



EUROPEAN COMMITTEE ON DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE (CDDG)

Terms of reference of the Working group on deliberative and participatory democracy¹ (GT-DD)

Task

Carry out preliminary work for the CDDG with a view to prepare a *draft report for the CDDG on new forms of deliberative and participatory democracy with a view to complementing Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the participation of citizens in local public life, and taking into account Guidelines on civil participation in decision-making* (specific task (ii) of the terms of reference 2022-2025)

In addressing the task, the working group is invited to highlight examples and best practice of deliberative and participative democracy from all levels of government which have the potential of involving and mobilising citizens in deliberations, discussions, information, and accountability mechanisms through quality debates and work conducted for instance through citizens' assemblies, initiatives using the potential of information and communication technologies etc. It should also consider highlighting ways for exchanging information and the development of shared learning as well as further innovative approaches in these fields.

Timeline: January-December 2022 (draft for approval by the CDDG at its 16th meeting, November 2022). Given that the scope of the work is well defined and specific, the GT-DD shall finalise its work in two meetings to be held in 2022, tentatively in March and September; an additional on-line meeting may be organised in June.

Composition

All member States can nominate representatives and/or independent experts and participate in the working group at their own expense. Institutions and bodies with the status of CDDG participant are also invited to nominate representatives in the working groups. The Council of Europe will bear the costs for the participation of one expert from each of the following 8 member States: **Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, Greece, Malta, Netherlands, Slovak Republic, Slovenia.**

¹ As approved by the CDDG at its 14th meeting and complemented by written procedure on 3 February 2022.

Experts nominated should have adequate specialisation in the following areas: forms of deliberative and participative democracy at central or sub-national levels of government; the setting-up and/or management of such mechanisms including citizens' assemblies and e-democracy platforms; the organisation of deliberations / discussions / information networks based on events in-person or IT platforms; participatory processes in specific areas such as budgeting or urban planning etc.

In any event, the experts who have worked on the report prepared by the Division on elections and participatory democracy could also be invited to participate in the activity of the working group (e.g. one of these experts could be invited to at least present the report at the first meeting).

Background documents

The working group should take into account pertinent reports and documents produced under the aegis of the Council of Europe or by other organisations, including:

- Report on deliberative democracy, currently under preparation by the Division on elections and participatory democracy
- Report by the Congress on deliberative Democracy – should be published on 19 November
- Assembly Recommendation 2212 (2021) "More participatory democracy to tackle climate change", adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly on 29 September 2021, and supporting report (Doc. 15351, rapporteur: Mr George Papandreou), see [here](#).
- [Study on the impact of digital transformation, including artificial intelligence and automated decision making, on democracy and governance](#), approved by the CDDG at its 13th meeting 15-16 April 2021
- [Handbook on e-democracy](#), approved by the CDDG at its 11th meeting 10-11 September 2020
- [Toolkit on civil participation in decision making \(April 2020\)](#)
- [Committee of Ministers' recommendation \(2018\)4 on the participation of citizens in local public life](#)
- [2017 Committee of Ministers' Guidelines on civil participation in decision-making](#) as well as [Civil participation in decision-making processes - An Overview of Standards and Practices in Council of Europe Member States \(May 2016\)](#)
- Proceedings from relevant editions of the [World Forum for Democracy](#), e.g. "Is democracy in danger in the information age?" (November 2019); "Re-wiring Democracy: connecting institutions and citizens in the digital age" (November 2013); Can Democracy save the environment? (2021)
- CDLR Report on [Participation of citizens in local public life \(2000\)](#)
- OECD: [Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave](#) ; work on [Digital Government](#) and on [Open Government](#)
- EU: [European Democracy Action Plan](#)

Working methods

The working group may use on-line meetings and written consultations as necessary. It is encouraged to hold consultations with other bodies within and outside the Council of Europe, including non-governmental organisations. Given the specificities of the subject, the working group could actually use innovative approaches regarding the involvement of NGOs. It may also rely on contributions from expert consultants. See also Resolution CM/Res(2021)3 on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods.