

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 6 October 2023

GT-G(2023)11

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

**WORKING GROUP ON GOVERNANCE
(GT-G)**

REPORT

of the 2nd meeting (21-22 September, Strasbourg)

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

1. Opening of the meeting

The meeting was opened with Peter Andre (Austria) in the Chair, who welcomed all the members.

2. Agenda

The agenda was adopted as it appears in Appendix II.

3. Information from the Secretariat

The Secretariat provided some practical information in relation to the meeting and pointed out that the report on multi-level governance would need to be finalised by the end of the year by the CDDG. A draft should thus ideally be approved at the plenary meeting of the CDDG on 23-24 November.

The Secretariat then updated the members of the working group on the state of play regarding responses to the questionnaire: five more countries had provided information since the informal meeting in June and the extension of the deadline for responses (the total number was now 20).

4. Report on multilevel governance

The group then heard a presentation by Dr Louis Meuleman and Dr Ingeborg Niestroy, Public Strategy for Sustainable Development - PS4SD. They presented their proposals for the draft report, including a three-dimensional conceptual framework on MLG (based on the multi-sector, multi-actors and multilevel dimensions of governance) and a list of possible policy elements that the report could highlight in the end. The working group discussed those proposals.

5. Discussion on the content of the draft

All participants were invited to present their views and proposals on each chapter of the draft report. With a view to specify in a clear purpose of the report and the intended readership, among other starting points, Paul Rowsell (United Kingdom) provided some drafting for the introduction of the report. The experts provided further explanations in relation to the (conceptual) first chapter. Georgios Chrysafis (Greece) provided further information and explanations in relation to his proposals made in June.

When discussing Chapter 2, the working group identified and discussed a variety of issues, considerations and arguments in relation to the benefits, requirements and challenges of MLG that would deserve to feature prominently in the draft. Transparency and accountability were mentioned on several occasions as particularly important subjects. The group considered that the structure would need to be simplified, with two subsections (i.e. 2.1 - key benefits and requirements, 2.2 - challenges) instead of three.

The group took the view that Chapter 3 should first and foremost focus on how MLG can be used in crises and what lessons can be learnt from the handling of crises. It should give an overview of trends and constants without going too deep into the specifics nor seeking to list all types of possible crises (these should remain mere examples). The requirements for emergency powers under the Council of Europe standards (e.g. temporariness, ex post control) could be recalled.

Chapter 4 would be entitled "Principles of MLG" and provide a practical guidance and a checklist for governments preparing MLG reforms. The working group entrusted the Secretariat to produce – on the basis of the content of the draft and latest proposals by the expert consultants - a list of such policy principles that would strive a balance between the necessary level of abstraction and sufficient concreteness, drawing inspiration from, and referring as appropriate, to earlier work of the CDDG and Council of Europe.

Overall, boxes would be used in the report to provide in a very concise manner, relevant examples of national experience to illustrate the substance of the report.

6. Next steps

At the closure of discussions, the working group agreed that a revised version of the draft report be produced and made available by 16 October for consideration by the CDDG Bureau at its 26th meeting (19-20 October, Strasbourg). The draft would then be revised with the experts, for consideration at the 18th CDDG meeting (23-24 November).

Since the national examples would be mentioned in a concise manner in the report, and since the information that had been provided in response to the questionnaire could be valuable to a broader public, a compilation of the responses to the questionnaire would be made publicly available (as an Appendix, with the consent of the countries as to the inclusion of their submission).

7. Other business

None

8. Date of the next meeting

If necessary, an additional, informal meeting of the working group could be held on-line in the end of October or early November 2023.

APPENDIX I
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

CHAIR / PRESIDENT

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

BELGIUM / BELGIQUE

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

CZECH REPUBLIC / REPUBLIQUE TCHEQUE

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

FINLAND / FINLANDE

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

FRANCE

Ms Camille VALENTIN, Rédactrice juridique, Bureau des structures territoriales, Direction générale des collectivités locales, Ministère de la cohésion des territoires et des relations avec les collectivités territoriales

GREECE / GRECE

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

Mr Ioannis MATHIOUDAKIS, Head of the Coordination Service, Ministry of Interior

ITALY / ITALIE

Mr Pierluigi TROMBETTA, Diplomatic Advisor to the Ministry for Regional Affairs and Autonomy, Presidency of the Council of Ministers

NORWAY / NORVEGE

Ms Sigrid STOKSTAD, Associate Professor in the Department of Public and International Law, Faculty of Law, University of Oslo

SLOVAK REPUBLIC / REPUBLIQUE SLOVAQUE

Ms Veronika LAKATOŠOVÁ, Local Self-Government and Foreign Affairs Unit, Department of Public Administration, Ministry of Interior

UKRAINE

Ms Oksana PAVLIUK, Head of the Unit, 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

Ms Siobhan SMYTH, 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

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

M. Armen GEVORGYAN, General Rapporteur on local and regional authorities, member of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development

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

M. Roman CHLAPAK, Secretary of the Governance Committee

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

Mr Christoph SPRENG, deputy Chair of the CINGO

EXPERT-CONSULTANTS

Mr Louis MEULEMAN, Public Strategy for Sustainable Development - PS4SD

Ms Ingeborg NIESTROY, Public Strategy for Sustainable Development - PS4SD

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****of the 3rd meeting of the GT-G****(21-22 September 2023, Strasbourg, Council of Europe, Agora, Room G05)**

1.	Opening of the meeting	
2.	Adoption of the agenda	[GT-G(2023)OJ3]
3.	Information from the Secretariat	
4.	Report on multilevel governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prof. Dr Louis Meuleman and Dr Ingeborg Niestroy, founding directors, Public Strategy for Sustainable Development (PS4SD), Brussels: presentation of the preliminary draft report <p>Q&A and general discussion of structure and approach</p> <p>Compilation of responses to the questionnaire</p>	 [GT-G(2023)9] [GT-G(2023)10]
5.	Discussion on the content of the draft: all members and participants present their views and proposals on each chapter of the draft report Discussion	
6.	Next steps	
7.	Other business	
8.	Date of the next meeting	