



COUNCIL OF EUROPE    CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 8 March 2005

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**EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW**  
**(VENICE COMMISSION)**

**with the assistance of  
THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

**SECOND EUROPEAN CONFERENCE  
OF ELECTORAL MANAGEMENT BODIES**  
**Strasbourg, 10 – 11 February 2005**  
**Council of Europe, Main Building, Room 8 (2<sup>nd</sup> floor)**

**PROGRAMME**

**THURSDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2005****9.00 – 9.30 Registration of participants****9.30 – 13.00 First session: Electoral management systems****Chair: Mr Hjörtur TORFASON**Former Judge, Supreme Court of Iceland,  
Vice-Chairman of the Council for Democratic Elections,  
Member of the Venice Commission

- Opening of the Conference
  - o Welcome address by Mr Gianni BUQUICCHIO, Secretary of the Venice Commission
- Presentations concerning “*Electoral management bodies of Ireland and Portugal*” by:
  - o Mr Gabriel O’DUFFY, Assistant Head of Unit, Franchise Section, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Custom House, Ireland
  - o Mr Domingos MAGALHAES, Director of Services, Technical Secretariat for Electoral Processes, (Secretariado Técnico dos Assuntos para o Processo Eleitoral - STAPE), Portugal
- Questions and discussion

**11.00 – 11.15 Coffee break**

“*The Council for Democratic Elections and its activities in the electoral field*”, by Mr Peter PACZOLAY, Deputy Head, Office of the President of the Republic of Hungary, Member of the Council for Democratic Elections

- Questions and discussion
- Presentation on “*Voter Turnout with special regard to the first time voters, the main topic of the ACEEEO annual Conference (Tirana, 9-11 September 2004)*”, by Mr Mate RADICS, Senior Project Manager, Association of Central and Eastern European Electoral Offices (ACEEEO)

**13.00 – 14.30 Lunch****14.30 – 17.30 Second session: Turnout****Chair: Mr Zenonas VAIGAUSKAS**

Chairman, Central Electoral Committee of the Republic of Lithuania

“*Tackling the problem of voter abstention – the facilitation/mobilisation framework and some empirical evidence*”, by Professor Richard SINNOTT, Department of Politics and Institute for the Study of Social Change, University College Dublin, Ireland

- Questions and discussion

*“Results of the study on Voter Turnout in Europe conducted by IDEA”, by Ms Maria GRATSCHEW, Assistant Programme Officer, Voter Turnout Project, Election Processes, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)*

**16.00 – 16.15 Coffee break**

*“E-voting and its impact on voter turnout in Switzerland”, by Mrs Nadja BRAUN, Legal Adviser, Political Rights Section, Federal Chancellery, Switzerland*

- Discussion on different aspects which have an impact on turnout

**17.00 – 17.30 Conclusions of the first day**

**18.30 Reception hosted by the « Préfecture de la Région Alsace et Bas-Rhin », Hôtel du Préfet, Place du Petit Broglie, Strasbourg**

**FRIDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2005**

**9:30 – 13:00 Third session: Absentee voting**  
**Chair: Mr André KVAKKESTAD**  
Member of the Parliament, Norway;  
Member of the Council for Democratic Elections

- Presentations on absentee voting (with different techniques for absentee voting):
  - o *“Austria’s remote voting – status and room for improvement”, by Mr Thomas M. BUCHSBAUM, Minister plenipotentiary, Head of Division IV 3, Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Austria*
  - o *“Compulsory voting and absentee voting in Belgium”, by Mr Stephan De MUL, Advisor, General Direction of Institutions and Population, Federal Public Service of Home Affairs, Belgium*
- Questions and discussion

**11.00 – 11.15 Coffee break**

- o *“The Swedish absentee voting system”, by Ms Kristina LEMON, Senior Administrative Officer, Election Authority, Sweden*
- *“The results of a comparative study on voting abroad”, by Mr. Carlos NAVARRO FIERRO, Director of Electoral Studies and International Affairs Unit, Federal Electoral Institute (Instituto Federal Electoral - IFE), Mexico*
- Questions and discussion

**13.00 – 14.30 Lunch**

**14.30 – 17.00 Fourth session:  
Chair:**

**Co-operation between Electoral Management Bodies  
Mr Yannick BLANC**

General Direction of Administration, Direction of Territorial Administration and Political Affairs, Ministry of Interior, of the Interior Security and Local Liberties, Paris

- *“Regional electoral associations”*, by Ms Nicola SCHMIDT, Programme Officer Europe, International Foundation of Electoral Systems (IFES Ltd), London
- *“Presentation of the Venice Commission’s “Vota” database”*, by Mr Pierre GARRONE, Head of Division, Elections and Referendums Division, Secretariat of the Venice Commission
- Questions and discussion

**16.00 – 16.15 Coffee break**

- Plans for the future, next steps
- Conclusions of the Conference