

OBSERVATORY ON HISTORY TEACHING IN EUROPE

Rules of Procedure of the Scientific Advisory Council

(Adopted by the Scientific Advisory Council on 13 July 2021)

The Scientific Advisory Council of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe (hereinafter referred to as “the Observatory”);

Having regard to Resolution CM/Res(2020)34 establishing the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Observatory on History Teaching in Europe, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 12 November 2020 at the 1388th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies;

Adopts the following Rules of Procedure:

Article 1 – Composition of the Scientific Advisory Council

1. The Scientific Advisory Council shall be composed of up to 15 members, who shall be elected in their individual capacity by the Governing Board. The elected members do not represent any government or institution and shall undertake to act independently of any external influence.
2. The members of the Scientific Advisory Council represent only their own expert opinions and shall therefore not delegate their responsibilities to another member or to a third person.
3. The chair of the Governing Board, or a member of the Bureau of the Governing Board shall be invited to attend the meetings of the Scientific Advisory Council, without the right to vote.
4. If a member steps down from their position on the Scientific Advisory Council, a candidate shall be selected from the reserve list by the Governing Board as a replacement.
5. If a member is consistently absent from meetings of the Scientific Advisory Council without notice, or unavailable for communication with the Observatory, the matter may be brought to the Governing Board. If the Governing Board decides to remove a member from the Scientific Advisory Council, it shall select a candidate from the reserve list as a replacement.

Article 2 – Chairmanship and Vice-chairmanship

1. The members of the Scientific Advisory Council shall elect its chair and vice-chair from among the members who have put themselves forward as candidates for these roles. The duration of the mandate of the chair and vice-chair shall coincide with the duration of the term of office of their membership on the Scientific Advisory Council, which shall be limited to two years. If the mandate of the chair and the vice-chair as members of the Scientific Advisory Council is renewed for a further two-year period, they shall also be re-eligible as chair or vice-chair.



2. Candidates with the most votes cast shall be elected. If only one member puts forward his/her candidacy, this candidate shall be declared elected by acclamation, unless a member of the Scientific Advisory Council requests a written vote.
3. The chair shall conduct proceedings and draw conclusions whenever (s)he considers it necessary and may call to order any speaker who fails to keep to the subject under discussion. The chair shall retain the right to speak and to vote in his/her capacity as a member of the Scientific Advisory Council.
4. Whenever the chair is absent or is otherwise unable to preside over the meeting, the vice-chair shall act as a replacement chair. If the vice-chair is absent, the chair or vice-chair shall suggest another member of the Scientific Advisory Council to preside over the meeting in question. If the vice-chair or another member chairs the meeting, they shall retain their right to vote. If the chair or vice-chair resigns before their mandate expires, the members of the Scientific Advisory Council shall elect a new chair or vice-chair for the duration of the remaining term.
5. The Secretariat shall issue a call for candidacy for the roles of chair and the vice-chair one month in advance of the election. To be considered, candidatures shall need to be sent to the Secretariat at least 15 days before the election. Candidatures received after the deadline will not be considered. The candidatures will be forwarded to all members of the Scientific Advisory Council. The application shall include submission of a written communication explaining the reason for standing and for which position.

Article 3 – Convocation, agenda, and documentation

1. The meetings of the Scientific Advisory Council shall be convened by written communication addressed by the Secretariat to the members and other invited participants, at least 30 days in advance.
2. The Secretariat shall prepare the draft agenda for each meeting in consultation with the chairperson and append it to the convocation.
3. The agenda shall be adopted at the beginning of each meeting.
4. The Secretariat is in charge of preparing all the documents relevant to the meeting and shall make them available, as a general rule, at least 15 days in advance of the meeting. The members of the Scientific Advisory Council can also distribute relevant documents to support or illustrate their views during the meeting.
5. All meeting documents shall be considered as restricted under the terms of Article 10 – Confidentiality of the present Rules, and access shall only be reserved for the participants of the meetings. Apart from opinions and recommendations prepared for the Governing Board, the Scientific Advisory Council will decide which meeting documents it wants to share with the Governing Board.

Article 4 – Meetings

1. At least one meeting of the Scientific Advisory Council shall be held per year. Further meetings may be convened by the Governing Board, either on its own initiative, or at the request of the Scientific Advisory Council.
2. As a general rule the meetings shall be held in the Council of Europe premises unless the members decide otherwise. Meetings may be held by videoconference in their entirety or in part.
3. Requests for postponement of meetings must reach the Secretariat at least two weeks before the date previously set.

4. Unless the Scientific Advisory Council decides otherwise, its meetings shall not be public.
5. Travel and subsistence expenses incurred by the participation of the members in the meetings of the Scientific Advisory Council shall be borne by the Council of Europe, in line with its financial regulations.

Article 5 – Quorum

1. The quorum is only required to be reached for the purpose of a decision by the Scientific Advisory Council on the modification of its own Rules of Procedure.
2. The quorum is only reached when more than half of the members of the Scientific Advisory Council are present at the meeting.

Article 6 – Languages

1. The working languages of the Scientific Advisory Council shall be the official languages of the Council of Europe, English, and French.
2. Any member may, however, use a language other than a working language, in which case they shall themselves provide for interpretation into one of the working languages.
3. Any documents to be considered by the Scientific Advisory Council that is submitted in a language other than one of the working languages shall be addressed to the Secretariat with a translation into one of the working languages.

Article 7 – Voting

1. Opinions and recommendations shall be adopted by consensus unless one or more members of the Scientific Advisory Council request a vote. If a vote is successfully requested, the decision shall be made by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, with each member having one vote.
2. Votes on opinions and recommendations will take place by the showing of hands unless the chairperson, considering the wishes of the members present, decides that votes will take place by secret ballot.
3. Procedural matters shall be settled by a simple majority of the votes cast. This vote shall be conducted by the showing of hands.
4. In meetings held by videoconference, the members shall vote by electronic means.
5. For the purpose of these Rules, “votes cast” shall mean the votes of members cast for or against. Members who abstain shall be deemed not to have cast a vote. Blank and invalid votes shall not be counted as votes cast.

Article 8 – Written procedure

1. The Scientific Advisory Council also have the possibility to be consulted by electronic means between the meetings.
2. Opinions, recommendations and procedural decisions may also be adopted in writing in between the meetings accordingly.



Article 9 – Meeting reports

1. The Secretariat shall provide a draft report after each meeting, which shall include the decisions taken during the meeting.
2. The opinions and recommendations adopted by the Scientific Advisory Council shall be reported to the Governing Board by the Secretariat on behalf of the Scientific Advisory Council.
3. A draft meeting report shall be considered adopted two weeks after its circulation, provided no objection has been submitted by any member within that period.

Article 10 – Confidentiality

1. Members of the Scientific Advisory Council shall not divulge to third parties information acquired as a result of their participation in the Scientific Advisory Council if this information is identified by the Observatory as “restricted or confidential”. They shall also note the confidential nature of the opinions expressed by the members of the Scientific Advisory Council during discussions in meetings or provided in written form.
2. Members of the Scientific Advisory Council shall be required, even after their duties have ceased, not to disclose information of the kind covered by the obligation of professional secrecy.
3. Members are encouraged to promote the visibility of the Observatory using information that has been identified as public.

Article 11 – Reputational Harm

1. Members of the Scientific Advisory Council shall agree to refrain from action that is intended to cause reputational harm to the Observatory or the other members of the Scientific Advisory Council.

Article 12 – Accompanying Scientific Guidance

1. The Scientific Advisory Council shall provide scientific guidance as a collegiate body. However, this guidance can be based on the preparatory work of individual members or of sub-groups of members of the Scientific Advisory Council who on the basis of their particular expertise have been designated “rapporteur” or “rapporteurs” by the plenary. They shall report on their activities to the rest of the Scientific Advisory Council.
2. Accompanying scientific guidance can be provided throughout the Observatory’s programme implementation and can take various formats, including contacts with the Secretariat when carrying out their work on the Observatory programme or with the expert groups commissioned for the preparation of the reports.

Article 13 – Participation in Additional Related Activities

1. Members of the Scientific Advisory Council may be invited by the Governing Board or through the Secretariat to participate in activities related to the Observatory apart from the meetings of the Scientific Advisory Council. This might entail attendance at events related to the Observatory or further research activities related to the subjects covered by the Observatory.



2. Members may be remunerated for any work done for related activities for the Observatory in line with the financial regulations of the Council of Europe. If travel and subsistence expenses are incurred by the participation of members of the Scientific Advisory Council in the aforementioned related events they shall be borne by the Council of Europe if they are not covered by the inviting organisation.

Article 14 – Amendments

1. These Rules of Procedure may be amended at any meeting by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast.
2. The Secretariat also have the right to propose amendments to these Rules of Procedure to the Scientific Advisory Council.
3. Amendments shall take effect on the day after their adoption.