

# Annex 1: Terms of reference

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## EVALUATION OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S CONFERENCE OF INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS (INGOs)

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

Directorate of Internal Oversight

Evaluation Division

Evaluation (2020)3

3 April 2020

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

The Council of Europe (CoE) is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It promotes human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe and beyond. The Organisation's 47 member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, the implementation of which is overseen by the European Court of Human Rights.<sup>1</sup>

The Conference of INGOs is a civil society assembly whose aim is to represent European civil society as the institutional civil society pillar within the Organisation and to promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law through civil society in Europe, alongside the Secretary General, the Committee of Ministers, the Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities the European Court of Human Rights and the Commissioner for Human Rights.<sup>2</sup>

The Helsinki Declaration,<sup>3</sup> delivered on 17 May 2019, stated that 'a free and pluralist public debate is a precondition for democracy, and strong action is required to reverse the recent deterioration of freedom of expression in Europe. We recognise the key role of civil society and express our deep concern at its shrinking space. We commit to a meaningful and transparent dialogue with civil society at all levels of our engagement'.

Similarly, the Georgian presidency of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers (November 2019 - May 2020), has highlighted *Civil Participation in Decision-Making Process* as one of its four priorities.<sup>4</sup> The Georgian Presidency considers that increasing the level of input from civil society and from citizens to guide public decisions can be one way of combating negative trends such as decreased trust in public authorities and increased populism in Europe.

In view of the above, the 2020 work programme<sup>5</sup> of the Directorate of Internal Oversight (DIO) included an Evaluation of the Programme line Conference of INGOs. The evaluation aims to contribute to the debate on the improvement of dialogue of the CoE with civil society. The INGO Conference is under the programme 'Democratic Governance' of the Programme and Budget 2020-2021.<sup>6</sup>

The evaluation is expected to contribute to the improvement of the institutional set-up between the Conference of INGOs and the Council of Europe, in order to assess the existing framework and identify possible avenues for future cooperation with the Conference of INGOs and implementation of its activities in protecting and promoting the rights of civil society in Europe.

These terms of reference provide a description of the proposed evaluation approach, design and timeframe.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/about-us/who-we-are>

<sup>2</sup> Action Plan of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe 2018-2021

<sup>3</sup> Declaration by the Committee of Ministers on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe, Helsinki, 17 May 2019

<sup>4</sup> Priorities of the Georgian Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (27 November 2019 – May 2020)

<sup>5</sup> GR-PBA(2020)3

<sup>6</sup> Programme and Budget 2020-2021

## 2. CONFERENCE OF INGOS

### 2.1 Internal organisation

The INGO Conference of the Council of Europe is made up of 320 INGOs enjoying participatory status, is the main decision-making body of the non-governmental organisations. It identifies the general action needed to organise its participation in the Council of Europe "quadrilogue"<sup>7</sup> (partnership between the four pillars of the Council of Europe: Committee of Ministers, Parliamentary Assembly, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, and INGO Conference).

#### **The Conference**

The Conference of INGOs is the chief body representing the INGOs enjoying participatory status with the Council of Europe and as such identifies the general action needed to organise its participation in the Council of Europe "quadrilogue" alongside the Committee of Ministers, the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, to ensure that participatory status functions correctly, and so help to affirm the political role of civil society at the Council of Europe. It decides on policy lines and defines and adopts action programmes.

#### **Sessions**

The Conference of INGOs meets in Strasbourg twice a year normally during the ordinary sessions of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. The Conference of INGOs is chaired by its President in office, whom it elects every three years. The current President is Ms Anna Rurka, who is in her second mandate which will end in April 2021.

#### **The Bureau**

The Bureau of the Conference of INGOs is made up of nine members who are delegates from INGOs belonging to the Conference of INGOs and who sit on the Bureau in a personal capacity.

The Bureau prepares the agenda for the meetings of the Conference of INGOs and its Standing Committee and implements the decisions taken by these two bodies. It also implements the internal and external communication policy of the Conference of INGOs defined by the Standing Committee. It ensures that all INGOs enjoying participatory status and interested in the work of the Conference of INGOS are involved in it.

#### **Standing Committee**

The Standing Committee is the management and decision-making body of the non-governmental organisations. It has a consultative and proposal-making role vis-à-vis the INGO Conference and its

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/the-conference-of-ingos-in-a-nutshell>

Bureau and adopts the recommendations and resolutions expressing their commitment. It is responsible for co-ordination between the INGO Conference and its Committees; it promotes participation by the INGOs in the work of the other partners in the Council of Europe. The Bureau prepares the agenda for the meetings of the INGO Conference and its Standing Committee and implements the decisions taken by these two bodies.

### **Thematic Committees**

During and between the sessions, the main work is carried out by the three committees where INGOs are involved at local, national and European level cooperate on issues in the competence of:

- Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges
- Education and Culture
- Human rights

The committees prepare the contributions to the steering committees and subordinate bodies, organise with the secretariat the activities on these issues both in the Council of Europe and its member States and elaborate draft declarations and recommendations to other entities of the Council of Europe to be discussed and adopted by the INGO Conference or its standing committee. They share their expertise with the directorates general and other entities of the Council of Europe.

### **The Expert Council on NGO Law**

The Expert Council was created in 2008 and carries out thematic and country studies on specific aspects of NGO legislation and its implementation that seem to pose problems of conformity with international standards, notably the European Convention on Human Rights and the Recommendation (2007)<sup>14</sup> on the legal status of NGOs in Europe. Its work covers the 47 member countries of the Council of Europe and Belarus. It co-operates with other Council of Europe bodies, in particular the Venice Commission and the Commissioner for Human Rights.<sup>8</sup>

### **INGO Service**

INGO-Service was set up to receive voluntary financial contributions from INGOs. The purpose of INGO-Service is to provide financial means to the Conference of INGOs, in addition to the financial contribution of the Council of Europe, to carry out its activities and its missions, to enhance the work of all of the INGOs holding participatory status. In 2019, the Council of Europe and INGOs voluntary contributions had a 50/50 share of the INGO-Service budget. The amount received from the Council of Europe was 20 000 EUR.

In addition to this collective work, national and international NGOs are cooperating individually as experts with the different organs and directorates general of the Council of Europe.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/expert-council>

## 2.2 The legal basis for the work in the Council of Europe

The Council of Europe has various hard and soft standards that regulate the status of NGOs in Europe and their relationship to the Council of Europe.

### **Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)14 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the legal status of non-governmental organisations in Europe**

The Recommendation defines the minimum standards to be respected concerning the creation, management and the general activities of NGOs in member states of the organisation.

CM/Rec(2007)14 is substantially and consistently promoted by the Conference of INGOs, notably through the work of the Expert Council on NGO Law, which uses the Recommendation as a strong point of reference and a bedrock for defending and expanding the multiple roles of civil society in Council of Europe Member States. The Conference encourages all civil society organizations throughout Europe to cite and make use of the Recommendation in their dealings with governmental authorities at all levels.

- [Link to Recommendation \(2007\)14](#)

### **European Convention on the Recognition of the Legal Personality of International Non-Governmental Organisations [CETS N° 124]<sup>9</sup>**

The Council of Europe recognised, as early as in 1951, the importance of the NGOs, each in its particular field, and of their contribution to the activities of the Organisation.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, being aware of the absence of any international instrument in force aimed at facilitating the activities of NGOs at international level charged a select Committee of experts on international non-governmental organisations (CJ-R-OR) with the task of drawing up an appropriate instrument on NGOs.

The CJ-R-OR held three meetings in 1982 and 1983 and submitted a draft European convention on recognition of the legal personality of international non-governmental organisations to the CDCJ for approval. This draft convention was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 24 October 1985 and the Convention was opened for signature by member States in Strasbourg on 24 April 1986.

- [Link to Convention 124](#)

### **Evolution of the Conference of INGOs**

In May 1951, the Committee of Ministers stated that it "may, on behalf of the Council of Europe, make suitable arrangements for consultation with international non-governmental Organisations which deal with matters that are within the competence of the Council of Europe" ([Resolution \(51\) 30Fe](#)). In October 1972 it adopted the "Rules for Consultative Status" for INGOs (Resolution (72) 35).

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe at the time, Georg Kahn-Ackermann, increased the cooperation with the INGOs and suggested that they should get organised among themselves. This led to establishing in January 1976 the Liaison Committee, a body made up of 17 INGOs elected by the "Plenary Conference of the INGOs enjoying consultative status with the Council of Europe". In

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<sup>9</sup> [https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/124/signatures?p\\_auth=JFcBOeyc](https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/124/signatures?p_auth=JFcBOeyc)

1979, the Committee of Ministers decided to establish, within the Directorate of Political Affairs, a secretariat for the Liaison Committee and to put interpretation and meeting rooms at the disposal of the INGOs. In order to finance the collective work, the Liaison Committee set up, in 1995, the association "INGO Service" to receive voluntary financial contributions from INGOs.

### **Participatory Status**

The Council of Europe has had working relations with non-governmental organisations since 1952 when it introduced a consultative status for INGOs. In 2003, in recognition of the increasingly active role played by the INGOS, the Council of Europe decided to change the consultative status to one of participatory status. The Resolution on the Status of partnership between the Council of Europe and national non-governmental organisations was adopted.<sup>10</sup>

In 2005, the Resolution on committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods<sup>11</sup> followed.

In his 2015 report on the "[State of Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law in Europe](#)" the Secretary General recommended to revise, in consultation with the Conference of INGOs, the guidelines on participatory status. The main objective of the revision of the resolution was to better define the criteria for granting or refusing participatory status and to increase the relevance and quality of INGOs enjoying participatory status.

In July 2016, the Committee of Ministers adopted a new resolution on participatory status, [Resolution \(2016\)3](#). It sets out the rules for the granting of participatory status to INGOs, gives more information on the background of the status, what it represents, the conditions to be met by INGOs and the possibilities it gives to INGOs to co-operate with the Council of Europe.

The INGOs enjoying participatory status form the Conference of INGOs. The Conference represents civil society at the Council of Europe and works to promote participatory democracy.

## **2.3 Work conducted under the programme line**

### **Programme and Budget 2016-2017**

In the Programme and Budget 2016-2017, the Conference of INGOs operates under the "Strengthening Democratic Dialogue" budget line and lists the following overall objective:

*"The objective of this programme is that different actors play a positive role at all levels of governance and in conflict resolution."*

More specifically, *"The Conference of INGOs will concentrate on enhancing the protection of human rights defenders; combating radicalisation and extremism leading to terrorism; promoting gender equality and protecting the freedoms of assembly, association and expression."*

Under this objective, the document lists one expected result with five indicators:

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<sup>10</sup> Resolution on the Status of partnership between the Council of Europe and national non-governmental organisations (Res(2003)9)

<sup>11</sup> Resolution on committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods (Res(2005)47)

EXPECTED RESULTS	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
<p><b>Expected result 1</b> Civil Society interaction with the Council of Europe has been strengthened.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Number of INGOs attending bi-annual sessions of the Conference of INGOs (target: increase from 90 to 120).</li> <li>▪ Number of INGO representatives having participated in intergovernmental committees (target: 100).</li> <li>▪ Number of representatives of civil society and the conference of INGOs having participated in the World Forum for Democracy (target: 400).</li> <li>▪ INGOs have contributed actively to the implementation of Council of Europe Action Plans.</li> <li>▪ Availability of timely and substantive inputs from civil society to the work of the Council of Europe.</li> </ul>

The average annual budget of the Conference of INGOs in 2016-2017 amounted to 159.450,00 EUR

### Programme and Budget 2018-2019

In the Programme and Budget 2018-2019, the Conference of INGOs operates under the “Democratic Governance” programme and budget line and lists the following overall objective:

*“The objective of this programme line is that member States take measures to ensure good democratic governance in their public institutions and in electoral processes, and that the different actors play a positive role at all levels of governance and in conflict resolution.”*

More specifically, *“The Conference of INGOs will concentrate on the freedoms of assembly, association and expression, promoting the use of the Council of Europe Guidelines on civil participation in political decision making.”*

Under this objective, the document lists one expected result with five indicators:

INGOs and civil society in member States have benefited from an improved and more enabling environment and strengthen their interaction with the Council of Europe.			
EXPECTED RESULT 3	Number of INGOs attending bi-annual sessions of the Conference of INGOs on average.	120	90
	Number of assistance activities provided to member States to improve protections of freedom of association and the enabling environment for civil society.	5	-
	Number of events held for promotion, awareness raising, exchange of best practice of the Guidelines on civil participation in political decision-making.	4	-
	Number of opinions, expertise, studies published in relation to member States' legislation, European case-law on NGO activities and freedom of association.	3	-
	Evidence of enhanced representativeness and participation of INGOs in the bi-annual sessions and of increased participation in relevant Council of Europe bodies (Steering Committees, working groups, etc.).		

The average annual budget of the Conference of INGOs in 2018-2019 amounted to 166.600,00 EUR.

## **2.4 Contributions of different Council of Europe institutions and entities and other actors**

### **Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)**

In November 2007, a resolution was adopted on the "Co-operation between the Parliamentary Assembly and the Conference of INGOs" (Resolution 1589 (2007)<sup>1</sup>), noting "with satisfaction that the work programme of the Conference of INGOs contains several major themes which are closely related to the priorities of the Assembly. On this basis, it is convinced that additional steps should be taken with a view to an enhanced co-operation aimed at further developing citizen participation and dialogue with civil society".

### **Congress of Local and Regional Authorities**

In May 2008, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and the INGO Conference concluded resolution on Partnership between local and regional authorities and NGOs in Council of Europe member States to promote progressive and appropriate procedures for citizen participation between elections". This memorandum was established mainly to strengthen the position of national and local NGOs, which in their great majority do not have any link with the Council of Europe.

### **World Forum for Democracy**

The World Forum for Democracy is a platform for political decision-makers and activists to debate solutions to key challenges for democracies worldwide. By identifying and analysing experimental initiatives and practices, the Forum highlights and encourages democracy innovations at the grassroots and their transfer on a systemic level in order to strengthen the foundations of democratic societies. The Forum thus contributes to the evolution of democracy towards more participatory and inclusive structures and institutions. A meeting of the Forum is held annually.

### **North-South Centre**

The mission of the North-South Centre is to empower civil society, in particular youth and women, through intercultural dialogue and global citizenship education, to play an active role in Council of Europe member states and neighbouring regions. In January 2010, a cooperation agreement was concluded between the North-South Centre and the INGO Conference in order to strengthen their collaboration.

The work of the entities listed above is carried out under different programme lines and is not included in the scope of the evaluation.

## Other international actors in the field

The evaluation will further look into various international organisations' roles in the field of International NGOs and identify the added value of the Council of Europe's work in comparison with those.

## 3. THE EVALUATION APPROACH

### 3.1 Rationale and purpose

The evaluation of the Conference of INGOs was included in the DIO's work programme for 2020 due to the political and strategic relevance of the subject. The Conference of INGOs has been recognised as an important political body of the Council of Europe by "consistently demonstrating its relevance and commitment to [the] Organisation's values and priorities"<sup>12</sup> since gaining its participatory status in 2003. Given the ever growing concern about the status of NGOs in Europe, and the priority given to civil society participation by both the past and current presidencies of the Committee of Ministers, and as confirmed in the Helsinki Declaration - it is a timely moment to assess the contribution made by the Conference of INGOs in giving civil society a much-needed voice within the Council of Europe and within its Member States.

The DIO conducted four other evaluations mentioned below. This evaluation seeks to further DIO's efforts in order to optimise the Organisation's interventions in support to INGOs. It has the potential to enhance the coherence and synergy of actions as well as to identify the added value of the Conference of INGOs in this respect.

### 3.2 Previous Evaluations undertaken by DIO in relation to NGOs

#### **Evaluation of the World Forum for Democracy<sup>13</sup>**

The purpose of the evaluation was to contribute in particular to on-going reflections among the organizers regarding a future strategy, positioning and management of the Forum. The evaluation report took stock of achievements and assessed operational arrangements in order to learn lessons for future editions of the Forum. Based on evaluation findings, the evaluation concluded that the management and governance arrangements of the Forum are partially efficient. The Forum is effective by giving some inputs for democratic initiatives implemented by its participants and it adds value to the Council of Europe and the international discussion on democracy. Overall, the strategic positioning of the Forum was found to be satisfactory. However, one of the recommendations (Rec.5) stated that the connection between the Forum and the Council of Europe's other work needed to be strengthened.

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<sup>12</sup> Action Plan of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe 2018-2021, p.1

<sup>13</sup> Evaluation of the World Forum for Democracy, 2017

## **Evaluation of the contribution of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to standard setting and monitoring in the CoE (2016)<sup>14</sup>**

This evaluation focused on the added value and effectiveness of the contributions of NGOs through the steering committees, monitoring bodies and Conference of International NGOs. The evaluation found that NGOs bring significant added value to standard setting and monitoring, as they channel professional expertise and practical experience on the implementation of standards in the field. NGOs also diversify the sources of information and the points of views considered by standard setting and monitoring bodies. Finally, NGOs are key actors for advocating the ratification, adoption and implementation of CoE standards.

## **Evaluations of the North-South Centre (2012 and 2015)**

The mission of the North-South Centre is to empower civil society, in particular youth and women, through intercultural dialogue and global citizenship education, to play an active role in Council of Europe member states and neighbouring regions.<sup>15</sup> DIO Evaluation Division carried out two evaluations of the North-South Centre, first in 2012<sup>16</sup> and a second in 2015.<sup>17</sup> Both evaluations sought to examine the relevance and added value of the North-South Centre and proposed possible scenarios for the most appropriate continuation of its functioning. The 2012 evaluation found “the Centre had added value to the Council of Europe and to the member states which contributed to the Partial Agreement and had the capacity to do so in the future”. However, the evaluation also showed that the Centre was facing several challenges. The 2015 report examined coordination and cooperation aspects with the headquarters, as well as the Centre’s role as an interface between Council of Europe and Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (SEM) Countries.

### **3.3 Scope**

The evaluation will cover all activities conducted under the Expected Results on the Conference of INGOs between 2016 and 2019 and will review the overall functioning of the Conference of INGOs. Activities under other programme lines will be outside the scope of this exercise, even if they aim at similar objectives and are conducted as joint activities.

### **3.4 Evaluation objectives, criteria and questions**

The evaluation’s objectives are to evaluate the degree to which the Conference of INGOs effectively achieves its intermediate outcomes and objectives, the relevance, coherence and coordination of the different types of interventions of the Conference and the added value of the Conference’s support to INGOs in providing a voice for civil society within the Council of Europe.

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<sup>14</sup> Evaluation of the contribution of NGOs to standard setting and monitoring, 2016

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/north-south-centre/about-us>

<sup>16</sup> Evaluation of the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, 2012

<sup>17</sup> Report of the Evaluation of the North-South Centre, 2015

The evaluation will assess the Council of Europe's activities in the area, against the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, and added value bearing in mind the stated objectives in the programme and budget and the Action Plan (2018-2021) and Resolution (2016) 3.

The evaluation questions are as follows:

1. To what extent has the work of the INGO Conference been effective in achieving the objectives and expected results as outlined in the Programmes and Budgets 2016-2019 and the Action Plan of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe 2018-2021?
2. To what extent are the objectives of the Conference of INGOs relevant?
3. What is the added value of the interventions of the Conference of INGOs in achieving the stated objectives?

The evaluation matrix (in Annex 1) specifies proposed related sub-questions and measures for these main evaluation questions and provides details on the data collection methods that are planned to be used to answer them.

### **3.5 Evaluation methodology**

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the DIO's Evaluation Guidelines<sup>18</sup>. It will use a mixed-methods approach to answer the evaluation questions and a gender sensitive evaluation methodology. The following sections describe the different methods intended to be used.

#### **Document review**

In order to obtain an in-depth understanding of the Conference of INGOs' work in the area of the following types of documents will be analysed:

- Relevant Council of Europe standards in the field of civil society;
- Legal opinions issued by the Expert Council on NGO Law;
- Country visit reports;
- Reports produced by the /secretariat of the Conference of INGOs, including activity, progress or assessment reports;
- Surveys on the participation of NGOs at the Council of Europe;
- Documents related to cooperation projects, including project descriptions, implementation reports, evaluation reports and other project related documents;
- Relevant documents issued by international organisations on INGO participation, as well as civil society in general (assemblies, networks etc.);
- Other relevant documents.

#### **Semi-structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with a sample of the following types of stakeholders:

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<sup>18</sup> Evaluation Guidelines of the Directorate of Internal Oversight, DD(2014)238 Final (Eng).

- Council of Europe Secretariat to the Conference of INGOs;
- Other Council of Europe staff members involved in the work of the Conference of INGOs e.g. secretariats of the Steering committees, Committee of Ministers, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, monitoring mechanisms, Human Rights Commissioner, European Court of Human Rights (ECHR);
- INGO Conference members;
- Permanent Representations of the Council of Europe;
- Representatives of national NGOs with a role in CoE's activities (e.g. PACE, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, monitoring mechanisms, ECHR);
- Representatives from other international organisations involved in civil society assemblies/networks.

Interviews will be conducted in person or on the phone/by teleconference. They will follow interview guidelines that will be adapted as needed to each stakeholder group. An interview protocol will be drafted for each interview and interview data will be analysed systematically with the help of an analytical grid.

### **Survey**

A survey will be conducted among relevant CoE staff members, INGO members, national NGOs and permanent representations on questions of relevance and effectiveness.

The survey will contain a few structured closed-ended questions at the end to facilitate the collection of quantitative data among this stakeholder groups regarding relevance, effectiveness and added value of the INGO Conference and its work.

### **Benchmarking**

The evaluation team will carry out benchmarking with other relevant international organisations (e.g. UN, EU, OECD, OSCE etc.) through online research and semi-structured interviews (if needed) with selected representatives to learn about good practices in civil society participation and representation.

### **Observation**

The evaluation team will take part, as far as possible due to the COVID-19 outbreak and observe relevant events/meetings organised by the INGO Conference such as the bi-annual session of the Conference and meetings of the Expert Council on NGO Law.

## 3.6 Organisational arrangements

### Evaluation management

The evaluation team will be comprised of an evaluator from the DIO under the supervision of the Head of the Evaluation Division and (an) external consultant(s).

The selected consultant(s) will be expected to deliver the following outputs:

1. Conducting scoping interviews and document review during inception phase;
2. Drafting and quality assuring the Inception Report based on the ToR outlining the theory of change, the detailed methodology and work plan;
3. Data collection and data analysis for the evaluation in accordance with the methodology specified in the inception report;
4. Participation (or by videoconference if necessary due to Covid-19), in two reference group meetings, including the presentation of the Inception and Draft Final Reports;
5. Revision of the Inception and Draft Final Reports based on the comments received from the DIO Secretariat and the Reference Group;
6. Take part in a third mission to Strasbourg in October 2020 to attend the Session of the INGO Conference;
7. Present the findings of the final report at an event organised by the DIO (to be contracted separately).

The evaluation team would normally be expected to meet on up to 4 occasions in Strasbourg. COVID-19 travel measures will dictate to what extent physical meetings will be possible:

- Inception meeting combined with scoping interviews with stakeholders – 2-3 days (Strasbourg);
- Discussion of the draft inception report with the reference group – 1 day (Strasbourg)
- Interviews with Council of Europe staff and INGO representatives and attendance at the Session of the Conference of INGOs 2-3 days (Strasbourg);
- Discussion of draft report with reference group – 1 day (Strasbourg).

The evaluation process will be guided by a reference group, which will provide comments on draft documents related to the evaluation and preliminarily discuss the feasibility of the implementation of recommendations. The reference group will consist of representatives of the Secretariat of the Committee of Ministers (CM), Conference of INGOs and other secretariat representatives (DGII), the Directorate of Human Rights and Rule of Law (DGI), the Office of the Director General of Programmes (ODGP), Congress and the Private Office.

## Evaluation process

The evaluation process will include four phases:

### *Inception phase*

During the evaluation inception phase the evaluation team will review documentation and hold preliminary (scoping) interviews that serve to obtain an overview of the Conference of INGOs activities and to scope the evaluation. The team will produce a draft inception report in line with the quality requirements for inception reports outlined in Annex 12 of the [Evaluation guidelines](#). The inception report will be reviewed, and quality assured by the DIO. The inception report will be finalised taking into consideration comments from the reference group. The reference group will in particular discuss issues related to the scope and objectives of the evaluation and the evaluation questions but can also provide suggestions on methodology.

### *Implementation phase*

During the implementation phase the evaluation team will collect data using the methods described in the methodology section of this concept note.

### *Reporting phase*

During the reporting phase, the evaluation team will analyse the data using methods proposed and if need be revised by the consultant following the inception report, in the evaluation matrix and produce a draft report in line with quality requirements outlined in Annex 15 of the [Evaluation guidelines](#) that will be quality assured by the DIO and submitted to the reference group for comments. The reference group will be asked to provide comments on factual errors contained in the report as well as the feasibility of the implementation of proposed recommendations.

### *Follow-up phase*

After the finalisation of the evaluation report, the management of concerned entities will be requested to provide a management response to the evaluation, in which they will specify whether or not they accept the recommendations and how they intend to implement them. In accordance with the Evaluation Policy the DIO will regularly request updates on the implementation of evaluation recommendations as part of the follow-up procedure for all evaluations and report to the Secretary General and the Committee of Ministers.

The final evaluation report will also be transmitted to the Chair of the Ministers' Deputies and published on the internet site of the Council of Europe in accordance with the new evaluation policy.

### 3.7 Qualifications of the external consultant(s)

The external consultant(s) will, individually or as a team, provide the following competencies and expertise:

- Extensive knowledge of evaluation principles, methodology and best practices, including qualitative and quantitative methods mentioned in the evaluation matrix (Annex 1);
- Proven record of at least 10 years' experience in designing, managing and leading evaluations in the context of international cooperation;
- Professional fluency in oral and written English or French;
- Thematic knowledge and experience in (evaluation of) interventions in the area of civil society and good governance;
- Knowledge and understanding of the Council of Europe, its normative instruments, its structure and its action will be an asset.

The selected consultant(s) will be asked to sign the Code of Conduct for Evaluators (Annex 1 of the [Evaluation guidelines](#)).

### 3.8 Budget

The budget for the assignment amounts to a maximum of 30 000 EUR. The consultant(s) will bear all costs (travel and subsistence) of up to 4 trips to Strasbourg (for the inception meetings, first reference group meeting, data collection interviews and final reference group meeting).

Budget proposals should indicate separately the amounts included for travel and subsistence in case amendments to the contract are necessary to take into account the need for remote meetings due to travel restrictions.

## ANNEX 1. EVALUATION MATRIX

Evaluation Question	Sub-Questions	Measure(s) / Indicator(s)	Data Collection Instrument(s)	Data Source(s)
1. To what extent has the work of the INGO Conference been effective?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent does the INGO Conference contribute to the general theory of change of the <i>Democratic Governance</i> Programme?</li> <li>• To what extent were the objective and expected results as set out in the P&amp;B 2016-2019 and the Action Plan 2018-2021 achieved?</li> <li>• What were the main factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?</li> <li>• To what extent has the Conference of INGOs effectiveness been facilitated by the Council of Europe’s secretariat and budgetary support?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objectives set out in the P&amp;B documents 2016-2019 and the Action Plan of the Conference of INGOs 2018-2021.</li> <li>• Indicators as listed in the P&amp;B documents 2016-2019 and the Action Plan of the Conference of INGOs 2018-2021.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Semi-structured interviews</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme and Budget 2016-2017</li> <li>• Programme and Budget 2018-2019</li> <li>• Action Plan of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe 2018-2021</li> <li>• Resolution (2016)3 on Participatory Status for INGOs with CoE</li> <li>• Programmatic documents</li> <li>• Activity and Progress reports</li> <li>• Documents published by INGO members</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Other relevant CoE Documents.</li> </ul>
2. To what extent are the objectives of the Conference of INGOs relevant?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the Conference of INGOs interventions relevant to the achievement of its objectives?</li> <li>• To what extent are the Conference of INGOs interventions consistent with the overall objectives and their attainment?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that the Conference’s interventions are relevant and consistent to the achievement of the objectives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Semi-structured interviews</li> <li>• Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action Plan of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe 2018-2021</li> <li>• Resolution (2016)3 on Participatory Status for INGOs with CoE</li> <li>• Other relevant CoE Resolutions</li> <li>• Programmatic documents</li> <li>• Activity and Progress Reports</li> <li>• Surveys on the Participation of NGOs at the CoE</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Other relevant CoE Documents.</li> </ul>

<p>3. What is the added value of the interventions of the Conference of INGOs in achieving the stated objectives?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent have the Conference of INGOs interventions contributed to better representation of civil society within the Council of Europe?</li> <li>• Is the Council of Europe cooperation with civil society more evolved due to the Conference of INGOs interventions?</li> <li>• Has the Conference of INGOs been more successful in involving civil society compared to other examples of cooperation?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that Conference of INGOs have led to improved level of representation of civil society within the Organisation.</li> <li>• Evidence that Conference of INGOs has significantly contributed to improved cooperation with civil society.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Semi-structured interviews</li> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• Benchmarking with other organisations</li> <li>• Mapping of CoE cooperation with NGOs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action Plan of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe 2018-2021</li> <li>• Resolution (2016)3 on Participatory Status for INGOs with CoE</li> <li>• Other relevant CoE Resolutions</li> <li>• Programmatic documents</li> <li>• Documents published by other international organisations</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Other relevant CoE Documents.</li> </ul>
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