Main reference documents of the Venice Commission

The Council of Europe is the continent’s leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.
I. FUNCTIONING OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Constitution
- Protection of children’s rights: international standards and domestic institutions
- Role of rule
- Stocktaking on the notion of “good governance” and “good administration”
- Constitutional provisions on amendments of the constitution
- Constitutional referendum
- Constitutional implications of the ratification of the statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC)

State formation
- Settlement of ethno-political conflicts
- Self-determination and secession in constitutional law
- Consequences of state succession on citizenship

Federalism
- Federated and regional entities and international treaties
- Federal and regional state

Parliament
- Exclusion of offenders from parliament
- Federal and regional state

Executive
- Role of the second chamber
- Right of legislative initiative
- Role of the opposition in a democratic Parliament
- Scope and lifting of parliamentary immunities
- Constitutional implications of the ratification of the statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC)
- Role of the International Criminal Court (ICC)

Judiciary
- Implementation of international human rights treaties
- Role of the judicial system – Part I (judges)
- Independence of the judicial system – Part II (the prosecution service)
- Judicial appointments
- Remedies to excessive length of proceedings
- Execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights

Constitutional justice
- Individual access to constitutional justice
- Composition of constitutional courts
- Execution of constitutional court decisions

II. PROTECTION OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

Security, terrorism and human rights
- Democratic oversight of the security services – update of the 2007 report - and report on democratic oversight of signals intelligence agencies
- Counter-terrorism measures and human rights
- Private military and security firms and erosion of the state monopoly on the use of force
- Civilian command authority over armed forces
- Video-surveillance in public places
- Democratic oversight of the security sector in member states
- International legal obligations in respect of secret detention facilities and interstate transport of prisoners
- Human rights in emergency situations
- Possible revision of the Geneva Conventions

Fundamental freedoms
- Guidelines on the legal personality of religious or belief communities
- Guidelines on freedom of association
- Guidelines on freedom of assembly
- Blasphemy, religious insults and incitement to religious hatred

Minority rights
- Dual voting for persons belonging to national minorities
- Preferential treatment of kin-minorities by their kin-state
- Dual voting for persons belonging to national minorities
- Thresholds and other features of electoral systems which bar parties from access to parliament – Report (II)
- Right of participation from prison
- Right of participation from prison
- Possibility to substitute a candidate in an electoral list

Right to vote
- Out-of-country voting
- Abolition of restrictions on the right to vote in general elections
- Remote voting and electronic voting – Compatibility with the standards of the Council of Europe

Electoral process
- Synthesis documents
- Misuse of administrative resources during electoral processes
- Electoral law and electoral administration in Europe – Synthesis study on recurrent challenges and problematic issues
- Measures to improve the democratic nature of elections in Council of Europe member states
- Funding of electoral campaigns
- Opinion on the need for a code of good practice
- Impact of electoral systems on women’s representation in politics
- Interference of foreign or other factors in elections
- Measures to improve the democratic nature of elections in Council of Europe member states
- Proportional Electoral Systems: the Allocation of Seats inside the lists (opened lists)
- Effects and other features of electoral systems which bar parties from access to parliament – Comparative report

III. ELECTIONS, REFERENDUMS AND POLITICAL PARTIES

Code of good practice in electoral matters and its interpretative declarations
- Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters
- Stability of the electoral law – Interpretative declaration
- Women’s participation in elections – Interpretative declaration
- Participation of persons with disabilities in elections – Interpretative declaration

Electoral systems
- Proportional Electoral Systems: the Allocation of Seats inside the lists (opened lists)
- Effects and other features of electoral systems which bar parties from access to parliament – Report (III)
- Role of political parties in election campaigns
- Electoral rules and affirmative action for national minorities’ participation in decision-making process in general elections
- Funding of electoral campaigns
- Opinion on the need for a code of good practice
- Impact of electoral systems on women’s representation in politics
- Interference of foreign or other factors in elections
- Measures to improve the democratic nature of elections in Council of Europe member states
- Proportional Electoral Systems: the Allocation of Seats inside the lists (opened lists)
- Effects and other features of electoral systems which bar parties from access to parliament – Comparative report

Women
- Impact of electoral systems on women’s representation in politics
- Declaration on women’s participation in elections
- National minorities
- Dual voting for persons belonging to national minorities
- Electoral rules and interpretative declarations
- Electoral rules and affirmative action for national minorities’ participation in decision-making process in European countries
- Electoral law and national minorities

Synthesis documents
- Misuse of administrative resources during electoral processes
- Electoral law and electoral administration in Europe – Synthesis study on recurrent challenges and problematic issues
- Measures to improve the democratic nature of elections in Council of Europe member states
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