



Recommendation 1595 (2003)¹

Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly notes that, over the last decade, the Council of Europe has developed numerous activities relating to the organisation and observation of elections, gaining as a result widely-acknowledged international expertise in this field.
2. The Assembly refers to its [Resolution 1264 \(2001\)](#) and 1320 (2003) in which it called on the Council of Europe to reaffirm its pioneering role in codifying election rules by inviting the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) to set up a working group to devise a code of good practice in electoral matters.
3. The Assembly also recalls that, in its [Recommendation 1578 \(2002\)](#), it urged the Council of Europe to continue and step up its activities relating to the harmonisation of election rules to meet the new challenges facing Europe.
4. The Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters is of great importance, as it sets out the underlying principles of European electoral systems and stipulates the conditions for their application.
5. The Assembly considers that, used as a reference document for member states, the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters would reinforce the credibility of the electoral observation and monitoring activities conducted by the Council of Europe.
6. The Assembly takes note of the preliminary draft convention recently drawn up by the Association of Central and Eastern European Election Officials (ACEEEO), which proposes to create a legal basis for bringing electoral legislation and practice into line with international standards.
7. The Assembly therefore recommends that the Committee of Ministers:
 - 7.1. transform the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters into a European convention, taking account, where appropriate, of the draft convention of the ACEEEO and the work of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (Odhr) of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE);
 - 7.2. with a view to preparing a legal instrument, agree to set up a group of experts in which the Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe and the Venice Commission would be represented as observers.

1. Assembly debate on 30 January 2003 (7th Sitting) (see [Doc. 9682](#), report of the Political Affairs Committee, rapporteur: Mr Clerfayt). Text adopted by the Assembly on 30 January 2003 (7th Sitting).

