

**PRESIDENCY
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11/2022 - 05/2023



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DE L'ISLANDE**

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE



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CONFERENCE

GREEN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN THE CONTEXT OF GOOD DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE EXCHANGE OF GOOD EUROPEAN PRACTICE

Strasbourg, 26 April 2023

Main takeaways

The Conference was organised by the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG) in cooperation with the Icelandic Presidency of the Committee of Ministers. Representatives of the international, national, and local authorities exchanged their views and experiences on Green Public Administration (GPA) – which is about integrating climate change and environmental considerations into decision-making at all levels of government. The results of the Conference will feed into the CDDG Report on Green Public Administration.

The main takeaways from the Conference included:

- Considerations of green issues will in future be an essential dimension in the pursuit of Good Democratic Governance at all levels.
- An overall enthusiasm and optimism that the carbon emissions can be reduced, and that climate change can be slowed down before it becomes irreversible. Going green is entirely possible while pursuing inclusive growth.
- Public administration can lead the way to promote and enforce the reduction of carbon emissions, protection of the environment, and better management of natural resources. Decisive action on the part of the public administration in turn will encourage individuals, organisations, and businesses to play their part.
- Given the significance of green public administration for Good Democratic Governance, the Conference reaffirmed that there is a clear role for the CDDG (The Council of Europe's Committee on Democracy and Governance) to play in this area – by organising and promoting exchanges of views and experiences through conferences, peer reviews, preparation of reports and recommendations. Participants agreed that such exchanges are very important and inspirational, countries need to learn from each other and to replicate good practice.

- There is a need to keep “going greener and building deeper shades of green governance”. Leadership and gradual (step by step) approach to introducing the green policies are vital to their success and public support. Other important factors include better data collection, shared international databases, constant measurement and evaluation of results.
- The concept of Green Public Administration needs to be deeply embedded in the principles of Good Democratic Governance, in the protection of Human Rights and the Rule of Law, in the democratic participation, in the functioning of local and multi-level governance, and in the concepts of economic, social, and environmental well-being
- The Conference highlighted a great importance of education for democratic values and that this needs to include climate and environmental issues, including promotion of green policies, better food management, and all the positive results which could be achieved through better action on climate and the environment.
- It is important to invest into the GPA, to ensure of availability of financial and human resources to implement the green policies
- Some of the most popular current trends in GPA in the context of Good Democratic Governance presented at the Conference included green public procurement, green budgeting, green fiscal policies and taxation, incentives for enterprises and consumers, smart digitalisation, agile working methods, innovative education practices, cross-border cooperation for environmental protection, youth and civil participation in the green decision-making.
- A separate case was made for the ecocide committed by the Russian Federation in Ukraine, and the devastating consequences of the loss of biodiversity, forestry, and water and air pollution. There is a need for an environmental tribunal, registry of the environmental crimes, and creation of the reparations mechanism. Ukraine also needs to incorporate the climate considerations when it starts preparing to re-build the country, and the Council of Europe member states stand ready to help.
- The Reykjavik Summit should reflect the urgency of addressing the climate change, and its potential impact on Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law, and should encourage the member states to act without delay.

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/good-governance/-/good-democratic-governance-goes-green>