and 'prevention' pillars

For information and discussion

15:30 – 16:00 Coffee Break and XR devise testing

15. Co-operation with Group of Friends on the Safety of Journalists and Media Freedom

Exchange of views with Ambassador Vebjørn HEINES, Presidency of the Group of Friends, Permanent Representation of Norway to the Council of Europe

For information and discussion

16. Platform to Promote the Protection of Journalism and Safety of Journalists

Exchange of views with Flutura KUSARI (European Centre for Press and Media Freedom) and Joanna SZYMANSKA (Article 19), representatives of the Platform's Partner Organisations

For information and discussion

17. Standard setting - Feasibility Study on Benefits and Challenges to Freedom of Expression in Immersive Realities

Presentation by Brittan HELLER, International Law, Technology, and Human Rights expert

For information and possible adoption

5 DECEMBER – Morning session 09:30 - 12:30

18. Exchange of views with the Secretariat of the European Audiovisual Observatory

Information provided by Pauline DURAND-VIALLE, Executive Director, European Audiovisual Observatory

For information and discussion

19. Council of Europe Cooperation activities on freedom of expression

Presentation by Alina TATARENKO, Head of the Division for Cooperation on Freedom of Expression

For information and discussion

10:50 – 11:20 Coffee break

20. World Forum for Democracy

Presentation by Irena GUIDIKOVA, Head of Democratic Institutions and Freedoms Department, Directorate for Democracy, Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity

For information and discussion

21. Contribution of CDMSI to the New Democratic Pact for Europe

Presentation by Irena GUIDIKOVA, Head of Democratic Institutions and Freedoms Department

Exchange of views on member states and CDMSI contributions to the Pact in the area of freedom of expression

Parameters to facilitate the application and implementation of the Reykjavík Principles and other relevant Council of Europe standards to promote, protect and strengthen democracy throughout the member States

Presentation by Urška UMEK, Head of the Democratic Institutions and Civil Society Division

For information and discussion

22. Participation in events of relevance for the CDMSI

Information by the Secretariat and CDMSI Plenary members

23. Any other business

Date and place of next meeting

List of participants / *Liste de participant.e.s*

Total number of participants: 88 / Nombre total des participants : 88
Gender distribution: 40 men (45 %) / 48 women (55 %) / *Parité entre hommes : 40 hommes (45 %) / 48 femmes (55 %)*

MEMBERS/*MEMBRES*

ARMENIA/*ARMENIE*	**Nerses ZEYNALYAN** Adviser to the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Armenia/ *Conseiller du ministre de la Justice de la République d'Arménie*
AUSTRIA/*AUTRICHE*	**Matthias TRAIMER** Head of Department Media Affairs, Federal Ministry for Housing, Arts, Culture, Media and Sport / *Chef du département des affaires médiatiques, ministère fédéral du Logement, des Arts, de la Culture, des Médias et des Sports*
AZERBAJIAN / *AZERBAÏDJAN*	**Rasim BAGHIROV** Director of the International Relations and Document Processing Department, Media Development Agency / *Chef du Service « Relations internationales et traitement des documents », Agence de développement des médias*
BELGIUM/*BELGIQUE*	**Johan BOUCIQUÉ** Media Advisor, Department of Culture, Youth and Media, Flemish Government / *Conseiller medias, Département de la culture, de la jeunesse et des médias, Gouvernement flamand*
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA/*BOSNIE-HERZEGOVINE*	**Emir POVLAKIC** Head of Audiovisual and Media Services, Communications Regulatory Agency / *Chef des services audiovisuels et médias, Agence de régulation des communications*
CROATIA/*CROATIE*	**Nives ZVONARIĆ** Head of Media Sector, Ministry of Culture and Media / *Cheffe du secteur des médias, ministère de la Culture et des Médias*
CYPRUS/*CHYPRE*	**Kyriakos KONSTANTA** Press and Information Officer, Press and Information Office (PIO), Ministry of Interior / *Attaché de presse et d'information, Bureau de presse et d'information (PIO), ministère de l'Intérieur* **Nikolas ZACHARIOU** Press and Information Officer, Press and Information Office (PIO), Ministry of Interior / *Attaché de presse et d'information, Bureau de presse et d'information (PIO), ministère de l'Intérieur*
CZECHIA/*TCHÉQUIE*	**Artus REJENT** Director, Media and Audio-Visual Department, Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic / *Directeur, Département des médias et de l'audiovisuel, ministère de la Culture de la République Tchèque*
ESTONIA / *ESTONIE*	**Andres JOESAAR** Advisor (media), Ministry of Culture / Conseiller, ministère de la Culture

FRANCE	**Anne-Emmanuelle LÉTÉ** European Affairs Officer / *Chargée de mission affaires européennes* **Mathieu PRADIER** Directorate for Cultural Diplomacy, Sub-Directorate for Culture and Media - Media and Cinema Division, Copyright, Audiovisual Regulation */ Direction de la diplomatie culturelle* *Sous-direction de la culture et des médias - Pôle médias et cinéma* *Droit d'auteur, régulation audiovisuelle*
GEORGIA/*GEORGIE*	**Ivane MAKHARADZE** Commissioner, Communications Commission of Georgia / *Commissaire, Commission des communications de Géorgie* **Nino GRDZELISHVILI** Head of International Relations Office, Georgian National Communications Commission / *Responsable du Bureau des relations internationales, Commission nationale des communications de Géorgie*
GERMANY/*ALLEMAGNE*	**David NEJJAR** Policy Officer, Federal Goverment Commissioner for Culture and the Media, Berlin / *Chargé de mission*, *Commissaire du gouvernement fédéral à la culture et aux médias, Berlin* **Niklas GRATSCH** State Chancellery of Rhineland-Palatinate, European and International Cooperation / *Chancellerie d'État de Rhénanie-Palatinat, coopération européenne et internationale*
GREECE/*GRECE*	**Aikaterini MANTZOU** Media Policy Expert, Secretariat General for Communication & Media / *Expert en politique médiatique, Direction des médias, Secrétariat général pour la communication et les média*
HUNGARY/*HONGRIE*	**György OCSKÓ** International Legal Advisor, National Media and Infocommunications Authority / *Conseiller juridique international, Autorité nationale des médias et des info-communications*
IRELAND/*IRLANDE*	**Kevin BYRNE** Assistant Principal Officer, EU Presidency and Media Regulation Unit, Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Broadcasting & Media Division / *Adjoint au chef de l'unité « Présidence de l'UE et réglementation des médias », ministère du Tourisme, de la Culture, des Arts, du Gaeltacht, des Sports et des Médias, division de la radiodiffusion et des médias* **Conor HOGAN** Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Broadcasting & Media Division / service *du Tourisme, de la Culture, des Arts, du Gaeltacht, des Sports et des Médias, division de la radiodiffusion et des médias*
ITALY/*ITALIE*	**Claudia SARTORI** Director General, Agency for the right to university education, Professor of Information and Communication, University of Rome / *Directeur general, Agence pour le droit à l'éducation universitaire* , *Professeur d'information et de communication, Université de Rome*

LATVIA/*LETTONIE*	**Gunta LIDAKA** Head of the Media Policy Unit, Ministry of Culture */ Cheffe de l'unité chargée de la politique des médias, ministère de la Culture*
LITHUANIA/*LITUANIE*	**Agnė MIKSTIENE** Chief Specialist, Media and Copyright Policy Unit, Ministry of Culture / *Spécialiste en chef, Unité de la politique des médias et des droits d'auteur, ministère de la Culture*
LUXEMBOURG	**Céline FLAMMANG** Senior policy advisor, Department of Media, Connectivity and Digital Policy, Ministry of State / *Conseillère principale, service des Médias, de la Connectivité et de la Politique numérique, ministère d'État* **Christophe LANGENBRINK** Department of Media, Connectivity and Digital Policy, Ministry of State / *service des Médias, de la Connectivité et de la Politique numérique, ministère d'État*
REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA/ *REPUBLIQUE DE MOLDOVA*	**Aneta GONTA** Vice-president of the Republic of Moldova Audiovisual Council / *Vice-Présidente du Conseil de l'audiovisuel de la République de Moldova*
MONACO	**Serge ROBILLARD** Head of Partnerships and Institutional Relations, Interministerial Delegation in charge of Digital Transition / *Chargé des partenariats et des relations institutionnelles, Délégation Interministérielle chargée de la Transition Numérique* **Paloma REBSTOCK** Interministerial Delegation in charge of Digital Transition / *Délégation Interministérielle chargée de la Transition Numérique* **Valérie TOMATIS NOUAILHAC** Head of Public Relations, Government of Monaco */ Chef de Section Relations Publiques, Gouvernement de Monaco*
NETHERLANDS/*PAYS-BAS*	**Inge WELBERGEN (Vice-Chair/ *Vice-présidente*)** Legal officer Media, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Directorate-General of Culture and Media, Media and Creative Industries / *Conseiller juridique Médias, ministère de l'Éducation, de la Culture et des Sciences, Direction générale de la Culture et des Médias, Médias et Industries créatives*
NORWAY / *NORVÊGE*	**Siw ELLEFSEN** Senior Media Aviser / *Conseillère média senior*
POLAND/*POLOGNE*	**Magda JAGIELLOWICZ** Chief Specialist, Media Law Unit, Department of Media and Creative Sectors, Ministry of Culture and Hational Heritage (KRRIT) / *Spécialiste en chef, Unité du droit des médias, Département de médias et des secteurs créatifs, ministère de la culture et du Patrimoine national*

PORTUGAL	**Charlotte SIMÕES** Policy Officer, Task Force on Media Public Policies (*Estrutura de Missão para a Comunicação Social #PortugalMediaLab*), Ministry of the Presidency / *Chargée de mission, Groupe de travail sur les politiques publiques relatives aux médias (Estrutura de Missão para a Comunicação Social #PortugalMediaLab), ministère de la Présidence*
ROMANIA / *ROUMANIE*	**Marius JITEA** Senior Public Manager at the General Secretariat of the Romanian Government / *Responsable public senior au Secrétariat général du gouvernement roumain*
SERBIA/*SERBIE*	**Maja ZARIC (Chair/*Présidente*)** Head of Division for International Cooperation in the Field of Media, Ministry of Information and Telecommunications/ *Chef de la division de la coopération internationale dans le domaine des médias, ministère de l'Information et des Télécommunications* **Maja MILENKOVIC** Head of normative Unit at Media Department, Ministry of Information and Telecommunications / *Chef de l'unité normative au département des médias, ministère de l'Information et des Télécommunications*
SLOVENIA/*SLOVENIE*	**Skender ADEM** Undersecretary, Ministry of Culture of Republic of Slovenia / *Sous-secrétaire, ministère de la Culture de la République de Slovénie*
SWEDEN / *SUEDE*	**Rebecca PARMAN** Adviser at the Swedish Ministry of Culture / *Conseiller au ministère suédois de la Culture*
SWITZERLAND / *SUISSE*	**Thomas SCHNEIDER** Ambassador, Director of International Affairs, Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communication DETEC, Federal Office of Communications OFCOM / *Ambassadeur, Directeur des affaires internationales, Service fédéral de l'environnement, des transports, de l'énergie et de la communication DETEC, Office fédéral de la communication OFCOM* **Andrin EICHIN** Senior Policy Advisor on online platforms, algorithms and digital policy at the Swiss Federal Office of Communications (OFCOM), Switzerland / *Conseiller politique principal sur les plateformes en ligne, les algorithmes et la politique numérique à l'Office fédéral de la communication (OFCOM), Suisse*
TÜRKIYE	**Yusuf DEMİRTAŞ** Head of Department (Acting)- International Relations Department, Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTUK), / *Chef de département (par intérim) - Département des relations internationals, Conseil suprême de la radio et de la télévision (RTUK)* **Gülşah EKMEKÇİ** Expert - Department of Press and Publications, Presidency of The Republic of Türkiye, Directorate of Communications / *Experte – Service de la presse et des publications, Présidence de la République de Türkiye, Direction de la communication*

UKRAINE	**Olha HERASYMIUK** Chair, National Council of Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine / *Présidente, Conseil national de la télévision et de la radiodiffusion d'Ukraine*
UNITED KINGDOM/*ROYAUME-UNI*	**Gillian MURTAGH** Senior Policy Adviser, International Media, Media and International / *Conseiller principal en matière de politique internationale, Médias internationaux* **Emma BROADHURST** Head of Media and Trust / *Cheffe du service Médias et confiance* **Lucy BYE** Head of UN and Council of Europe | International / *Responsable des Nations Unies et du Conseil de l'Europe* | *International*

OBSERVERS STATES / *ÉTATS OBSERVATEURS*

HOLY SEE/*SAINT SIEGE*	**Michael LUKAS** Spokesman of the Order of Malta in the Diocese of Hildesheim / *Porte-parole de l'Ordre de Malte dans le diocèse de Hildesheim*
MOROCCO/*MAROC*	**El Mahdi AROUSSI IDRISSI** Director of the Legal Studies Department, focal point, High Authority for Audio-visual Communication (HACA) / *Directeur du Département des études juridiques, point focal, Haute Autorité de la Communication Audiovisuelle (HACA)* **Othmane ALAMI LAKTIB** Senior Manager, Legal Studies Department, HACA / *Cadre supérieur, Département des études juridiques, HACA* **Chanaz EL AKRICHI** Head of Division for Cooperation Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, Department of Communication / *Cheffe de division de la Coopération, ministère de la Culture, de la Jeunesse et des Sports, Département de la Communication*

OBSERVERS TO THE CDMSI / *OBSERVATEURS AUPRES DU CDMSI*

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR VIEWERS INTERESTS (EAVI) / *ASSOCIATION EUROPEENNE POUR LES INTERETS DES TELESPECTATEURS*	**Paolo CELOT** Founding Member and Secretary Genera l/ *Membre fondateur et secrétaire général*

NEWS MEDIA COALITION (NMC)/ *COALITION DES MEDIAS D'INFORMATION*	**Andrew MOGER** Chief Executive of the News Media Coalition and former publishing managing editor/ *Directeur general*
REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS / *REPORTERS SANS FRONTIÈRES*	**Lucie CANAL** Advocacy Officer / *Chargée de plaidoyer*

OTHER PARTICIPANTS / *AUTRES PARTICIPANTS*

ARTICLE 19	**Joanna SZYMANSKA** Head of programmes and strategy for Europe/ R*esponsable des programmes et de la stratégie pour l'Europe*
CENTRE FOR MEDIA AND PRESS FREEDOM / *CENTRE POUR LA LIBERTÉ DES MÉDIAS ET DE LA PRESSE*	**Flutura KUSARI** Legal Adviser / *Conseillère juridique*
CENTRE FOR MEDIA PLURALISM AND MEDIA FREEDOM / *CENTRE POUR LE PLURALISME ET LA LIBERTÉ DES MÉDIAS*	**Konrad BLEYER-SIMON** Research Associate / *Chercheur associé* **Urbano REVIGLIO** Research Associate / *Chercheur associé*
CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES / *CONGRÈS DES POUVOIRS LOCAL ET RÉGIONAL*	**Stewart DICKSON** Rapporteur, United Kingdom
EUROPEAN COMMISSION/ *COMMISSION EUROPÉENNE*	**Olga GLINICKA** Legal and Policy Officer | DSA enforcement, European Commission, DG CONNECT, Platforms Policy and Enforcement *Responsable juridique et politique* | *Application de la DSA, Commission européenne, DG CONNECT, Politique et application relatives aux plateformes*
INTERNET RIGHTS AND PRINCIPLES COALITION (IRPC) STEERING COMMITTEE / *COMITÉ DE PILOTAGE DE LA COALITION POUR LES DROITS ET PRINCIPES DE L'INTERNET (IRPC)*	**Minda MOREIRA**
TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY DUBLIN, IRELAND /	**Brian O´NEILL** Emeritus Professor / *Professeur émérite*

UNIVERSITÉ TECHNOLOGIQUE DE DUBLIN, IRLANDE	
UNESCO	**Andrea CAIROLA** Senior Programme Specialist, Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists Section / *Spécialiste principal de programme, Section Liberté d'expression et sécurité des journalistes*
UNIVERSTIY OF BARCELONA / *UNIVERSITÉ DE BARCELONE*	**Mel SALTER** **Alex FUENTES RAVENTÓS** **Michael WIESING** Investigators in applications of immersive realities / *Chercheurs dans le domaine des applications des réalités immersives*
	Brittan HELLER International Law, Technology, and Human Rights expert / *Experte en droit international, technologie et droits 'humains*

COUNCIL OF EUROPE / *CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE*

COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE IMPACTS OF GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION (MSI-AI) / *COMITE D'EXPERTS SUR LES IMPLICATIONS DE L'INTELLIGENCE ARTIFICIELLE GENERATIVE POUR LA LIBERTE D'EXPRESSION (MSI-AI)*	**Murielle POPA-FABRE** Drafting Co-Rapporteur / *Co-rapporteur de rédaction* **Patricia TRISH** Drafting Co-Rapporteur / *Co-rapporteur de rédaction*
COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ONLINE SAFETY AND EMPOWERMENT OF CONTENT CREATORS AND USERS (MSI-ESEC) / *COMITE D'EXPERTS SUR LA SECURITE EN LIGNE ET LA RESPONSABILISATION DES CREATEURS DE CONTENUS ET DES UTILISATEURS*	**Nicole STELLOU** Chair / *Présidente* **Martin HUSOVEC** Drafting Co-Rapporteur/ *Co-rapporteur de rédaction* **Peter NOORLANDER** Drafting Co-Rapporteur/ *Co-rapporteur de rédaction*
EUROPEAN AUDIO-VISUAL OBSERVATORY / *OBSERVATOIRE EUROPEEN DE L'AUDIOVISUEL*	**Pauline DURAND-VIALLE** Executive Director / *Directrice exécutive* **Sophie VALAIS** Deputy Head of department for Legal Information, European Audiovisual Observatory / *Cheffe adjoints du servuce d´information juridique, Observatoire européen de l'audiovisuel*

EUROPEAN PLATFORM OF REGULATORY AUTHORITIES (EPRA)/ *LA PLATE-FORME EUROPÉENNE DES INSTANCES DE RÉGULATION*	**Emmanuelle MACHET** Head of EPRA Secretariat / *Cheffe du secrétariat de l'EPRA*
STEERTING COMMITTEE ON DEMOCRACY / *COMITÉ DIRECTEUR SUR LA DÉMOCRATIE (CDDEM)*	**Urska UMEK** Secretary / *Secrétaire*

DGII – DIRECTORATE FOR DEMOCRACY - DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN DIGNITY / *DIRECTION DE LA DEMOCRATIE - DIRECTION GENERALE DE LA DEMOCRATIE ET DE LA DIGNITE HUMAINE*

Matjaz GRUDEN Director, Directorate for Democracy / *Directeur, Direction de la Démocratie*
Irena GUIDIKOVA Head of the Democratic Institutions and Freedoms Department / *Cheffe du département des institutions démocratiques et des libertés*
Artemiza-Tatiana CHISCA Secretary to the Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI), Head of Freedom of Expression and CDMSI Division / *Secrétaire du Comité Directeur Médias et Société de l'Information (CDMSI), Cheffe de la Division Liberté d´expression et CDMSI*
Giulia LUCCHESE Co- Secretary to the CDMSI, Secretary to the Committee of Experts on the Impacts of Generative Artificial Intelligence for Freedom of Expression (MSI-AI) / Co-secrétaire du CDMSI, S*ecrétaire du Comité d'experts sur les implications de l'intelligence artificielle générative pour la liberté d'expression (MSI-AI)*
Cesare PITEA Secretary to the Committee of Experts on online safety and empowerment of content creators and users (MSI-eSEC) / *Secrétaire du Comité d'experts sur la sécurité en ligne et la responsabilisation des créateurs de contenus et des utilisateurs (MSI-eSEC)*
Rodica CIOCHINA Programme Manager, Freedom of Expression and CDMSI Division / *Chargée de programme, Division Liberté d´expression et CDMSI*
Elena BRODEALA Programme Manager, Freedom of Expression and CDMSI Division / *Chargée de programme, Division Liberté d´expression et CDMSI*
Alina TATARENKO Head of Division for Cooperation on Freedom of Expression / *Cheffe de division pour la coopération en matière de liberté d'expression*
Adrian EVTUHOVICI Platform for the Safety of Journalists / *Plateforme pour la sécurité des journalistes*
Irina TOMOVA Assistant, Freedom of Expression and CDMSI Division / *Assistante, Division Liberté d´expression et CDMSI*

Ketevan SAKHELASHVILI Assistant, Freedom of Expression and CDMSI Division / *Assistante, Division Liberté d´expression et CDMSI*

INTERPRETERS / *INTERPRETES***:**

Célia RAWINSKI
Sara WEBSTER
Lisa WOJCIECHOWICZ