

Commission Démocratie, cohésion sociale et enjeux mondiaux CONF/DEM(2019)SYN1

DRAFT SYNOPSIS

FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE DEMOCRACY COMMISSION, SOCIAL COHESION AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES

The Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee met on 10 April 2019 in Strasbourg under the chairmanship of Thierry Mathieu.

The Committee

approved the agenda

adopted the synopsis of the meeting of 26 June 2018

debated "*The impact of information technologies for democracy*" by addressing two issues:

The benefits of information technology for democracy: how can social media engage citizens in the democratic process? How can citizens mobilize against nationalism and populism for the European elections? What are the benefits of using social media? What are the challenges? With the participation of Francois Friederich, Head of the Electoral Assistance Division of the Council of Europe

M. Friederich recalled the importance of information technology, and tools that have become essential playing a key role in all areas of everyday life in our societies, including social and political life (public services, voting, etc.). He also stressed the interference of social networks, potential vectors of fake news in electoral campaigns and addressed how citizens can mobilise against nationalism and populism for the European elections.

It emerged from this debate that the representation and participation of the citizens who are the pillars of democracy must arm themselves against the effects of recent developments in the field of information technology.

The risks of IT for democracy: does artificial intelligence threaten democracy in Europe? With Sébastien Fanti, a specialist in data protection in Switzerland

Mr. Fanti alerted the committee members on the threats that artificial intelligence may pose to democracy. He stressed that the influence of artificial intelligence on the voting process is a subject that can endanger the security of elections, if strict regulations are not put in place. He emphasized the risk of AI in protecting patients' medical data. (cf. Annex 1 minutes by L. Petrescu)

exchanged on e-democracy and e-governance with Peter Andre, Chairman of the CDDG, and Gerhard Ermischer, Vice-Chair of the Committee and Rares Augustin Craiut, Secretary General of the European Confederation of Youth Clubs

heard Maguelonne Dejeant-Pons, Executive Secretary of the European Landscape Convention on the Workshops for the Implementation of the European Landscape Convention held in Seville from 14 to 15 March 2019 and whose theme was water in the landscapes. Ms. Dejeant Pons paid tribute to the work of the commission, thanking her chair for her intervention during the opening ceremony.

Heard an update on the activity of the working groups

Transversal Group Social and Territorial Cohesion. The working group informed the Committee of the follow-up of the contribution of the Conference to COP24 on the theme "Human Rights and Climate Change", thematic driven since 2008 within the Conference by Edith WENGER, Delegate of the European Office of the Environment (BEE).

Anne Marie Chavanon (FIHUAT) stated that she had been able to deliver personally, in Katowice (Poland), the declaration adopted by the Conference of INGOs on the one hand to NGOs working on these issues with the United Nations, on the other hand to Laurent Fabius, President of COP 24, Patricia ESPINOSA, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Michal KURTYKA, Secretary of State at the Ministry of Energy in Poland, President of COP24 and Michelle BACHELET, High Commissioner for Human Rights at the United Nations.

Patrice Collignon (RED) **reported** on the work of the Urban-Rural Fracture Working Group, focusing on the contribution to consider in order to establish and restore the dialogue between populations and territories.

Transversal Working Group Prevention of Corruption. This group coordinated by Luminita Petrescu invited experts to talk about programs developed in Romania: Ms Laura Stefan Anti-Corruption Program Coordinator of the Expert Forum (EFOR), a Romanian NGO and Mr. Manuel Dalia, blogger and independent political journalist from Malta, "The Political Customer Map" and "The School of Democracy". The role of the Council of Europe in assessing corruption in member countries and civil society, in particular NGOs, was recalled to organize information campaigns for citizens. (cf. Annex 2 : minutes by L. Petrescu)

Participation in the democratic decision. This working group coordinated by Gerhard Ermischer fueled the second part of the committee's debate

Gender Perspectives in the Political and Democratic Process coordinated by Bettina Hahne

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