EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR JUSTICE AND CONSUMERS

Directorate C – Rule of Law, Fundamental Rights and Democracy
Unit C.4 – Democracy, Union citizenship and Anti-corruption

Minutes
Meeting of the European Cooperation Network on Elections
5 June 2026 CET
Online

On 5 June 2026, the European Cooperation Network on Elections (ECNE) held its 35th plenary meeting online.

Updates from the Commission

The Commission provided an update on the implementation of the different work strands under the European Democracy Shield. This included an overview of the most recent developments and exchanges of the ECNE working groups on the topics of safety in politics, AI in elections, election integrity and political campaigning, complemented by an update on recent efforts to support the implementation of the Political Advertising Regulation.

Exchange of information and best practice on elections

Member States exchanged on recent and upcoming elections, identifying shared challenges and best practices, on threats such as AI-driven disinformation and foreign interference.

SE reported that it launched a large-scale campaign promoting elections, in view of its local and national elections to be held simultaneously on 13 September 2026.

MT shared its experience of its national elections of 30 May and outlined the features of its electoral system, stressing that the MT Electoral Commission remains in permanent readiness for snap elections. Parliamentary elections held on 30 May recorded a turnout of 87%, representing an increase of 2% compared with 2022, despite voting not being compulsory. **MT** also described its gender corrective mechanism, under which up to 12 additional seats may be allocated to the under-represented sex where parliamentary representation falls below 40%, with these seats divided equally between the majority and minority parties.

BG emphasised the added value of EU-level mechanisms and European Democracy Shield tools in addressing foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI) and disinformation, noting that these instruments complement national efforts, in particular through rapid information exchange. **BG** explained that its campaign had prioritised media

literacy and engagement with civil society, while interinstitutional coordination had been used to address electoral violations. It underlined the importance of sharing best practices among Member States in order to respond to emerging threats, including FIMI, hybrid risks and disinformation.

HU reported a record voter turnout of nearly 80% in its parliamentary elections of 12 April. **HU** highlighted the voter information and transparency measures put in place, including video guides, printed booklets, among them an English-language version for international observers, and training materials. In addition, **HU** developed an online tool allowing citizens to verify whether their personal data had been used to support candidate nominations, as a safeguard against fraudulent signatures. **HU** further presented its new online electoral register system, which processed 85% of voter registration requests digitally. It noted that envelopes were used only exceptionally for overseas voters and that these arrangements accelerated the proclamation of results by 15 to 20 minutes.

In the run up to its municipal elections on 18 March, **NL** organised a Member States' expert exchange. **NL** indicated having identified signs of coordinated inauthentic behaviour originating from abroad and stated that it is working on legislation aiming to protect against FIMI. In addition, **NL** observed an increase in political intimidation.

SI provided an overview of its parliamentary elections of 2 March, noting high turnout comparable to previous parliamentary elections. **SI** introduced new rules on candidate protection to address online threats, risks linked to artificial intelligence and cybersecurity concerns. It also carried out disinformation awareness campaigns, training sessions for government officials and round tables. **SI** observed increased use of public billboards and social media advertising during the campaign. **SI's** postal voting is strictly limited to defined categories, including hospitals, prisons and care homes, and requires prior registration**.** Postal ballots are returned using two separate signed envelopes, one for the voting card and one for the ballot itself.

PT presented its presidential elections of 18 January and 8 February as an important test of electoral resilience, being the first two-round presidential contest since 1986. Severe weather linked to Storm Kristin, affected about 80 municipalities and required last-minute operational adjustments as well as local postponements of voting. Another issue was the rise of AI-driven disinformation, mainly directed at opponents or used to simulate voting trends without the necessary rigour of opinion polls.

BE suggested that future meetings should include an exchange of best practice on crisis preparedness in elections.

Rules and standards relevant to electoral processes

The Commission delivered several presentations on rules and standards relevant to electoral processes, with a focus on election dispute resolution, notably relevant international standards and EU law, the voting rights of mobile EU citizens in municipal elections and the new Directive on combatting corruption.