



Strasbourg, 24 October 2022

**CDL-EL(2022)003**

Or. Engl.

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

**REVISED INTERNAL RULES OF PROCEDURE  
OF THE COUNCIL FOR DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS**

**Adopted by the Council for Democratic Elections  
at its 74<sup>th</sup> meeting (Venice, 20 October 2022)**

Having regard to Resolution 1264 (2001) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Having regard to the decision to create the Council for Democratic Elections

Having regard to Resolution 1320 (2003) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

Having regard to the Internal Rules of Procedure of 11 March 2004

The Council for Democratic Elections

Adopts the following revised Internal Rules of Procedure:

## **INTERNAL RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE COUNCIL FOR DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS**

### **Article 1**

#### *Members*

The Council for Democratic Elections is made up of 9 members and 9 substitutes, as follows:

- 4 members and 4 substitutes appointed by the Venice Commission;
- 3 members and 3 substitutes appointed by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe;
- 2 members and 2 substitutes appointed by the Congress of Local and Regional authorities of the Council of Europe, representing both Chambers.

### **Article 2**

#### *Term of office*

1. Each institution decides on the duration of the term of office of the CDE members it appoints and informs the Secretariat of the CDE.
2. Each institution which appoints a member shall inform the Secretariat of his or her name, address and working languages. Not later than 8 weeks before the expiry of the term of office, the Secretary of the CDE shall invite the institution concerned to proceed with the appointments for the new term.
3. The term of office of a member shall expire:
  - a. at the end of the regular term established by each institution for its members, it being understood that he or she may continue to exercise his or her functions until the appointment of the new member;
  - b. when a member is no longer a member of the institution that appointed him or her;
  - c. on the day a letter of resignation signed by the member is received by the Secretariat.

### **Article 3**

#### *Substitutes*

1. The provisions of these rules of procedure are applied *mutatis mutandis* to the substitutes.
2. The term of office of a substitute shall coincide with the term of office of the member he or she replaces. If the term of office of the member ends for the reasons set forth in Article 2.3.b) or c), the substitute shall exercise the functions of the member until the appointment of the new member.

### **Article 4**

#### *President and Vice-Presidents of the CDE*

1. The Presidency of the Council for Democratic Elections includes a President and two Vice-Presidents. The Presidency always includes a representative of the Venice Commission, a representative of the Parliamentary Assembly and a representative of the Congress. In the spirit of the tri-partite composition of the CDE, a rotation of the Presidency between the three institutions should be aimed at.
2. The President and the Vice-Presidents are elected for a term of two years by the members of the CDE by a relative majority of votes. Candidates to the Presidency may be nominated by the Venice Commission, the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress.
3. Nobody can serve more than two full consecutive terms as President or Vice-President. An outgoing President can be elected as Vice-President, and vice versa.
4. If the term of office of a member of the Presidency expires according to the provisions of Article 2 (3) of the present rules, or if he or she resigns, the CDE is invited to elect amongst the members from the same institution a new member of the Presidency up to the end of his or her predecessor's term.
5. The same institution cannot hold the functions of the President for more than two consecutive mandates.
6. Whenever the President is absent or stands down, he or she shall be replaced by the Vice-President with the highest seniority in the CDE until a new President is elected by the CDE.

### **Article 5**

#### *Observers*

1. The CDE may decide to invite international organisations and other international bodies to take part in its work as observers.
2. An observer has no right to vote.
3. An observer may make oral or written statements on the subjects being discussed.
4. Institutions invited to nominate an observer shall inform the Secretariat of the CDE of the name, address and working languages of their representative.

## **Article 6**

### *Meetings of the CDE*

1. Unless otherwise decided, the CDE shall hold its meetings on the day preceding the plenary session of the Venice Commission. Members, substitute members, their respective secretariat and observers mentioned in Article 5 may attend the meetings of the CDE.
2. Members of the Venice Commission, the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities who are not members or substitute members of the CDE may attend its meetings if they are rapporteurs for a document submitted to the CDE or with the agreement of the President of the CDE.
3. Meetings shall be *in camera* unless the CDE decides otherwise. The President may invite experts to take part in the discussion of a document.
4. The CDE appoints rapporteurs on questions submitted to its attention. Members, substitute members, observers and external experts can be Rapporteurs of the CDE.

## **Article 7**

### *Convocation*

After consultation with the President, the Secretary shall convene the meeting of the CDE by letter addressed to the members, substitute members, and observers.

## **Article 8**

### *Secretariat*

The Secretariat of the Venice Commission acts as the Secretariat of the CDE. The Secretary of the Venice Commission appoints the Secretary of the Council for Democratic Elections.

## **Article 9**

### *Agenda*

The agenda shall be adopted at the beginning of each meeting on the basis of a draft prepared by the Secretariat taking into account possible proposals by members. The agenda shall be annexed to the letters of convocation.

## **Article 10**

### *Documents*

1. The Secretariat is in charge of preparing and circulating all the documents intended to be examined by the CDE.

2. The documents submitted for approval by the CDE shall be sent beforehand to the members, substitute members and observers for written comments; written comments shall be examined on a priority basis during the meeting.

3. After their approval by the CDE, the opinions and reports are submitted to the Venice Commission for adoption at its Plenary Session.

### **Article 11**

#### *Languages*

The working languages of the CDE shall be English and French.

### **Article 12**

#### *Quorum*

There shall be a quorum if 5 members and/or substitutes are present (including at least one representative from the Venice Commission, the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe).

### **Article 13**

#### *Voting*

1. Each member shall have one vote. If a member cannot attend a meeting of the CDE he or she informs the Secretariat indicating which substitute will represent him/her at the meeting and have the right to vote.

2. The CDE shall adopt its decisions by a majority of the members present at the meeting.

3. Each member or substitute member may request that his or her opinion be recorded in the meeting report.

### **Article 14**

#### *Amendments*

Amendments to these Rules shall be adopted by a two-thirds majority of the members present at the meeting, in full respect of Article 13 of the present rules.

### **Article 15**

#### *Entry into force*

The present revised rules of procedure will enter into force on 1 October 2023.