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Wikimedia Movement Charter analysis for the CEE region

(Final Version June 10th 2024)



How to use this analysis

- These slides provide an analysis of each main chapter of the [final version of the movement charter](#) - the final version of the charter is a lot more vague in key points and can be read several different ways. Keep that in mind while reading this analysis.
- You can read each chapter of the draft first and then compare your notes and thoughts with what is mentioned here
- The points made in these slides will not be complete, but highlight the main issues from a CEE point of view - other aspects not mentioned here might be more important in your context
- You can use the comment function to make observations or ask questions :-)

Volunteers



“Volunteers” section

- “Volunteers are accountable for their contributions” - could for example imply some expected accountability when there is a toxic atmosphere in a Wikimedia project
- Unclear if the footnotes are part of the charter, but should be treated as such - they sometimes give statements a different meaning, like the meaning of an “open community” meaning that it is “open for review”
- “work together as a global community in a fair and unbiased manner” could mean stronger alignment on a global level to achieve this and require extra resources to do so, exerting more control on communities

“Volunteers” section (2)

- More focus on equal access and openness - depending on the compliance processes, responsibilities and resources of the Global Council, more attention will be put on this and communities will have to spend more time reporting
- Some of the listed responsibilities start with “should”, so aren’t actually responsibilities
- “The policies and guidelines of Wikimedia Movement communities should be easily accessible and enforceable.” - which for some projects would mean the duty to reduce the number of policies and guidelines, probably based on the “open review” mentioned earlier

“Movement Bodies”



“Movement Bodies” section

- New concept of “Care Responsibility” - being in some (yet to be defined) way responsible for the health of the community that the affiliate supports - part of compliance and the Wikimedia project review mentioned in “volunteers”?
- An “Independent Dispute Resolution function” will be put in place to resolve conflicts among movement bodies, so theoretically also conflicts between the Wikimedia Foundation and affiliates - until this function has been set up, the WMF is still responsible for resolving conflicts though
- The affiliate structure stays unchanged, solving none of the severe issues with this broken model in CEE

“Movement Bodies” section (2)

- Affiliates have to prove that they contribute to the diversity of their community
- “Upholding the Code of Conduct” - unclear which areas this actually applies to
- Fundraising efforts have to be coordinated with the wider movement, including the Wikimedia Foundation and the Global Council

Wikimedia Foundation



“Wikimedia Foundation” section

- Governance structures of the Wikimedia Foundation (WMF) stay the same
- The WMF is supposed to align its strategic direction with the Global Council
- The WMF is still mentioned as distributing resources, but at the direction of the Global Council
- The WMF has more of a supportive role now and less of a top-down decision-making role
- Many decision-making responsibilities move from the WMF to the Global Council, at least on paper - the text is vague enough to make it uncertain as to how and when this transition of power is supposed to happen

Global Council



“Global Council” section

- Can have between 25 and 100 members - the members “select” the Global Council Board - no mention of how long the terms of these members are
- Now defined as **a** (so not the only one) “collaborative and representative decision-making body” - which others exist is not mentioned
- Responsible for global strategy development and to “shape the future ... of the Wikimedia movement”
- Unclear if Global Council members are paid or unpaid members, considering the workload they will have to handle, or if this is done by Global Council staff

“Global Council” section (2)

- Commitment to certain demographics not dominating the Global Council and its decision-making, so there will most likely be quotas for certain regions if the Global Council wants to honour this commitment
- The Global Council defines itself, i.e. its own processes, structures, membership(!) and accountability, which could be bad for the transparency of the Global Council because it could close itself off
- Internal review of processes at least every 3 years (which would probably take 1 year of those 3 years to conduct)

“Global Council Board” (GCB)

- Can have between 5 and 20 members depending on the size of the Global Council
- Election processes similar to how the Board of Trustees is elected, with the same problems of being dominated by members from Europe and North America
- The relationship between the WMF Board of Trustees and the GCB is still not mentioned, but the GCB is assigned the decision-making role
- GCB can create committees, but each committee defines its own setup, which hasn't worked in the past when you look at examples like AffCom
- There are at least four committees for the four areas that the Global Council is responsible for (see next slide)

“Global Council Board” - functions

- “Strategic planning” - defining the long-term strategic direction of the movement. Affiliates are expected to follow this direction, level of participation depends on the Global Council Board
- “Support of Wikimedia Movement Organisations” - rather overseeing affiliates than supporting them, with conflict management and process simplification included (unclear if centralisation or decentralisation of processes is meant by that)

“Global Council Board” - functions (2)

- “Resource distribution” - manages the “funds of the Wikimedia Movement”, so also including the budget of the Wikimedia Foundation, unless the WMF is not part of the “Wikimedia Movement”. All fund distributions to affiliates will be determined by the Global Council Board
- “Technology advancement” - the GCB advises the WMF on the technological priorities based on the strategic direction.
- **Still no mention of what kind of resources the Global Council is entitled to** - although the Global Council Board now has the ability to define these resources themselves

The first Global Council

- Will consist of 25 members
 - 12 elected by “Wikimedia community”
 - 8 elected by Wikimedia affiliates, including all user groups
 - 1 appointed by the Wikimedia Foundation
 - 4 are appointed by the other 21 members after those have been determined
- Members elect/select 5 Global Council Board members
- Elections of these members will most likely follow existing processes, with all the same problems attached. The charter does not put any duties on the Global Council to design a framework that isn't dominated by one group

New
organisational
structure
(very
rudimentary)

