

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 2 December 2015

GEC (2015) Rap 2

GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION (GEC)

**8th meeting
18-20 November 2015**

REPORT

I. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

The Chairperson, Sergiy Kyslytsya, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. The Gender Equality Commission (GEC) adopted the agenda as set out in Appendix I to this report (GEC(2015)OJ 2 rev2). The list of participants is attached in Appendix II.

The Chairperson informed the members that during a meeting with the Secretary General, he had invited him to participate in the next meeting of the GEC in April 2016. He asked the Secretariat to follow up on this invitation.

The Chairperson also informed the participants that the budget discussions would continue in the week following the GEC meeting and he encouraged everyone to follow the discussions closely through their respective permanent representations in Strasbourg.

The Secretariat informed GEC members about recent changes in the staff of the Gender Equality Unit.

- *The GEC instructed the Secretariat to follow up with the Secretary General's Private Office about his participation in the next GEC meeting.*

II. Election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson (January to December 2016)

In line with Resolution CM/Res(2011)24 on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods, the GEC re-elected Sergiy Kyslytsya (Ukraine) as its Chairperson, and Kira Appel (Denmark) as its Vice-Chairperson by a show of hands.

III. Exchange of views with Gender Equality Rapporteurs

The Chairperson welcomed the Gender Equality Rapporteurs (GERs) who had participated in the training on gender mainstreaming organised on 17 November by the Secretariat, in partnership with the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research. He praised the progress already made by committees such as the Pompidou Group, GRECO and EURIMAGES, in achieving gender mainstreaming in their activities, and encouraged everyone to continue this work in their respective areas. The Secretariat and the Swedish GEC member, who is also Head of the Swedish Secretariat for Gender Research, gave an overview of the training which was prepared on the basis of a questionnaire completed by the participants. 35 participants, including GERs and members of relevant Council of Europe Committees, benefitted from this training.

Following an exchange among the participants, many GERs expressed their appreciation for the training and requested that training be carried out more frequently, if possible. They also expressed appreciation for the information document prepared by the Secretariat on "Gender Mainstreaming in the Council of Europe: policy briefs and activities" and proposed that this document be updated and made available on the gender equality website.

GERs also highlighted the importance of sharing good practices on gender mainstreaming across the different sectors of the Council of Europe, as well as the need to keep receiving trainings on a regular basis.

- *The GEC requested the Secretariat to make available online the information document on “Gender Mainstreaming in the Council of Europe: policy briefs and activities” and to update it at regular intervals.*

IV. Council of Europe Transversal Programme on Gender Equality

1. Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017

a. Draft Annual Report on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy

The Secretariat presented the 2015 draft Annual Report on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017, which follows the same format as the 2014 report. The Secretariat drew attention to the conclusions in the draft report. During the discussion which followed, members stressed the usefulness of the report as a good instrument to highlight and give visibility to GEC activities, and suggested adding some of the issues on which the UNECE regional review of the Beijing +20 reported progress. The Secretariat welcomed the feedback and the national contributions received for the preparation of the report.

- *The GEC instructed the Secretariat to amend the conclusions to the draft annual report on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy to include a reference to the progress reflected in the regional review carried out by the UN 20 years after the Beijing Conference.*
- *The GEC agreed to send a revised version of the annual report to the CDDECS, so that it takes note of it and brings it to the attention of the Committee of Ministers.*

b. Combating gender stereotypes and sexism

- Presentation by Eva Abella Martin (Lawyer at the Institute for equality between women and men in Belgium) about the 2014 Belgian law against sexism in the public space

Following an introduction by the Chairperson, Eva Abella Martin, a lawyer at the Institute for Equality between Women and Men in Belgium, presented the 2014 Belgian law against sexism in the public space. In her [Powerpoint presentation](#) which is available on the Gender Equality website, Ms Abella Martin explained that the mandate of the Institute is to fight against gender-based discrimination and its goal is to change mentalities via three working areas: litigation (helping victims access justice), research and studies, as well as recommendations to policy-makers. She explained that the trigger event for the law reform was the broadcast of the documentary “Femmes de la rue” by Sophie Peeters, which highlights daily street harassment. As a result, the police in Brussels issued administrative fines for sexist insults on the street. The 2014 law defines and criminalises sexism as a self-

standing offence, whereas the law on gender continues to criminalise discrimination. She explained that the burden of proof is heavy as the behaviour must be intentional and the harm to the person's dignity, serious. The 2014 Law covers men and women as possible victims and sexism on social networks, but not in advertising. Ms Abella Martin highlighted the need for awareness-raising measures, such as training of judges and updated information brochures. There has been an increase in the number of complaints brought under this law but there is still no case-law on its application. In the discussion which followed, members expressed interest in the experience of Belgium in combating sexism and asked questions to Ms Abella about the pending legal action against the 2014 law currently awaiting the decision by Belgium's Constitutional Court.

- No Hate Speech Campaign, Education and Training Division, Youth Department

The Secretariat informed members that the No Hate Speech campaign has been extended for a further two years and that sexist hate speech has been identified as one of the themes for action under the campaign in 2016-2017. As objective 1 of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy specifically refers to the need to combat sexism as a form of hate speech, the Gender Equality Unit is planning to co-operate with the No Hate Speech Campaign (Youth Department) in the organisation of a seminar on sexist hate speech (February 2016).

Nordic Council of Ministers - seminar on hate speech and sexism

Kira Appel, the Vice-Chairperson and Danish Representative informed the members about a seminar organised by the Nordic Council of Ministers on hate speech and sexism (2-3 November 2015, Copenhagen). The seminar showed that sexism encompasses many different acts and target groups, and it needs to be defined in more detail, including sexism online and in the street. While women and men are affected by sexist hate speech in different ways and react to it differently, men are more often offenders. The seminar concluded that there is a need for gender-sensitive laws, including sexism, a convention against sexism and guidelines on the rights of both women and men. The establishment of networks like the Everyday Sexism Project are necessary for women not to feel alone when experiencing sexism. Education materials for schoolchildren and information on cyber rights for parents should also be produced. Ms Appel will make the findings of the seminar available as soon as the English version is ready.

c. Preventing and combating violence against women

Exchange with Feride Acar, President of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO)

The Chairperson welcomed Feride Acar, President of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO). Ms Acar gave an overview of the work of GREVIO, which was holding its second meeting at the same time as the GEC meeting, on 18-20 November. GREVIO finalised and adopted its Rules of Procedure at its previous meeting, in September, when its Bureau was elected. The President of GREVIO wished to inform the GEC that the Rules of Procedure include country visits as

part of the procedure for monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. GREVIO is currently focusing on the preparation of the initial questionnaire for Parties, which should cover the entire Convention. It is expected that the questionnaire will be completed by March 2016. Ms Acar stressed the natural affinity between the GREVIO and the GEC and said that she expected to continue close and sustainable co-operation between the two bodies, including through the GREVIO's receiving information from the GEC as part of the monitoring procedure. She also said that co-operation was underway between the GREVIO and other international and regional bodies who have similar conventions on the same subject, such as CEDAW, UN Women and the Organization of American States. The Secretariat informed GEC members about the current number of Parties (19) and signatories (20), and about progress in the preparation of the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by Belgium, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine.

d. Guaranteeing equal access of women to justice

- Bern Conference "Towards guaranteeing equal access of women to justice" (15-16 October 2015)
 - o *Follow-up to the Bern Conference* GEC(2015)7

The Secretariat thanked the Swiss authorities for their co-operation in the organisation of a successful conference. Document GEC(2015)7 which gives an overview of the work the GEC and the National Focal Points (NFP) have already carried out to guarantee women's equal access to justice was presented. The document also outlined future activities on this issue for the remaining two years of the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy (2016-2017) for consideration by the GEC. She also mentioned that the short video from the conference and the conference report would be made available as soon as possible.

- *The GEC agreed to the 11 proposals for future activities and follow-up on women's equal access to justice outlined in document GEC(2015)7, as amended. The agreed follow-up activities correspond to the following four topics:*
 - *Address gender stereotypes and sexism in the justice system, including judicial stereotyping and the need for targeted training.*
 - *Tackle multiple discrimination as a specific barrier for women's equal access to justice.*
 - *Information and data.*
 - *Co-operation with the United Nations.*
- Regional Conference on "Improving women's access to justice in five EAP countries" (Kvareli, 5-6 November 2015)

Oral presentation

The Secretariat made a [Powerpoint presentation](#) about this regional project in the five EAP countries, funded by the EU. In particular, the presentation focused on the Regional Conference on "Improving women's access to justice in five EAP countries" which took place in Kvareli, Georgia on 5-6 November 2015. The conference was well attended and the main findings of the national studies on barriers, remedies and good practices for women's

access to justice in the five participating countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine) were presented. The GEC member in respect of Serbia, Dragan Knezevic, was a speaker at the conference and congratulated the project team for the organisation of a successful event. Follow-up activities include a compilation of good practices and training resources on women's rights and gender equality for legal professionals, with a focus on judges and prosecutors; a short movie on gender stereotyping; and a compilation of progressive jurisprudence from the countries of the project. Trainings for judges and prosecutors on women's rights and gender equality, with a focus on gender stereotyping in the judiciary, are planned for 2016, in the five countries. A regional closing conference is foreseen for October 2016 in Chisinau.

- UN Women: proposed indicators to measure access to justice, including specific challenges facing women

Draft Report

The Secretariat introduced the document prepared by UN Women on proposed indicators to measure access to justice, including specific challenges facing women. She informed the members that the Council of Europe had co-operated with UN Women in the drafting of the report. She explained that while it was not a binding document, it contained useful information. The report is expected to be finalised and made available on-line by UN Women and the CoE in 2016. The representative of the INGOs conference suggested that the draft report be consulted more widely, including with relevant NGOs. The Secretariat agreed to forward the suggestion to UN Women. A discussion also ensued about the ways in which the report could be used and how to make it more reader-friendly. Charles de Vries (The Netherlands) clarified that the National Statistical Offices are the institutions tasked with developing the indicators for the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They could be informed of this report. The UN Women Deputy Director for Europe and Central Asia agreed that the report could be used also in the process of 'localising' the SDGs, a project that UN Women will be conducting in the coming years.

- *The GEC agreed to send written comments on the draft report to the Secretariat by 15 December 2015.*

e. Achieving balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

Third round of monitoring the implementation of CM Recommendation Rec(2003)3 on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

Oral presentation

The Secretariat explained that the on-line questionnaire for the third round of monitoring the implementation of CM Recommendation Rec(2003)3 on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making had been delayed because of difficulties with the user-friendliness of the IT tool, but that it should be available for testing

in December 2015. The on-line questionnaire is expected to be launched in January 2016. Member states will have 6 months to complete the questionnaire following its launch.

The Secretariat informed the GEC about activities on the subject of balanced participation of women and men in political decision-making which are being carried out by other Council of Europe bodies:

- the Parliamentary Assembly is preparing a report to assess the impact of measures to improve women's political representation;
- the Venice Commission has created a dedicated webpage on gender equality on their site, and is organising a [Regional Conference](#) on gender equality in electoral processes, in co-operation with the Central Election Commission of Georgia, Tbilisi (Georgia), 25-26 November, with participation from the Gender Equality Unit; and
- the Democratic Institutions and Governance Directorate, whose work in the area would be subject to a presentation at this meeting.

➤ *The GEC agreed that the reference date for non-elective matters in the on-line questionnaire should be changed to 1 January 2016.*

Report by Ralph Kass on the Conference on "Women in political and economic decision-making" (Luxembourg, 15-16 October 2015)

Ralph Kass (Luxembourg) informed the participants about the conference "Women in political and economic decision-making" which took place in Luxembourg on 15-16 October 2015. The Conference gathered experts from the economic, political and academic fields to promote equal participation in decision-making, where women still constitute a minority. In October 2015, the Luxembourg authorities submitted a draft law to parliament, aimed at introducing a quota of 40% for either sex in the electoral lists presented by political parties for national legislative elections. The need for positive measures and a more equitable sharing of responsibilities in the public and private spheres between women and men were also discussed at the Conference.

f. Achieving gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

- Factsheet on gender mainstreaming

Factsheet

The Secretariat presented the [factsheet on gender mainstreaming](#) which is the latest information note to be prepared on the various themes covered by the Gender Equality Strategy and is available on the Gender Equality website.

- Report from Isabel Romao about the Conference “Promoting Gender Mainstreaming in Sport” organised by the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) (Strasbourg, 17 November 2015)

Isabel Romao (Portugal) reported back about her participation in the Conference on “Promoting Gender Mainstreaming in Sport” which was organised by the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) in Strasbourg on 17 November 2015. The conference aimed to increase awareness of the Council of Europe work on gender mainstreaming, to support capacity building, and to share good practices and to assess what had been achieved in implementing gender mainstreaming in sport. A consultant is preparing a study of benchmarks in order to monitor the implementation of the Committee of Ministers’ Recommendation to member States on gender mainstreaming in sport adopted in January 2015. A number of participants stressed the importance of the implementation of a gender mainstreaming perspective in this area, given the serious existing gaps and gender inequalities in the area of sport. The need for a handbook on existing good practices in this area was also mentioned.

The Secretariat pointed out the work that had already been done on women in sport at the 2014 Helsinki conference. The Gender Equality Unit would continue co-operating with EPAS and would keep the GEC updated.

- Exchange of views with Isabel Castro, Deputy Executive Director of EURIMAGES – the European Cinema Support Fund

The Chairperson welcomed back Isabel Castro, Deputy Executive Director of EURIMAGES, the European Cinema Support Fund, who gave an update of the work on gender mainstreaming carried out by EURIMAGES since 2013, which included the creation of a Gender Equality Study Group, introducing a gender criterion in the composition of co-production working groups and in the selection of readers, the creation of a gender analysis tool, and the definition of performance indicators to measure progress. The gender analysis tool has allowed the collection of information on the degree of gender equality of projects submitted to and selected by EURIMAGES. Ms Castro informed the members about the [Sarajevo Conference Declaration](#) adopted at the Conference “Women in today’s European film industry: gender matters. Can we do better?”, organised by the Bosnian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers on 14 August 2015. She hoped that this Declaration would eventually lead to the adoption of the Committee of Ministers Recommendation to encourage member states to implement policies to reduce gender inequalities in European cinema. She also informed the members that at the last meeting of the EURIMAGES Board of Management, a gender equality policy and an action plan for 2016-2017 had been adopted. Ms Castro’s [Powerpoint presentation](#) is available on the Gender Equality website.

- Exchange of views with Francine Raveney, Executive Director of European Women's Audiovisual Network (EWA)

The Chairperson introduced Francine Raveney, Executive Director of European Women's Audiovisual Network, who presented the aims of the EWA Network. These include promoting a greater gender equality on (cast) and off screen (creatives) in the audio-visual sector (film, TV, video games and online audio-visual) and encouraging reflections on the representation of women in audio-visual content. Among the work carried out by EWA was research done in seven countries on women directors in European films - best practice and policy recommendations, the study of which was launched in September. EWA also carries out coaching sessions and ad hoc training with women professionals in the sector. Ms Raveney explained that future action would include involving female students in order to have junior members of the Network. Ms Raveney's [Powerpoint presentation](#) is available on the Gender Equality website.

- Presentation by Ana Rusu (Electoral Assistance Division, Directorate General of Democracy) of the work on women's participation in public and political decision-making in the EAP countries

The Chairperson introduced Ana Rusu from the Division of Electoral Assistance in the Directorate General of Democracy, who presented the Division's work on women's participation in public and political decision-making in the EAP countries. In her [Powerpoint presentation](#), which is available on the Gender Equality website, Ms Rusu outlined the types of activities carried out at three election periods (pre-election, election and post-election) which included capacity development of women candidates, monitoring the media coverage of women candidates, assistance to civil society and data collection. A regional study on women political representation in the EAP countries will be released at the beginning of 2016. In reply to questions from the members, Ms Rusu mentioned the importance of supporting women candidates at the local level, as this will enable them to move to the national Parliaments at a later stage. A discussion also took place on the worrying trend of elected women resigning after a short period of mandate as a possible way to circumvent the obligations set by legislative quotas.

g. Meeting of the Network of National Focal Points (NFPs)

3rd meeting of the Network (Bern, 16 October 2015)

NFP(2015)RAP

The Vice-Chairperson of the GEC introduced this item and said that changing the format of the meeting (removing the *tour de table* and producing a document in advance of the meeting on activities and measures towards the achievements of the objectives of the Gender Equality Strategy) had allowed the time of the meeting to be used for other purposes, including a thematic discussion. The document that was produced (GEC(2015)15 rev2) on activities in 33 member states had also proved useful in the preparation of the annual report on the strategy.

2. Co-operation with other sectors of the Council of Europe

- Exchange of views with Isabela Mihalache, Support Team to the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Roma Issues

The Chairperson introduced Isabela Mihalache, who is a Project Manager on the [Support Team to the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Roma Issues](#). She presented the work of the Support Team which involves assisting member States to better mainstream gender equality into Roma issues. She mentioned the lack of gender mainstreaming in many national policies on Roma. Ms Mihalache also explained that some work was done on violence against Roma women with a focus on early and forced marriages and human trafficking, and that support was provided to Roma women's organisations, including through the organisation of conferences and the setting up of the Phenjalipe Network of Roma Women. She also spoke about future work, including on the situation of Roma women in prisons, access to justice for Roma women and thematic visits in 2016-2017 on empowerment and participation of Roma in decision-making bodies and political life, and access to employment, both with a focus on Roma women and youth. More work is also needed to build the capacity of Roma women on gender equality.

3. Glossary on Gender Equality

- Draft Council of Europe Gender Equality Glossary *GEC(2015)11*

The Secretariat presented the draft Council of Europe Gender Equality Glossary which had been prepared on the basis of earlier discussions in the GEC and of a concept note discussed at a previous GEC meeting. After a discussion on this issue, the GEC decided to limit the notions included in the Glossary to existing Council of Europe standards and to the areas covered by the current objectives of the Gender Equality Strategy.

- Presentation by Dimitrios Tsoutsias (Resource and Documentation Centre Officer, EIGE), about on-going work on the gender equality glossary and thesaurus

The Chairperson introduced Dimitrios Tsoutsias, Resource and Documentation Centre Officer from EIGE who spoke about the on-going work on EIGE's gender equality glossary and thesaurus, expected to be completed in early 2016. Mr Tsoutsias' explained that EIGE will use the Council of Europe definitions as far as gender-based violence is concerned. His [presentation](#) is available on the Gender Equality website.

The Secretariat highlighted the differences between the two documents and asked GEC members for guidance on the way forward. Following a discussion, members welcomed the document as a useful tool for them to use at the national and international level. The Vice-Chairperson informed members that the Nordic Council of Ministers is also preparing a glossary about gender equality. The GEC noted that some of the definitions have evolved over time and, while the definitions quoted from existing standards cannot be changed, the introduction to the Glossary should mention this fact. Members also asked for the

Introduction to include a more positive language in the reference to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender issues.

- *The GEC agreed to keep the focus of the Glossary on Council of Europe standards*
- *The GEC agreed to finalise the draft Council of Europe Gender Equality Glossary and to revise the Introduction in light of comments made during the meeting, including the evolution of definitions and concepts in the field of gender equality policies.*

V. Co-operation with national authorities

- Exchange of views with Silvan Agius, Policy Coordinator (Human Rights), Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties, Malta

The Chairperson introduced Silvan Agius, Policy Coordinator (Human Rights), at the Maltese Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties, and who is also the Maltese Representative on the CDDECS. Mr Agius outlined the progress which had taken place in Malta with regard to gender issues since the establishment of an LGBTIQ consultative committee with political parties, Christian groups and LGBTIQ groups. He spoke about the law allowing for self-determination of gender identity and change of sex and name in birth certificates through a public deed. Mr Agius explained the importance of placing these issues with the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties, which applies a human rights approach to LGBTIQ issues. In the discussions that ensued, members were interested in the links between the Maltese policies on reproductive rights and self-determination rights for LGBTIQ people, on multiple discrimination affecting female LGBTIQ, and on the links between gender equality and LGBTIQ rights.

- Exchange of views with Brigitte Grésy, Secretary General and Marie Becker, Project Leader, *Conseil supérieur de l'égalité professionnelle*, France

The Chairperson welcomed Brigitte Grésy, Secretary General, and Marie Becker, Project Leader, of the High Council on Professional Equality between Women and Men (*Conseil supérieur de l'égalité professionnelle*) (CSEP) of France. Ms Grésy presented the CSEP and its mandate, as well as the Law for real equality between women and men which was adopted in 2014 in France and covers a wide range of areas, from women's economic independence to gender stereotypes and violence against women. Among different measures, the law obliges companies to sign an agreement on equality in the workplace every three years. The Law also extends the mandatory parity in appointments to all professional orders, independent administrative authorities and consultative bodies. The CSEP has also worked on combating gender stereotypes in the media, using Council of Europe standards and tools. Ms Grésy also highlighted "benevolent sexism" which values women for their added value and complementarity, more than for their skills. In August 2015, the employment Code was amended to add the prohibition of sexism at work, with the support of social partners. This is an important step as it is the first time that "sexism" is included in the law, which should encourage women to denounce more easily the frequent occurrences of sexism in the work place. There is no case-law yet on the application of the new provisions to combat sexism in

the workplace. In response to a question from Iceland, Ms Grésy pointed out that the quota on executive boards did not have a spill over effect into managerial positions.

Ms Grésy's presentation is available on the Gender Equality website.

VI. Co-operation with international / regional organisations

- Presentation of the Gender Equality agenda during Luxembourg's EU Presidency (July – December 2015)

Ralph Kass (Luxembourg) presented the latest activities undertaken during the Luxembourg EU Presidency. He informed members about the emphasis given to gender equality in political decision-making. He said that negotiations on the draft directive "Women on Boards" are difficult and opinions on quota are diverging but an agreement was still possible.

The High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming which met in Luxembourg on 17 and 18 September (senior officials from EU member states), reviewed priorities on gender equality in the context of the declaration of the trio of Italian, Latvian and Luxembourg Presidencies. He mentioned that 9 December will be the 20th anniversary of the Ministry of Equal Opportunities in Luxembourg. He further announced the preparation of an international conference on "Caring Masculinities", organised jointly by Luxembourg and Germany, to be held on 17-18 October 2016.

- Presentation of the Gender Equality agenda during the Netherlands EU Presidency (January – June 2016)

Charles de Vries (The Netherlands) presented the agenda for the Netherlands EU Presidency which would concentrate on jobs and growth, empowerment and protection of citizens, climate policy, freedom and security, and making the EU a strong global actor. He also noted that the Netherlands would ensure a strong EU commitment at the CSW-60 in 2016.

- Presentation of the Gender Equality agenda during the forthcoming Estonian Committee of Ministers' presidency (May – November 2016) *GEC(2015)12*

In her presentation about Estonia's forthcoming presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (May-November 2016), Käthlin Sander (Estonia) mentioned their three priorities: gender equality, human rights and the rule of law online, and children's rights. She focused on gender equality and Estonia's proposal to host the 2016 thematic conference in Tallinn. She outlined that the conference would take stock of progress in the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy and launch preliminary discussions on the priority themes for the next strategy. The conference would also concentrate on two of the strategic objectives in the current strategy: "combating gender stereotypes and sexism" and "achieving gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures".

During the ensuing discussion, members discussed the level of participants, the format of the conference and the conference dates. Members were asked to inform their authorities about the conference and to save the date to ensure a good high level turnout.

- *The GEC agreed to the proposal by Estonia to host the 2016 conference in Tallinn.*
- *The GEC agreed that the conference would take place on 30 June – 1 July 2016.*

- Debrief following the adoption of the Post 2015 agenda

Oral presentation

The Secretariat introduced the item on the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development last September. The new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) include SDG 5 to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, as well as other SDGs also relevant for gender equality (such as SDGs 3, 4, 10 and 16). The next important stage would be the adoption of indicators to measure progress towards achieving the SDGs, which are currently under discussion and are expected to be adopted by March 2016. During the discussion that followed, members were asked to follow their governments' work on the indicators for the 169 targets and the 17 goals contained in the 2030 agenda (as national statistical offices are involved), and to encourage using sex-disaggregated indicators and introducing gender mainstreaming into the targets.

VII. Report of events attended by GEC members, National Focal Points and the Secretariat

GEC(2015)9

The Chairperson informed members that document [GEC\(2015\)9](#), which includes reports and information about events in which NFPs, members of the GEC or the Secretariat had participated, was available on the gender equality website.

VIII. Current and future activities

The Secretariat informed the members about the side event taking place in New York on 25 November. The subject was *“Raising awareness to prevent violence against women and domestic violence - Council of Europe Istanbul Convention’s Contribution to UN Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”*, organised by the Council of Europe and the Albanian Permanent Mission to the United Nations. While in New York, meetings will also take place to prepare the side event at the 2016 CSW in partnership with Bulgaria. The events during the CSW-60 will focus on migrant and refugee women and on lesbian women, respectively. The Secretariat also informed the participants that the façade of the Council of Europe’s main building would be lit up in orange as part of the launch of the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence on 25 November.

The Slovenian representative informed the members about a Slovenian travelling exhibition on violence against women which will be in the Council of Europe on 10 December

commemorating Human Rights Day. The exhibition had previously been at the UN Office in Geneva.

IX. Other business

None.

X. Date and place of next meetings

The Chairperson informed the members of the proposed dates for the 2016 GEC meetings which had been chosen to avoid major events such as the CSW, Sessions of the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly, etc.

- *The GEC agreed to hold the 2016 meetings in Strasbourg on 27-29 April 2016 (9th meeting) and on 16 –18 November 2016 (10th meeting).*

AGENDA

- I. **Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda**
 - o *Draft Agenda* *GEC(2015)OJ 2 rev2*
- II. **Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair (January to December 2016)**
- III. **Exchange of views with Gender Equality Rapporteurs**
- IV. **Council of Europe Transversal Programme on Gender Equality**
 1. **Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017**
 - a. **Draft Annual Report on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy** *GEC(2015)10*

Activities and measures in member states towards the achievement of the objectives of the Gender Equality Strategy *GEC(2015)5rev3*
 - b. **Combating gender stereotypes and sexism**
 - Presentation by Eva Abella Martin (Lawyer at the Institute for equality between women and men) about the 2014 Belgian law against sexism in the public space
 - Exchange of views with Rui Gomes, No Hate Speech Campaign, Education and Training Division, Youth Department
 - c. **Preventing and combating violence against women**

Exchange with Feride Acar, President of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO)
 - d. **Guaranteeing equal access of women to justice**
 - Bern Conference "Towards guaranteeing equal access of women to justice" (15-16 October 2015)
 - o *Follow-up to the Bern Conference* *GEC(2015)7*
 - Regional Conference on "Improving women's access to justice in five EAP countries" (Kvareli, 5-6 November 2015) *Oral presentation*
 - UN Women: proposed indicators to measure access to justice, including specific challenges facing women *UN Women draft Report*
 - e. **Achieving balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making**

Third round of monitoring the implementation of CM Recommendation Rec(2003)3 on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

Oral presentation

Report by Ralph Kass on the Conference on “Women in political and economic decision-making” (Luxembourg, 15-16 October 2015)

f. Achieving gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

- Factsheet on gender mainstreaming *Factsheet*
- Report from Isabel Romao about the Conference “Promoting Gender Mainstreaming in Sport” organised by the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) (Strasbourg, 17 November 2015)
- Exchange of views with Isabel Castro, Deputy Executive Director of EURIMAGES – the European Cinema Support Fund
- Exchange of views with Francine Raveney, Executive Director of European Women’s Audiovisual Network (EWA)
- Presentation by Ana Rusu (Electoral Assistance Division, Directorate General of Democracy) of the work on women’s participation in public and political decision-making in the EAP countries.

g. Meeting of the Network of National Focal Points (NFPs)

3rd meeting of the Network (Bern, 16 October 2015)

NFP(2015)RAP

2. Co-operation with other sectors of the Council of Europe

- Exchange of views with Isabela Mihalache, Support Team to the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Roma Issues

3. Glossary on Gender Equality

- Draft Council of Europe Gender Equality Glossary *GEC(2015)11*
- Presentation by Dimitrios Tsoutsias (Resource and Documentation Centre Officer, EIGE), about on-going work on the gender equality glossary and thesaurus

V. Co-operation with national authorities

- Exchange of views with Silvan Agius, Policy Coordinator (Human Rights), Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties, Malta
- Exchange of views with Brigitte Grésy, Secretary General and Marie Becker, Project Leader, *Conseil supérieur de l'égalité professionnelle*, France

VI. Co-operation with international / regional organisations

- Presentation of the Gender Equality agenda during Luxembourg's EU Presidency (July – December 2015)
- Presentation of the Gender Equality agenda during the Netherlands EU Presidency (January – June 2016)
- Presentation of the Gender Equality agenda during the forthcoming Estonian Committee of Ministers' presidency (May – November 2016)

Preliminary Note – 2016 Conference

GEC(2015)12

- Debrief following adoption of the Post 2015 agenda *Oral presentation*

VII. Report of events attended by GEC members, National Focal Points and the Secretariat

GEC(2015)9

VIII. Current and future activities

- *At national level*
- *At international level*

IX. Other business

X. Date and place of next meetings:

GEC meetings

- *9th meeting: Strasbourg, 27-29 April 2016*
- *10th meeting: Strasbourg, 16 –18 November 2016*

Calendar of forthcoming events and meetings:

Council of Europe

- *2016 NFP Conference [venue and date to be confirmed]*
- *4th NFP meeting [venue and date to be confirmed]*

Other organisations

CSW60 –

Priority theme: Women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development

Review theme: The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls (New York, 14 – 24 March 2016)

(CoE side-event on migrant women, in preparation)

APPENDIX II

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