

**Bureau of the Steering Committee on
Media and Information Society
28th meeting (4 April 2025)
Online**

Report

1. Opening of the meeting

The Bureau members met online; the gender distribution was 10 women (77 %) and 3 men (23 %). The list of participants appears in Appendix 1.

Irena Guidikova, Head of the Democratic Institutions and Freedoms Department, Directorate for Democracy, Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity, welcomed the members of the Bureau. Recognising the fast-paced nature of the digital environment, she highlighted the importance of the CDMSI's work and underscored the need for its deliverables to remain accessible, while ensuring that its recommendations are concrete and practical. To that end, she stressed the value of public consultations as a means to enrich the process with broad expertise. Guidikova also shared updates on the Secretary General's plan to establish a new [Democratic Pact](#), inviting meaningful engagement by the members of the CDMSI in shaping a renewed vision of today's democratic institutions and practices. In this framework, she also presented the upcoming Democracy's Firewall Hackathon, to be held in Strasbourg on 20 June 2025, an initiative meant to build tools, strategies, and campaigns that help combat disinformation and safeguard democratic values online. Finally, she informed Bureau members about ongoing work within the Steering Committee on Democracy (CDDem) on the parameters to facilitate the implementation of the Reykjavik Principles and other relevant Council of Europe standards and invited the CDMSI to participate in this consultation process.

2. Adoption of the agenda and order of business

The Bureau members adopted the agenda of the meeting, in Appendix 2.

3. Ongoing standard-setting work

3.1. Expert committees of the CDMSI - work progress

3.1.1. Committee of Experts on online safety and empowerment of content creators and users ([MSI-eSEC](#))

The MSI-eSEC Secretary informed the Bureau about the third meeting of the MSI-eSEC, held on 26-27 March 2025 (in person). The MSI-eSEC was tasked with elaborating a draft recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member states on online safety and empowerment of content creators and users, by the end of 2025.

The Committee re-elected Nicole Stellou (Greece) and Marijana Grbesa (Croatia) as Chair and vice-chair respectively. Maida Culahovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina) was appointed as drafting rapporteur for the Explanatory memorandum, along with one of the drafting rapporteurs for the

draft recommendation, Peter Noorlander (independent expert).

The discussion during the third meeting was based on a draft which underwent a round of comments and inputs by members and participants prior to the meeting. The Committee further discussed and agreed on outstanding issues, including defining the scope of the document, both in terms of risks and their relevance to freedom of expression, and defining the type of platforms to which the draft recommendation refers to. The provisions on the responsibilities of content creators and on content rules were identified as those needing refinement. Following the discussion and agreement in principle, the rapporteurs will submit a revised draft reflecting the outcome of the meeting. The Committee specifically addressed the provisions relating to online empowerment tools and agreed on revised formulations.

The draft deliverable will be presented at the next CDMSI Plenary meeting, when members will discuss and decide whether to open it for public consultations. The MSI-eSEC fourth meeting will be held on 21-22 October 2025, in the premises of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

3.1.2. Committee of Experts on the implications of Generative Artificial Intelligence for Freedom of Expression ([MSI-AI](#))

The MSI-AI Secretary informed about outcome of the third meeting of the Committee of Experts, held on 25-26 March 2025 in the premises of the Council of Europe in Paris and online. The MSI-AI was tasked to draft a Guidance Note on the implications of generative artificial intelligence for freedom of expression, by the end of 2025.

Committee's members and participants discussed the draft Guidance Note. The discussion focused on the sections of the future instrument, namely: the introduction; the Generative AI Technology Stack; Freedom of Expression and Generative AI Technology and Use; Structural Implications for Freedom of Expression; and the Guidelines. On the latter, the MSI-AI agreed to focus on four key areas structured around action verbs: observe, assess, enable, empower. The Committee of Experts also agreed to include visual materials in the body of the Guidance Note and discussed the roadmap for future work.

The draft deliverable will be presented at the next CDMSI Plenary meeting, when members will discuss and decide whether to open it for public consultations. The MSI-AI fourth meeting will be held on 15-16 October 2025, in the premises of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

3.2. Work progress related to the further expected deliverables under [CDMSI Terms of Reference](#)

The Secretariat provided information on the progress made on the other deliverables under the CDMSI Terms of Reference for 2024-2025.

3.2.1. Feasibility study on immersive realities applications and their implication from freedom of expression

The Bureau was informed about the efforts' carried out by the Secretariat to explore the vast and complex topic of freedom of expression in immersive realities. The aim is to develop a guiding document which examines how to uphold freedom of expression within the evolving digital landscape and provide direction for future work in this area. A group of experts will be convened for a dedicated discussion in autumn. Several relevant stakeholders were identified for further engagement. The Secretariat also reported about the participation in the Media Literacy Expert Group (MLEG) meeting, organised by the EU and held in Brussels on 20 February 2025, noting that while the discussion is still broad, clear consensus was reached regarding the importance of protecting children within virtual realities.

The Bureau members expressed interest in the ongoing work and the future deliverable and

invited the Secretariat to share a preliminary draft of the feasibility study ahead of the next CDMSI Plenary meeting to gather feedback, and for potential adoption before the end of the year.

3.2.2. Indicators for Media and Information Literacy (MIL) strategies at national level

The Secretariat reported on the progress of the media and information literacy deliverable. Selected experts will participate in a seminar scheduled for 22-23 May 2025 to review and discuss the indicators outlined in the current draft document. The one-day and a half seminar is expected to provide valuable input for further development of the document. The consultant, Nicoleta Fotiade, Media Literacy Educator & Trainer, Associated to Mediawise Society (RO) and International Association for Media Education, will attend the next CDMSI Plenary session and provide an oral update of the progress achieved. The Secretariat provided information also about the data received in response to the questionnaire circulated amongst CDMSI members.

3.2.3. 10 steps to counter disinformation – Strategy and practical tools based on existing Council of Europe standards and other instruments

The Secretariat reported on progress of the deliverable on disinformation. A total of 24 replies were received in response to the questionnaire distributed to CDMSI members. Two experts (Konrad Bleyer-Simon and Urbano Reviglio, Research Associates at the Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom (CMPF) of the European University Institute) were tasked to analyse the responses and are currently working to identify common features, shared approaches and recurring issues reported by member States. They are currently working on a structure and a discussion paper presenting the underlying approach. Following exchanges with the Secretariat, a first draft of the deliverable will be circulated in advance of the next CDMSI plenary meeting. The Secretariat highlighted that disinformation and information integrity are topics of priority within the Organisation, including in the framework of the [new Democratic Pact](#) of the Council of Europe, initiated by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe. They also noted that several related events are planned for the remainder of the year in which the Council of Europe plays a leading or a supportive role.

3.3. Other pending instruments of relevance for the CDMSI

3.3.1. Pompidou Group – Information on follow-up to the Policy paper on strategies and regulatory options aimed at reducing risks and harms related to online gaming and online gambling

The Bureau was informed about the follow-up to the discussion held during the last plenary meeting in relation to the [Policy paper on strategies and regulatory options aimed at reducing risks and harms related to online gaming and online gambling](#), adopted by the Pompidou Group in June 2024. The Secretariat of the Pompidou Group previously envisaged consultations within the CDMSI on a future draft Recommendation building on the Policy paper. However, the Bureau members were informed that the Pompidou Group decided to postpone the development of such a recommendation to a later stage. Meanwhile, a new two-year project with the European Commission will be launched on "Promoting the mental health of children and children facing the risks of online and online play."

3.3.2. Criminal Law and Freedom of Expression: Council of Europe Approach –Expert study elaborated under Council of Europe Cooperation activities on freedom of expression

The Secretariat provided information about an expert study prepared by Peter Noorlander, Independent Consultant and Startup Director, Reporters Shield, in the framework of a co-operation project in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which aims to summarise and systematise the limitations imposed by Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and other

relevant Council of Europe standards on the use of criminal law in relation to freedom of expression. Given its relevance and content, it was proposed that the expert study be submitted to the CDMSI to take note of it at the next CDMSI Plenary.

4. Mid-term review of the CDMSI Terms of reference for 2024-2027

In line with existing practice, the Secretariat informed the Bureau members of the consolidated proposal for the new CDMSI Terms of Reference, integrating the outcomes of prior Bureau exchanges on prospects for the work of the CDMSI during the forthcoming biennium. Feedback was received from Switzerland, notably on the proposed focus on foreign interference, notably that foreign interference could introduce consideration such as national security - that fall outside the CDMSI's mandate.

The Secretariat outlined the procedural steps ahead: the proposals, after prior hierarchical visa, will be part of a consolidated document covering all intergovernmental committees and related budgetary needs, to be submitted to the Committee of Ministers for discussion and approval between early summer and the end of the year. Discussions will take place in Committee of Ministers' thematic groups relevant to CDMSI - namely, GR-H and GR-PBA (for budgetary issues) - where questions or requests for clarification may arise. The final approval by the CM, including on the budget, is expected in November. The CDMSI will be kept informed of the advancement of the examination process of the proposals made.

5. Council of Europe '[Journalists matter](#)' Campaign for the Safety of Journalists

The Bureau members were informed about the latest achievements of the [Council of Europe 'Journalists Matter' Campaign for the Safety of Journalists](#), including the increased number of designated national focal points (41), established national committees/coordination structures/platforms of dialogue for the Campaign, and enacted and planned national action plans for the safety of journalists. The secretariat provided updates on the [annual thematic conference](#) : *Building the paradigm against impunity of crimes against journalists* and of the third meeting of the National Focal Points to the [Council of Europe Campaign for the Safety of Journalists- Journalists Matter](#), held on 29 and 30 April 2025 in Luxembourg, under the Presidency of Luxembourg of the Committee of Ministers.

6. Meeting of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe with the chairs of intergovernmental committees

The Secretariat provided information about the third meeting of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe with Presidents of Intergovernmental Committees, to be held in the Palais de l'Europe, Council of Europe, in Strasbourg, on 24 April 2025. The CDMSI Chair, Maja Zarić, informed about her upcoming attendance of the meeting and share with the Bureau members the main takeaways of preparatory meetings. She stressed the added value of using the opportunity to interact with the Chairs of other Intergovernmental Committees working on cross-cutting issues of relevance for the CDMSI and to engage in discussions about potential priorities and innovative solutions of the future [new Democratic Pact](#). She also informed about her participation, in the framework of the meeting, in the Working Group focusing on how democratic participation, freedoms, diversity, and inclusion can be integrated into the Secretary General's Democratic Pact.

The Bureau members exchanged about the opportunities provided by the meeting, stressed the importance to signal the important work carried out by the CDMSI, addressing issues which are at the core of functioning democratic societies.

7. Preparation for the 27th CDMSI Plenary meeting (18-20 June, Strasbourg)

The Bureau and the Secretariat exchange about priority files to be addressed during the next

CDMSI Plenary meeting, notably progress made on the deliverables to be finalised by the end of the year. *Inter alia*, during the Plenary, the relevant work of European Commission for Democracy through Law ([Venice Commission](#)) and the annual [Report on Confronting Political Pressure, Disinformation and the Erosion of Media Independence](#) by the Partners Organisation to the [Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists](#), launched in Brussels on 5 March, will be presented by selected experts. On the second day of the Plenary, the CDMSI members will be invited to attend a thematic session on Hate Speech and Safety of Journalists, in the framework of, and alongside the participants to, the “[No Hate Speech Week](#)”. The Bureau members also exchanged about the CDMSI possible involvement in the Democracy’s Firewall Hackathon, to be held in Strasbourg on 20 June 2025.

8. Recent country-specific developments in the field of freedom of expression

Members of the Bureau shared information about the following country-specific developments of relevance for the CDMSI:

- In the Netherlands: work is ongoing to translate selected legal instruments of the Council of Europe in the field of freedom of expression in Dutch, including through a project involving of students and academics.
- In Serbia: similar efforts in translation of Council of Europe standards on freedom of expression into the national language are carried out under the authority of the Ministry of European Integration. Consultations are ongoing regarding draft amendments on media and broadcast laws.
- In Greece: specialised trainings for law enforcement were set up, including as follow-up to the [Seminar: The Role of the Police in the Protection of the Safety of Journalists](#), held on 26-27 September 2024 in the framework of the ‘Journalists matter’ Campaign.
- In the Republic of Moldova: the State is working on the alignment of national legislation with relevant EU standards on media, audiovisual services and advertising. Current efforts aim to establish a National Action Plan for the Safety of Journalists, in line with the goals of the Council of Europe Campaign ‘Journalists matter’.

9. Participation in events of relevance for the CDMSI

The Secretariat provided information on its past participation in: the European Commission Expert Group on Media Literacy Education (Brussels, 20 February 2025); [RightsCon](#) (24-27 February 2025) where the Secretariat organised and hosted an online roundtable “Scariest than eco-anxiety: how the law is abused to silence information on the environment”; the [UK Media Freedom Forum](#) (London, 4-5 March 2025); and, the Conference “Strengthening the Reliability of News and Journalism: Council of Europe Actions Against Disinformation” of the Swiss Presidency of the Group of Friends on the Safety of Journalists (Strasbourg, 31 March 2025).

The Bureau was also informed about planned participation in relevant events of the [World Press Freedom Day](#) (Brussels, 5-7 May 2025); the European Dialogue on Internet Governance ([EuroDIG](#)) (Strasbourg, 11-13 May 2025); the 61st Meeting of the European Platform of Regulatory Authorities ([EPRA](#)) (Chisinau, 14-16 May 2025); and, the Internet Governance Forum ([IGF](#)) (Lillestrøm, 23-27 June 2025).

10. Any other business

The next CDMSI plenary meeting will be held on 18-20 June 2025 in Strasbourg, in the Palais de l’Europe.

The Bureau agreed to hold its next meeting in the autumn of 2025, on a date to be determined.

List of participants

Bureau of the Steering Committee on Media
and Information Society
28th meeting (4 April 2025)
Hybrid format

Liste des participants

Bureau du Comité directeur sur les médias et
la société de l'information
28ème réunion (4 avril 2025)
Format hybride

SERBIE/SERBIE	Maja ZARIC (Chair/Présidente) Head of Division for International Cooperation in the Field of Media, Ministry of Information and Telecommunications/ <i>Chef de la division de la coopération internationale dans le domaine des médias, ministère de l'Information et des Télécommunications</i>
GREECE/GRECE	Aikaterini POLYZOU Head of Department for Audiovisual Media & Internet, Secretariat General for Communication & Media / <i>Chef du département Médias audiovisuels et Internet, Direction des médias, Secrétariat général pour la communication et les médias</i>
REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA/ REPUBLIQUE DE MOLDOVA	Aneta GONTA Vice-President of the Audiovisual Council of the Republic of Moldova / <i>Vice-Présidente du Conseil de l'audiovisuel de la République de Moldova</i>
PAYS-BAS/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 / <i>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</i>
SUISSE/SUISSE	Thomas SCHNEIDER Ambassador, Director of International Affairs, Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communication DETEC, Federal Office of Communications OFCOM / <i>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</i>

Secretariat du Conseil de l'Europe

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 LUCCHESI

Vice- Secretary to the CDMSI, Secretary to the Committee of Experts on the Impacts of Generative Artificial Intelligence for Freedom of Expression (MSI-AI) /
Vice-secrétaire du CDMSI, *Secrétaire 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

Tudor ROSU

Programme Manager, Freedom of Expression and CDMSI Division /
Chargée de programme, Division Liberté d'expression et CDMSI

Irina TOMOVA

Assistant, Freedom of Expression and CDMSI Division / *Assistante, Division Médias et Internet*

Roxana VENER

Assistant, Freedom of Expression and CDMSI Division / *Assistante, Division Liberté d'expression et CDMSI*

AGENDA

Morning session
<p>1. Opening of the meeting</p> <p>Irena GUIDIKOVA, Head of Democratic Institutions and Freedoms Department, Directorate for Democracy, Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity</p>
<p>2. Adoption of the agenda and order of business</p>
<p>3. Ongoing standard setting work</p> <p>3.1 Expert committees of the CDMSI - work progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Committee of Experts online safety and empowerment of content creators and users (MSI-eSEC) ○ Committee of Experts on the Implications of Generative Artificial Intelligence for Freedom of Expression (MSI-AI) <p>3.2 Work progress related to the further expected deliverables under CDMSI Terms of Reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Feasibility study on immersive reality applications and their implications for freedom of expression ○ Indicators for media and information literacy (MIL) strategies at national level ○ Ten steps to counter disinformation - Strategy and practical tools based on existing Council of Europe standards and other instruments <p>3.3 Other pending instruments of relevance for the CDMSI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pompidou Group – Information on follow-up to the Policy paper on strategies and regulatory options aimed at reducing risks and harms related to online gaming and online gambling ○ Criminal Law and Freedom of Expression: Council of Europe Approach – Draft expert study elaborated under Council of Europe Cooperation activities on freedom of expression <p>Information provided by the Secretariat and discussion.</p>
<p>4. Mid-term review of the CDMSI Terms of reference for 2024-2027</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CDMSI work during the second biennium (2026-2027) <p>Information provided by the Secretariat and discussion.</p>

5. Council of Europe ‘Journalists matter’ [Campaign for the Safety of Journalists](#)

- Progress report on most recent developments and forthcoming work
- Information on main thematic annual event under the Campaign: please add title, date

Information provided by the Secretariat and discussion.

Afternoon session

6. Meeting of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe with the chairs of intergovernmental bodies (24 April 2025)

Information provided by the Chair and Secretariat and discussion.

7. Preparation for the 27th CDMSI Plenary meeting (18-20 June, Strasbourg)

- **Planned activities and exchanges of views**
 - Hate Speech workshop in the framework of the “[No Hate Speech Week](#)”
 - Venice Commission representative
 - Annual Report [Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists](#)

Information provided by the Secretariat and discussion.

8. Recent country-specific developments in the field of freedom of expression

Information provided by the Bureau members.

9. Participation in events of relevance for the CDMSI (2025)

- Past:
 - [RightsCon](#), Taipei, 24-27 February
 - [UK Media Freedom Forum](#), London, 4-5 March
 - Group of Friends of the Council of Europe on the Safety of Journalists and Media Freedom in Strasbourg - Conference on the topic: “*Strengthening reliable information and journalism: Council of Europe actions against disinformation*”, Strasbourg, 31 March
 - EC Expert Group on Media Literacy Education, Brussels, 20 February
- Upcoming:
 - World press Freedom Day ([WPFD](#)), Brussels, 5-7 May
 - European Dialogue on Internet Governance ([EuroDIG](#)), Strasbourg, 12-14 May
 - [61st EPRA Meeting](#), 14-16 May 2025, Chisinau, Moldova
 - Internet Governance Forum ([IGF](#)), Norway, 23-27 June

Information provided by the Bureau members and by the Secretariat.

10. Any other business

Date and place of next meeting.