



T +33(0)388412560

[www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int)

[pressunit@coe.int](mailto:pressunit@coe.int)

Ref. DC 160(2015)

## **World Forum for Democracy (18-20 November 2015, Strasbourg)** **"Freedom vs. control: For a democratic response"**

Strasbourg, 06.11.2015 – How to maintain a balance between security and freedom in a democratic society under threat? Can democracies resist the escalation of fear and formulate responses based on civic responsibility and active citizenship? Can they deal with security risks without jeopardising individual rights and freedoms? These will be core questions at the next World Forum for Democracy organised by the Council of Europe from 18 to 20 November 2015 in Strasbourg with the support of the French Government, the Alsace Region and the City of Strasbourg.

This fourth event of its kind will gather some 1,500 participants – political leaders, militants from civil society, media representatives and young people – from 100 countries on **three themes**:

1. Surveillance – what is the right dose?
2. Building trust in diverse societies
3. Media responsibility in a context of terrorist threat.

The Secretary of State for European Affairs of France, Harlem Désir, will participate in the opening on Wednesday 18 November.

**Nineteen labs** intended to use concrete initiatives as an illustration of how these challenges can be taken up will help formulate a democratic response to the concerns discussed at the Forum.

On the occasion of the International Day for Children's Rights, the Council of Europe and the Themis association will bring together 45 classes of the region, totalling 1200 pupils (Friday 20 November, 2-4 pm). This **children's forum** will enable the children to contribute their ideas for improving the conventions in force in the field of protection for children and citizen participation; it will reward the children for the projects which they will have developed in anticipation of the event, and pick out the best of them.

### **Press contact:**

Estelle Steiner ([estelle.steiner@coe.int](mailto:estelle.steiner@coe.int)) Spokesperson/Press officer, tel. +33 3 88 41 33 35, mobile +33 6 08 46 01 57

\* \* \*

Note for Editors

### **Please note:**

- The [Pew Research Center](#) will present its new **report on public opinion around the world concerning democracy and civil liberties** (Wednesday 18 November, 2.15-3 pm).
- The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights ([FRA](#)) will present its **report on surveillance by intelligence services** (Wednesday 18 November, 2.15-3 pm).
- **"Freedom AND control: young people tell their story"** (Thursday 19 November, 11 am-12.30 pm and 2-3.30 pm), with the participation of a former Guantanamo prisoner, an unaccompanied underage migrant from Guinea, a former German neo-Nazi and a Russian human rights activist.
- The **Democracy Innovation Award** will be made by the Council of Europe to the most promising initiative among those discussed in the context of the ideas laboratories (Friday 20 November at the closure, 11.30 am-2.30 pm).
- The Council of Europe and the FRA will launch a Handbook of European Law on the Rights of the Child (Friday 20 November, 12.45-1.45 pm).

### **On the sidelines of the Forum:**

The City of Strasbourg and its partners will again offer the general public a score of events enabling its members to take part in the exercise. Debates, encounters, exhibitions, screenings, concerts and artistic performances will enliven the town from 16 to 21 November.

- The **Reporters without Frontiers Prize for freedom of the press** will be awarded on Tuesday 17 November at 7 pm (Odyssée cinema).
- The **Alsatian Prize for democratic commitment** will be presented on Thursday 19 November at 6 pm (Maison de la Région).

**Worth knowing:**

Further information and webcast: [forum-mondial-democratie.org](http://forum-mondial-democratie.org)

**Accreditation:** please complete the [on-line form](#)

Follow the Forum on the social networks: [www.facebook.com/WFDemocracy](https://www.facebook.com/WFDemocracy), @WFDemocracy (#CoE\_WFD).