



**4th meeting, 23-24 September 2021
(by videoconference)**

MSI-REF(2021)15
25 October 2021

MEETING REPORT

Opening and agenda

1. The meeting was opened by Maria Donde, the Chair of the [Committee of Experts on Media Environment and Reform](#) MSI-REF. Jan Kleijssen, Director, Information Society – Action against Crime, welcomed members and participants and thanked them for their continued engagement in the development of the Expert Committee’s deliverables. Mr Kleijssen underlined the importance and timeliness of the MSI-REF work for capturing the profound changes in the media and digital environment in a human rights and rule of law framework and expressed hope that the texts in preparation would serve as catalysts for changes at the level of the Council of Europe’s member states. Mr Kleijssen further informed the Expert Committee about the recent developments in the Council of Europe, notably the foreseen adoption of new terms of reference of intergovernmental committees for the period 2022-25 which were to provide continuity with the existing standards and activities, including the deliverables of the current expert committees.
2. The agenda (Appendix I) was adopted without change. According to the list of participants (Appendix II), of the 41 members and participants, there were 21 women (51%) and 20 men (49%). The meeting was attended by ten members; Ms Jadranka Vojvodić, Mr Artur Cozma and Mr Marius Dragomir apologised.

Conclusions and decisions

3. The main objective of the meeting was to finalise the three documents that the Expert Committee had been tasked to prepare, the Draft recommendation on principles for media and communication governance, the Draft recommendation on electoral communication and media coverage of election campaigns and the Draft guidance note on the prioritisation of public interest online. The Chair recalled that throughout the eighteen-month drafting process, critical input had been received from the MSI-REF members, participants, and observers, as well as guidance from several CDMSI members. During the public consultations on the two draft recommendations (July-

August 2021), additional contributions were provided by the interested stakeholders, based on which the rapporteurs have again reviewed the texts.

4. The MSI-REF welcomed the amended documents and proceeded to a careful review of the texts paragraph by paragraph, to ensure that the key ideas and concepts were adequately reflected and clearly communicated, as well as to check that the documents were coherent. The Expert Committee discussed and reformulated where necessary, based on constructive and concrete suggestions from the members and participants. Some minor textual changes were made to the Draft recommendation on principles for media and communication governance, for example regarding the States' role in content moderation online, or clarity about the actors which are to assume specific governance functions. In the Draft recommendation on electoral communication and media coverage of election campaigns a few additional governance principles were added to the first section for completeness, and the fourth and fifth sections were merged to include all content related guidelines in the electoral context, encompassing algorithmic transparency, handling of problematic accounts and content curation and moderation. Also the Draft guidance note on the prioritisation of public content online underwent some minor changes, for example to ensure that any prominence obligations should be subject to efficient appeal procedures, or to define the emergencies which can warrant prominence of public authorities' communications.
5. Following a lack of quorum on the second day of the meeting, the MSI-REF members confirmed the amendments made in and following the meeting and approved the three texts in written procedure. They further agreed to integrate a comment received in written procedure with regard to the independence of the regulatory and oversight authorities involved in the electoral campaigns oversight mechanisms (Draft recommendation on electoral communication and media coverage of election campaigns). A single reference to independence was retained in the text instead of referring to this feature at each mention of the authorities. One member disagreed with this position, taking the view that in order to make it clear that this independence is indispensable and to prevent misleading selective citation of individual passages of the recommendation, that feature should be mentioned in all places where reference is made to authorities and their powers.

Any other business

6. The fourth meeting having been the last meeting of the MSI-REF, members expressed their satisfaction with the work carried out by the Committee, thanking the rapporteurs – Ms Elda Brogi, Mr Raphaël Kies, Mr Mark Cole, Mr Manuel Puppis and Mr Damian Tambini – for their dedication and commitment, and the Chair, Ms Maria Donde, for her attentive guidance. The members regretted the absence of physical meetings and direct exchanges due to the Covid-19 related restrictions on travel and gatherings, concluding that the online format has made the Committee's tasks more difficult to perform.
7. The members and participants also discussed the possible follow-up to the work of the Committee, committing to promote the future instruments among their networks and enhance their visibility amongst the relevant stakeholders. Some members also noted the parallels between the MSI-REF deliverables and the ongoing work of the European Union, notably on the future Digital Services Act and the Media Freedom Act. The representatives of the European Commission, for their part, actively participated in the meetings and expressed interest in the future instruments, and they also presented

the recently adopted EC Recommendation on the protection, safety and empowerment of journalists.

8. In line with established practice, the Secretariat will prepare a draft meeting report to be sent to the Chair and Vice-Chair for consideration. Thereafter, the Secretariat will send the draft report to the MSI-REF, allowing for comments within five full working days. In the absence of comments, the report will be deemed finalised and will be transmitted to the CDMSI for information.

Appendix I

Agenda

23 September 2021

09:30 – 10:00

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Welcoming remarks by Jan Kleijssen, Director, Information Society - Action against Crime Directorate, Directorate General Human Rights and Rule of Law

10:00 –11:30

3. Discussion of Draft Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member States on electoral communication and media coverage of election campaigns, revised after public consultations, with a view to possible finalisation of the document

11:30-11:45 - coffee break

11:45- 13:00

4. Continuation of point 3

14:30-16:00

5. Continuation of point 3

16:00-16:15 – coffee break

16:15-18:00

6. Discussion of the Draft Guidance note on the prioritisation of public interest content on online platforms, with a view to possible finalisation of the document

24 September 2021

09:30 – 11:00

7. Continuation of point 6

11:00-11:15 – coffee break

11:15 – 13:00

8. Discussion of the Draft Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to member States on principles for media and communication governance, revised after public consultations, with a view to possible finalisation of the document

14:30 – 18:00

9. Continuation of point 8
10. Other business

Appendix II

List of participants / liste de participants

COMMITTEE MEMBERS / MEMBRES DU COMITÉ

<p>Ms / Mme Eida BROGI Scientific Coordinator at the Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom and Professor / <i>Coordinatrice scientifique au Centre pour le pluralisme des médias et la liberté des médias et professeur</i> European University Institute, Florence, Italy / <i>l'Institut universitaire européen, Florence, Italie</i></p>
<p>Ms / Mme Liz CAROLAN Executive Director of Digital Action / <i>Directrice exécutive de Digital Action</i> Ireland / <i>Irlande</i></p>
<p>Mr / M. Mark David COLE Professor for Media and Telecommunication Law, University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg / <i>Professeur de droit des médias et des télécommunications, Université du Luxembourg, Luxembourg</i> Director for Academic Affairs, Institute of European Media Law (EMR), Saarbrücken, Germany/ <i>Directeur des affaires académiques, Institut de droit européen des médias (EMR), Sarrebruck, Allemagne</i></p>
<p>Mr / M. Artur COZMA (excused) Member of Coordinating Council of the Audio-visual of the Republic of Moldova/ <i>Membre du Conseil de coordination de l'audiovisuel de la République de Moldova</i></p>
<p>Ms / Mme Maria DONDE, Chair of MSI-REF / Présidente du MSI-REF Head of International Content Policy, Office of Communication (OFCOM) / <i>Chef de la politique de contenu international, Bureau de la Communication (OFCOM)</i> United Kingdom / <i>Royaume-Uni</i></p>
<p>Mr / M. Marius DRAGOMIR (excused) Director of the Center for Media, Data and Society, at the Central European University / <i>Directeur du Centre pour les médias, les données et la société, à l'Université d'Europe centrale</i> Austria, Hungary / <i>Autriche, Hongrie</i></p>
<p>Mr / M. Raphaël KIES Research Scientist, Department of Political Science (IPSE) / <i>Chercheur scientifique, Département de sciences politiques (IPSE)</i> University of Luxembourg / <i>Université du Luxembourg</i></p>
<p>Ms / Mme Helena MANDIĆ Director of Broadcasting, Communications Regulatory Agency / <i>Directrice de la radiodiffusion, Agence de régulation des communications</i> Bosnia and Herzegovina / <i>Bosnie-Herzégovine</i></p>
<p>Mr / M. Marko MILOSAVLJEVIĆ, Vice-Chair of MSI-REF / Vice-président du MSI-REF Associate Professor, Chair of Journalism / <i>Professeur associé, Chaire de journalisme</i> Faculty of Social Sciences at the Ljubljana University, Slovenia / <i>Faculté des sciences sociales de l'Université de Ljubljana, Slovénie</i></p>
<p>Mr / M. Markus OERMANN, Gender Equality rapporteur of MSI-REF / Rapporteur sur l'égalité de genre du MSI-REF Policy Advisor / <i>Conseiller politique</i> Office of the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Department for Strategy and Policy Planning/Digital Policy, Germany / <i>Bureau du Président de la République fédérale d'Allemagne, Département de la stratégie et de la planification politique/politique numérique, Allemagne</i></p>

Mr / M. Manuel PUPPIS Professor in media systems and media structures at the Department of Communication and Media Research DCM / <i>Professeur en systèmes et structures médiatiques au Département de recherche sur la communication et les médias DCM</i> University of Fribourg, Switzerland / <i>Université de Fribourg, Suisse</i>
Mr / M. Damian TAMBINI Associate Professor in the Department of Media and Communications, <i>Professeur associé au département des médias et des communications</i> London School of Economics, United Kingdom / <i>London School of Economics, Royaume-Uni</i>
Ms / Mme Jadranka VOJVODIĆ (excused) Gender Equality rapporteur of MSI-REF / <i>Rapporteur sur l'égalité de genre du MSI-REF</i> Deputy Director, Agency for Electronic Media / <i>Directrice adjointe, Agence pour les médias électroniques</i> Podgorica, Montenegro / <i>Podgorica, Monténégro</i>

PARTICIPANTS AND OBSERVERS / PARTICIPANTS ET OBSERVATEURS

AZERBAIJAN / AZERBAÏDJAN	Ms / Mme Jamala ALIYEVA Senior Adviser of the Department for Work with NGOs and Communication / <i>Conseiller principal du Département pour le travail avec les ONG et la communication</i>
CROATIA / CROATIE	Ms / Mme Nives ZVONARIĆ Head of Media Sector / <i>Chef du secteur des médias au Ministère de la culture et des médias</i>
GEORGIA / GEORGIE	Mr / M. Ivane MAKHARADZE Head of Audiovisual Media Services Regulation Department, Communication Commission of Georgia / <i>Chef du département de la réglementation des services de médias audiovisuels, Commission des communications de Géorgie</i>
REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA / REPUBLIQUE DE MOLDOVA	Ms / Mme Tatiana BURAGA Member of the Audiovisual Council / <i>Membre du Conseil de l'audiovisuel</i>
NETHERLANDS / PAYS-BAS	Ms Amber MECHELSE Policy officer democracy, Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations / <i>Chargée de politique démocratie, Ministère néerlandais de l'intérieur et des relations au sein du Royaume</i> Ms Puck GORRISEN Policy officer democracy, Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations / <i>Chargée de politique démocratie, Ministère néerlandais de l'intérieur et des relations au sein du Royaume</i>
ROMANIA / ROUMANIE	Ms / Mme Raluca DOCA Expert within the Directorate of Public Policies and Priorities / <i>Experte, Direction générale des politiques publiques, Secrétariat général du gouvernement de la Roumanie</i> Ms / Mme Alexandra ENESCU

	<p>University lecturer PhD, associate professor at the University of Bucharest / <i>Department Maître de conférences PhD, professeur associé à l'Université de Bucarest</i></p> <p>Bureau Chief - Public Relations / <i>Chef de bureau - Département des relations publiques</i></p>
RUSSIAN FEDERATION / FEDERATION DE RUSSIE	<p>Mr / M. Mikhail KONRAD</p> <p>Director of Special Projects / <i>Directeur des projets spéciaux</i> Rossiya Segodnya Media Group / <i>Groupe de médias Rossiya Segodnya</i></p>
SERBIA / SERBIE	<p>Ms / Mme Maja ZARIC</p> <p>Head of Unit for International Cooperation, European Integrations, Programming and conducting programmes and projects financed from international funds in the field of public information / <i>Chef d'Unité Coopération Internationale, Intégrations Européennes, Programmation et exécution de programmes et projets financés par fonds internationaux dans le domaine de l'information du public</i> Ministry of Culture and Media / <i>Ministère de la Culture et des Médias</i></p>
SPAIN / ESPAGNE	<p>Mr Miguel OVEJERO PÉREZ</p> <p>Subdirector General for the Management of Audiovisual Communication Services / <i>Sous-direction générale adjointe pour l'organisation des services de communication audiovisuelle</i> Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation / <i>Ministère des affaires économiques et de la transformation numérique</i></p>
SWITZERLAND / SUISSE	<p>Ms / Mme Christiane ERKOREKA-FÜRST</p> <p>Media lawyer / <i>Juriste médias</i> Division Media, Section Legal Affairs Media / <i>Division Médias, Section Affaires juridiques Médias</i> Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications DETEC / <i>Département fédéral de l'environnement, des transports, de l'énergie et de la communication DETEC</i></p> <p>Mr / M. Andrea FRATTOLILLO</p> <p>Media specialist in the Division media of the Federal Office of Communications (OFCOM) <i>Spécialiste des médias dans la Division Médias, Office fédéral de la communication (OFCOM)</i></p>
TURKEY / TURQUE	<p>Mr / M. Yusuf DEMİRTAŞ</p> <p>Assistant Expert, Radio and Television Supreme Council / <i>Expert adjoint, Conseil suprême de la radio et de la télévision</i> International Relations Department / <i>Département des relations internationales</i></p> <p>Ms / Mme Müge ASI</p> <p>Radio and Television Supreme Council / <i>Conseil suprême de la radio et de la télévision</i> International Relations Department / <i>Département des relations internationales</i></p> <p>Mr / M. Sercan DOĞAN</p> <p>Communications Expert / <i>Expert en communication</i> Directorate of Communications of the Republic of Turkey / <i>Direction des communications de la République de Turquie</i></p>

UKRAINE	Mr / M. Taras SHEVCHENKO Deputy Minister of Culture of Ukraine / <i>Vice-ministre de la culture de l'Ukraine</i>
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DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND FUNDAMENTAL, RIGHTS, VENICE COMMISSION / INSTITUTIONS DEMOCRATIQUES ET DROITS FONDAMENTAUX, COMMISSION DE VENISE	Mr / M. Taras PASHUK
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