



Bucharest, 13 April 2016

CDL-EL(2016)002syn
Or. Engl.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW
(VENICE COMMISSION)

in co-operation with

THE PERMANENT ELECTORAL AUTHORITY OF ROMANIA

1ST SCIENTIFIC “ELECTORAL EXPERT” DEBATES:

**ELECTORAL LAW AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES:
LEGAL CHALLENGES**

Tuesday and Wednesday, 12-13 April 2016

**Amphitheatre, Central University Library
Bucharest**

SYNOPSIS

On 12-13 April 2016, the Venice Commission organised, in co-operation with the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania, the 1st Scientific "Electoral Expert" debates on "Electoral Law and New Technologies: Legal Challenges".

New technologies in the electoral field are not limited to electronic voting, but concern the whole electoral process, from registration of voters to the transmission of results.

The debates, which brought together representatives of more than 30 European and Latin American countries, focused on the implications of constitutional and international law principles in the field. Such implications are not limited to the application of the fundamental principles of electoral law (universal, equal, free, secret and direct suffrage, stability of electoral law). They also include more general aspects of constitutional law such as legality, the separation of powers, federalism, as well as access to justice, proportionality and transparency.

The reports addressed these issues from a comparative point of view, as well through the analysis of national experiences of a number of countries, such as Austria, Estonia, Germany, Romania and Switzerland, and even Brazil.

The conference was an opportunity to bring together not only practitioners of electoral law - who meet for example in the European Conference of Electoral Management Bodies yearly organised by the Venice Commission – but mainly academics, enabling them to learn from each other's experiences.

The conference observed that, while the use of new technologies throughout the electoral process is inescapable, the development of electronic voting has come to a halt, since full trust is not yet ensured. The focus is now more on voter registration, campaign spending, avoidance of the misuse of administrative resources, or electronic petitions.

The reports delivered at this occasion will appear in the "Electoral Expert" review published by the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania, the only review dedicated to electoral law in Europe.

The Scientific "Electoral Expert" Debates should take place in the future every two years and be regularly followed by a publication in the "Electoral Expert" review.