



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

ACFC/MR(2025)3

Meeting report

87th meeting

Approved by the Advisory Committee on 9 February 2026

Opening of the meeting

The Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ACFC) held its 87th meeting from 14 October to 17 October 2025 in Strasbourg. Petra Roter, President of the Advisory Committee, opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the Advisory Committee.

Adoption of the Agenda and Order of Business

The Agenda and Order of Business, as reproduced in Appendix I, were adopted without amendments.

Approval of the report of the 86th meeting of the Advisory Committee

Having examined the report of its 86th meeting, the Advisory Committee approved the report as reproduced in document ACFC/MR(2025)2, without amendments.

Report from the Bureau

The President reported about the Bureau meeting held on 30 September 2025. She also informed the Advisory Committee about her presentation of the Opinion on Serbia at the Committee of Ministers' Rapporteur Group on Human Rights (GR-H) on 23 September 2025 and about an upcoming meeting of the on 16 October 2025 where draft resolutions on the implementation of the Framework Convention will be discussed.

Update by the Secretariat

Elise Cornu, Executive Secretary, informed the Advisory Committee about developments in the Committee of Ministers, including the state of negotiations of country resolutions, and updated the members of the Advisory Committee about state reports recently received. She informed the Advisory Committee of the recent decision (5 October 2025) of the House of Representatives of the Netherlands to recognise Sinti, Roma, and *Woonwagenbewoners* under the Framework Convention, following the long-standing recommendations of the Advisory Committee. She also informed the Advisory Committee of the upcoming publication of a [factsheet](#) on the intersectional challenges faced by women and girls belonging national minorities during the panel at the Geneva Peace Week, which was co-organised by the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

Approval of draft opinions

In application of Rule 37 of Resolution CM/Res(2019)49, the Advisory Committee unanimously approved the Sixth draft Opinion on Italy, on 16 October 2025. The Advisory Committee also decided to communicate the draft opinion to the Italian authorities and to invite them to provide written observations until 5 January 2026.

Adoption of final opinions

On 15 October 2025, in application of Rule 37 of Resolution CM/Res(2019)49, the Advisory Committee unanimously adopted the Sixth Opinion on Hungary and the Fifth Opinion on Portugal.

Presentation of the updated Glossary

The Advisory Committee exchanged on the proposals made by the Working Group and updated the Glossary (as an internal document) accordingly.

Presentation of the Checklist of Issues for Monitoring Visits

The Checklist of Issues for Monitoring Visits prepared by the Secretariat was presented to the Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee took note of this checklist, which identifies the main issues arising in the Advisory

Committee's monitoring activities, bringing together three dimensions of monitoring work into a single document to support future visits. These three dimensions are: a general Framework Convention checklist, a dedicated section on Roma-related issues, and a Gender Equality Checklist (previously adopted by the Advisory Committee).

The Advisory Committee agreed that the Checklist would serve as a living instrument, to be updated as needed, and that it would be included among the materials for all upcoming monitoring visits.

Presentation of the updated Sourcebook

Members of the Advisory Committee were invited to discuss the continued relevance of the Sourcebook, which compiles its case law, in light of the HUDOC-FCNM database. The Advisory Committee noted that HUDOC is now generally used, and concerns were raised over human and time resources required to maintain the Sourcebook.

The Advisory Committee endorsed the work done on the Sourcebook, and agreed to update it once per year, noting its value for new members and new members of the Secretariat while recognising that advances in technology may render it less relevant in future. The Advisory Committee agreed to review additions to the Sourcebook after the final adoption of the opinions, with a view to updating its case law as reflected in the newly adopted opinions.

Presentation of the research on the national legislation relating to symbols and exchange on the possible follow-up to be given

The Advisory Committee discussed how it could best monitor ongoing developments regarding the use of various symbols in so far as it affects national minorities and diversity management more generally. The Advisory Committee discussed areas of possible focus in future monitoring visits, including: how national symbols are regulated, which symbols are regulated, whether the use of specific national symbols can promote inclusion or exclusion of persons belonging to national minorities and how they (do not) contribute to societal integration and cohesion. The Advisory Committee concluded that further research was required to establish how national symbols may be included in future monitoring activities. The Advisory Committee agreed on some further steps in this direction.

Update by the members and reporting back on participation in external events

Petra Roter informed the Advisory Committee about her participation, on 16 September 2025, in the annual meeting of the chairs of Council of Europe monitoring bodies and the Secretary General. She informed the Advisory Committee that the Secretary General recognised the challenges facing monitoring bodies and emphasised the need for monitoring bodies to apply a constructive, evidence-based approach in their activities. She also informed the Advisory Committee that all chairs reported on various challenges in the work of their respective monitoring bodies, and asked the Secretary General for a firm political and institutional support to the monitoring work in general.

David Smith, second vice-President of the Advisory Committee, informed the Advisory Committee about his participation in a working group meeting concerning CDADI's upcoming study on regional or minority language protection and identification of good practices in member states. The study is expected to be published in early 2026 and will be shared with the Advisory Committee.

Exchange of view with Ambassador Berta MRAK, President of the Committee of Ministers' Rapporteur Group on Human Rights (GR-H), Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the Council of Europe

The Ambassador discussed a range of monitoring issues with the Advisory Committee. She highlighted the importance of the Advisory Committee in ensuring the protection of minority rights and in monitoring the implementation of the Framework Convention. In response to questions from members of the Advisory Committee concerning amendments to recommendations made by the Advisory Committee, the Ambassador stressed the

need to consider individual states' viewpoints, and the importance of negotiations between the delegations in the GR-H. In this respect, she underlined the role of the Secretariat during the negotiations of draft resolutions in ensuring that the standards are preserved.

Following questions from the Advisory Committee regarding potential scope for more substantive exchange on the interpretation of the Framework Convention between Advisory Committee members and the GR-H group, which is currently possible through the online discussion format, the Ambassador expressed willingness to discuss the Advisory Committee's concerns further.

Exchange of views with Hallvard GORSETH, Director, Directorate of Equal Rights and Dignity

The Director emphasised his aim to increase synergies between the departments under his portfolio. He noted in this context that the work of the Advisory Committee is increasingly important.

The Director discussed the Secretary General's comments on the annual meeting of the chairs of Council of Europe monitoring bodies and the Secretary General. The Director noted that the Secretary General thanked the monitoring bodies for their work and emphasised their important contribution to the credibility of the Council of Europe amid politicisation of monitoring activities and democratic backsliding. The Advisory Committee heard that the Secretary General stressed the independence of the monitoring bodies but noted the importance of applying a fact-based approach to monitoring activities. The Director emphasised the need for monitoring bodies to remain within their respective mandates to ensure their continued credibility. The Advisory Committee also heard that the Secretary General envisages an important role for monitoring bodies in the [New Democratic Pact for Europe](#) by helping to restore trust in institutions.

Following questions of members of the Advisory Committee, the Director discussed the next budget and applications of ongoing discussions of possible applications of artificial intelligence in the work of the Council of Europe and the monitoring bodies. The Director also discussed effective collaboration between the Council of Europe and the European Union about minority rights, highlighting the provisions of the Copenhagen political criteria. The Director noted effective collaboration in Armenia, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Western Balkans.

Exchange of views with Christophe KAMP, High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

The OSCE High Commissioner presented his priorities and current activities. An exchange followed on issues of mutual interest including on the evolving challenges in the field of minority protection. Both the OSCE High Commissioner and the Advisory Committee stressed the importance of dialogue and synergies between their respective work.

Composition of working groups/planning of visits

The Advisory Committee exchanged views on the composition of working groups and planning of visits. Several members expressed their interests in joining country working groups. The Advisory Committee agreed that the plan for future monitoring visits should be prepared by the Secretariat as soon as possible, and that the plan with the composition of future working groups would be circulated among the members who would be invited to come forward with their preferences, and that the Bureau would look at the composition of working groups, taking into account the changed composition of the Advisory Committee after 1 June 2026.

Petra Roter reminded the Advisory Committee that the preparation of the 15th activity report covering the period 1 June 2024 – 31 May 2026 should start in view of its approval by the Advisory Committee at its May 2026 plenary. Members of the Advisory Committee exchanged views on elements to be included in the section "Trends and challenges". It was agreed that the Secretariat would prepare an outline for the consideration of the Advisory Committee at its next plenary meeting or by written procedure as may be appropriate, and that members of the

Advisory Committee would reflect on their experience in the Advisory Committee over the past two years with a view to identifying possible trends and challenges in diversity management through minority rights.

Future plenary meetings

The Advisory Committee confirmed the dates of the following plenary meetings:

- 88th plenary from 9 to 13 February 2026;
- 89th plenary from 18 to 22 May 2026;
- 90th plenary from 26 to 30 October 2026.

Appendix I – Agenda

Tuesday, 14 October 2025

- 09.00 – 09.30 Rapid exchange among members of the Bureau
- 09.45 – 10.30 Opening of the meeting
Adoption of the Agenda & Order of Business
Approval of the 86th meeting report
Report from the Bureau
Update by the Secretariat
- 10.30 – 12.30 Monitoring: First reading of the draft Sixth Opinion on Italy
- 12.30 – 14.00 Break
- 14.00 – 18.00 Monitoring: First reading of the draft Sixth Opinion on Italy

Wednesday, 15 October 2025

- 09.30 – 11.30 Monitoring: Reading and final adoption of the draft Sixth Opinion on Hungary
- 11.00 – 12.30 Monitoring: Reading and final adoption of the draft Fifth Opinion on Portugal
- 12.30 – 14.30 Break
- 14.30 – 17.00 Presentation of the compiled list of issues for the monitoring visits (for discussion and approval)
Thematic: Presentation of the updated Glossary (for approval)
Thematic: Presentation of the updated Sourcebook (for approval)
Thematic: Presentation of the research on the national legislation relating to symbols and exchange on the possible follow-up to be given

Thursday, 16 October 2025

- 09.00 – 12.30 Monitoring: Reading and final adoption of the draft Sixth Opinion on Italy
- 12.30 – 14.00 Break
- 14.00 – 15.00 Update by the members and reporting back on participation in external events
- 15.00 – 17.00 Exchange of views with Ambassador Berta MRAK, Chair of the Committee of Ministers' Rapporteur Group on Human Rights (GR-H), Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the Council of Europe (15h)
Exchange of views with Hallvard GORSETH, Director, Directorate of Equal Rights and Dignity (16h)

Friday, 17 October 2025

- 08.30 – 09.30 Informal exchange between the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the WG on Ukraine
- 09.30 – 11.00 Exchange of views with Christophe KAMP, High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)
- 11.00 – 12.00 Composition of Working groups/Planning of visits
Exchange about upcoming visits and the preparation of the Activity Report 2024-2026
Next meetings
Any other business
List of decisions adopted during the meeting

Appendix II – List of participants

▪ Ordinary Members

Pedro AGUILERA CORTÉS (Spain)
 Evis ALIMEHMETI (Albania)
 Ingeborg BIRNIE-HAVENGA (Netherlands)
 Besarion BOKHASHVILI (Georgia)
 Laura-Maria CRĂCIUNEAN-TATU (Romania)
 Vladimir DJURIĆ (Serbia) *online*
 Yuliia FYSUN (Ukraine)
 Tomáš HRUSTIČ (Slovak Republic)
 Šarūnas LIEKIS (Lithuania)
 Tove H. MALLOY (Denmark)
 Egly PANTELAKIS (Cyprus)
 Klaus POIER (Austria)
 Detlev REIN (Germany)
 Petra ROTER (Slovenia)
 Elisabeth SÁNDOR-SZALAYNÉ (Hungary)
 David SMITH (United Kingdom)
 Judith WYTTEBACH (Switzerland) *online*

▪ Additional Members:

Emma LANTSCHNER (Italy)

➤ Secretariat of the Council of Europe

Elise CORNU, Executive Secretary and Head of the National Minorities and Minority Languages Division
 Lusine DRAMPYAN, Administrator
 Michaël GUET, Administrator, Policy Adviser
 Maxime HUOT, Administrator
 Zeynep USAL-KANZLER, Administrator
 Snežana LALIČIĆ, Administrative Assistant
 Thomas GRIFFITHS, Trainee