

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 28 September 2021

GT-RE(2021)7

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

**WORKING GROUP ON ACCOUNTABILITY  
(GT-RE)**

**REPORT OF THE 5<sup>th</sup> MEETING**

**13 September 2021, held by videoconference**

## **1. Opening of the meeting**

The Chairman of the Working Group, Mr Paul-Henri Philips (Belgium, Brussels Capital Region), opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. He informed the Group that he would retire in the beginning of 2022 and that, as a result this was his penultimate attendance of CDDG activities. The list of participants appears in Annex I.

## **2. Agenda**

The agenda as set out in Annex II was adopted.

## **3. and 4. Drafting of a Recommendation for the Committee of Ministers on democratic accountability of elected officials and bodies at local and regional level**

### *Information by the Secretariat*

Mr Dan Popescu introduced the new Head of the Democratic Governance Division, Ms Alina Tatarenko, who had taken up her new duties on 1 September and who would be the new Secretary of the CDDG Committee. He then recalled the importance of this new instrument in the current European context and pointed to the particular challenges posed the subject of popular recall addressed in Annex 2, section 7.

### *Presentation of the study on the democratic accountability of elected representatives and bodies at local and regional level by Mr Arnaud Duranthon*

Mr Arnaud Duranthon (Senior Lecturer at the University of Strasbourg) presented the study which had recently been finalised (document GT-RE(2021)6), on the basis of an analysis of the replies to the questionnaire and in the light of the (amended) wording of the draft Recommendation prepared by the working group.

The working group agreed that the study would remain a valuable source of information, to be made available on the CDDG website for future reference. It also discussed the opportunity of converting it into an explanatory report and considered that there was no need to do so since the draft Recommendation was comprehensive and self-explanatory enough, especially with the most recent additions made to the annexes to the operational part.

### *Discussion of the draft Recommendation*

The working group examined successively the operative part of the draft Recommendation and its two annexes (document GT-RE(2021)5) after the Secretariat had presented the changes made following the working group discussions held in June and indicated that the draft Recommendation would need to be sent for review by the legal advice services and by the editorial services for legal, technical and linguistic consistency, possibly before its final consideration by the CDDG at its 14<sup>th</sup> meeting (29-30 November).

The member from the United Kingdom submitted additional drafting proposals for the first paragraphs of the operative part, and the members from Finland, Greece and Norway, as well as the scientific experts, suggested further linguistic and conceptual adjustments, including with regard to the definitions. The working group discussed the various suggestions and approved various changes and additions.

Further proposals were submitted in writing by the Danish and the Slovak delegations, which could not be presented and discussed, including for technical reasons. The working group agreed that for the final version of the draft to be considered by the CDDG in November, and prior to that by the Bureau at its meeting of 14-15 October, those proposed changes which appear to be consistent with what the group had already discussed and agreed could be included, and that in case of doubt the suggested new wording would be highlighted in square brackets.

## **5. Other business**

In response to a question by the representative of the Conference of international non-governmental organisations who remarked that the Recommendation was covering only elected officials, it was agreed that a footnote could be added, stating the fact that local/regional accountability to be overall effective would also have to take appointed/nominated officials into account. The study could also be used to provide further explanation on this and to refer to those other Council of Europe standards and documents which already deal with public officials more broadly.

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

Mr Paul-Henri PHILIPS, Coordinateur pour les Organisations Internationales, Relations multilatérales et Organisations Internationales, BRUXELLES

**AUSTRIA / AUTRICHE**

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

**BELGIUM / BELGIQUE**

Mr Edwin LEFEBRE, 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, Directorate of Organisation and Functioning of Local Government, Ministry of the Interior, ATHENS

Mr Ioannis MATHIOUDAKIS, Head of the Independent Department of International and European Relations, ATHENS

Mr Dimitris PONTIKATIS

**ITALY / ITALIE**

Mr Francesco GIUSTINO, Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, D.A.R.A. - Ufficio Attività Internazionali, ROMA

**NORWAY / NORVEGE**

Ms Nina Britt BERGE, Senior Adviser, Department for Local Government, Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, OSLO

**SLOVAK REPUBLIC / REPUBLIQUE SLOVAQUE**

Ms Nad'a KURILOVÁ, Director, Local State Administration, Self-Government and Foreign Relations Department, Public Administration Section, Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic

**SLOVENIA / SLOVENIE**

Ms Helena KAVČIČ, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Public Administration, Local Self-Government Service, LJUBLJANA

**SPAIN / ESPAGNE**

Ms Raquel Tábara ANTÓN, Technical Councillor, Secretary General for Territorial Coordination, Ministry for Territorial Policy, MADRID

**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

**OTHER PARTICIPANTS / AUTRES PARTICIPANTS****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, Secretariat of the Governance Committee / Secrétariat de la Commission de la gouvernance

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

Ms Anna SEVORTIAN, Representative of the INGOs Conference to the CDDG, EU-Russia Civil Society Forum

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

**EXPERT-CONSULTANTS / CONSULTANT-EXPERTS**

M. Arnaud DURANTHON, Maître de conférences de droit public, Faculté de droit, de sciences politiques et de gestion, France

Prof. Mark PHILP, Department of History, University of Warwick, United Kingdom

**SECRETARIAT**

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

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

Mr Christophe SPECKBACKER, Administrator – Democratic Governance Division - Directorate of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance, Directorate General of Democracy

Ms Isabelle ETTER - Assistant

**Interpreters / Interprètes**

Mr Grégoire DEVICTOR

Mr Luke TILDEN

Ms Julia TANNER

## ANNEX II

## AGENDA

## 10.30

1. **Opening of the meeting**
2. **Adoption of the agenda** [GT-RE(2021)OJ3]
3. **Drafting a recommendation for the Committee of Ministers on democratic accountability of elected officials and bodies at local and regional level**
  - Information by the Secretariat
  - Consideration of a draft accompanying study [GT-RE(2021)6]
    - presentation by M. Arnaud Duranthon, scientific expert
    - exchange of views on the study
  - Consideration of a draft Recommendation for the Committee of Ministers on democratic accountability of elected officials and bodies at local and regional level [GT-RE(2021)5]
    - Operative part of the Recommendation
    - Appendix 1
    - Appendix 2
    - Contributions from members of the working group, participants and experts, and exchange of views: **NB: the chair wishes to focus the discussions as much as possible on the last changes made to the draft**

*Other reference documents:*

- > *Compilation of responses to the questionnaire* [[CDDG\(2021\)7 Addendum](#)]
- > *Previous version of the draft Recommendation examined by the GT-RE at its 4<sup>th</sup> meeting*



GT-RE(2021)3E-Recommendation on democ

- > *Reports of the CDDG's 13<sup>th</sup> and other recent meetings and of all GT-RE meetings:*  
[link](#)

**13.00 – 14.30 Lunch break****14.30 – 17.00**

4. **Continuation of discussions on the draft Recommendation**
5. **Other business**