

Q&A on the functioning of the Civil Dialogue Groups

Please find some additional information below.

1. Chair/vice-chairpersons

Election of the chairperson and vice-chairs at the first meeting of each CDG; The Vice-chairs shall be chosen among other organizations than the one to which the chair belongs; and the two vice-chair persons shall originate from two different organizations. All the CDGs have to elect a new chairmanship, i.e. the election of the chair and the vice-chairs (without taking into account any previously held positions in the Advisory groups). Also the chairmanship of each CDGs is invited to draft a new strategic agenda, in particular those groups with several sectors (e.g. arable crops).

There will be only one chairperson (and 2 vice-chairpersons) for each CDG which means that for the CDGs (HOS, AC, and A.P.) covering different sectors, there will be only 1 board.

Election in the multi-sectorial CDGs:

The chairperson and the 2 vice-chairpersons to be elected at the first meeting of:

- CDG Arable crop: on 30 September;
- CDG Horticulture, olives and spirits: fruit and vegetable on 1 October;
- CDG Animal products: sheep goat & beekeeping on 8 October;
- Etc.

General comments on the chair/vice-chairs:

- Prior coordination among the member organizations ahead of the first meeting will be the key to seek for a wide representation of the chair/vice-chairs not only from different interest groups (producers, industry, trade, environmentalists), but also from the various sectors concerned by the CDG (e.g. horticulture, olives and spirits). However, the Decision's requirement is different organizations.
- The chairperson and the two vice-chairpersons shall serve a term of one year, which shall be renewable. However, the chairperson can only serve for two consecutive terms.
- The candidates for the chair/vice-chairs do not have to be physically present at the election (it is desirable). The chair does not need to be an expert in all sectors covered by a CDG, he needs to efficiently lead the meeting, to empower the conversation and to steer a good and well balanced debate between the different NGOs and sectors.
- Vice-chairs have a more important role in the CDG system. The chairperson can delegate its role to one of the vice-chairs (e.g. in case the chair is not available or if one of the vice-chairs is more competent to chair a meeting on a specific topic).

2. Topics to be addressed in each CDG

A number of CDGs (arable crops, animal products, horticulture, olives and spirits) cover a wide range of subjects. NGOs will have to allocate its seats to experts concerned by all the topics addressed during the day.. It is not possible to change experts during the course of a whole day meeting – even though no reimbursement is claimed. The experts are designated for the whole day. Therefore the NGOs will need to find themselves the most efficient way to allocate their seats.

- The strategic agenda is crucial for the CDGs in charge of several sectors. It ensures that all topics are discussed in the CDG in a balanced manner, regardless of the sector the chair belongs to.
- The timing of each item will be indicated in the timetable presented on screen at the beginning of each CDG so that the experts can attend the part of the meeting they are interested in. As an example, a meeting of the arable crop CDG will be organized along the following lines: items related to the markets of all arable crops will be on the agenda in the morning; discussions will focus on more specific sector issues in the afternoon.

3. Observers

The status of observers under the previous system was based on an administrative practice and will not be continued under the new system of CDGs since the 2013 Decision does not provide for a system of observers as long the former administrative practice.

4. Experts nominated in each CDG – Allocation of seats

Experts will be nominated by the member organizations for each meeting in accordance primarily with the agenda.

5. Documents/CIRCABC

Experts will not receive emails directly from CIRCABC with the documents (agenda, minutes, presentations, etc.) as it was the practice in the past. The NGOs will need to register to CIRCABC and only **the secretariat** of the member organizations mentioned in the Commission Decision will receive these emails in the future. NGOs shall find an appropriate way to forward this information to the experts under its remit and concerned by this information.

6. Forecast working groups

The reform does not impact these expert groups; their composition and way of working remain unchanged. The CDG will have to approve the terms of reference of the working group. The experts attending the working groups will have to be member of an NGO considered eligible and qualifying under the CDG system.

7. Rules of procedure and mission statements

The draft rules of procedure have been distributed for comments in the CDGs. These rules allow for better structuring of their work and are important in terms of clarifying the internal organization.

Each CDG has a mission statement defining its duties based on the Register of experts.