

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 25 November 2013

GEC (2013) RAP 2

**GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION
(GEC)**

4th meeting

Strasbourg, 13-15 November 2013

REPORT

I. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

The Chairperson opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. He appreciated the presence of high-ranking officials during this meeting and underlined the importance of the work of the Gender Equality Commission (GEC) in a context of transition and restructuring within the Council of Europe.

The Agenda was adopted by the GEC as set out in Appendix I to this report. The list of participants is attached at Appendix II.

II. Exchange of views with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe

The Secretary General, Mr Thorbjørn Jagland, recalled his commitment to promote the effective implementation of gender equality standards both within the Council of Europe and in the member states. Significant progress had been achieved since the launch of the Transversal Programme on Gender Equality in 2012. Results included the setting up and strengthening of the structures of the Transversal Programme, (in particular the establishment of the network of national focal points and the appointment and training of gender equality rapporteurs), the integration and implementation of a gender perspective in all areas of work of the Council, the support to the implementation of gender equality standards by the member states, as well as further developing co-operation with other international organisations. In respect of the latter, joint efforts to promote signature and ratification of the Istanbul Convention were highlighted as particularly successful. The adoption of the Gender Equality Strategy (2014-2017) by the Committee of Ministers on 6 November 2013 marked an important turning point in the Organisation's commitment to gender equality, mobilising all Council of Europe actors around a limited but important number of clear objectives and mobilising all Council. The Secretary General pointed out that the expertise and leadership of the Gender Equality Commission will be key to the implementation of the strategy and reiterated his commitment and support for its work and activities.

III. Address by the Minister of Social Security and Labour of Lithuania

The Ambassador of Lithuania to the Council of Europe presented, on behalf of the Minister of Social Security and Labour, the priorities and activities undertaken during the Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2013 in relation to gender equality. The main priority was the promotion of the effectiveness of institutional mechanisms and the implementation of gender equality policies, including gender mainstreaming and balanced participation at decision-making level. The Ambassador admitted that even though results have been achieved in closing gender gaps, progress has been slow and a lot remains to be done. He highlighted the complementarity of the activities of the European Union and the Council of Europe and recalled that co-operation is necessary to achieve concrete results towards substantial gender equality.

IV. Exchange of views with Gender Equality Rapporteurs (GERs)

The Gender Equality Rapporteurs (GERs) presented their work - challenges and achievements - over the past year within their own Committees, particularly in the fields of local and regional democracy, corruption and youth.

They also reported on the first introductory training on gender mainstreaming in which they had participated the previous day. They stressed the need to pursue capacity-building through training, in order to be able to fulfil their task and suggested that future activities should focus more on the substance of their work within their individual steering committees.

During the exchange that followed, the idea of twinning between GERs, GEC members and NFPs was discussed to facilitate exchange and regular flow of information, and bring a more tangible and comprehensive gender approach in the work of the various committees. There is a clear need for transversal co-operation especially for subjects having a wide scope and multiple dimensions. This can be achieved, among others, through mutual invitation of GERs to equality events and of GEC members to meetings of Steering Committees and conferences which they organise.

Following the discussions, the GEC agreed to:

- disseminate the training material developed for the 1st training to all GERs and the relevant Secretariat members;
- support the organisation of further tailor-made training for GERs in the coming years, along with general training for newcomers;
- attend meetings or conferences of other steering committees (for example, Conference organised by GRECO on gender and corruption, Prague, 13 December 2013);
- share and disseminate the documents on competences of NFPs and GEC members to GERs in order to facilitate the setting up of twinning;
- identify transversal subjects with a gender dimension taken up by other Committees, and involve GEC members to ensure synergies and co-operation.

V. Council of Europe transversal programme on gender equality

1. *Election of Chair and partial renewal of the GEC*

Partial renewal of the GEC is subject to the outcome of discussions and decisions at the level of the Committee of Ministers and is related to the setting up of a new steering committee (European Committee for Social Cohesion, Human Dignity and Equality (CDDECS))¹.

¹ Since the meeting of the GEC, the Committee of Ministers has adopted the Programme and Budget 2014-2015 and the Terms of Reference of Intergovernmental Structures including for the CDDECS. With regard to the GEC, those elected representatives – for whom travel and subsistence expenses are borne by the Council of Europe - will continue to do so until the first meeting of the CDDECS, to allow the latter to proceed with the designation of the new elected representatives.

In the discussions that ensued, GEC members expressed their satisfaction with the revised terms of reference (ToR) of the GEC which clarified some aspects such as the intergovernmental nature of the GEC and the right to participate and to vote belonging to each member state. The Chair recalled that the next review of the ToR will be in 2015 and expressed the hope, echoing other GEC members, that it will enable all member states to have a member in the Commission for whom travel and subsistence costs are borne by the Council of Europe. The restructuring could be seen as a window of opportunity, including the possibility for member states to appoint representatives with knowledge and expertise of issues related to gender equality for membership in the new steering committee.

Following the discussion, the GEC instructed the Secretariat to:

- keep members informed about developments and decisions at CM level regarding the future Steering Committee and decisions concerning the functioning of the GEC.

2. *Reform of the Council of Europe structures*

Ms Marja Ruotanen, Director of Justice and Human Dignity, presented the restructuring and its rationale. As from 1 January 2014, the Gender Equality and Human Dignity Department, including the GEC Secretariat, will be transferred to the Directorate General of Democracy to increase synergies and transversality with other equality and human dignity related issues.

The Director recalled that the 47 member states are full members of the GEC, even though there are only 16 members whose travel and subsistence costs are borne by the Council. The remaining 31 are fully engaged in the GEC through the National Focal Points (NFPs).

Following this presentation, GEC members underlined the need to be associated with the development of new structures and in particular when the new "*parent committee*" discusses and decides upon the designation of elected GEC representatives.

Following the discussions, the GEC:

- encouraged members to liaise with the competent authorities, in particular their respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs to ensure that future developments regarding rules of procedure for the GEC under its new parent committee (CDDECS) take into account information and contributions from the GEC;
- asked the Secretariat to keep the members informed about developments.

3. *Council of Europe Strategy on Gender Equality*

Ambassador Tatiana Parvu, the Thematic Co-ordinator on Equality and Trafficking, reported about the adoption of the Gender Equality Strategy by the Committee of Ministers on 6 November 2013 and the political support expressed by member states on this occasion. She underlined that the Committee of Ministers will review progress through the presentation by the Secretary General of an annual report on the implementation of the Strategy.

The Secretariat then presented the indicative table attached to the Strategy and highlighted the fact that it reflects input and contributions by several sectors of the Council of Europe. The Secretariat drew attention to the fact that the table is a “living” document and will be regularly updated to reflect developments throughout the different sectors inside the Organisation and in the member states.

Several GEC members underlined the importance of having specific actions following the adoption of the Strategy and stressed the need to have it translated into national languages. Comments were made in particular about Objective 1 of the Strategy on “Combating gender stereotypes and sexism”, suggesting the preparation of a campaign on social media instead of an awareness-raising manual. The Representative of Ireland drew attention to other activities of interest regarding this objective, in particular the World Radio Day on 13 February 2014 which will focus on women empowerment and gender mainstreaming in radio.

Following the discussions, the GEC agreed to:

- follow up and regularly update the table of activities attached to the Strategy;
- explore possibilities at national level, to have the Strategy translated into as many national languages as possible.

4. *Thematic priorities - Combating gender stereotypes and sexism*

4.1 **Achieving Gender Mainstreaming in all policies and measures**

- *Exchange of views with the Gender Equality Rapporteur of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)*

Ms Krisztina Gönter, Gender Equality Rapporteur *ad interim* from the EPAS presented the work of EPAS in relation to gender equality in sport, in particular the [Draft Recommendation on gender mainstreaming in sport](#) (EPAS(2013)36rev3). The text had been distributed to the GEC members prior to the meeting for their comments and advice. Isabel Romao, the Portuguese Representative, who has been involved as GEC representative in the drafting process, described more thoroughly the Recommendation, notably its three main components:

1. balanced participation at all levels;
2. equal access to sports resources and facilities; and overall on
3. the need to change the system and its structure (including change of language).

In the exchange of views that followed, GEC members welcomed the initiative of the sport sector of the Council of Europe to mainstream gender in their activities and norms. They put forward a number of proposals to revise the draft text. These included editing proposals on the language (terminology, avoid overlap, consistencies of gender equality and non-discrimination throughout the text), but also on the substance and the use of concepts in the draft (definitions, for example). GEC members stressed the need to strengthen the part on financial resources, by reinforcing the equal share of financial support of sport for girls and boys and suggested to include the dimension of [corporate responsibility for the sport movement](#).

The members agreed that, once adopted the recommendation should be made accessible through the preparation of a toolkit and the dissemination of good practices on women and sport that exist at national level (along the lines of the existing EPAS handbook).

Following the discussions, the GEC agreed to:

- submit written comments on the draft Recommendation on gender mainstreaming in sport to Isabel Romao and the Secretariat;
 - disseminate good practices on women and sport, in particular the [EPAS Handbook on gender equality](#);
 - send good practice initiatives to the Secretariat for the preparation of a toolkit.
- *Monitoring of the Recommendation on gender mainstreaming in education*

Mr Villano Qiriazzi, Head of the Division for Education Policy, informed the GEC about the outcome of the first round of monitoring of the Recommendation and future priorities of the division until 2015. He noted the high level of participation of member states (44) and shared the main conclusions of the first round:

- the reviewing of the legislative framework with a gender perspective has started in most countries;
- the concept of gender mainstreaming in education is not very well understood by all the actors in the educational system;
- the need for support in reforming of school curricula and programmes to include a gender perspective at all stages;
- the need for gender mainstreaming in teachers training, both initial and in service training;
- the lack of tools to monitor the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the education system in most member states (only one third of countries have set up monitoring bodies).

It is hoped that the adoption of the Gender Equality Strategy will help states to pursue their efforts in changing legislation and policies. States will need tools to properly implement this strategy, in particular through the exchange of good and innovative practices.

The Division for Education Policy will base its future priorities on three main lines:

1. the democratic competences and intercultural dialogue;
2. diversity and capacity-building;
3. participation and access to quality education.

All these dimensions include gender equality. Specific activities are foreseen on women in history teaching, as well as the training of teachers (Pestalozzi Programme).

Mr Bernard Wicht, the GER of the Steering Committee for Education Policy and Practice (CDPPE) reported on the introduction of a gender perspective into the work of his Committee. He underlined the challenges ahead, in particular keeping education high on the political agenda and combating worrying trends such as corruption in the educational systems, drop-out of boys, limited access of girls to the labour market and tackling inequality resulting from socio-economical differences in the education system across Europe.

In the discussion which followed, GEC members raised issues of concern from their own countries and gave ideas for the future NFP conference on education, notably on teacher training, drop-out of boys, access to labour market and career opportunities for girls, as well as combating bullying in schools (*see also under item VI below*).

Following the discussion, the GEC agreed to:

- take note of the analysis of the first round of monitoring of the Recommendation on gender mainstreaming in education;
 - disseminate the analysis as well as information from the education sector on future priorities to the relevant authorities at national level;
 - send to the Secretariat any material, information, projects, that could be used for the preparation of the NFP conference on combating stereotyping in and through education;
 - maintain contacts and exchange information with the Secretariat of the CDPPE on the dates and place of the NFP conference.
- *Trafficking in Human Beings - Exchange of views with the Executive Secretary of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA)*

Ms Petya Nestorova, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, gave an overview of the monitoring carried out by GRETA and the gender perspective of the Convention. The Convention indeed includes two perspectives of the concept of gender equality, on the one hand the principle of non-discrimination (in education and awareness-raising), and on the other hand specific policies

to empower women. For instance, Romania has adopted specific policies to increase access to the labour market of individuals at risk of prostitution.

Regarding the monitoring of the Convention, 23 country reports have been published and are available online. The monitoring results show that efforts need to be continued, and Ms Nesterova particularly emphasised the lack of measures regarding male victims. Some countries have also adopted/are adopting legislation criminalising the demand of prostitution.

During the debate that followed, GEC members insisted on the need to make a strong distinction between sexual and labour exploitation and discussed whether the prohibition of sexual services deterred trafficking networks. They stressed that European countries are failing with regard to preventing trafficking for sexual exploitation purposes considering the increase of the number of victims, the scarcity of cases brought before the courts and the number of prosecutions. They agreed that there is a need for co-ordination of protection mechanisms to combat trafficking at both national and international level. GEC members also underlined the benefit of sharing lessons learned by GRETA with regard to the future GREVIO.

Following the discussion, the GEC agreed to:

- disseminate the recently published [3rd General Report](#) on GRETA's activities;
- hold regular exchanges on developments related to the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings;
- promote the ratification of the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

4.2 Media and the Image of Women

The Secretariat reported on the positive feedback about the Conference which took place in Amsterdam. The momentum can be used to develop future activities, in particular as regards the implementation of the Committee of Ministers [Recommendation on gender equality and media](#).

The three main dimensions regarding [follow-up to the Amsterdam Conference](#), namely raising awareness on existing standards and on gender equality in/through the media, exchanging good practices and promoting the Council of Europe standards and policies at regional and international level also fall within the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy.

This presentation was followed by three interventions of Secretariat members from different sectors of the Council of Europe dealing with the media. Ms Onur Andreotti, from the Media Division, presented the Committee of Ministers Recommendation on gender equality and media which was adopted in July, and the recent [Belgrade Ministerial Conference](#) where gender dimension was taken into consideration in the adopted texts.

Ms Emmanuelle Machet, Secretary to the European Platform of Regulatory Authorities (EPRA) introduced the work of the Platform and underlined that gender equality has been an angle of analysis of a working group session on political communication. Pending a decision by its members during its forthcoming Board meeting, EPRA is considering the inclusion of gender equality on the agenda of its activities. She also referred to recent activities and reports in relation to gender equality conducted by the francophone Network of Media Regulators (REFRAM), the Mediterranean Regulatory Authorities Network (MNRA/RIRM) and the European Audiovisual Observatory.

Mr Reynald Blion, manager of the MEDIANE project: Media in Europe for Diversity Inclusiveness (2013-2014), presented the scope of the project co-funded by the European Union. Based on the outcome of the “Speak out discrimination” campaign and the [Media Against Racism in Sport](#) project, MEDIANE aims at targeting and working with media professionals (journalist, trainers, regulatory authorities and producers) to put into practice the extensive normative work done by the Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI) and the Committee of Ministers on diversity and equality in the media.

During the exchange of views that followed, members of the GEC underlined the need to pursue the work done so far in the area of gender and media, in close co-operation with the authorities in the member states, through the network of NFPs, as well as EU institutions (EIGE). They highlighted the importance of disseminating the Recommendation to the media industry and journalists (firstly by translating the text into national official languages) and of preparing a ready-to-use argument on the link between gender equality and freedom of expression.

Following the discussions, the GEC:

- took note of the report of the 1st meeting of the NFPs and agreed to pursue and strengthen its support to the network;
- took note of the report of the Conference of the NFPs on “Media and the Image of Women”;
- entrusted the Secretariat to prepare activities and projects suggested in the follow-up to the Amsterdam Conference in co-operation and co-ordination with the relevant Council of Europe and bodies;
- instructed the Secretariat to keep the GEC informed about future initiatives of other Council of Europe sectors and with a view to contributing to their work, i.e. the EPRA or MEDIANE encounters on gender equality (Germany, 11-13 April 2014);
- encouraged co-operation between the EU and the Council of Europe, particularly in view of the EIGE/Nordic Council Conference on gender and media (end-2014).

4.3 Guaranteeing Equal Access of Women to Justice

The Secretariat introduced the draft Concept Paper and draft Programme of the Hearing on “Access to Justice for Women Victims of Violence” (Paris, 9 December 2013), including the background of this activity, its objectives and links to the recently adopted Gender Equality Strategy of the Council of Europe. The Secretariat thanked the members of the GEC and National Focal Points for their input in suggesting speakers for the Hearing. Member states

which had not already done so were invited to send written contributions on the key challenges and good practices regarding access to justice for women victims of violence at the national level.

The debate that followed emphasised the need to raise awareness about women's rights regarding equal access to justice and gather data on the actual number of judicial cases concerning women and their rights.

Following the discussions, the GEC:

- took note of the programme of the Conference and related documents;
- took note of information by the Swiss representative regarding preparation of a study by the Swiss authorities on access to justice in all cases of discrimination, including a chapter on access to justice for women who have suffered violence;
- asked the Secretariat to make available on-line, a compilation of case-law from the European Court of Human Rights regarding gender equality issues.
- agreed to engage and co-operate with the European Court of Human Rights regarding the implementation of Objective 3 of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy: "Guaranteeing Equal Access of Women to Justice".

4.2 Preventing and combating violence against women

The Secretariat reported on progress towards the entry into force of the Istanbul Convention which has been signed by 25 member states and ratified by 7 (Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy, Portugal, Montenegro and Turkey) and highlighted the role and contribution of the GEC and its members to promoting the Convention at both national and global level as a practical tool to combat gender based violence.

Following this report, Professor Carol Hagemann-White presented the detailed analysis of the results of the fourth round of monitoring the implementation of the Committee of Ministers Recommendation Rec(2002)5 on the protection of women against violence. In response to a revised questionnaire that was distributed in April 2013, the Council of Europe has received the highest number of replies during this fourth monitoring round - 46 out of 47 member states. The record response rate may indicate a higher acceptance of the standards proposed by Rec(2002)5 following their inclusion in the Istanbul Convention, which seems to already function as a common framework for Council of Europe member states. Results show that progress is taking place in all areas covered by the scope of monitoring: national policies on violence against women, legislation and judicial procedures, specialist support and protection for victims, programmes for perpetrators, public awareness and media, education and training, and data collection and research. However, the data offer limited information on the application of provisions 'on the books' and more in-depth descriptions of measures and policies are needed in the member states to arrive at more robust conclusions about the implementation of standards included in Recommendation Rec(2002)5 or the Istanbul Convention.

Following the discussions, the GEC agreed to:

- provide feedback on the report of Professor Hagemann-White;
- asked the Secretariat to transmit the draft report to the National Focal Points and inform them about the deadline for comments and feedback;
- instructed the Secretariat to finalise the report on the basis of discussions at the GEC meeting and the comments received from NFPs;
- asked the Secretariat to undertake measures and required action for the publication and dissemination of the report;
- discuss follow-up action during one of its forthcoming meetings.

The Secretariat informed the GEC that it has partnered with the European Women's Lobby to promote the Istanbul Convention as an important tool for progress in reforming legislation, policies and practices of professionals addressing sexual violence, including rape. A series of public events will take place in 33 countries in Europe during the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, between 25 November and 10 December, under the common slogan *Act against Rape! Use the Istanbul Convention!* The project is implemented with financial support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland. A closing event will take place in Strasbourg, on 10 December, International Human Rights Day, at the European Parliament. The event will take stock of the situation in Europe with respect to legislation, policies and services for victims of sexual violence and highlight possible ways forward based on the outcome and recommendations of the public events.

- GEC members were encouraged to promote, join and contribute to the public events organised in the 33 member states.

VI. Conferences and meetings of the Network of National Focal Points (NFPs)

The Secretariat presented the draft concept paper and the draft programme for the second NFP conference on “Combating stereotypes in and through education”. The Conference will focus on how education is a vehicle for gender stereotypes which affect girls and boys. It will aim at examining ways to promote an education free from stereotypes while also looking at the results of the monitoring of Recommendation on gender mainstreaming in education. The draft programme consists of four sessions revolving around specific themes and looking at countries’ experiences in different fields such as combating stereotypes, mainstreaming gender in the education system, gender equality in the margins of the classroom, and combatting violence against girls and women.

The GEC members welcomed these documents and discussed the substance and format of the programme and concept paper. As regards the concept paper, it was suggested to make a reference to girls belonging to disadvantaged groups (i.e. Roma girls), as well as the need to use non-sexist and inclusive language. As to the draft programme, members discussed the approach (objective, target group and expected results) and the scope of issues to address (whether to keep or remove pre-school, workplace, media, parents, etc.). The programme should also reflect a balanced geographical scope. This will be made possible thanks to the input from NFPs when suggesting speakers and sending good practices.

Following the discussions, the GEC:

- asked the Secretariat to revise the draft concept paper and draft programme taking into account discussions at the GEC and comments and suggestions from the NFPs;
- agreed to send to the Secretariat, examples of good practices to be discussed during the Conference.

VII. Exchange of views with Nils Muižnieks, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights

The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights gave an update of his activities with particular focus on issues related to the work and activities of the GEC, in particular: safeguarding human rights in times of austerity, positive measures to benefit vulnerable groups and women, violence against women and domestic violence, hate speech, discrimination on the grounds of gender identity, trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation. The Commissioner pointed out that he regularly calls upon the member states to sign and ratify the Istanbul Convention and pays particular attention to women's right in his country reports focusing on gender equality issues such as the pay-gap, the need for balanced participation in public and political life, multiple discrimination suffered by women and gender based violence.

The Commissioner stressed that a lot remains to be done in the field of women's human rights in Europe, in particular with regard to introducing a gender perspective in national human rights action plans and collecting sex-disaggregated data.

The Commissioner encouraged members of the GEC to provide him with information and suggestions on how to incorporate a gender perspective into his work more effectively. Areas of common interest include access to justice, gender stereotypes and sexism and hate speech. Synergies could be achieved through regular exchange of information and joint events with the participation of human rights defenders. Other possible areas for co-operation include training on gender equality for human rights bodies, integration and implementation of a gender perspective in the national action plans of human rights bodies, information and feedback from the GEC for his country visits. The Commissioner would welcome input for his forthcoming visits to Denmark, Georgia and the United-Kingdom (Scotland), as well as for his thematic visits to refugee camps in Bulgaria, Germany and Turkey.

The GEC welcomed the work and activities of the Commissioner and his office in defending and promoting women's human rights. The exchange of views touched upon issues of sexism and hate speech, trafficking, access to justice, case law on sexism, female genital mutilation, women and girls from disadvantaged group (roma, elderly), national human rights mechanisms, women politicians and media and the economic situation of women. Discussions took place on where to draw the line between human rights and freedom (of expression, of religion, etc.) and when these liberties violate basic rights of women. Members of the GEC encouraged the Commissioner to continue to advocate gender issues in the member states and within the Council of Europe.

Following the discussions, the GEC agreed to:

- share suggestions and gender related information with the Commissioner to support his work related to women's human rights and gender issues in his country visits and country reporting, in his thematic work, as well as when addressing urgent issues, including through the use of social media (twitter, facebook);
- send information on domestic case law (complaints before courts or being prosecuted) on hate speech grounded on gender or good examples that can be shared and used by the Commissioner in his work and activities;
- ask the Commissioner, when and where appropriate, to introduce a gender equality dimension in his annual and country visit reports;
- ask the Secretariat to liaise with the Office of the Commissioner and discuss future co-operation based on the beneficial exchange of views;
- discuss the possibility to organise events in co-operation with the Commissioner and his office, such as a round table for human rights defenders on gender equality and training on gender equality for human rights bodies;
- look into the possibility of having another exchange of views with the Commissioner at the end of 2014 or at the beginning of 2015.

VIII. Exchange of views with the Director General of the Ministry of Gender and Family Issues of Tunisia about the on-going revision of the Action Plan on Gender Equality in Tunisia

The Chair introduced the Director General of the Ministry of Gender and Family Issues of Tunisia, Ms Imen Houimel. This exchange of views is part of the co-operation programme of the Council of Europe on "Combating violence against women and domestic violence, including against children, in the South Mediterranean Region by Ensuring Respect for Human Rights and by Implementing International Standards" that covers gender equality issues. The Director General presented the situation of women and gender equality in Tunisia, policies and actions in place, as well as challenges and results in the framework of the implementation of the Tunisian strategy to combat violence against women and to achieve gender equality. Ms Houimel highlighted the new Constitution project and its guarantees with regard to women's rights. She also underlined the discrepancies between women's success at university level and the fact that they constitute the majority of unemployed individuals.

The GEC praised Tunisian authorities for their continued efforts to put in place policies and measures to achieve gender equality. Results are encouraging and the GEC expressed hope that the Tunisian authorities will continue their efforts towards promoting and achieving gender equality and combating violence against women.

- The GEC reiterated its readiness to provide support as requested and when needed.

IX. Co-operation with other regional and international organisations

The representative from the **European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)** informed participants about the Institute's on-going activities, studies and initiatives and underlined the complementarity of the work of the two institutions in the area of gender equality. GEC recalled the importance of regular exchange of information and co-operation to ensure that the work and activities continue to mutually benefit the two bodies. Areas where further co-operation would be possible and useful between the two organisations include, but are not limited to: media, gender mainstreaming (the results of the EIGE study on institutional capacity and effective methods for gender mainstreaming will be disseminated in January 2014), combating stereotypes and sexism (EIGE prepared an extensive qualitative study and developed an on-line database), violence against women (study on victim support and co-operation foreseen with the Fundamental Rights Agency), gathering of data (gender index which include balanced participation in political and public decision-making) and the work on terminology (thesaurus and glossary). EIGE has also set up a [documentation and resource centre](#) on line as from [1 October 2013](#) constituting the "institutional memory" of gender equality at European Union and member states levels.

The Representative from the **European Union** gave a presentation on the promotion of gender equality in the EU, highlighting the priorities, activities and achievements of the Commission's Strategy for equality between men and women for 2010-2015. Particular focus was given to equal pay, combating violence against women and gender balance in decision-making.

The GEC agreed to:

- Hold an exchange of views with the Director of EIGE at its next meeting and define areas where synergies can be strengthened.

X. Reports of events attended by GEC members, NFPs and the Secretariat

The full reports of attendance and contributions of GEC members and Secretariat to various events is contained in, and can be consulted for further information in [document GEC\(2013\)11](#).

The Secretariat thanked the members who accepted invitations to represent GEC in various events and increase the visibility of the standards, work and activities of the Council of Europe and its Transversal Programme in the area of gender equality.

Following these reports, the GEC agreed to:

- inform the Secretariat when they participate in events related to the work of the GEC;
- encouraged members to attend events to present Council of Europe standards and work in the area of gender equality.

XI. Current and future activities

The GEC had a "*tour de table*" which provided the members with the opportunity to report on priorities and activities carried out by their national authorities regarding gender

equality. GEC members described new laws, initiatives, and events in their respective countries. The Secretariat took note of the information and pointed out that such information is very useful for the preparation of country profiles on gender equality, as well as a resource of information and good practices for other member states.

- The GEC agreed to transmit to the Secretariat on a regular basis, information which may be useful and which could be made available on the Gender Equality website as well as for distribution among other member states.

XII. Other business

The Council of Europe will organise two side events during the CSW in New-York:

- An event on trafficking in women and girls for the purpose of domestic work co-organised by the Council of Europe in co-operation with the Austrian Presidency of the Committee of Ministers (10 March, 2014);
- An event on the two regional conventions on violence against women: Belem do Para and the Istanbul Convention (11 March 2014, date to be confirmed).

XIII. Date and place of next meetings:

GEC meetings in 2014:

- 5th meeting: Wednesday - Friday 2-4 April 2014, Strasbourg
- 6th meeting: Wednesday - Friday 19-21 November 2014, Strasbourg

Calendar of forthcoming events and meetings:

2013

- *Hearing on "Access to Justice for Women Victims of Violence"*
Paris, 9 December 2013
- *Conference on the "Participation of Women in Public and Political Life in the EAP Countries"*
Chisinau, 10 December 2013
- *Conference on the "Gender dimension of corruption"*
Prague, 13 December 2013

2014

- *2nd Conference of the Network of NFPs "Combating stereotypes in and through education"*
Strasbourg, 2014 (dates to be decided)
- *2nd Hearing on "Tackling the gaps in research and the lack of data disaggregated by sex concerning women's equal access to justice"*
Strasbourg, Thursday – Friday 9-10 October 2014 or Thursday – Friday 16-17 October 2014 (dates to be decided)

APPENDIX 1

Strasbourg, 13 November 2013

GEC (2013) OJ 2

**GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION
(GEC)***4th meeting*

9.00 am – 6.00 pm, 13-15 November 2013
Strasbourg, Agora, Meeting Room G05

AGENDA**I. Opening of the meeting and Adoption of the agenda***Draft Agenda**GEC(2013)OJ 2 rev 3***II. Exchange of views with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe****III. Communication from the Minister of Social Security and Labour of Lithuania****IV. Exchange of views with Gender Equality Rapporteurs****V. Council of Europe transversal programme on gender equality***1. Election of Chair and partial renewal of the GEC**2. Reform of the Council of Europe structures**3. Council of Europe Strategy on Gender Equality*

- *Information update on the strategy*

*Oral presentation**4. Thematic priorities - Combating gender stereotypes and sexism***4.2 Achieving Gender Mainstreaming in all policies and measures**

- Exchange of views with the Gender Equality Rapporteur of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport
Draft Recommendation on Gender Mainstreaming in Sport

EPAS(2013)36 rev3

- Monitoring of the Recommendation on Gender Mainstreaming in Education
Report on the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)13 adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 10 October 2007

CM(2012)38
CM(2012)38 add
CM Rec(2007)13
CM Decision
- Trafficking in Human Beings - Exchange of views with the Executive Secretary of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings

Oral presentation

4.4 Media and the Image of Women

- *Report of the Amsterdam Conference* GEC(2013)5 rev1E
- *Follow-up to the Amsterdam Conference* GEC(2013)7
- *Follow-up to Recommendation CM/Rec(2013)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on gender equality and media* Oral presentation

4.5 Guaranteeing Equal Access of Women to Justice

- *Hearing on "Access to Justice for Women Victims of Violence" Paris, 9 December 2013*
 - o *Draft Programme* Programme
 - o *Draft Concept Paper* GEC(2013)6
Oral presentation

4.6 Preventing and combating violence against women

- *Signature, ratification and entry into force of the Istanbul Convention* Oral presentation
- *Analysis of the fourth round of monitoring of Recommendation Rec(2002)5 on the protection of women against violence* GEC(2013)10
GEC(2013)10 rev Appendix
- *"Act against rape! Use the Istanbul Convention" Joint action of the Council of Europe and the European Women's Lobby* Oral Presentation

VI. Conferences and meetings of the Network of National Focal Points (NFPs)

- *Report of 1st meeting of the Network of NFPs* NFP(2013)RAP 1
- *2nd Conference of the Network of NFPs - Combating stereotypes in and through education (provisional title)*
 - o *Draft Concept Paper* GEC(2013)8
 - o *Draft Programme* GEC(2013)9

VII. Exchange of views with the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights**VIII. Exchange of views with the Director General of the Ministry of Gender and Family Issues of Tunisia****IX. Co-operation with other regional and international organisations****X. Report of events attended by GEC members, National Focal Points and the Secretariat**

- *UNFPA and UNECE - ICPD Beyond 2014 in the UNECE region Thematic Meeting "Inequalities, Social inclusion and Rights" Belgrade, 15-16 April 2013*
- *EU High Level Conference "Gender Equality de facto as a Contribution to Reaching Europe 2020 Targets: the Effectiveness of Institutional Mechanisms" Vilnius, 13 September 2013*
- *4th International Roma Women's Conference: acting now for an equal future Helsinki, 16-17 September 2013*
- *Workshop convened by the Working Group on discrimination against women in law and in practice of the UN Human Rights Council Geneva, 1 October 2013*
- *L'Institut universitaire Kurt Bösch (IUKB), l'Institut international des Droits de l'enfant (IDE) et Le 2e Observatoire de Genève : Colloque sur La socialisation différenciée, un obstacle à la pédagogie de l'égalité ? Sion, 1 October 2013*
- *A European Strategy for Gender Equality Brussels, 9 October 2013*
- *OSCE "Enhancing Role of Women in public, Political & Economic life" Monaco, 28-29 October 2013*
- *Turkish Parliamentary and Exchange of Dialogue - Symposium on Gender Equality, Paris, 6 November 2013*
- *"Promoting Women's Human Rights in the 3rd Year of the Istanbul Convention" Turkey, 6-8 November 2013*

GEC(2013)11

XI. Current and future activities

- At national level
- At international level

XII. Other business

XIII. Date and place of next meetings:**GEC meetings in 2014**

- *5th meeting Wednesday - Friday 2-4 April 2014, Strasbourg*
- *6th meeting Wednesday - Friday 19-21 November 2014, Strasbourg*

Calendar of forthcoming events and meetings:**2013**

- *“Promoting Women’s Human Rights in the 3rd Year of the Istanbul Convention”
Turkey, 6-8 November 2013*
- *Hearing on “Access to Justice for Women Victims of Violence”
Paris, 9 December 2013*
- *Conference on the “Gender dimension of corruption”
Prague, 13 December 2013*

2014

- *2nd Conference of the Network of NFPs “Combating stereotypes in and through
education” (provisional title)
Strasbourg, Tuesday – Wednesday 1-2 April 2014 (dates to be decided)*
- *2nd Hearing on “Tackling the gaps in research and the lack of data disaggregated by sex
concerning women’s equal access to justice” Strasbourg, Thursday – Friday 9-10 October
2014 or 16-17 October 2014 (dates to be decided)*

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