

# PROGRAMME

Parliamentary Conference

## Envisioning effective public policy to prevent and address cases of missing migrants

23 & 24 April 2025

Room 1 - Palais de l'Europe – Strasbourg



## Clarifying the fate of missing migrants in Europe: parliamentarians meet in Strasbourg

Each year, thousands of people go missing during their migration journey. In Europe and beyond, families are desperately looking for their loved ones. At the same time, forensic experts, prosecutors, the police, and municipalities are dealing with numerous unidentified bodies, many of which are presumed to be those of migrants. In the absence of harmonised standards, too many missing migrants remain unidentified. Parliamentarians can play a key role in adopting legislation on this topic and bridging this gap.

Clarifying the fate of missing migrants is not only a moral but also a public policy imperative. Law enforcement, public health, autopsy rules, cross-border judicial co-operation, sharing of personal data and the dignified treatment of the living and the deceased: the Council of Europe provides a meaningful forum for co-operation to provide a human rights-based response aimed at facilitating search and identification procedures across borders.

During the conference on ***Envisioning effective public policy to prevent and address cases of missing migrants***, for the first time, national parliamentarians from member States of the Council of Europe will come together with forensic experts, prosecutors, national authorities, civil society, and family members of missing migrants, as well as guest speakers from INTERPOL, the United Nations, the ICRC and the IOM, to explore concrete policy measures to address this issue.

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# Day 1 – 23 April 2025

14:00 - 14:30 Registration of participants

14:30 - 15:15 Opening address and welcome

- **Antonio Gutiérrez Limones**, Vice-President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (Spain, SOC)
- **Gianluca Esposito**, Director General of Human Rights and Rule of Law, Council of Europe
- **Julian Pahlke**, Member of PACE (Germany, SOC), Rapporteur for follow-up on Resolution 2569 (2024) “Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers – A call to clarify their fate”

15:15 - 15:30 Family picture

15:30 - 17:00 Keynote speeches

- **Gehad Madi**, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants
- **Julia Black**, Missing Migrants Project of the International Organization of Migration (IOM)
- **Tareke Brhane**, President of the Comitato Tre Ottobre
- **Florian von König**, Global Advocacy Lead – Central Tracing Agency, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

Questions and answers

17:30 - 19:00 Reception

# Day 2 – 24 April 2025

09:00 – 09:15 Registration of participants

09:15 – 09:20 Speech

- **Michael O’Flaherty**, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe (video address)

9:20 – 10:15 **Round Table 1: Investigating cases of missing persons in the context of migration (paragraphs 15-18 of the RES 2569 (2024))**

- **Dr Morris Tidball-Binz**, UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions
- **Salvatore Vella**, Chief Prosecutor, Public Prosecutor’s Office in Gela, Italy
- **Tania Delabarde**, Forensic anthropologist, Forensic medical institute of Paris (IML)
- **Panagiotis Maniatis**, Public Prosecutor at the First Instance Court of Athens

Questions and answers

**Moderation: Julian Pahlke, Member of PACE (Germany, SOC)**

10:15 – 11:00 **Round Table 2: Engaging families throughout the process (paragraphs 6, 12, 25.2, 25.5 and 25.7 of RES 2569 (2024))**

Protection-oriented mechanisms: treating families as rights-holders

Honouring the “last rights”: a matter of dignity for families and for the deceased

- **Sarah Klingeberg**, Regional Internal Displacement and Migration Adviser for Europe and Central Asia, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- **Batoul Karbijha**, Co-founder, Association of Families of Missing Asylum Seekers
- **Syd Bolton**, The Last Rights Project

Questions and answers

**Moderation: Carmen Leyte, Member of PACE (Spain, EPP/CD)**

11:00 – 11:15 Coffee

**11:15 - 12:30** **Round Table 3: What databases? Addressing the challenges and needs in the migration context (paragraphs 13, 14, 18-23, 25.3 of RES 2569 (2024))**

Data collected by Police

- **Lieutenant Colonel Pantelis Themelis**, Hellenic Police – Joint Coordination Centre for Cooperation and Crisis Management, Commander of the Greek DVI Team
- **Dr Susan Hitchin**, Coordinator of DNA Unit, INTERPOL

Spain: towards a national data bases on missing migrants?

- **Patricia Bárcena**, Second Deputy of the Spanish Ombudsman, Defensor del Pueblo
- **Dr José L. Prieto**, Head of the Forensic Pathology Department, Institute of Forensic Medicine and Forensic Sciences, Madrid

Questions and answers

**Moderation: Lord Michael German, Member of PACE (United Kingdom, ALDE)**

**12:30 - 14:00** Lunch

**14:00 - 14:15** **Speech**

- **Prof. Cristina Cattaneo**, Full Professor of Forensic Medicine at the Department of Biomedical Science for Health of the University of Milan, Director of LABANOF (Forensic Anthropological and Odontological Lab)

**14:15 - 15:30** **Round Table 4 – Cross-border co-operation on missing migrants: good practices (paragraphs 13, 25.4 and 25.5 of RES 2569 (2024))**

- **Claudia Guarneri**, Acting Focal Point for Missing Migrants and Desk Officer, European Migration Policy Task Force at the German Federal Foreign Office
- **Mercedes Salado**, Director for Eurasia and Middle East, Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team (EAAF)
- **Pape Lamine Diop**, Technical Advisor to the Secretary of State for Senegalese abroad, Ministry of African Integration and of Foreign Affairs of Senegal

Questions and answers

**Moderation: Georgios Stamatis, Member of PACE (Greece, EPP/CD)**

**15:30 - 16:30** **Conclusive remarks**

- **Julian Pahlke**, Member of PACE (Germany, SOC), Rapporteur for follow-up on Resolution 2569 (2024) “Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers – A call to clarify their fate”
- **Leyla Kayacik**, Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on Migration and Refugees (2022-2024)

**16:30 - 17:15** Coffee