



Strasbourg, 6 October 2021

GT-DT(2021)5

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

**WORKING GROUP ON DEMOCRACY AND TECHNOLOGY
(GT-DT)**

MEETING REPORT

VIDEOCONFERENCE MEETING

24 September 2021

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

The Chair, Mr Almir Šahović (Bosnia and Herzegovina), welcomed the members of the Working Group to the 5th meeting. The list of participants can be found in Appendix I. The agenda was adopted as it appears in Appendix II.

Mr Dan Popescu, Head of Democracy and Governance Department, introduced and welcomed Ms Alina Tatarenko who had been appointed Head of Division Democratic Governance and Secretary to the CDDG.

2. Draft Committee of Ministers' guidelines on the use of new technologies in the different stages of the electoral process

The [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2017\)5 on standards for e-voting](#) and its guidelines for implementation provided the background for the current draft guidelines. In fact, the draft guidelines were meant to complement the existing standards.

The three expert consultants (Ms Ardita Driza Maurer, University of Zurich, Zentrum für Demokratie Aarau, Switzerland; Mr Robert Krimmer, ERA-Chair Full Professorship of e-Governance, Skytte Institute, University of Tartu, Estonia; and Ms Melanie Volkamer, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Germany) presented the final draft guidelines which currently consisted of an introduction, 12 provisions and a glossary.

The experts highlighted that the main goal of the draft guidelines was to provide member States with a practical and comprehensive tool to think through and plan the use of ICT solutions in electoral processes – if they decided to introduce ICT solutions. The draft guidelines should not suggest that ICT solutions must be introduced.

Ms Driza Maurer pointed out that the draft guidelines were conceptualised to apply to all stages of the processes (with the exception of e-voting and e-counting) and cover a broad range of ICT solutions. Thus, the draft guidelines were general, not going into details, in order to be useful in a maximum of cases. Mr Krimmer explained that the draft guidelines were meant to offer member States an orientation, if and when they decided to introduce ICT solutions.

Ms Driza Maurer thanked member States for their comments and feedback to the previous draft and outlined the main changes. Elaborating on the concept of assumption used in Guideline 1, Ms Volkamer explained that e.g., in the context of security member States should in particular be aware of a) assumptions made about an attacker's capabilities and b) assumptions made about the trustworthiness of those who have access to encryption keys, and that these assumptions would then be evaluated in the context of the risk assessment.

Overall, members welcomed the draft guidelines. The discussion centred around the following issues: security, accessibility and usability, as well as balancing conflicting or competing guidelines.

With regards to the issue of **security**, members emphasised the importance of taking a security by design approach. Members expressed that security concerns needed to be made more prominent in the draft guidelines, as security should not be treated as an after-thought in the design process. To this end, it was suggested to include an explicit mention of security in the introductory part on general principles.

Members stressed that **accessibility** and **usability** were two distinct concepts, and the draft guidelines should reflect this better.

With regards to conflicting principles, members suggested that the question of transparency v. secrecy should also be mentioned in Guidelines 7.

In addition, members raised the question of financial resources and the costs of introducing ICT solutions.

With regards to the glossary, members suggested that the definitions of usability, accessibility and assumptions needed to be further elaborated to clarify the intended meaning, and to avoid giving the impression that achieving digital security is dependent on making assumptions, rather than a proportionate response to risk analysis.

The Secretariat pointed out that the draft guidelines would be submitted for editorial review to ensure consistency with Council of Europe language.

3. Conclusions

The draft guidelines were adopted in substance. It was agreed that final suggestions should be sent in writing to the Secretariat by 5 October 2021. The draft guidelines would thereafter be reviewed by the Bureau prior to being submitted for adoption at the 14th CDDG plenary meeting on 29-30 November 2021.

4. Other business

The Secretariat announced that the review meeting on the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)5 on standards for e-voting would be held during the plenary. A questionnaire had been sent out to member States and the Secretariat had already received several replies. The Secretariat encouraged member States to send in their replies.

The Secretariat informed about an online conference on AI regulations which would take place on 26 October 2021 under the auspices of the Hungarian presidency to the Council of Europe. A save the date would be sent out.

APPENDIX I**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS****Members of the Working group / Membres du groupe de travail****CHAIR / PRESIDENT**

Ambassador Almir ŠAHOVIĆ, Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo

FINLAND / FINLANDE

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

GREECE / GRECE

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

Ms Vasiliki MASOURA, Expert, Directorate of Organisation and Functioning of Local Government

Mr Nikolaos DIKAROS, Head of the Department of Design and Development of Information Systems, Directorate of E-Government

Ms Elli STILIANIDI, Expert, Independent Department of International and European Relations

ITALY / ITALIE

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

NETHERLANDS / PAYS-BAS

Ms Amber MECHELSE, Senior Policy Officer Democracy, Democracy Department, Democracy and Governance Division, Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, The Hague

UNITED KINGDOM / ROYAUME-UNI

Mr Paul ROWSELL, Head of Governance Reform and Democracy Unit, 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

Ms Kirsty BROWN, Governance Reform and Democracy Unit, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, London

Election management bodies / Organes d'administration des élections
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BELGIUM / BELGIQUE

M. Régis TRANNOY, Service Elections

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA / BOSNIE-HERZEGOVINE

Mr Goran MIŠKOVIĆ, Secretary General, Central Election Commission

CROATIA / CROATIE

Mrs Ivana BELEC, Member of the State Electoral Commission of the Republic of Croatia

CZECH REPUBLIC / REPUBLIQUE TCHEQUE

Ms Patricie SOKOLOVÁ, The Department of elections, Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic

FINLAND / FINLANDE

Ms Juha MÄENALUSTA, Election Management Body (EMB), Ministry of Justice

GREECE / GRECE

Mr Ioannis, PARASKEVAS, Head of the Department of Data Management and Interoperability

Ms Angeliki BAROUTA, Head of the Department of Elections and Political Parties of the Directorate of Elections

Mr Kosmas CHATZIVASILOGLOU, expert at the Department of Elections and Political Parties of the Directorate of Elections

HUNGARY / HONGRIE

Mr Attila PÉTERI, Election expert, National Election Office

ITALY / ITALIE

Mr Angelo CIANCIOSI, Centre for Studies on Privacy and New Technologies

LATVIA / LETTONIE

Mr Ritvars EGLĀJS, Secretary of the CEC

LITHUANIA / LITUANIE

Mr Darius GAIŽAUSKAS

LUXEMBOURG

Ms Anne GREIVELDINGER, Conseiller de Gouvernement, Ministère d'Etat, Service Juridique

Mr Lionel ANTUNES, Ministère d'Etat, Service Juridique

POLAND / POLOGNE

Mr Michal BOCHENSKI, National Institute of Local Government

SERBIA / SERBIE

Ms Dara GRAVARA STOJANOVIĆ, Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government,

SLOVAK REPUBLIC / REPUBLIQUE SLOVAQUE

Mr Martin GAJDOŠ, General State Advisor, Department of Elections, Referendum and Political Parties, Section of Public Administration, Bratislava

SPAIN / ESPAGNE

Ms Vanessa SÁNCHEZ, Technical Advisor. Directorate General of Internal Policy and Electoral Processes, Directorate General of Internal Policy. Ministry of the Interior, MADRID

SWITZERLAND / SUISSE

Mr Beat KUONI, Chancellerie Fédérale

UKRAINE

Mr Sergiy POSTIVYI, CEC member

UNITED KINGDOM / ROYAUME-UNI

Mr Paul DOCKER, Head of Electoral Administration, UK Government

RAPPORTEUR ON DEMOCRACY AND TECHNOLOGY / RAPPORTEUR SUR LA DÉMOCRATIE ET LA TECHNOLOGIE

Mr Peter ANDRE, Senior Expert for Legal Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Wien, Austria

EXPERT-CONSULTANTS / CONSULTANT-EXPERTS

Ms Ardita DRIZA MAURER, Juriste, LI.M., Consultante indépendante, Droits politiques et nouvelles technologies de vote, Suisse

Mr Robert KRIMMER, ERA-Chair Full Professorship of e-Governance, Skytte Institute, University of Tartu, Estonia

Ms Melanie VOLKAMER, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Germany

SECRETARIAT

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

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

Ms Judith ORLAND, Democratic Governance Division – Directorate of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance - Directorate General of Democracy

Ms Isabelle ETTER - Assistant

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

Ms Sophia WISTEHUBE, Division of Elections and Political Parties – Venice Commission

Interpreters / Interprètes

Ms Rémy JAIN

Ms Elisabetta BASSU

APPENDIX II

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting

2. Adoption of the agenda

[GT-DT(2021)0J2]

3. Develop standards on new technologies and the different stages of the electoral process (including voter registration, transmission and tabulation of results, etc.) (task ii.)

- Finalisation of the draft Committee of Ministers' guidelines on the use of new technologies in the different stages of the electoral process

[GT-DT(2021)4]

4. Other business