

Strasbourg, 23 March 2017

GEC(2017)2 Rev
(paragraph numbering only)

GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION (GEC)

Preparation of the
Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023

Discussion document

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INTRODUCTION: The Council of Europe and Gender Equality

1. Achieving gender equality is central to fulfilling the core objectives of the Council of Europe human rights, the functioning of democracy and respect for the rule of law.
2. *Gender equality means equal rights, visibility, empowerment, responsibility and participation for both women and men in all spheres of public and private life.* It also means an equal access to and distribution of resources between women and men.
3. Even if progress is visible and the legal status of women in Europe has undoubtedly improved during recent decades, effective equality between women and men is far from being a reality. Gender gaps and structural barriers persist in many areas, maintaining women and men in their traditional roles and constraining women's opportunities to benefit from their fundamental rights. Regular monitoring and research show that progress is very slow in some areas such as women's political participation, access to justice and the prevalence and impact of harmful gender stereotypes and sexism. The most pronounced expression of the unequal power relations between women and men remains violence against women, which is both a violation of women's human rights and a major obstacle to gender equality.
4. In the current context of growing economic difficulties and subsequent austerity policies, political uncertainties and raising inequalities at all levels of the society, it is important to recognise the essential contribution of women to communities, societies and economies, and address the high cost of gender inequalities. Furthermore, rising nationalism and populism and the inflow of migrants and refugees have also created new challenges, and made visible persistent obstacles to ensure full respect for women's rights and to achieve gender equality: decreasing resources for gender equality mechanisms and policies to failure to implement agreed standards and growing threats to women's fundamental human rights.
5. The Council of Europe's pioneering work in the fields of human rights and gender equality has resulted in a solid legal and policy framework. The Council of Europe remains fully committed to address the current challenges, and together with its member States, to remove barriers towards the achievement of real and full gender equality.
6. In doing so, it will adopt a dual-track approach including:
 - specific policies and actions, including positive action when appropriate, in critical areas for the advancement of women and for the realisation of *de facto* gender equality, and
 - the promotion, monitoring, co-ordination and evaluation of the process of gender mainstreaming in all policies and programmes,¹ whereby gender mainstreaming refers to the *(re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy making.*²

¹ Recommendation [CM/Rec\(2007\)17](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member States on gender equality standards and mechanisms.

² Council of Europe Group of Specialists in Gender Mainstreaming, 1998.

Council of Europe Legal Standards

7. The Council of Europe's work in the fields of human rights and gender equality has resulted in comprehensive legal standards and policy guidance aimed at achieving the advancement and empowerment of women and the effective realisation of gender equality in Council of Europe member States and beyond.
8. An impressive number of legal Conventions and Recommendations have been adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe which influenced gender equality developments in Europe and beyond.
9. The [European Convention on Human Rights](#) is Europe's core human rights treaty: Article 1 of the Convention guarantees the rights and freedoms to everyone. Article 14 and Protocol 12 reaffirm the principle of non-discrimination; the European Social Charter establishes the enjoyment of economic and social rights without discrimination; the Council of Europe [Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence](#) (Istanbul Convention) is the "gold standard" to tackle violence against women in all its many forms; the Council of Europe [Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings](#), aims at preventing and combating trafficking in women, men and children for the purpose of sexual, labour or other types of exploitation; and the Council of Europe [Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse](#) (Lanzarote Convention), is the first treaty to criminalise all forms of sexual offences against children.
10. The Committee of Ministers recommendations³ related to gender equality cover grounds ranging from sex discrimination to sexist language, the protection of women against violence, balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making, gender mainstreaming in education, gender equality standards and mechanisms, protection and promotion of the rights of women and girls with disabilities, gender equality and the media, and gender mainstreaming in sport. They provide the member States with standards which are crucial to prepare legislation and put in place policies at national level to comply with internationally agreed standards in the area of gender equality

³ [Recommendation No. R\(85\)2 on legal protection against sex discrimination](#); [Recommendation No. R \(90\)4 on the elimination of sexism from language](#); [Recommendation Rec\(2002\)5 on the protection of women against violence](#); [Recommendation Rec\(2003\)3 on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making](#); [Recommendation Rec\(2007\)13 on gender mainstreaming in education](#); [Recommendation Rec\(2007\)17 on gender equality standards and mechanisms](#); [Recommendation Rec \(2012\)6 on the protection and promotion of the rights of women and girls with disabilities](#); [Recommendation Rec \(2013\)1 on gender equality and media](#); [Recommendation Rec \(2015\)2 on gender mainstreaming in sport](#).

The Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017

11. The Council of Europe launched its first ever Transversal Programme on Gender Equality in 2012 with the aim of increasing the impact and visibility of gender equality standards and supporting their implementation in member States and within the Organisation itself. The Programme mobilises all of the Council of Europe's sectors, intergovernmental structures, monitoring mechanisms and partial agreements as well as its external partners, and thus brings resources together for greater impact, energy and focus. The Council of Europe [Gender Equality Commission](#) (GEC) is at the centre of this effort.
12. The most tangible result of the Transversal programme was the first Council of Europe [Strategy on Gender Equality 2014-2017](#), which was unanimously adopted by the Committee of Ministers in November 2013. The Strategy built upon the strengths, specificities and added value of the Council of Europe and set the vision and a framework for the Council of Europe's role and action in the area of gender equality. The Strategy promotes a holistic and integrated approach to gender equality and provides policy guidance and support to Council of Europe member States, as well as internal institutional bodies and mechanisms to tackle old and new challenges in implementing standards in the area of gender equality.
13. The Gender Equality Strategy for 2014-2017 set five priority areas:
 1. combating gender stereotypes and sexism;
 2. preventing and combating violence against women;
 3. guaranteeing equal access of women to justice;
 4. achieving balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making;
 5. achieving gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures.
14. The Council of Europe has engaged in the promotion and the monitoring/evaluation of standards in order to identify gaps and obstacles, as well as in the development of activities, tools and co-operation programmes to address such gaps and support the implementation of relevant standards by member States. Another important element of the current Gender Equality Strategy has been the strategic partnerships launched and strengthened with other regional and international organisations, aimed at ensuring synergies, avoiding duplication and strengthening impact, as well as with the civil society to increase outreach and visibility.

15. The Gender Equality Commission (GEC) has reported annually to the Committee of Ministers on the implementation of the Strategy. These reports have confirmed the leading role of the Council of Europe in the area of gender equality and its increasing authority both at European and global level. Regular reporting and monitoring have also confirmed that member States engage in a proactive way in activities related to all five objectives of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy, and that national efforts have benefited from the initiatives and tools developed under the guidance of the GEC. On the other hand, co-operation with the member States has been vital and has enabled the Strategy to harness the Council of Europe standards with initiatives, innovative ideas and experience at the national level.

The new strategy for 2018-2023

16. The Conference "[*Are we there yet? Assessing progress, inspiring action – the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017*](#)"⁴ took stock of the implementation of the 2014-2017 Strategy, and put forward a number of recommendations for the preparation of the next Council of Europe gender equality strategy, including the need to take account of progress and achievements, as well as of emerging issues - such as migration flows and refugee crisis.
17. The new strategy builds upon the vast legal and policy *acquis* of the Council of Europe as regards gender equality, as well as the achievements of the first Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017. It links them to both the current economic context and the political leverage within the Council of Europe, including the overarching priorities of the Organisation. The new strategy outlines the goals and priorities of the Council of Europe on gender equality for the years 2018-2023, identifies the working methods and the main partners, as well as the measures required to increase the visibility of results.
18. The strategy recognises the important challenge of ensuring that all women benefit from gender equality policies and protection provided by relevant standards, including certain disadvantaged groups of women (Roma women, women with disability, migrant and refugee women, etc.). In order to address this, the strategy integrates an intersectional transversal approach in each of the priority objectives and actions listed below. In addition, the strategy needs to be implemented in a co-ordinated way with other Council of Europe strategies and action plans in the fields of children's rights, internet governance, rights of persons with disabilities, and the inclusion of Roma and Travellers.

⁴ 30 June – 1 July 2016 in Tallinn, Estonia

19. Furthermore, discrimination on the ground of sex has a structural and horizontal character that pervades all cultures and communities, at all levels. Gender inequalities “add up” during the course of a life, so that certain disadvantages experienced in younger years accumulate throughout the life cycle and can cause subsequent difficulties later in life. Women are also often subjected to discrimination on several of the grounds listed in Article 14 of the European Convention for Human Rights and expanded through related case-law of the European Court of Human Rights. Multiple forms of discrimination and identities need to be taken into account so that gender equality policies and “generic policies” are fully effective for both women and men in their diversity.
20. A strong commitment to *de facto* equality between women and men at all levels, alongside women’s empowerment and the elimination of sexism and harmful gender stereotypes will benefit entire societies, including men and future generations. Moving towards real gender equality also requires a change in both women’s and men’s roles, including an equal sharing of care responsibilities.
21. A biennial table indicating current, future and proposed activities (in line with the budget cycle of the Council of Europe) will be attached to the new strategy to show the immediate link between the strategic objectives and the specific measures and means used to achieve them.

Council of Europe in the global context: UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

22. The Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy contributes to achieving the goals set in relevant international standards, such as the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
23. The Council of Europe has three ground-breaking, unique and comprehensive Conventions in the area of human dignity that are all of relevance to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and through them can support and contribute to the implementation, notably of Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) and Goal 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels):
 - The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) (CETS 210);
 - The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CETS 197);
 - The Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) (CETS 201).

24. These conventions have a global outreach. Their provisions inspire normative and policy changes in all regions of the world and all States can become Parties to these conventions. They can be used as blue prints and provide inspiration and good practice examples when designing national policies and legislation globally.
25. The 14 indicators agreed upon at UN level to measure the implementation of the nine targets included in Goal 5 cover priority areas of the Council of Europe work to promote gender equality, such as laws and policies to promote gender equality; legal frameworks to promote and monitor non-discrimination on the basis of sex; women and girls subject to different forms of gender-based violence; and women members of national parliaments and local government. The Council of Europe's Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017 and the new strategy (2018-2023) directly address many of the targets included in Goal 5, including human dignity and the fight against gender inequality; the promotion of the full participation of women in society; the need to guarantee access to fair justice systems for all and to work in partnerships.
26. Goal 16 is also relevant to the Council of Europe's work on gender equality as it refers to providing "access to justice for all". The Council of Europe addresses this through its work to guarantee women's equal access to justice. Furthermore, Goal 16 includes targets to reduce physical, psychological and sexual violence and related deaths, and to end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against girls and boys – areas covered by Council of Europe conventions and addressed through activities and co-operation with the 47 member States and the South-Mediterranean countries.
27. All this comprehensive and extensive body of standards and work provides important input towards the efforts of the member States to achieve the SDGs.

I. GOAL AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

28. The new Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy for 2018-2023 builds on the achievements of the previous strategy (2014-2017) and continues to address persistent challenges under each priority area, as agreed with the member States.
29. The overall goal of the new strategy is to achieve gender equality and empower women in Council of Europe member States, by supporting the implementation of existing standards and strengthening the Council of Europe *acquis* in the field of gender equality, under the guidance of the GEC. The focus for the period 2018-2023 will be on six strategic areas:
- Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism;
 - Prevent and combat violence against women;
 - Ensure the equal access of women to justice;
 - Achieve a balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making;
 - Protect the rights of migrant and asylum-seeking women and girls;
 - Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures.
30. The priority areas build on and further develop the existing body of work by the Council of Europe, bringing added value to actions taken by other regional and international organisations. In addition, they aim to continue the focus of future Council of Europe activities in the field of gender equality in order to achieve tangible results during the period covered by the new strategy (2018-2023).
31. The beneficiaries of the new strategy are women and men living in the 47 Council of Europe member States and society as a whole. The governments of member States drive the implementation of the new strategy at national and local levels, in close co-operation with gender equality institutions, equality bodies and civil society.

Strategic objective 1: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

32. Gender stereotypes are preconceived ideas whereby women and men are arbitrarily assigned characteristics and roles determined and limited by their sex. Sex stereotyping can limit the development of the natural talents and abilities of girls and boys, women and men, their educational and professional experiences, as well as life opportunities in general.
33. Stereotypes about women both result from and are the cause of deeply engrained attitudes, values, norms and prejudices against women. They are used to justify and maintain the historical relations of power of men over women, as well as sexist attitudes which are holding back the advancement of women.

34. Gender stereotypes and patriarchy affect men too. Societal perceptions about what a man should look like/"real man" (boys and men don't cry, men are strong, etc.), or what careers to pursue and what roles to take on in the household (carer and provider versus equal partner sharing work and childcare) and the way they are portrayed in and by the media, feed into reinforcing gender stereotypes.
35. Further action in this area will seek to:
- promote the implementation of Council of Europe standards and recommendations that target the eradication of prejudices, customs, traditions based on stereotyped gender roles; develop tools to support member States in implementing relevant standards, in particular the Istanbul Convention, Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)13 of the Committee of Ministers on gender mainstreaming in education and Recommendation CM/Rec(2013)1 of the Committee of Ministers on gender equality and media;
 - promote the implementation of recommendations from the Helsinki Conference (2014) on "[Combating Gender Stereotypes in and through Education](#)";
 - promote the implementation of recommendations from the Amsterdam Conference (2013) on "[Media and the Image of Women](#)";
 - identify, compile and disseminate good practice to eradicate gender stereotypes for both girls and boys, women and men;
 - collect data to review the implementation of existing standards by member States;
 - continue to address the harmful impact of gender stereotyping on judicial decision-making, in the framework of activities to improve women's access to justice and support efforts to combat gender stereotyping within the judiciary, in accordance with the Council of Europe Action Plan on Judicial Independence and Impartiality for 2016-2021 (Action 2.4);
 - tackle harmful gender stereotypes affecting one or more particular group/s of women, in co-operation with relevant sectors and organisations (e.g. women with disabilities, migrant women, Roma women, etc.);
 - address harmful gender stereotypes affecting men;
 - continue to address sexist hate speech as a form of sexism, in co-operation with other relevant sectors of the Council of Europe;
 - prepare a draft recommendation to prevent and combat sexism.

Strategic objective 2: Prevent and combat violence against women

36. Violence against women remains widespread in all member States of the Council of Europe, with devastating consequences for women, societies and economies. The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), is the most far-reaching international treaty to tackle this serious violation of women's human rights. Despite progress in standard setting, the persistence of violence against women demonstrates the need to prioritise this issue at all levels, including by addressing the situation of some groups of women who are confronted to multiple forms of violence.
37. The Istanbul Convention has led to positive changes in legislation and in the development of strategies to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence in many member States. However, a number of significant challenges persist in developing policies and actions to address violence against women, including the limited resources available to provide specialist and dedicated support services to all women victims of violence.⁵ In addition, the needs of specific groups of women, including the ever increasing numbers of women migrants, refugees and asylum seekers require targeted policies and activities to address the violence they are confronted with.
38. Social media play an important role in our lives, particularly when used to share information and expand awareness of a wide range of issues. However, evidence also shows that all social media are subject to abusive use, and that women and girls are often confronted with violent and sexualised threats online. Particular platforms acting as conveyers of sexist hate speech include social media or video games. Freedom of expression is often abused as an excuse to cover unacceptable and offensive behaviour. In the same way as with other forms of violence against women, sexist hate speech remains underreported, but its impact on women, whether emotional, psychological and/or physical can be devastating, especially for young women.
39. Further action in this area will seek to:
- support member States to sign, ratify and implement the Istanbul Convention, including through the provision of technical and legal expertise;
 - develop tools to promote the knowledge of the Istanbul Convention among non-state actors in order to encourage their contribution to its implementation;
 - promote the Istanbul Convention beyond the European continent, making available expertise and sharing good practices in the context of co-operation with non-member States and other regional and international organisations;

⁵ See "[Analytical study of the results of the 4th round of monitoring the implementation of Recommendation Rec\(2002\)5 on the protection of women against violence in Council of Europe member States](#)" (March 2014).

- gather information and build knowledge about the specific forms of violence faced by certain groups of women (such as older women, migrant women, women with a disability, young women and girls) through co-operation and exchange of information with relevant bodies and entities of the Council of Europe;
- develop information tools on the role of men in preventing violence against women.

Strategic objective 3: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

40. Access to justice is a human right and an integral element of promoting the rule of law and a well-functioning democracy. Respect for and protection of human rights can only be guaranteed by the availability of effective remedies, adequate reparation and/or compensation. While accessing justice may be difficult for everyone, it is even more so for women, due to gender inequality in society and in the justice system. Persistent inequalities between women and men, gender bias and gender stereotypes result in unequal access of women and men to justice. Evidence also points to the existence of a glass ceiling in the judiciary.⁶
41. Equal access to justice implies the right to an effective remedy, the right to a fair trial, the right to equal access to the courts, and the right to legal aid and legal representation. There are a multitude of obstacles that prevent women from having equal access to justice: taboos, prejudices, gender stereotypes, customs, ignorance and sometimes even the laws themselves, as well as gaps in legislation and in their implementation. Taken together, they are pieces in a 'justice jigsaw' that leaves women out. It is urgent that this gender imbalance is addressed, as equal access to justice is fundamental to ensuring real equality between women and men.
42. Cultural barriers, fear and shame also impact women's access to justice, as do discriminatory attitudes and the stereotypical roles of women as carers and men as providers, which still persist in civil and family law in many jurisdictions. These barriers may persist during investigations and trials, especially in cases of gender-based violence. Such barriers impact even more women exposed to multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination.
43. Council of Europe action in this area will seek to:
- support member States to implement Council of Europe and other relevant standards, including SDG 16 and CEDAW's General Recommendation No. 33 on women's access to justice (2015);
 - promote and support the implementation of the recommendations from the Bern Conference (2016) "[Towards guaranteeing equal access of women to justice](#)";
 - identify, compile and disseminate good practices from member States to reduce obstacles and facilitate women's access to justice;

⁶ Council of Europe European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice, "[European Judicial Systems - Efficiency and quality of justice](#)" CEPEJ Studies No. 23, Edition 2016 (2014 data).

- encourage research and data collection to tackle gaps and lack of data disaggregated by sex concerning women's access to justice;
- take measures to address the gender stereotyping within the judiciary, including on judicial decision-making, through research, monitoring, training, education, capacity building and the promotion of good practices;
- develop training tools and materials on gender equality issues and women's human rights, tailored to the needs of justice professionals and members of law enforcement bodies;
- monitor court decisions to raise awareness and ensure a better understanding among legal professionals of issues related to women's access to justice, including judicial stereotypes and the protection against gender-based violence and discrimination;
- develop information tools with the main Council of Europe standards to promote women's access to justice taking into account the needs of women in particularly vulnerable situations, such as survivors of violence, migrant women, targets of sexist hate speech, etc.

Strategic objective 4: Achieve a balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making

44. Balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making is required for real democracy. Despite the adoption of new laws and policies in many member States and examples of good practices and supportive measures in some of the member States, women's underrepresentation in public and political life remains a critical issue which undermines the full functioning of democratic institutions and processes. Political activities and public decision-making remain male-dominated areas. Men set political priorities, and political culture continues to be structured around male behaviour and life experience.
45. A number of obstacles make it difficult for women to enter the area of political and public decision making, including electoral systems, the functioning of political parties, gender stereotypes, models and values conveyed by the family, school and media; cultural and ideological factors; and the social division of work which leaves little space for the participation of women in the public arena. In most member States, the full and equitable participation of women in political and public life, in legislative, executive, judicial, diplomatic and administrative bodies at the local, regional and national level is still below the Council of Europe agreed standards and the governments' commitment for a "Planet 50-50 by 2030".
46. Full participation of women in public and political life underpins the need for fundamental changes to remove both societal and structural obstacles.

47. Further action in this area will seek to:

- support member States in achieving balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making;
- consider updating Recommendation Rec(2003)3 of the Committee of Ministers on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision making to include parity standards;
- continue the regular monitoring of the implementation by member States of Recommendation Rec(2003)3 of the Committee of Ministers on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making, and ensure the visibility and dissemination of data and good practices in member States;
- encourage and support actions to facilitate women's participation in elections at the national, regional and local levels as well as actions to empower both women candidates and elected officials - also from marginalised groups – in co-operation with relevant bodies of the Council of Europe;
- identify and support measures and good practices that promote gender equality in relation to electoral systems, training of decision makers, parity thresholds, and the regulation of political parties including public funding, in co-operation with relevant bodies of the Council of Europe and with a view to combating harmful gender stereotypes and to improve the gender-sensitiveness of decision-making environments;
- achieve the balanced participation of women and men in Council of Europe bodies, institutions and decision-making processes.

Strategic objective 5: Protect the rights of migrant and asylum-seeking women

48. The rapidly growing number of migrant and asylum-seeking women and girls and the precarious situation in which they are, raise concerns about their physical and sexual safety and security – especially when they travel on their own, are pregnant or with small children - and both on their migratory routes and once they reach their final destination. Many migrant and asylum-seeking women and girls have already been exposed to various forms of gender-based violence either in their country of origin or during the journey to Europe or upon arrival. Due consideration should be given to the needs and circumstances of women migrants and asylum seekers, and adopt gender-responsive measures to prevent violence, harassment and other form of exploitation and abuse. In addition, measures need to be taken to ensure that migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women have access to their social rights in relation to employment, housing, health, education, social protection and welfare where applicable; and access to information about their rights and the services available.

49. There is lack of accurate sex-disaggregated statistics on migrants and asylum-seekers, including with regard to detention. Women victims of trafficking and gender-based violence held in administrative detention need to be identified as such and provided with adequate protection, treatment and care. Furthermore, migrant and asylum-seeking women and girls are a vastly diverse group and additional considerations of age, nationality or ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity, and state of health may amplify vulnerabilities to specific threats or further limit access to resources or services.
50. Council of Europe standards should serve as a blue print for all efforts and measures undertaken by the member States to protect the human rights of migrant and asylum-seeking women. In particular, the Istanbul Convention, the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, and the Lanzarote Convention should be at the heart of efforts to protect and promote the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls, including ensuring that culture, custom, tradition or so called 'honour' are not be considered as justification for any acts of violence or any violation of women's human rights, as provided by the Istanbul Convention.
51. Action in this area will seek to:
- support the systematic integration of a gender equality dimension in securing the human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrant and asylum-seeking women, regardless of traditional or cultural attitudes;
 - support the implementation of existing standards aimed at preventing migrant and asylum-seeking women and girls from falling victim to gender-based violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, including by addressing these risks through adequate reporting and referral mechanisms;
 - develop tools to support the appropriate treatment of migrant and asylum-seeking women victims of violence, having regard to the measures included in the Istanbul and the Anti-Trafficking Conventions;
 - encourage respect for the social rights of migrant and asylum-seeking women, in particular with regards to health, housing and education and address the multiple discrimination that migrant and asylum-seeking to which women may be subject;
 - update Recommendation No. R (79) 10 of the Committee of Ministers to member States concerning women migrants, and regularly review its implementation;
 - prepare and disseminate information documents on the main Council of Europe standards to protect the human rights of migrant and asylum-seeking women;
 - encourage independent Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms to address the specific needs of migrant and asylum-seeking women into their monitoring work where applicable, and to make recommendations in this regard.

Strategic objective 6: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

52. Council of Europe standards on gender mainstreaming laid the foundations for important work in this area in Europe and beyond, including the reference definition of the term. The Committee of Ministers has adopted a number of recommendations on gender mainstreaming in different fields, including education, the media and sport.⁷ By adopting a gender mainstreaming approach in all policies and measures, the Council of Europe will ensure that new initiatives and standards are neither gender neutral nor gender blind, and therefore result in better informed policy-making, better allocation of resources and better governance.
53. Some member States are also actively promoting the implementation of gender mainstreaming in their national policies and measures through action plans and institutional structures to co-ordinate gender mainstreaming efforts, gender budgeting policies, and relevant training for government officials.
54. In 2014-2017, co-operation and synergies were reinforced in the various steering committees, monitoring mechanisms and partial agreements to introduce a gender equality perspective in Council of Europe policies and at all levels. Gender Equality Rapporteurs (GERs) have been appointed in 36 steering committees and other institutional bodies, as well as in seven monitoring mechanisms. They lead efforts to integrate a gender equality dimension into their work and activities.
55. The Council of Europe will continue to strive to achieve gender mainstreaming in:
- its various policy areas, in particular the areas of justice, law enforcement, local government, media, culture, education, minorities, migration, Roma people, children's rights, bioethics, social rights, youth, sports, fight against corruption, fight against terrorism, trafficking in human beings, drug abuse, health and pharmaceutical care, and in
 - the development, implementation and evaluation of co-operation programmes, projects and activities;
- by:
- supporting policy analyses that are grounded on the concrete situation of women and men and their specific needs, as well as on the estimated impact of new policies and measures on them;
 - providing targeted training on gender mainstreaming and related materials and tools;

⁷ Recommendation No. CM/Rec (1998)14 on gender mainstreaming; Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)13 on gender mainstreaming in education; Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)1 on the inclusion of gender differences in health policy; Recommendation CM/Rec(2013)1 on gender equality and media; and Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)2 on gender mainstreaming in sport. Work is underway to prepare a new recommendation of the Committee of Minister on gender equality in the audio-visual sector.

- encouraging the different Council of Europe sectors to address the need for sex-disaggregated data in standard-setting, monitoring and co-operation activities;
 - taking due care to involve all relevant actors;
 - compiling and reviewing information on national gender equality mechanisms and other institutional frameworks for gender mainstreaming;
 - identifying and disseminating good practices from both the member States, and inside the organisation, on gender mainstreaming.
56. Training and support for GERs and Secretariat members supporting them will be continued, as well as the production of supporting policy tools, the development of indicators to assess progress, the provision of expertise, and the exchange of information and good practice both within the Organisation and with relevant national and international partners.
57. The Council of Europe will also continue to actively promote strong and efficient gender equality mechanisms and gender mainstreaming in member States through the promotion of existing standards, and by gathering information and disseminating good practices from member States.
58. The Council of Europe will continue work to mainstream gender in its staff policies, including tools and indicators to measure and assess progress.

II. INSTITUTIONAL SETTING, RESOURCES AND WORKING METHODS

59. The transversal nature of the Gender Equality Programme presupposes that all Council of Europe decision-making, advisory and monitoring bodies, including in the field of human resources, should support and actively contribute to the achievement of the goal and strategic objectives of the gender equality strategy. They will be invited to take initiatives within their respective mandates and resources. To stimulate and facilitate this process, the following elements complete the Council of Europe institutional setting for gender equality:
60. The Gender Equality Commission (GEC): a Council of Europe Steering Committee composed of representatives of the 47 member States. The mission of the GEC is to steer the Gender Equality Transversal Programme, advise and involve its various components, as well as liaise with relevant intergovernmental bodies, providing expertise and a forum for exchange on good practices and issues of concern.
61. The Gender Equality Rapporteurs (GERs) appointed within intergovernmental bodies and other Council of Europe structures (see above) work to identify ways to integrate a gender equality perspective in the functioning, policies, programmes and activities of their respective body or structure. In co-operation with the GEC, they identify opportunities to develop new measures and activities to promote gender equality.
62. The Gender Mainstreaming Team (GMT) is a group of Council of Europe staff members serving in the various sectors and bodies of the Organisation. Its task is to share information and expertise, provide visibility to results, identify opportunities for joint action and make proposals to facilitate the implementation of the Gender Equality Transversal Programme, including this Strategy. The Gender Equality Unit convenes and chairs the meetings of the GMT.
63. In order to assess progress in the implementation of the strategy, the GEC regularly takes stock of results achieved and prepares an annual report on its implementation, which is submitted to the Committee of Ministers.

III. PARTNERSHIPS

64. All the main international partners of the Council of Europe (United Nations (UN), European Union (EU), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Organization of American States (OAS)) have adopted Gender Equality Strategies or Action Plans. This provides a sound basis for partnerships and institutionalised co-operation, enabling the identification of opportunities for joint action, complementarity and synergy. The Council of Europe places a great importance in maintaining strategic partnerships with other regional and international organisations and civil society working for the promotion of gender equality and women's rights.
65. The EU, the OSCE, the OAS and UN-Women are invited to contribute to the development of the new strategy. They are therefore invited to contribute to its implementation as appropriate, in particular by holding regular consultations with the Council of Europe, participating in meetings and events and co-operating in joint initiatives. The Council of Europe will seek to reinforce its co-operation with other UN agencies and bodies (in particular Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Commission for the Status of Women (CSW), UN Global Compact, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)) and other international organisations (such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*).
66. The Gender Equality Transversal Programme also seeks to involve, engage and use the experience and expertise of civil society organisations in the development, implementation and assessment of policies, programmes and activities.
67. Other natural partners in the implementation of the gender equality strategy include:
- parliaments;
 - national governments;
 - local and regional authorities and their associations;
 - gender equality bodies;
 - human rights institutions;
 - professional networks (in particular in the fields of justice, journalism, education, health and social services);
 - trade unions and employers' associations;
 - the media;
 - the private sector.

IV. COMMUNICATION

68. Further work in this area will continue to seek to:

- increase the visibility of Council of Europe standards, studies, guidelines, projects, events and their results in the area of gender equality;
- raise awareness on specific issues with a view to changing attitudes, mentalities and behaviours;
- facilitate the exchange of information between the various components of the programme and with partners;
- give visibility to good practices and data collected at national, regional and local level.