

E-voting and use of ICT in elections
"Taking stock and moving forward"

PROGRAMME & LIST OF SPEAKERS

CONFERENCE



Council of Europe, Strasbourg, France

JUNE | **16th** | **2023**

9.30-17.00 - Room 2, Palais de l'Europe



PROGRAMME of the Conference*

9:00-9:30 Welcoming of participants – Palais de l'Europe

9:30-9:45 Opening remarks

- **Paul ROWSELL**, Chair of European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG)
- **Aloisia WÖRGETTER**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Austria to the Council of Europe

9:45-10:45 Taking stock of the implementation CM/Rec(2017)5 on e-voting

What is the situation with regards to the implementation of the recommendation in Council of Europe member States? What are the main trends, key challenges and lessons learned? How is the Recommendation used and what are member States needs? A summary and analysis of replies from questionnaire (baseline) will be presented, followed by a discussion.

Moderator: **Gregor WENDA**, Head of Department of Electoral Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Austria

- **Rastó KUŽEL**, Council of Europe expert
Presentation of the key findings of a questionnaire on the implementation of CM/Rec(2017)5 in member States

Questions & Answers

10:45-11:00 Coffee break

11:00-12:00 Case studies showcasing current work, or experience from Election Management Bodies (EMBs) or Member States with regards to e-voting and online voting.

Case studies from different member States will be presented, highlighting current trends, challenges and innovation in the field of e-voting and online voting, in light of key issues such as trust, cyber threats and resilience, transparency and respect of key principles of the electoral cycle.

Moderator: **Franck DAESCHLER**, Deputy Head, Division of elections and participatory democracy, Council of Europe

Panellists:

- **Alexandru BERLINSCHII**, Secretary, Central Election Commission, Republic of Moldova
- **Dr Simone EHRENBURG-SILIES**, Office of Technology Assessment at the German Bundestag, Germany
- **Beat KUONI**, Federal Chancellery, Switzerland
- **Giorgi KALANDARISHVILI**, Chairperson, Central Election Commission, Republic of Georgia

Questions & Answers

*Conference co-organised by the Democratic Governance Division and the Division of Elections and Participatory Democracy

12:00–13:00 Debate:

Tackling challenges related to implementation of e-voting solutions

Addressing the challenges to the implementation of e-voting solutions. What are current needs and approaches to secrecy of the vote; data protection and privacy issues; securing and protecting critical infrastructure; auditing and transparency of e-voting solutions and capacity building of stakeholders.

Moderator: **Ardita DRIZA MAURER**, Council of Europe expert

Panellists:

- **Adrià RODRÍGUEZ-PÉREZ**, Public Policy Researcher, ScytI
- **Nicolae PANFIL**, Director of Program, Promo-LEX, Republic of Moldova
- **Leontine LOEBER**, Head of Department, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, The Netherlands
- **Oliver KASK**, Judge, President of the National Election Commission of Estonia, Substitute member of the Venice Commission

Questions & Answers

13:00-14:30 *Lunch Break at the Palais*

14:30–15:45 Digital technologies in elections

Digital transformation impacts all aspects of life, including organisation of elections. Member States are currently digitalising many aspects of their electoral process. The CM Guidelines on the use of ICT in electoral processes provide orientation in this field. What are the issues in practice?

Moderator: **Daniel POPESCU**, Head of Democracy and Governance Department, Council of Europe

Panellists:

- **Vladimir MISEV**, Senior Election Adviser on New Voting Technologies at the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights: Presentation of ODIHR Handbook "Observation on new voting technologies"
- **David ERAY**, Member of the Congress of Local and regional Authorities of the Council of Europe: Presentations of findings with regards to e-voting and use of ICT in election observation missions
- **Sylvie AFFHOLDER**, Head of PACE Election observation and support division: Presentation of findings with regards to e-voting and use of ICT in election from PACE election observation

Discussion of impact of use of new campaigning tools (e.g. Apps and tools to mobilise and target voters; micro-targeting etc.) and impact of algorithms and AI-based solutions in the electoral process as well as of more generally about cyber security in elections.

15:45–16:00 *Coffee break*

16:00-17:00 Ways forward

Moderator: **Gregor WENDA**, Head of Department of Electoral Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Austria

Panellists:

- **Rastó KUŽEL**, General Rapporteur - *Discussion on preliminary conclusions from the discussion to be presented at CDDG plenary*

Discussions and closing remarks

- **Paul ROWSELL**, Chair of European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG)

LIST OF SPEAKERS

Opening remarks



Paul ROWSELL CBE

Head of Governance Reform and Democracy Unit, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Paul has extensive experience of leading work on reforming democratic governance, particularly at the local and regional levels, and on devolution and decentralisation. Recently, he has overseen legislation in the United Kingdom to decentralise power through the creation of a new combined county authority model and a number of new devolution deals. He is currently Chair of the European Committee on

Democracy and Governance, whose activities this year have focused on producing recommendations on the uses of deliberative and participatory democracy and the principles of good democratic governance. Paul was awarded the CBE for services to Local Government in the Queen's New Year Honours List in 2017.



Aloisia WÖRGETTER

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Austria to the Council of Europe

Aloisia has been a member of the Austrian senior diplomatic service for many years, performing duties in multilateral and bilateral posts. As Ambassador, she has represented Austria in Algeria, Niger and Belarus. While at the Austrian Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, she chaired the open-ended working group to draft an Additional Protocol to the UN Convention against All

Forms of Discrimination against Women, which established a legally binding right of complaint. In Vienna, she was involved in international environmental diplomacy and climate change issues, as well as chairing the Austrian Foreign Ministry's Dialogue of Cultures Task Force. She is the author of several specialized publications and has served as a university lecturer at the Universities of Innsbruck and Vienna, as well as an instructor at the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna. In the course of her diplomatic duties, she carried out numerous election observation missions. Currently, Aloisia is the Permanent Representative of Austria to the Council of Europe. She is the thematic coordinator for Information Policy of the Committee of Ministers' Deputies.

Taking stock of the implementation CM/Rec(2017)5 on e-voting



Gregor WENDA

Head of Department of Electoral Affairs, Federal Ministry of Interior, Republic of Austria

Gregor holds a master's degrees from the University of Vienna Law School (Magister iuris) and the University of Salzburg Business School (Master of Business Administration). Upon completion of his mandatory military service and a court clerkship, Gregor started to work in the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior in 2003. After two years as a legal specialist in the Department of Legislative Affairs, he transferred to the Department of Electoral Affairs and became its Deputy Head. In 2006, he was also appointed Vice Chair of the Austrian Federal Electoral Board. Since 1 May 2023, Gregor Wenda has been the new Head of the Electoral Affairs Department with the Federal Ministry of the Interior. Gregor has been a member of and a contributor to Council of Europe workshops and committees for almost 20 years. In October 2015 he was elected Chair of the Council of Europe Ad-hoc Committee of Experts on electronic voting (CAHVE), which was tasked with updating the Committee of Minister's Recommendation on e-voting through 2016. Recommendation Rec(2017)5 of the Council of Europe on e-voting was adopted in 2017. Recently, Gregor was a member of two CDDG workshops. Aside from his job in electoral affairs, Gregor serves as a personal advisor to the Director-General for Legal Affairs in the Federal Ministry of the Interior. He is the editor and author of numerous publications, including articles and commentaries, and holds functions in different associations, inter alia as the Secretary-General of the Austrian Society of Administrative Sciences.



Rast'o KUŽEL

Executive Director MEMO 98 / General Rapporteur of the Conference

Rast'o is a media and election expert with over 24 years of international experience. Since 1998, he has been running MEMO 98, a media-monitoring organization with extensive experience in delivering analyses on behalf of international institutions as well as technical assistance to different electoral stakeholders. Rast'o has worked as a media and election analyst, consultant, and trainer, participating in a number of election observation missions and projects.

For the last 6 years, Rast'o has focused intensively on the issue of online disinformation in the context of elections as well as on the role of social media during elections and ways to tackle their negative impact on elections. He co-authored a White Paper on Social Media, Disinformation and Electoral Integrity to guide International Foundation for Electoral Systems in this area and the UNESCO/UNDP guide Elections in Digital Times published by UNESCO which is a practical guide focusing on Internet, Social Media, Social Messaging, and AI. Drawing upon his experience in media monitoring, Rast'o wrote a media monitoring toolkit, which was developed within the framework of the Council of Europe project "Supporting the transparency, inclusiveness, and integrity of electoral practice in Ukraine", implemented within the framework of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine 2018–2022.

Case studies



Franck DAESCHLER

Deputy Head of Division of elections and participatory democracy, Council of Europe

Franck has over 20 years of experience in the field of elections. Starting as a short-term election observer in 2000, he has been, from 2000 to 2007, Operations Expert and Deputy Head of Mission in five election observation missions' core team, before joining the Election Observation and Inter-parliamentary Cooperation Division of the Parliamentary Assembly, where he served for more than 10 years, and organised and carried out over 50 election observation missions in many Council of Europe member States, but also in Europe, Central Asia and North-Africa. Franck joined the Council of Europe in 1995. As a member of the Field Support Division of the Directorate General of Political Affairs until 2008, he supported the opening and ensured the implementation of the emerging Council of Europe external Offices and field presences, mainly in the Western Balkans, South and North Caucasus and Eastern European countries and took part in several long-term assignments in the field. In the headquarters, he has also been working as Project Officer the field of the fight against corruption at the Economic Crime Division, as Senior Project Officer at the Sport Conventions Division and, after several years back in the Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly, he joined the Division of Elections and Participatory Democracy in 2021 where he manages a great variety of cooperation projects in the field of elections.



Alexandr BERLINSCHII

Secretary of the Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Moldova

Alexandr was appointed a member of the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) of the Republic of Moldavia and holds the position of Secretary of the CEC from 2021. Previously, Alexandr took up the Deputy Head position (from 2014 to 2016) and has been heading the Elections Management Division of the Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Moldova from 2016 to 2021. He started his professional activity in the public administration department of the Municipality City Hall. Alexandr holds a degree in Political Sciences from the State University of Moldova and a Master's degree in criminal law from the Free International University of Moldova. He has also followed training courses in the field of Security and National Defence at the Military Academy of Moldova.



Simone EHRENBERG-SILIES

Office of Technology Assessment at the German Bundestag, Germany

Simone works as senior consultant at VDI/VDE-IT since 2008. Initially, she worked in the Society and Economics Department before changing to Demography, Clusters and Foresight in 2011. From the beginning, she was involved with questions of future research and technology assessment. She directed the ITA /Foresight project sponsorship for the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research and is currently responsible for the management of the project "Digital Labour Society - Strategic Foresight" for the German Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Since 2014 she is involved in the Horizon Scanning of VDI/VDE-IT for the Office for Technology Assessment of the German Bundestag and has published on its behalf on topics such as World without cash, Sustainable Cooling, additive manufacturing and Changing job profiles and qualification needs under the influence of digitalisation.



Beat KUONI
Federal Chancellery, Switzerland

Beat is a Legal Counsel at the Political Rights Section of the Swiss Federal Chancellery, where he is responsible for legislation and special legal issues. He received his doctorate from the University of Zurich with a comparative thesis on direct democracy in the German federal states and the Swiss cantons. Beat Kuoni is a former member of the Swiss e-voting team at the Federal Chancellery and contributed to the elaboration of national and international standards for e-voting.



Giorgi KALANDARISHVILI
Chairperson of the Central Election Commission of Georgia

Giorgi has led the Central Election Commission (CEC) of Georgia since the 3rd of August 2021, and started working for the CEC in 2008. From 9 September 2019 to 25 May 2021, he was the Head of the Human Resources Management Department, from May 25 until his election as the Chairperson, he led Human Resources Management and Workforce Security Department at the CEC. In addition, Giorgi was the Chair of the Gender Equality Council of Election Administration (EA) as well as the CEC's Quality Manager in accordance with the requirements of the international standard ISO 9001: 2015. Between 2012 -2019, Giorgi was the Head of Legal Maintenance Division, and before that (2008-2012), Head of the Public Relations and Press Department. Before joining the CEC, Giorgi worked in different positions, including in JSC "Energy Invest" and the State Representative/Governor's Administration of Imereti. Giorgi received his education from Akaki Tsereteli State University in Kutaisi and Ioane Petritsi University. He has been participant in numerous international study courses including in Estonia, Poland, Israel, India, and Sweden. He has gained education in electoral, legal, gender equality, electoral technologies, cyber hygiene, effective public administration, public relations and media, personal data protection, etc. Giorgi also has many years of experience in participating in election observation missions in different countries. He has been involved in short-term as well as long-term observation missions as an international observer. Additionally, Giorgi underwent OSCE/ODIHR training for long-term observers in Bosnia and Herzegovina and holds an appropriate certificate.

Tackling challenges related to implementation of e-voting solutions



Ardita DRIZA MAURER

Legal consultant and e-voting expert

Ardita is an independent legal consultant, based in Switzerland. She focuses on issues at the crossroads of constitutional principles, electoral legislation and use of digital technologies in electoral processes. Ardita was Lead Expert for the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG) on the *Committee of Ministers Guidelines on the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in electoral processes in Council of Europe member States*, approved by the Committee of Ministers on 9 February 2022. Ardita was Lead Expert for the ad-hoc Committee

on legal, operational and technical standards for e-voting (CAHVE) on the *Committee of Ministers Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)5 on standards for e-voting*, approved by the Committee of Ministers on 14 June 2017 and related Guidelines. In her capacity as expert for different international institutions, namely the Council of Europe and Venice Commission, Ardita works with several countries, especially in the eastern part of Europe, on legal aspects related to the use of e-voting and other ICT in electoral processes. Ardita is author and editor of various scientific contributions on the topic, among which "E-Voting Case Law: A Comparative Analysis" (Ashgate/Routledge, 2015/2017). Previously she worked in the public administration, among others as a member and director of the internet voting project of the Swiss Federal Chancellery (2006-2012).



Adrià RODRIGUEZ-PEREZ

Public Policy Researcher, ScytI

Adrià is a Political and Legal Analyst doing research and policy advise at the intersection of (global) governance and emerging technologies. He currently holds the positions of Public Policy Researcher and Data Protection Officer, Business affairs at ScytI Election Technologies, S.L.U. Adrià is also an Adjunct Professor of International Relations and Global Governance at Universitat Pompeu Fabra, at Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals (IBEI), and at CEI International Affairs. Adrià holds a PhD (Cum Laude) in Electoral Law and ICT from Universitat

Rovira i Virgili, with industrial mention at ScytI. He graduated with Highest Honours in Political Science and Public Administration from Universitat Pompeu Fabra and holds a Master's Degree in International Relations.



Nicolae PANFIL

Director of Program, Promo-LEX, Republic of Moldova

Nicolae serves as a Director of the Monitoring Democratic Processes Program at Promo-LEX Association (since April 2021). He is an active advocate for free and fair elections in Moldova, with 14 years of experience in planning and coordination of various programs oriented towards monitoring and advocacy for different democratic processes & reforms. Nicolae joined Promo-LEX Association in 2013 as a Program Coordinator, and since then he has contributed to the organization of about 20 election observation missions. During 2009 – 2016 he also acted as a Secretary of

the Civic Coalition for Free and Fair Elections. In his roles at Promo-LEX he coordinated a large number of significant monitoring and advocacy efforts (*i.e. monitoring of the justice sector reform 2012-2014; monitoring of the Police development strategy 2016-2020; advocacy for electoral reforms in 2017 and 2022; monitoring of political finances in Moldova, since 2015; monitoring of the Parliament activity, since 2016; advocacy for a local public administration reform, initiated in 2022/2023 as members and founders of the Coalition for Decentralization, etc.*). Nicolae graduated from the Free International University from Moldova (BA in Psychology) and "Al. I. Cuza" University (MA in Human Relations and Communication).



Leontine LOEBER

Head of Department, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, The Netherlands

Leontine studied law and has worked as a legislative lawyer at the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations of the Netherlands. In this capacity she was responsible for drafting changes in the Election Law. After this, she worked at the Dutch Electoral Council, where among other tasks, she was involved with organizing elections. During this period, the Netherlands switched from e-voting to paper ballot voting. From 2010 until 2023 Leontine worked at the Council of State as a legislative lawyer and since 2017 as a head of sector, advising on legislation from the Ministries of General Affairs, the Interior and Education. Since 2023, she is a department head at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. Leontine obtained a master's in political science at the University of Leiden in 2011 and has published articles on amongst others e-voting and voter trust. In 2023 she obtained her PhD at the University of East Anglia on the topic of election fraud. She is a co-convenor of the Electoral Management Research Network which undertook a comparative study on over 70 Electoral Management Bodies. She is the current outreach chair for the E-Vote-ID conference, a conference where she has presented several papers in the past years. Besides her academic work, Leontine has acted as an election observer for ODIHR and worked with different NGOs in the field of elections.



Olivier KASK

Chairperson of the Central Electoral Commission of Estonia

Oliver is an Estonian judge, president of the National Election Commission (since 2019), and an expert on voting rights in Europe. His research focuses on constitutional law with an emphasis on electoral law, human rights, and administrative law. He is also co-author and co-editor of the Estonian Constitution. From 2017-2022, Oliver was alternate member of the Management Board of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights and between 2010-2016, ad hoc judge at the European Court of Human Rights. In his earlier career, he was a lecturer as well as Head of the Public Law Department of the Estonian Ministry of Justice. Oliver is a long-standing member of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, where he served as full member from 2005-2021 and as substitute member since 2021. In parallel, between 2006-2022, he was a member of the Venice Commission's Council for Democratic Elections, which he presided in 2017-2022.

Digital technologies in elections



Daniel POPESCU

Department of Democracy and Governance

Daniel is the Head of the Department of Democracy and Governance at the Council of Europe. He has worked for the Council of Europe for 25 years and is currently dealing with issues concerning good democratic governance such as public administration reform at all levels and fundamental tenets of democracy, including elections and civic participation.



Vladimir MISEV

ODIHR Senior Advisor on New Voting Technologies

Vladimir has a background in political science. He has been working as an Election Adviser in ODIHR since 2015. Vladimir worked as a lecturer of political science and as a senior researcher in a several think-tanks in the Balkan region. He has over 20 years' experience in the field of human rights, democratization and elections. Vladimir has been part of more than 100 ODIHR election observation missions in more than 40 countries.



David ERAY

Head of the Swiss delegation to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities - Thematic Spokesperson of the Congress on Digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence, Minister of the Environment for the Canton of Jura

David is a member of the Independent Christian Social Party, elected to the Jura Government in 2015 and heading the Ministry of the Environment, which also includes transport, energy, infrastructure and IT. He is a member of the political management of the Swiss Digital Administration (Political Management

Committee/Digital Public Services Switzerland), an observer at the Regional Forum of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA - EFTA), Chairman of the Swiss delegation to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and Spokesman of the Congress on Digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence. An engineer in microtechnology, and holder of an executive-MBA, David had worked for 21 years in the industrial sector in Switzerland as well as in the United States and India, before entering politics.



Sylvie AFFHOLDER

Head of PACE Election observation and support division: Presentation of findings with regards to e-voting and use of ICT in election from PACE election observation

Sylvie joined the Council of Europe in 1995. In the Congress of Local and Regional authorities, she mainly worked on the consolidation of local and regional democracy in the Western Balkans, including on post-conflict issues (managing the programme of Local democracy agencies), as well as on monitoring and electoral activities and observation of local and regional elections. She joined the Parliamentary Assembly's

Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in 2005, focusing on PACE Campaign on violence against women and domestic violence and the Istanbul Convention and on women's participation in public and political life. She worked then twelve years in PACE Monitoring Committee and its Sub-Committee on conflicts concerning member states, working extensively with several Western Balkan countries, as well as the Republic of Moldova and Türkiye. She is heading the PACE Division on Election Observation and Support since February 2023.