

**Task Force on Gender Equality
of the Conference of INGOs
Terms of reference 2018-2021
adopted by the Standing Committee on 23 April 2018**

Context:

For many years now, the Conference of INGOs has been dealing with the benefits and challenges which the issue of gender equality presents for Council of Europe member states. The world must move forward with a paradigm shift that is essential for building fully cohesive and inclusive societies, with due respect for human rights, while bringing about a necessary change in national legislation and its implementation and promoting greater gender equality.

The Conference of INGOs must comply with the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023, launched in May 2018 in Copenhagen, and the numerous recommendations adopted by the Committee of Ministers on equality. In this context, it is proposed that the Standing Committee set up a Task Force to provide input into the work of all the component entities of the Conference of INGOs on this cross-sectoral issue. The Task Force will facilitate the drafting of reasoned common positions which will include forward-looking analysis of integration trends and enable the Conference of INGOs to respond appropriately whenever necessary, while ensuring that its members' knowledge and expertise are pooled effectively.

Functions:

The Task Force will have the following tasks:

- Receiving information and alerts, particularly from the network of INGOs working in the field on the relevant thematic area. This information will provide useful material for analysis by the Task Force;
- Gathering and raising awareness of good practices in this area;
- Analysing the information received in the light of the work carried out in the Council of Europe and in other European and international institutions and organisations, in particular based on international legal instruments applicable to gender equality;
- Providing input for the work of the Vice-President in charge of Equality and all the thematic committees;
- Drafting reasoned positions for submission to the Standing Committee;
- Putting forward activity proposals to the Bureau and the Standing Committee;
- Proposing to the Conference of INGOs, through its component entities, common positions regarding problems identified.

Composition:

Given its operational nature, the size of the Task Force on Gender Equality should allow efficient exchanges and rapid methods of consultation. It will bring together an extensive network of collaborators who will submit information and provide input for the reasoned analyses.

Working method:

The information received will refer to the gender equality policy, norms and standards upheld by the Council of Europe in this regard.

Practical arrangements:

- Consultation following receipt of the information;
- Set deadline for replying to the information provider;
- Transmission of the analysis to the Bureau of the Conference of INGOs, which will decide on the follow-up to be given;
 - asking a thematic committee to make a reference to it for examination or debate during the session of the Conference of INGOs;
 - issuance of a press release by the Bureau;
 - inclusion on the agenda of the Standing Committee and of the plenary of the Conference of INGOs, in accordance with Rule 1.4.7 of the Rules of Procedure of the Conference;
- Together with the President, the Vice-President in charge of Equality shall establish dialogue with the bodies dealing with gender equality at the Council of Europe.

Impact criteria:

Generally, the aim of the Conference of INGOs is to remain vigilant as to the ways in which states act with regard to gender equality, to support NGOs in their democratic mission and to monitor respect for human rights. In this context, it is especially important that information is received on a regular basis and that reasoned analyses are produced.

The analysis by the Task Force should facilitate the transformation of the problems identified into issues serving as a basis for developing legal, social, philosophical, educational and sociological expertise, and carrying out advocacy work among the bodies of the Council of Europe.

Next stages:

- Identify the experts who will assist in analysing the information;
- Identify specialised INGOs dealing with a specific aspect;
- Draw up a non-exhaustive inventory of the work done by the INGOs.