

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 16 October 2023

GT-A(2023)10

**EUROPEAN COMMITTEE ON DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE
(CDDG)**

**WORKING GROUP ON GREEN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
(GT-A)**

REPORT

of the 3rd meeting, Strasbourg, 2-3 October 2023

Secretariat Memorandum
prepared by the
Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity
Democratic Governance Division

1. Opening of the meeting

The Chair, Mr Markku MÖLLÄRI (Finland), opened the meeting and welcomed all participants, the list of which appears in Appendix I.

2. Agenda

The agenda was adopted as it appears in Appendix II.

3. Information from the Secretariat

The Secretariat emphasised that the report would need to be finalised by the end of the year and be adopted at the upcoming 18th CDDG plenary meeting of 23-24 November. To achieve this objective, an additional informal meeting could be organised to discuss any final amendments and address any outstanding issue. The Secretariat also gave an update on the number of responses to the questionnaire (now 16), circulated to assist in the drafting of the report.

4. Draft report on Green Public Administration

The working group heard and discussed an introductory presentation by Mr Louis MEULEMAN, Director, Public Strategy for Sustainable Development, on the additions and changes he had made to the draft report on Green Public Administration (document GT-A(2023)8), since the meeting in June. A series of graphics and illustrations had been included, the structure had been reviewed and short tables introduced to present concrete examples taken from national practices, to illustrate issues and possible solutions.

In the ensuing discussion, the group discussed such matters as: the need to refer to positive key messages and concrete practical guidance; the specifics – benefits and challenges – of dealing with green public administration (GPA) in a democratic manner; the complementarity between the various governmental levels depending on what they can deliver; the need for coherent and consistent green policies involving and providing support to the citizens for them to contribute to the implementation of such policies; the preference for the concept of “green” rather than “sustainable”; the connection to the social dimension; the need for leadership and training of elected decision-makers; connections between the content of the report with the recent results of the [Fourth Council of Europe Summit of Heads of State and Government](#) (Reykjavik, Iceland, 16-17 May 2023), contained in the final declaration; the growing importance of the human rights dimension of environmental and climate policies; the importance of cooperation between public institutions to break possible persisting silo mentalities.

The Group agreed also that there was no need to include too many examples of national practices and that the compendium of replies to the questionnaire should become a publicly available appendix to the report with the permission of, and following additional editing as appropriate by the responding countries.

5. Discussion on the content of the draft report.

The group discussed the report chapter by chapter and participants made various suggestions and remarks for further improving the draft, addressing additional issues, and increasing the consistency of the structure. An annotated version of the report was produced in real time, summing-up all the input. The Group agreed to also simplify the structure with less sub-titles and one consolidated general introduction in the beginning.

It was agreed that the Conclusions of the report should echo the conclusions of the [GPA Conference](#), with the main message being that GPA can make a real difference in terms of reducing carbon emissions and slowing down the climate change. It was also emphasised that green transition was one of the subjects currently on the very top of many political agendas (together with artificial intelligence) and that it deserved some more sustained action by the Council of Europe in the future.

6. Next steps

The next revised version of the draft report should be available for consideration at the forthcoming CDDG Bureau meeting of 19-20 October (deadline: 16 October). The Bureau could then decide whether an additional meeting would need to be held before the 18th plenary meeting to finalise the draft and consider any outstanding matters.

The working group entrusted the Secretariat to seek the consent of responding countries to publish the compilation of national responses to the questionnaire of the Rapid Response Service No. 55.

The participants also discussed the need for follow-up once the report is finalised and adopted. Proposals included organisation of conferences in interested member states to promote the report; entrusting the new intergovernmental committee on environment and human rights ("Reykjavík Committee"), one of the results of the 4th Summit, as well as the Parliamentary Assembly and Congress, to follow up on the implementation of the guidance provided in the report; presentation of the report at the COP in Dubai and other international events.

The CDDG could hold a dedicated discussion on this at its 18th plenary meeting, together with representatives of the responsible committee in PACE. A document could be produced for the Committee of Ministers' Rapporteur Group on Democracy suggesting a way forward.

7. Any other business

None.

8. Date of the next meeting

If needed, an informal online meeting can be organised in November before submission of the report to the CDDG plenary.

APPENDIX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

CHAIR / PRESIDENT

Mr Markku MÖLLÄRI, Ministerial adviser, Department for Local Affairs and Regional Administration, Ministry of Finance, Finland

BELGIUM / BELGIQUE

Mr Edwin LEFEBRE, Deputy Director, Ministry of the Flemish Community, Agency for Home Affairs

CZECH REPUBLIC / REPUBLIQUE TCHEQUE

Ms Tereza ŠTALCEROVÁ, Senior administrative advisor, Department for Strategic Development and Coordination of Public Administration

GREECE / GRECE

Mr Christos PETSIMERIS, Head of the Department of International Relations (sector of Administrative Reconstruction), Ministry of Interior

MALTA / MALTE

Mr Christopher GALEA, Director (DLGMS), Monitoring and Support, Local Government Division, Ministry for the National Heritage, the Arts and Local Government

UKRAINE

Ms Oksana PAVLIUK, Head of the Unit for local self-government development and cooperation with Council of Europe institutions of the Department for local self-government development, territorial organisation of power and administrative-territorial structure Ministry for Communities, Territories and Infrastructure Development

UNITED KINGDOM / ROYAUME-UNI

Mr Paul ROWSELL, Head of Governance Reform and Democracy Unit, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Local Government & Communities Directorate, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

PARTICIPANTS

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE / ASSEMBLEE PARLEMENTAIRE DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Mr Armen GEVORGYAN, General Rapporteur on Local and Regional Authorities, Member of the Social, Health and Sustainable Development Committee

**CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE
/ CONGRES DES POUVOIRS LOCAUX ET REGIONAUX DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE**

Mr Roman CHLAPAK, Secretary of the Governance Committee

**CONFERENCE OF INGOS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE / CONFERENCE DES ONG
DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE**

Apologised / Excusé

EXPERT CONSULTANT / EXPERT CONSULTANT

Mr Louis MEULEMAN, Director, Public Strategy for Sustainable Development

SECRETARIAT

Ms Alina TATARENKO – Head of the Democratic Governance Division / Secretary of the CDDG / Directorate of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance / Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity

Mr Christophe SPECKBACHER, Administrator – Democratic Governance Division / Directorate of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance / Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity

APPENDIX II**AGENDA**

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| 1. | Opening of the meeting | |
| 2. | Adoption of the agenda | [GT-A(2023)OJ3] |
| 3. | Information from the Secretariat | |
| 4. | <p>Report on green public administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Louis Meuleman, founding director, Public Strategy for Sustainable Development (PS4SD), Brussels: presentation of the revised draft report <p>Q&A and general discussion of structure and approach</p> <p>Compilation of responses to the questionnaire</p> | <p>[GT-A(2023)8]</p> <p>[GT-A(2023)9]</p> |
| 5. | <p>Discussion on the content of the draft: all members and participants present their views and proposals on the various chapters of the draft report</p> <p>Discussion</p> | |
| 6. | Next steps | |
| 7. | Other business | |
| 8. | Date of the next meeting | |