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Strasbourg, 20 November 2025

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**EUROPEAN COMMITTEE ON LEGAL CO-OPERATION
(CDCJ)**

105th plenary meeting

18-20 November 2025

Strasbourg, Palais de l'Europe, room 7

ABRIDGED MEETING REPORT

**CDCJ website: www.coe.int/cdcj
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The European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) held its 105th plenary meeting in Strasbourg on 18-20 November 2025 with Eral Knight (United Kingdom) in the Chair.

The agenda of the meeting appears in Appendix I. The full report of the meeting including the list of participants¹ is available on the CDCJ's website.

The CDCJ:

- welcomed the newly designated member (Croatia) and substitute representatives (Azerbaijan, Lithuania and Türkiye) participating in the meeting for the first time;
- took note of the information provided by the Chair and by the secretariat on the developments that have occurred since the 104th plenary meeting (16-18 June 2025) and their possible implications for the CDCJ's work, in particular the work of the Consultative Council of European Judges (CCJE) and the Consultative Council of European Prosecutors (CCPE) with the adoption of their respective 2025 Opinions, thematic studies and statements, including the topics of their Opinions and thematic studies for 2026; the publication by the Parliamentary Assembly of a toolkit for parliamentarians to prevent and address cases of missing migrants, which refers to Recommendation CM/Rec(2009)12 on principles concerning missing persons and the presumption of death, which was prepared by the CDCJ; the work underway at the Parliamentary Assembly on the reports on "Ensuring better protection of whistle-blowers in Europe" and "Safeguarding human rights in the artificial intelligence-driven public sector"; the participation in the work conducted by the Steering Committee on Democracy (CDDEM) to prepare draft parameters for the implementation of the Reykjavik Principles for democracy and a new recommendation on the legal status of civil society organisations (update of Recommendation CM(2007)14 on the legal status of non-governmental organisations in Europe, prepared by the CDCJ); the Conference on safeguarding the best interests of the child held in Malta on 23 October 2025; the Commissioner for Human Rights' speech on the use of AI as part of policing and concerns raised with regard to the possible misuse of such tools with the result of curtailing human rights; was informed by the secretariat that several new translations of the guide for practitioners on the administrative detention of migrants and asylum seekers had been published (Armenian, Italian, Spanish, Turkish, Arabic) or were underway (German and Portuguese);
- took note of the state of play of the implementation of the CDCJ activities since the 104th plenary meeting of the CDCJ (16-18 June 2025). It examined proposals for future work and agreed to continue discussions on several avenues proposed, including potential new activities relating to the safeguarding of democratic institutions and the civil service, medical liability, the role of justice as a driver of economic growth and financial stability, and the human rights dimension of personal insolvency and debt-enforcement proceedings at its next plenary meeting;
- took note of the information provided by the secretariat on the preparation of the draft report on the first thematic review by the CDCJ focused on the career and training of judges, as a follow-up to the [Council of Europe Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality](#) (Sofia Action Plan); examined the draft report in the light of the comments and suggestions made by CDCJ delegations, with a view to its adoption at its next plenary meeting in June 2026; examined the proposal for follow-up action to give to this first thematic review and to the Sofia Action Plan, and agreed to organise a conference back-to-back with the CDCJ plenary meeting in November 2026;
- took note of the update provided by the secretariat on the CDCJ activity related to the use of artificial intelligence for policing, the administration of justice and borders/migration, preparations made for conducting a feasibility study on possible draft legal instrument on these areas, to be initiated in 2026;
- took note of the information provided by the secretariat on progress made on the draft study on national climate litigation; examined the draft study, with the assistance of one of the two consultants who prepared it, Joanna Setzer (Grantham Research Institute, London School of Economics), and authorised its publication, subject to drafting changes agreed during the meeting and to a final editorial review;

¹ At this plenary meeting of CDCJ, 33 member states were represented by 35 participants: 17 women and 18 men, 48,57% and 51,43% respectively.

- took note of the update provided by the Chair of the CDCJ Limited Working Group on Migration (CDCJ-MIG), Francesco Crisafulli (Italy), and by the secretariat; examined and adopted the draft compendium of promising practices on access to nationality for stateless children and instructed the secretariat to take the necessary steps for its publication; examined the draft revised Recommendation CM/Rec(2009)13 on the nationality of children, in the presence of the consultant of the CDCJ-MIG, Professor René De Groot; instructed the secretariat to convey to the CDCJ-MIG the committee's guidance, including to pursue the revision of the recommendation as a whole and identify principles which do not deal expressly with stateless children and to maintain the condition of "lawful" residence contained in principles 2 and 5 in brackets at this stage of the drafting process; took note of the list of decisions made by the CDCJ-MIG at its 4th meeting (29 September-1 October 2025), including the new composition of the working group following of the resignation of some of its members;
- took note of the information provided by the Chair of the Committee of Experts on Access to Origins (CJ-OR), Thomas Knoll-Biermann (Germany); with the assistance of the consultant of the CJ-OR, Laurence Brunet, on the work of the committee and progress made to date; took note of the report of the 2nd meeting of the CJ-OR (28-30 October 2025); provided to the CJ-OR and its consultant guidance for the further preparation of the draft legal instrument and its accompanying draft explanatory memorandum and specifically to take into account the resource implications of mechanisms and setups proposed in the draft, as well as carefully balance the rights of different stakeholders; examined the candidatures received in response to the call for interest concerning the seat left vacant after the representative of Denmark had stepped down and selected Ivy van Dijke (The Netherlands) as new member of the CJ-OR; took note that a revised draft recommendation would be circulated in good time before the next plenary meeting to facilitate consultations in the capitals ahead of the said plenary meeting; concurred with its Bureau that complex issues were at stake and legal frameworks varied across Europe which constituted a challenge considering the deadline fixed in the terms of reference for completion of the draft recommendation;
- held jointly with the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF) an event to launch Recommendation CM/Rec(2025)4 on the protection of the rights and best interests of the child in parental separation proceedings and Recommendation CM/Rec(2025)5 on the protection of the rights and best interests of the child in care proceedings, as well as the checklists designed as a practical tool for policy makers to facilitate and optimise the implementation of these recommendations - see the programme in Appendix II;
- took note, during a joint session held with the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF) and the European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC, online), of the information provided by the secretariat regarding the timeline for achieving the thematic review on the Child-friendly Justice Guidelines; took note of information provided by Susanna Greijer, one of the two independent consultants responsible for preparing the report on the said thematic review, on the results of the consultation process; took note of the exchange of views that took place between the CDCJ Bureau (123rd meeting, 25-26 September 2025) and the CDENF Bureau;
- took note of the information provided by the secretariat on signatures and ratifications that have taken place since the last plenary meeting in June 2025, in particular the Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters (ETS No. 127); was also informed by the secretariat that responsibility for treaties relating to animal rights had been transferred from CDCJ to other intergovernmental committees;
- welcomed the recent signatures of the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer (CETS No. 226, the "Luxembourg Convention") and held a tour de table where the EU Delegation to the Council of Europe informed the CDCJ about further steps regarding the signature and ratification of the EU, and CDCJ delegations provided information on progress in their countries with regard to signature and/or ratification of the Convention; held an exchange of views with Judge Rădulețu and Judge Mercer of the European Court of Human Rights on the protection of the profession of lawyer, in particular in the light of the Court's case law; took note of the information provided by the secretariat on activities and events aiming to promote the Luxembourg Convention, including a factsheet on the Convention prepared by the secretariat to help the Council of Europe member states promote and raise the awareness of the new treaty among the non-member states;
- took note of the programme of the webinar to take place on 4 December 2025 on "Enhancing access to information on Foreign Law" to promote the European Convention on Information on Foreign Law (ETS No. 62) and its Additional Protocol (ETS No. 97) and the practical tools designed to facilitate

the implementation of these treaties; and agreed to disseminate the invitation to the relevant national authorities;

- assessed the mainstreaming of perspectives related to gender, youth, children's rights, rights of persons with disabilities, and Roma and Traveller issues, in the performance of its tasks, as well as the contribution of the committee's work to United Nations Sustainable Development Goals 5, 10, 13 and 16; identified, among the activities within its current mandate, and in particular:
 - the Convention for the protection of the profession of lawyer, prepared by the CDCJ and opened for signature on 13 May 2025, takes into account the Gender Equality Strategy and contributes to UNSDGs 5 and 16;
 - the work on stateless children and their access to nationality contributes to UNSDG 10 and 16;
 - the work on the rights of donor-conceived persons to know their origins contributes to UNSDG 10 and 16;
 - the study on national climate change litigation and possible follow up to it will contribute to UNSDG 13;
 - the work undertaken as a follow-up action to give effect to its report on the implementation of the Council of Europe Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality contributes to UNSDG 16;
- took note of the information provided by a number of member states on recent developments in the area of public law and thanked the delegations concerned for their contributions;
- took note of the information provided by relevant Council of Europe bodies and committees in areas of interest to the CDCJ;
- took note of progress made in respect of the activities featuring in the committee's terms of reference and workplan, and assessed their achievement based on the state of implementation of the CDCJ activities and on additional information provided by the secretariat, and was satisfied that its activities remained in accordance with the Programme and Budget for 2024-2027, the 4th Summit of Heads of States and Governments (Reykjavik, 16-17 May 2023) and the New Democratic Pact for Europe;
- was informed by the secretariat that the CDCJ had not received any request from the Committee of Ministers for possible comments on texts adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly or by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities at their last sessions;
- elected Signe Öhman (Sweden) as Chairperson for a first term of office of one year and Lennart Houmann (Denmark) as Vice-Chairperson for a first term of office of one year; elected Christoph Henrichs (Germany) as a member of the Bureau for a first two-year term of office; and re-elected Alexandra Terés Erich (Andorra), João Arsénio de Oliveira (Portugal) and Matija Vidmar (Slovenia) as members of the Bureau for a second two-year term of office.

As from 1 January 2026, the CDCJ Bureau will be set up as follows:

Chairperson: Signe Öhman (Sweden) – elected for a first term of office of one year, from 1 January to 31 December 2026.

Vice-Chairperson: Lennart Houmann (Denmark) – elected for a first term of office of one year, from 1 January to 31 December 2026.

Bureau members:

Alexandra Terés Erich (Andorra) – re-elected for a second term of office of two years, from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2027.

Christoph Henrichs (Germany) – elected for a first term of office of two years, from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2027.

João Arsénio de Oliveira (Portugal) – re-elected for a second term of office of two years, from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2027.

Matija Vidmar (Slovenia) – re-elected for a second term of office of two years, from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2027.

Guillaume Vieillard (France) – elected in November 2024 for a two-year term of office, under Article 13.d of the Rules of Procedure, from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2026, after the first one-year term of office.

- made the necessary appointments of its thematic rapporteurs (gender equality, children's rights, rights of persons with disabilities), representatives and substitutes for 2026, as they appear in Appendix III;
- held an exchange of views on a possible revision of the CDCJ's working methods with a view to improving the efficiency of its work, based on proposals prepared by the secretariat following discussions of the Bureau at its 123rd meeting in September 2025, agreed to resume discussions at its next plenary meeting based on possible amendments to its working methods prepared by the secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, taking into account the committee's first discussions and guidance, in view of their adoption at the next CDCJ Plenary in June 2026;
- took note of the updated calendar of its meetings and events for 2025-2026, including the dates of its next two plenary meetings on which it agreed:
 - 106th meeting: Strasbourg, 2-4 June 2026,
 - 107th meeting: Strasbourg, 17-19 November 2026;
- adopted the abridged report of its 105th plenary meeting.

Appendix I

Agenda

1. Opening of the meeting
 2. Adoption of the agenda and order of business
 3. Tour de table: interventions by newly designated members of the CDCJ
 4. Information by the Chair and Secretariat
 5. Review of progress
- Justice and the Rule of Law**
6. Council of Europe Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality (Sofia Action Plan) (*main deliverable 10*)
 7. The use of artificial intelligence for policing, the administration of justice and borders/migration – Study on the feasibility of a draft legal instrument (*main deliverable 11*)
- Public Law**
8. National climate litigation (*main deliverable 4*)
 9. Statelessness and access to nationality (*main deliverables 6 and 7*)
- Family law and children's rights**
10. Rights of donor-conceived persons to know their origins (*main deliverable 8*)
 11. Thematic review of the guidelines on child-friendly justice (focus: civil and administrative proceedings) (*main deliverable 9*)
 12. Promote and facilitate the functioning, implementation and where necessary the ratification of Council of Europe conventions, agreements and protocols within its area of competence (*main task iv*)
 13. Raise-awareness about Council of Europe standards and tools in its field of competence in the member states and beyond, through the neighbourhood policy and in other international and global fora where relevant (*main task xiv*)
 - 13.1 Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer Treaty Office (CETS No. 226) – follow-up
 - a. Tour de table on signatures and ratifications of the Luxembourg Convention
 - b. Exchange of views with two judges of the European Court of Human Rights
 - c. Promotion of the Luxembourg Convention
 - 13.2 European Convention on Information on Foreign Law (ETS No. 62) and its Additional Protocol (ETS No. 97) (*main deliverable 5*)
 14. Transversal issues:
 - a. Mainstreaming gender, youth, children's rights, rights of persons with disabilities, and Roma and Traveller issues (*main task xvi*)
 - b. Contribution to the UNSDGs - Goal 5: Gender equality, Goal 10; Reduce inequality within and among countries, Goal 13: Climate Change and Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions (*main task xix*)

15. Developments in member states in the area of public law
16. Co-operation with other relevant Council of Europe bodies and committees, other international organisations and civil society in the area of public law
17. Evaluation of completed activities / Annual exchange of views to evaluate its activities and to advise the Committee of Ministers on future priorities in its sector, including possible new activities and those that might be discontinued (*main task xv*)
18. Elections and Appointments
 - a. Elections (Chair, Vice-Chair and Bureau members)
 - b. Appointments for 2026 (CDCJ Representatives and Rapporteurs, including Rapporteur to follow the implementation reviews of legal instruments)
19. CDCJ Opinions (if any) (*main deliverable 13*)
20. Any other business
 - Working methods – possible review
21. Dates and place of next meetings
22. Adoption of the meeting report

Appendix II

Programme of the launch event of Recommendations of the Committee of Ministers on the protection of the rights and best interests of the child in parental separation proceedings (CM/Rec(2025)4) and in care proceedings (CM/Rec(2025)5)

jointly organised by the CDCJ and the CDENF
Strasbourg, 19 November 2025

“Hear our Voice:

upholding the rights and best interests of the child in parental separation and care proceedings”

- 2.00 Welcome words**
Hallvard Gorseth, Director, Directorate of Equal Rights and Dignity, Council of Europe
- 2.15 Keynote addresses**
- *Ambassador Daniela Cujbă*, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Moldova, Chair of the Ministers’ Deputies of the Council of Europe
 - *Bjørn Berge*, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe
 - *Anne Louise Bormann*, Judge of the European Court of Human Rights
- 2.45 Presentation of the Recommendations**
- *Seamus S. Carroll*, First Chairperson of the Committee of Experts on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation and in care proceedings (CJ/ENF-ISE)
 - *Thomas Knoll-Biermann*, Second Chairperson of the CJ/ENF-ISE (online)
- 3.15 First panel: Challenges faced by children in parental separation and care proceedings**
Moderated by *Eral Knight*, Chair of the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ)
- *Anna Glatz*, Hintalovon Child Rights Foundation (Hungary) facilitating child consultations during the drafting process of the Recommendations (online)
 - *Stéphanie Hébrard*, Vice-Chair of the CJ/ENF-ISE
 - *Benoit Van Keirsbilck*, Director of Defence Children International Belgium, Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
- Questions and answers**
- 4.00 Refreshment break with pastries- Family photo**
- 4.30 Second panel: Promising practices among CoE member States**
Moderated by *Ružica Boškić*, Chair of the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF)
- *Daja Wenke*, Consultant of the CJ/ENF-ISE
 - *Andrej Del Fabro*, Head of Child-Friendly Criminal Justice Department, Ministry of Justice, Slovenia
 - *Bente Therese Bekkhus*, Acting Director, Department of International Law, Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs and Member of the CJ/ENF-ISE
- Questions and Answers**
- 5.00 Concluding Remarks**
Ambassador Dastid Koreshi, Permanent Representative of Albania and Chair of the Committee of Ministers’ Rapporteur Group on Social and Health Questions (GR-SOC)

Appendix III

Appointments by the CDCJ for 2026

CDCJ Thematic Rapporteurs

Rapporteur on Gender Equality (GER)	Ms Alexandra Terés Erich (Andorra)
Rapporteur on Children's Rights	Ms Verena Cap (Austria)
Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Ms Lana Morgoshia (Georgia) – <u>subject to confirmation</u>

CDCJ representatives/substitutes in other Council of Europe bodies

European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ)	Representative: Mr João Arsénio de Oliveira (Portugal) Substitute: Mr Rodrigo Rodriguez (Switzerland)
Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH)	Representative: Mr Rodrigo Rodriguez (Switzerland)
Steering Committee for New and Emerging Digital Technologies (CDNET) (<i>replacing the Committee on Artificial Intelligence - CAI</i>)	Representative: Ms Rubina Mkhitarian (Armenia)
Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF) / Consultation Group on Children of Ukraine (CGU) / Committee of Experts on access to child-friendly justice through multidisciplinary and interagency services (ENF-JUS)	Representative: Ms Verena Cap (Austria)
Steering Committee on Democracy (CDDEM)	Representative: Mr James D'Agostino (Malta)
Steering Committee on the Environment (CDENV)	Representative: <u>Subject to confirmation</u>