

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 27 March 2023

GT-DD(2023)2

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

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

REPORT OF THE 4th MEETING

1 March 2023, online and informal meeting

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

1. Opening of the meeting

The Vice-Chair, Mr Markku Mölläri (Finland), 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 Secretariat

The Secretariat provided information about the public consultation. Overall, 22 comments were received, including from key stakeholders in the field such as Bertelsmann Foundation, Center for Blue Democracy in Poland, Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory in Serbia, ALDA, European Partnership for Democracy. Furthermore, academics, lawyers and citizens also commented. Most comments concentrated on the Appendix, in particular on Principle 1 Availability of legal framework; Principle 4 Fair representation; Principle 7 Accountability; Principle 9 Evaluation & Learning. Furthermore, it was suggested to clarify how the outcomes / recommendations of the deliberative process should feed into the decision-making process. A compilation of all comments was shared with the working group (GT-DD(2023)1 addendum). The Secretariat prepared a revised version of the Draft recommendation (GT-DD(2023)1). The Working Group took note of the information.

4. Draft Recommendation on Deliberative Democracy

The working group heard an intervention from Mr Iain WALKER, Executive Director, newDemocracy, Australia. His presentation focused on key pressure points, meaning on those principles that were easiest to manipulate. He stressed the importance of ensuring transparency of design, pre-agreed authority, random recruitment, diversity of information and freedom of response as well as allowing sufficient time for the actual deliberations.

The working group also heard an intervention from Mr Art O'LEARY, Secretary General of the Electoral Commission and Secretary to the Citizens' Assembly, Ireland. He pointed out that citizen assemblies led to societal change in Ireland and had become part of the decision-making infrastructure. He also shared the principles used by organisers of citizen assemblies in Ireland, namely: transparency, equality of voice, fairness, efficiency, respect and collegiality. The key pressure points for Mr O'Leary were: random recruitment, selection of the issue/topic and how to deal with the outcomes.

Both experts stressed that big societal questions such as climate change were well suited for deliberative processes. The same was true for questions related to budget, crime, or taxes. Deliberative processes could help unlock polarised debates, and also provided a way to change your mind.

The ensuing discussion focussed on how to involve young people or children in the process (e.g. organising children friendly assemblies in parallel); whether to institutionalise deliberative processes (e.g. modelled on jury system) and how to ensure diversity of information (e.g. how to address with mis- and disinformation).

The Working Group considered the revised draft recommendation on deliberative democracy [GT-DD(2023)1]. There was consensus about the following:

- no need for a glossary,
- to integrate principles of transparency of design, diversity of information and freedom of response into the existing principles of the Appendix,
- to emphasise more clearly the importance of random recruitment,
- to merge the 10 principles into 8 principles (principles on resources and communication would be integrated into other principles),
- to streamline the language to avoid repetitions,
- to clarify who was accountable to whom for what in the Principle of Accountability.

The working group also took note of a proposal by the UK delegation to amend the operational part, so as to mention fundamentals and principles.

5. Next steps

The Working Group entrusted the Secretariat to prepare a revised draft and share with the group for written comments with a deadline of one week. Thereafter, the document would be examined by the Bureau, prior to being submitted to the CDDG plenary for adoption in April 2023.

6. Other business

None.

APPENDIX I
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

VICE-CHAIR / VICE-PRESIDENT

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

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

GREECE / GRECE

Mr Georgios CHRYSAFIS, Directorate of Organising and Functioning of Local Government, Ministry of the Interior, 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

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

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

M. 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

Apologised for absence / Excusé

VENICE COMMISSION / COMMISSION DE VENISE

Mr Michael JANSSEN

GUEST SPEAKERS / INTERVENANTS

Mr Art O'LEARY, Secretary General of the Electoral Commission and Secretary to the Citizens' Assembly, Ireland

Mr Iain WALKER, Executive Director, newDemocracy, Australia

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

Ms Isabelle ETTER, Assistant

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

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

1.	10.00 Opening of the meeting	
2.	Adoption of the agenda	[GT-DD(2023)OJ1]
4.	Interventions on the draft Recommendation and information by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iain Walker, Executive Director, newDemocracy, Australia • Art O'Leary, Secretary, Citizens' Assemblies and Secretary General, Electoral Commission, Ireland 	
Coffee break	11.00-11.15	
3.	Information by the Secretariat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief presentation of the revised version and the compilation of comments received 	
4.	Draft Recommendation on deliberative democracy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration and finalisation of the Preamble and Operational Part 	[GT-DD(2023)1 + addendum]
Lunch break	13.00-14.30	
4.	Draft Recommendation on deliberative democracy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration and finalisation of the principles 	
Coffee break	15.45-16.00	
4.	Draft Recommendation on deliberative democracy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration and finalisation of the principles 	
5.	Next steps	
6.	Other business	
End	17.00	