

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 20 October 2022

GT-DD(2022)12

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

**WORKING GROUP ON DELIBERATIVE AND
PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY
(GT-DD)**

REPORT OF THE 3rd MEETING

Strasbourg, 26-27 September 2022

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

1. Opening of the meeting

The Chair, Mr Abassin Nessar (Netherlands), welcomed the members of the Working Group. The list of participants is set out in Appendix I.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted as set out in Appendix II.

3. Information by the Chair and the Secretariat

The Secretariat informed the working group that:

- Ms Marja Ruotanen (Finland) started her position as new Director General of Democracy and Human Dignity in September, and recalled that the Directorate had a new name;
- the CDDG would host a Forum Talk on deliberative democracy during the World Forum for Democracy in November. The Forum Talk would showcase examples of deliberative exercises from Ireland, Serbia and Ukraine, as well as on the European Union level and would take place on 8th November 2022;
- registration to the WFD was now open and members were invited to register.

The working group took note of the information.

4. Drafting of a Report for the CDDG on new forms of deliberative and participatory democracy

The Working Group considered the "Draft Report on deliberative democracy" [GT-DD(2022)10] prepared by the working group in consultation with Dr Andy Williamson.

Overall, the working group welcomed the draft report. The discussion centred, among others, around the link between democracy and respect for human rights and rule of law; need to protect against 'dictatorship of the majority'; the causes and impact of democratic backsliding, including decline in voter turnout and trust in democratic processes and institutions; and deliberation as a subset of participatory democracy. The working group agreed that the report should neither categorise democracies as 'stronger' or 'emergent' nor assess the state of democracy or name the member States. Furthermore, there was consensus to:

- streamline the report to avoid duplication;
- delete the section "1.1 key terms";
- shorten, streamline and restructure the chapter 2 on democracy;
- position deliberative methods and practices more clearly within representative democracy;
- merge chapter 4 and 5 on deliberative democracy;
- rephrase the recommendations, e.g., regarding research.

The Secretariat informed the working group that it had received additional case studies from the Netherlands, Greece, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Germany, France and the UK. It was agreed that member States should indicate where these additional examples should be included in the report.

5. Draft Recommendation on Deliberative Democracy

The Working group discussed a draft recommendation on deliberative democracy [GT-DD(2022)11] with a view to prepare the text for public consultation.

The working group agreed that the purpose of the draft recommendation was not to promote the use of deliberative methods and practices per se, instead, the recommendation should provide guidance to member States wishing to use deliberative methods and practices on how to implement deliberation in a lawful, fair, accountable, and auditable manner. The working group stressed that it was important to get deliberation right to avoid potential detrimental effects on democracy.

The working group agreed to slightly change the order of the paragraphs in the preamble to position deliberative democracy more clearly within representative democracy and as a form of participatory democracy. Furthermore, the operational part was amended according to a proposal from the UK delegation. The working group also introduced minor changes in the Appendix and stressed that the principles of deliberative democracy should be practical and manageable and not overburden authorities, in particular at the local and regional level.

The working group entrusted the Secretariat with revising the text accordingly and preparing it for public consultations after informing the GR-DEM. The Secretariat invited the members to disseminate the public consultation as widely as possible to relevant stakeholders, including civil society organisations.

6. Contributions by the representatives of the Congress and Parliamentary Assembly, other organisations

The working group took note of the Recommendation 2232(2022) "[Safeguarding and promoting genuine democracy in Europe](#)" and the proposal therein to "set up a permanent platform on democracy, which would be based on the expertise of various bodies and structures of the Council of Europe and its activities and which would serve as a permanent platform for the exchange of information, good practices and innovations for the benefit of member States' public authorities and other stakeholders in democracy such as political parties, non-governmental organisations and representatives of civil society (..)".

The working group took note of the Congress [Report "Beyond Elections – the Use of Deliberative Methods in European Municipalities and Regions"](#), and the Recommendation 472 inviting member States to "(...) b. promote policies of deliberative democracy at national, local and regional level; c. assist in strengthening the deliberative process by making it permanent or institutionalised; d. to this end, underpin local and regional capacities, including their financial capacities, and provide logistical and administrative assistance to devise and implement deliberative democracy mechanisms;".

7. Next steps

The working group entrusted the Secretariat with preparing the draft recommendation for public consultation and to inform the GR-DEM accordingly. The working group entrusted the Secretariat to revise the draft report and to send it for consideration to the CDDG Bureau and the working group prior to being finalised for submission to the CDDG plenary for adoption.

8. Other business

The [BePart platform](#) was online and member States were invited to contribute case studies.

9. Date and place of the next meeting

An additional informal meeting could be organised before the CDDG plenary, if needed. Date and modalities to be discussed.

APPENDIX I**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS****CHAIR / PRESIDENT**

Mr Abassin NESSAR, Senior Advisor and Coordinator, Democracy and Governance, Ministry of Interior, The Hague

BELGIUM / BELGIQUE

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

CZECH REPUBLIC / REPUBLIQUE TCHEQUE

Mr Kristian MALINA, Ministerial Assistant Principal, Department of Coordination of Public Administration and International Relations Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic

FINLAND / FINLANDE

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

GREECE / GRECE

Mr Georgios CHRYSAFIS, expert (Deputy Head), Department of Organising and Functioning of Local Government, Ministry of the Interior, Athens

Mr Ioannis MATHIOUDAKIS, Head of the Coordination Service, Athens

ITALY / ITALIE

Mr Francesco GIUSTINO, Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, Ufficio Attività Internazionali, ROMA

MALTA / MALTE

Mr Robert TABONE, Head EU & International Affairs, Office of the Director General, Local Government Division, VALLETTA

NETHERLANDS / PAYS-BAS

Ms Lauren ANTONIDES, Policy advisor citizen participation and democratic renewal, Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, THE HAGUE

PORTUGAL

Apologised for absence / Excusé

SLOVAK REPUBLIC / REPUBLIQUE SLOVAQUE

Ms Barbara GINDLOVÁ, Local Self-Government and Foreign Affairs Unit, Department of Public Administration, Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic

SLOVENIA / SLOVENIE

Mr Jurij MEZEK, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Public Administration, Local Self-Government Service, LJUBLJANA

SWEDEN / SUEDE

Mr Daniel WOHLGEMUTH, Deputy Director, Ministry of Culture, Division for Media and Democracy

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, LONDON

Ms Siobhan SMYTH, Senior Policy Adviser, Governance Reform and Democracy Unit, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, LONDON

Mr Matthew BRANNEN, Senior Policy Adviser, Governance Reform and Democracy Unit, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Local Government & Communities Directorate, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, LONDON

Ms Kirsty BROWN, Governance Reform and Democracy Unit, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Local Government & Communities Directorate, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, LONDON

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

Mr Armen GEVORGYAN, Rapporteur général sur les pouvoirs locaux et régionaux, Membre de la Commission des questions sociales, de la santé et du développement durable

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, Governance Committee / Commission de la Gouvernance

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

Mr Christoph SPRENG, Representative of the INGOs Conference to the CDDG, Initiatives of Change-International

VENICE COMMISSION / COMMISSION DE VENISE

Apologised for absence / Excusé

SECRETARIAT**Secretariat of the CDDG / Secrétariat du CDDG**

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

Ms Judith ORLAND, Democratic Governance Division – 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

Ms Isabelle ETTER, Assistant

Other Secretariat participating in the meeting /Autre Secrétariat participant à la réunion

Ms Claudia LUCIANI, Director of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance / Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity

Mr Daniel POPESCU, Head of Democracy and Governance Department / Directorate of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance / Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity

Ms Cornelia PERLE, Elections and Participatory Democracy Division / Directorate of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance / Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity

APPENDIX II

AGENDA WITH ORDER OF BUSINESS

MONDAY 26 SEPTEMBER		
Bluejeans link: https://bluejeans.com/720493546/2915		
9.30		
1.	Opening of the meeting	
2.	Adoption of the agenda	[GT-DD(2022)OJ3]
3.	Information by Chair and the Secretariat	
4.	Drafting of a Report for the CDDG on new forms of deliberative and participatory democracy - Discussion chapter by chapter - Contributions by members of the working group	[GT-DD(2022)10]
13.00-14.30	Lunch break	
14.30		
4. (cont.)	- Discussion chapter by chapter - Preparing draft report for submission to the plenary	
17.00	End of day 1	
TUESDAY 27 SEPTEMBER		
Bluejeans link: https://bluejeans.com/720493546/2915		
9.30		
5.	Draft Recommendation on Deliberative Democracy Presentation draft recommendation on deliberative democracy - Discussion and contributions by members of the working group - Discussion about the modalities for public consultation	[GT-DD(2022)11]
13.00-14.30	Lunch break	
14.30		
5. (cont.)	- Discussion and contributions by members of the working group - Finalising draft for public consultation	
6.	Contributions by representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly and Congress, other organisations	
7.	Next steps	
8.	Other business	
9.	Date of the next meeting	