

Strasbourg, 22 March 2017

GEC(2016)1 rev 1

GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION
(GEC)

GEC Work Plan 2016 - 2017

In the framework of the Terms of Reference of the Gender Equality Commission (GEC) (see appendix 1) and bearing in mind the five strategic priorities included in the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy (2014-2017), the following activities are proposed for the biennium 2016-2017:

I. Combating gender stereotypes and sexism:

1. A seminar on "Combating sexist hate speech" in co-operation with the No Hate Speech Movement campaign (Youth Department) and follow-up action.
2. Preparation and dissemination of a factsheet/brochure on sexist hate speech (including Council of Europe standards in this area).
3. Preparation of a draft recommendation, for consideration by the Committee of Ministers, on preventing and combating sexism.
4. Follow-up the implementation of the new Council of Europe Internet Governance Strategy 2016-2020, in particular work related to the need to combat online harassment and bullying, and to monitor action taken to protect women and girls internet users from online abuse, including online threats of sexual violence and sexism.
5. Follow-up the work of two new Council of Europe Committees: the Committee of Experts on Internet Intermediaries (MSI-NET), which will prepare a draft recommendation by the Committee of Ministers on the roles and responsibilities of Internet intermediaries; and the Committee of Experts on Media Pluralism and Transparency of Media Ownership (MSI-MED), which will prepare a feasibility report on a standard-setting instrument on the media coverage of elections, with a specific focus on gender equality and the use of the Internet in elections.

II. Preventing and combating violence against women

1. Continue promotional activities for the signature and ratification of the Istanbul Convention; continue disseminating the collection of papers on specific provisions of the Istanbul Convention. Finalise the preparation and publication of the last two papers (on Article 11 and Article 52 of the Istanbul Convention).
2. Continue promoting the Istanbul Convention beyond the European continent, making available expertise and sharing good practices with non-member states and other regional and international organisations, such as the South Mediterranean countries, the Parties to the Belem do Pará Convention, the Organization of American States, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and UN Women.

3. Continue the regular exchange of views with the Secretariats of the Istanbul Convention, the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and the Lanzarote Convention, as well as with their respective monitoring bodies, as appropriate.

III. Guaranteeing equal access of women to justice

1. Carry out the agreed follow-up to the Bern Conference, including:
 - Disseminate the training materials of the regional project: "Improving women's access to justice in five Eastern Partnership countries" (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine).
 - Co-operate with the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR) on the preparation of a training module on judicial stereotypes and a video on women's access to justice.
 - Finalise and disseminate the report on indicators to measure women's access to justice (in co-operation with UN Women).
 - Review and update the factsheet on "Guaranteeing Equal Access of Women to Justice".
 - Continue updating the compilation of case-law of the European Court of Human Rights (Court) on gender equality issues, prepared by the Gender Equality Unit.
 - Give visibility to and help disseminate the factsheet prepared by the European Court of Human Rights with case-law on sex-based discrimination (published in April 2016).
 - Explore possible work and co-operation with other Council of Europe sectors to address multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination affecting women as regards their access to justice, including research and good practices.
2. Continue engaging with relevant Council of Europe committees and bodies (e.g. European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice - CEPEJ, European Committee on Legal Co-operation - CDCJ) so that their activities take account of issues related to women's access to justice and Council of Europe's work in this field. Contribute to the implementation of the Council of Europe Action Plan on "Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality".

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

1. Carry out the third monitoring round of the implementation by member States of CM Recommendation (2003)3 on balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making, including collection of data from member States, analysis of the information gathered, publication and dissemination of the analytical report.
2. Prepare a factsheet with the main results and recommendations stemming from the monitoring of Recommendation (2003)3.
3. Consider initiating any follow-up measures to address the main findings and recommendations from the third monitoring round of the implementation of CM Recommendation (2003)3.
4. Continue co-operation with the Venice Commission and the Electoral Assistance Division of the Council of Europe to support their work to integrate gender equality in electoral processes.

V. Achieving gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

1. Organise and carry out the training of Gender Equality Rapporteurs (GERs), including the preparation of relevant materials and tools to help them in their work. Organise and carry out regular exchanges of views between GERs and the GEC.
2. Provide advice and expertise to the Committee of Ministers and other Council of Europe committees and bodies on gender mainstreaming and gender-sensitive budgeting, upon request and on the basis of existing standards and tools. This includes on-going initiatives in the fields of sport, cinema, youth policies, democratic governance, etc.
3. Continue holding exchange of views between the GEC and other sectors of the Council of Europe carrying out work on gender mainstreaming.
4. Update and keep under review the summary document providing an overview of gender mainstreaming activities in the Council of Europe.
5. Prepare a compilation of activities to promote gender mainstreaming carried out in member States.

VI. Progress review

1. Prepare and disseminate the annual report on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017, and its submission to the Committee of Ministers.
2. Continue monitoring developments at the national level and compile a document on action taken by the member States to implement the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy.
3. In 2016, organise a stock-taking conference to review progress in the implementation of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017 and explore possible themes to be covered in the next Strategy.
4. Carry out an evaluation of the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017 with the involvement of member States and civil society.
5. On the basis of the evaluation of the current Strategy, prepare a draft Council of Europe strategy on gender equality from 2018 onwards, for adoption by the Committee of Ministers.

VII. International co-operation

1. Continue engaging and co-operating with the United Nations (in particular the Commission on the Status of Women, UN Women, the Committee on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights, and the Economic Commission for Europe).
2. Organise events on the standards and activities of the Council of Europe in the area of gender equality during the regular annual sessions of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.
3. Contribute to the regional review of the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
4. Continue engaging and co-operating with the European Union (in particular the European Commission, European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), the European Parliament, and the Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)). Continue contributing to the work of the European Commission's Advisory Body on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men. Continue co-operation with the European Network of Equality Bodies (Equinet).

5. Continue engaging and co-operating with the Organization of American States, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
6. Continue engaging with relevant international and regional NGOs in the field of gender equality and women's rights.

VIII. Communication

1. Prepare and launch a quarterly on-line newsletter about Council of Europe's work on gender equality.
2. Prepare, publish and disseminate a revised factsheet on gender equality.
3. Re-publish the existing thematic factsheets in a more user-friendly brochure format.
4. Ensure a complete review of the Council of Europe's gender equality website, both in terms of design and of content.

See Appendix 2 for the table of activities.

Appendix 1

Under the supervision of the Committee of Ministers, the GEC will steer the intergovernmental work in the field of gender equality. In particular, the GEC will carry out the following main tasks:

- Support the implementation of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy (2014-2017);
- Conduct needs' assessments and provide advice on the development of standards, co-operation and monitoring activities within its field of competence;
- Ensure that a gender perspective is maintained in the activities of all committees and bodies of the Organisation;
- Provide expertise to member States on the development of legislation, policies, practice, training schemes and awareness material to support implementation of internationally agreed standards at national level; and facilitate exchange of experience and good practice;
- Support governments, parliaments, local authorities, civil society and private sector for the purposes of achieving real change on gender equality in member States;
- Advise the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General on appropriate action to be taken and likewise provide advice as requested on such questions as may arise;
- Contribute to co-operation and support activities to national initiatives in this field;
- Follow the implementation of the non-binding instruments that it has prepared as well as conventions for which it has been given supervision by the Committee of Ministers;
- Identify a topic of particular relevance in the field of gender equality and organise a thematic conference to exchange experience and good practices, and facilitate progress;
- Engage in co-ordination and joint planning at international level with the European Union, UN Women and other intergovernmental organisations and civil society;
- Follow the activities of the relevant monitoring and other bodies or convention mechanisms, without prejudice to the mandates of intergovernmental committees of the Council of Europe that already follow the work of monitoring mechanisms;
- Carry out, at regular intervals, within the limits of the available resources and bearing in mind its priorities, an examination of some or all of the conventions for which it has been given responsibility (i.e. the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, and the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence) in co-operation, where appropriate, with the relevant convention-based bodies, and report back to the Committee of Ministers.

The terms of reference of the Gender Equality Commission for 2016-2017 include the following specific tasks:

- Promote gender equality as a visible priority for the Organisation (internal and external);
- Promote the implementation by member States of the 2009 Madrid Declaration and the 2010 Baku Action Plan and contribute towards the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;
- Oversee the implementation of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy (2014-2017);
- Share good practices and support member States in the implementation of gender equality standards at national level;
- Promote Council of Europe gender equality standards and activities at national and international level;
- Promote coherence, synergies and cooperation with other regional and international organisations on gender equality;
- Promote the inclusion in the political agendas of the Council of Europe member States and beyond of the need to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women and domestic violence;
- Review the implementation of relevant Committee of Ministers' recommendations;
- Promote the visibility of the Council of Europe's standards at United Nations level;
- Ensure co-operation with relevant UN agencies, namely UN Women and relevant UN Special Rapporteurs and participation in relevant meetings (UN Commission on the Status of Women, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Human Rights Council, events and conferences organised by UN Women), the World Bank, the OAS, the OSCE, the OECD as well as at the European Union level, by co-operation with the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), with the aim of strengthening equality and enhancing women's rights as an integral part of universal human rights.

Appendix 2 – Table of Activities

Activity	Responsible	Timeframe	2016	2017	Comment / update
Objective 1. Combating gender stereotypes and sexism					
Seminar on combating sexist hate speech	GE Unit + Youth Directorate + GEC	January – February			Seminar took place 10-12 February with participation from Austrian GEC representative
Follow-up action: preparation and dissemination of factsheet on sexist hate speech	GE Unit	April – June			Produced 2016
Preparation of a draft recommendation on preventing and combating sexism for consideration by the Committee of Ministers	GE Unit + GEC + CM				1st drafting committee meeting took place March 2017
Promotion of standards	GE Unit	January - December			
Follow-up implementation of Council of Europe Internet Governance Strategy – online harassment and bullying	GE Unit	January - December			
Objective 2. Preventing and Combating Violence against Women					
Papers on the Istanbul Convention:					
<i>Article 11 – data collection and research</i>	GE Unit + external experts + GEC	January - April			Published in April 2016
<i>Article 52 – emergency barring orders</i>		January - December			
Promoting the Istanbul Convention within the member States and beyond the European Continent	GE Unit	January to December			

Exchanges with Secretariats of the Istanbul Convention, Lanzarote Convention and anti-Trafficking Convention and respective monitoring bodies	GE Unit + Lanzarote+ GREVIO and GRETA secretariats	April / November			
Objective 3. Guaranteeing equal access of women to justice					
Follow-up to Bern Conference:					
<i>Disseminate training materials of the regional project "Improving women's access to justice in five Eastern Partnership countries"</i>	GE Unit	September – December			
<i>Factsheet on Equal access to justice for victims of violence</i>	GE Unit	April - June			
<i>Update the compilation of case-law of the Court on gender equality issues</i>	GE Unit	On-going			
<i>Integration of judicial stereotypes into training manual</i>	GE Unit in co-operation with OHCHR	April - December			
<i>Finalise and disseminate indicators on women's access to justice</i>	GE Unit in co-operation with UN Women	January – June			
<i>Give visibility and help disseminate factsheet prepared by the Court with case-law on sex-based discrimination</i>	GE Unit + European Court of Human Rights	April - December			Published on 21 April 2016
<i>Explore co-operation with other Council of Europe sectors to address multiple and intersectional forms of discriminating affecting women</i>	GE Unit				

Engaging with Council of Europe Committees and bodies so that their activities take into account women's access to justice. Contribute to the implementation of the Council of Europe Action Plan on "Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality"	GE Unit	January - December			
Objective 4. Achieving balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making					
Launch 3rd round of monitoring of CM Recommendation (2003)3	GEC + member States + GE Unit	January – June			On-line questionnaire launched January
- Prepare analytical report	Expert + GE Unit + GEC	July – December			
- Publish and disseminate analytical report and findings	GE Unit + GEC	April - December			
- Produce a factsheet on key findings of analytical report	GE Unit	September - December			
- Consider initiating follow-up measures to address main findings	GE Unit + GEC				
Continue co-operation with Venice Commission and the Electoral Assistance Division to support their work on GE in electoral processes	GE Unit + VC + EAD	January - December			
Objective 5. Achieving gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures					
Training of GERS	GE Unit + Expert + GERS	November			
Exchange of views GER/GEC	GEC + GER	November			

Support gender mainstreaming activities and provide advice and expertise on gender-sensitive budgeting	GE Unit	January to December			
Compilation of GM initiatives in the member States	GE Unit + GEC	March – September			
Continue regular exchanges between GEC and other sectors of the Council of Europe carrying our work on gender mainstreaming	GE Unit + GEC	January to December			
Provide advice and expertise to Committee of Ministers and other Council of Europe committees and bodies on existing standards and tools	GE Unit	January to December			
Progress Review					
Annual Thematic Conference	GE Unit + GEC	January – June 2016			2016: 30 June – 1 July Tallinn, Estonia 2017: dates to be decided
Preparation and adoption of new gender equality strategy 2018-2023	GE Unit + GEC				CM adoption foreseen for early 2018
Monitoring and evaluation:					
<i>Annual Report</i>	GE Unit + GEC	September – November			
<i>Final evaluation report of the Strategy</i>	GE Unit + Expert	September - November			
<i>Progress/developments in the member States</i>	GE Unit + GEC	September – November			

International co-operation					
Engagement and co-operation with United Nations	GE Unit				Including CSW, UN Women, CEDAW, OHCHR, ECE
Organise and participate in events on standards and activities of the Council of Europe on gender equality issues during CSW sessions	GE Unit	March 2016 March 2017			2016: Two side events organised 2017: Three side events
Contribution to the UN 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development	GE Unit + GEC				
Engagement and co-operation with the European Union	GE Unit				Including EIGE, FRA. Contacts ongoing throughout the year
Engagement and co-operation with Equinet, OAS, OSCE and the OECD	GE Unit				Contacts ongoing throughout the year
Engagement with international and regional NGOs	GE Unit				Contacts ongoing throughout the year
Communication					
Prepare and launch a quarterly gender equality on-line newsletter	GE Unit				1st edition October 2016/2nd edition February 2017
Prepare and disseminate a revised factsheet on gender equality	GE Unit	February – April			Published and disseminated in 2016
Republish existing thematic factsheets in user-friendly format	GE Unit	January – June			Published and disseminated in 2016
Review and keep revamped Council of Europe gender equality website updated	GE Unit	January - December			New site launched March 2016