

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Paris, 13 March 2026

CDCJ-BU(2026)03

**BUREAU OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMITTEE ON LEGAL CO-OPERATION
(CDCJ-BU)**

124th meeting
12-13 March 2026

Council of Europe Office in Paris, 55 avenue Kléber
Room 3 and online

MEETING REPORT

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1-2. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1. The Bureau of the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) held its 124th meeting on 12-13 March 2026 in Paris (Council of Europe Office), with Ms Signe Öhman (Sweden) in the Chair.

2. The agenda of the meeting is contained in Appendix I. The list of participants appears in Appendix II.

3. Information by the Chair and Secretariat

3. The Bureau took note of the departure of Francesco Crisafulli (Italy) from the CDCJ and expressed its gratitude for his strong commitment to the work of the committee over the years.

4. The Bureau took note of the information provided by the secretariat about recent developments having occurred since the last CDCJ plenary meeting (18-20 November 2025) and any implications they may have on CDCJ activities.

5. The Bureau took note of the new rules concerning the organisation of meetings of intergovernmental committees. It expressed concerns that the hybrid format of plenary meetings may be detrimental to its current efforts to strengthen the engagement of delegations if too many delegations choose to participate online. Furthermore, it considered that the Bureau plays a crucial role in steering the work of the CDCJ and therefore that holding one of its two annual meetings online may not allow it to do its work most effectively. At the same time, it recognised that hybrid meetings for expert committees drafting new instruments would allow for a broader range of delegations to contribute to their work.

6. The Bureau welcomed the new signatures of the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer (ETS No. 226) having taken place since the last plenary meeting (Finland, Germany, Portugal, Slovenia, Ukraine). It also welcomed the factsheet on the Luxembourg Convention designed for non-members states of the Council of Europe, as well as the translation of the information leaflet (German, Italian, Polish, Romanian, Spanish, Turkish and Ukrainian).

7. The Bureau welcomed the publication of the Study on national climate litigation, as well as new language versions of the guide for practitioners on the administrative detention of migrants and asylum seekers (German and Portuguese), and of the practical guide on the mechanism of the European Convention on Information on Foreign Law (German, Hungarian Italian, Polish, Romanian and Spanish).

4. Review of progress

8. The Bureau took note of the update by the secretariat on the progress made in implementing the CDCJ activities and achieving its deliverables.

9. The Bureau examined the possible future CDCJ activities for 2027 and onwards as proposed by the secretariat in document [CDCJ\(2025\)14 prov3](#), based on the discussion held at the 105th plenary meeting (18-20 November 2025) in the context of the preparation of the next Council of Europe Programme and Budget (2028-2031). It also took note of the research note on the case law of the European Court of Human Rights concerning the role of notaries for the effective administration of justice ([CDCJ-BU\(2026\)02 - restricted](#)). The Bureau noted that proposals for future work include exploring the human rights dimensions of private debt recovery and enforcement proceedings, particularly the protection of vulnerable persons, as agreed at the last plenary meeting. It agreed that the role of notaries in states governed by the rule of law should be added to the document on possible future activities. Finally, the Bureau

also agreed that future CDCJ work should systematically examine the impact on gender equality and that this should be added for the different topics to be discussed.

10. It gave directions to the secretariat on the practical arrangements, methodology and template for structured discussion on future work of the CDCJ at the Plenary through breakout groups during the Plenary ([CDCJ-BU\(2026\)01](#) - *restricted*).

11. The Bureau examined and agreed to the draft update for 2027 in the revised terms of reference of the CDCJ and of the CJ-OR ([CDCJ\(2026\)11](#) - *restricted*) which reflect the CDCJ Bureau's position.

Justice and the Rule of Law

5. Council of Europe Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality (Sofia Action Plan) (main deliverable 10)

12. The Bureau took note of the update provided by the secretariat on the progress made in preparing the first CDCJ thematic review of the implementation in member states of the Council of Europe Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality (Sofia Action Plan), with a focus on the career and training of judges.

13. It examined, in light of the comments received ([CDCJ\(2026\)03](#) - *restricted*), the draft report as updated by the secretariat following the discussion at the last plenary meeting ([CDCJ\(2024\)13 prov6](#)), in view of its adoption by the committee at its 106th plenary meeting (2-4 June 2026).

14. The Bureau considered the concept note and preliminary programme for the launch conference concerning the CDCJ's thematic review on the career and training of judges ([CDCJ\(2026\)04 prov](#) - *restricted*). It welcomed the proposed hybrid format, interactive sessions, and focus on presenting the main findings, taking into account good practice.

15. The Bureau underlined that a new topic would have to be found for the next thematic review that would be included in its future terms of reference. It held a preliminary discussion where the possibility of exploring the career and training of prosecutors was considered an option whilst not excluding a further topic on judges given current challenges to their independence.

6. The use of artificial intelligence for policing, the administration of justice and borders/migration – Feasibility study (main deliverable 11)

16. The Bureau took note of the information provided by the secretariat on the procurement procedure for contracting a consultant with a view to conducting a feasibility study on the use of artificial intelligence for policing, the administration of justice and borders/migration, by the end of 2027 in line with the CDCJ terms of reference.

Public Law

7. Statelessness and access to nationality (main deliverable 7 and main task xi)

17. The Bureau took note of the update provided by the secretariat on progress made in the work of the CDCJ Limited Working Group on Migration (CDCJ-MIG), and also of the changes in the composition of the Group, in particular that following the departure of Francesco Crisafulli (Italy) as chair of the Group, Katerina Radova (Czechia), vice-chair, chaired the 5th meeting (23-24 February 2026).

18. It examined the draft revised recommendation on the nationality of children ([CDCJ-MIG\(2026\)02 prov2](#) - *restricted*) resulting from the discussions held by the CDCJ-MIG at its 5th meeting. It made a number of observations, in particular regarding the notion of lawful and habitual residence, the separation of birth registration and the migration status of the parents, and the fact that states having already procedures relevant to the recommendation need not create new procedures. It agreed that each delegation provides their drafting suggestions as part of the forthcoming consultation (April-May).

19. It took note of the list of decisions made by the CDCJ-MIG at its 5th meeting ([CDCJ-MIG\(2026\)PV1](#)).

20. The Bureau welcomed the publication of the Compendium of promising practices on access to nationality for stateless children and noted that it had been presented by the CDCJ Secretariat at a side-event that had taken place during the 61st session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva on 2 March 2026, which was co-organised by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Child Identity Protection (CHIP), and co-sponsored by the Council of Europe and the Global Alliance to End Statelessness.

Family law and children's rights

8. Rights of donor-conceived persons to know their origins (main deliverable 8 and main task xi)

21. The Bureau took note of the update by the secretariat on progress made in the work of the Committee of Experts on Access to Origins (CJ-OR).

22. It examined the draft text of the recommendation on the rights of donor-conceived persons to know their origins ([CJ-OR\(2025\)10 prov3](#) - *restricted*). It called on the CJ-OR to keep the scope of the recommendation only to medically assisted reproduction and to focus on core principles, avoiding being overly prescriptive given the diversity of national situations across Europe and the nature of the legal instrument. It instructed the secretariat to convey their observations for the consideration of the CJ-OR during its 3rd meeting (24-26 March 2026).

9. Thematic review of the guidelines on child-friendly justice (focus: civil and administrative proceedings) (main deliverable 9)

23. The Bureau took note of the update provided by the secretariat on progress made in the preparation of the draft Thematic Review Report of the Guidelines on Child-Friendly Justice. A shorter gap analysis, which will constitute the report of thematic review to be adopted by the CDENF, CDCJ and CDPC, will be presented to the three committees in June before being sent out for comments to all delegations. The final draft report (gap analysis) will take into account the results of the consultation and will be adopted in November during a joint online session of the three committees.

10. State of play of the implementation of selected conventions and/or recommendations falling under the CDCJ's responsibility, including proposals for follow-up deliverables, and awareness-raising activities in other international and global fora where relevant (*main deliverable 12 and main tasks v, xiv and xviii*)

24. The Bureau examined the proposal by the secretariat for selected conventions and recommendations falling under the CDCJ's responsibility where a review of their implementation in member states or promotion and/or revision is found appropriate (see [CDCJ\(2026\)05 prov](#)). It provided the necessary guidance to the secretariat to revise the document before the upcoming plenary meeting.

11. Provide input to the Committee of Ministers in view of the regular, high-level dialogue with member States and partners on delivering on the Reykjavik Principles for Democracy (*main task xiii*) and contribute, where relevant, to the process towards a New Democratic Pact for Europe (*main task ii*)

25. The Bureau examined the secretariat's document on the strategic input of the CDCJ to the Reykjavik Principles for Democracy and to the New Democratic Pact for Europe, as they appear in [CDCJ\(2026\)06 prov](#). It welcomed this document as a way of highlighting the relevance of its activities for these two strategic documents.

12. Observer status with the CDCJ and its subordinate bodies

26. The Bureau examined the request from the Council of the Notariats of the European Union (CNUE) for observer status with the CDCJ and the preliminary assessment by the secretariat in light of the CDCJ criteria to grant observer status ([CDCJ\(2026\)07 - restricted](#)). It asked the secretariat to invite this organisation to its next Plenary meeting to present its application.

13. Developments in member states in the area of private law

27. The Bureau took note of the information provided by member states on developments in their legislation in the area of private law ([CDCJ\(2026\)08](#)) and thanked the delegations concerned for their contributions. It proposed to add a rubric in the calls for information asking delegations to indicate whether any developments would prove relevant to future work of the committee.

14. Review of the CDCJ working methods

28. The Bureau examined the proposals for a revision of the CDCJ working methods ([CDCJ\(2026\)02 prov - restricted](#)) prepared by the secretariat in the light of the discussions held at the last CDCJ plenary meeting, and taking into account, *inter alia*, new rules for plenary and bureau meetings since 1 January 2026, Resolution [CM/Res\(2021\)3-consolidated](#) (intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods), Resolution [Res\(2001\)6](#) (access to Council of Europe documents), and [Council of Europe Transparency Framework](#). As regards hybrid plenary meetings, it asked the secretariat to add specific rules concerning the participation of experts in the capitals online and the prevalent role of the heads of delegation in this context. It also asked the secretariat to look into the further shortening of this document in order to ensure increased effectiveness and flexibility of the working methods of the CDCJ. The revised draft will be sent out for comments to all delegations ahead of the next plenary meeting where it will be proposed for adoption.

15. Preparation of the next plenary meeting

29. The Bureau agreed on the draft agenda of the 106th plenary meeting of the CDCJ to take place in a hybrid format on 2-4 June 2026 ([CDCJ\(2026\)OJ1 prov](#)).

16. CDCJ Opinions (if any) (*main deliverable 13*)

30. The Bureau 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.

17. Any other business

31. The Bureau wished to thank the French authorities for inviting the Bureau to the Ministry of Justice and for a fruitful exchange of views with the Diplomatic Advisor to the Minister.

18. Dates and place of the next meetings

32. The Bureau took note of the calendar of meetings, consultations and events for 2026-2027 as it appears in document [CDCJ\(2026\)09](#).

33. It agreed on the dates of its 125th meeting (6-7 October 2026).

19. Adoption of the meeting report

34. The Bureau adopted the report of its meeting.

Appendix I

Agenda

1. Opening of the meeting
 2. Adoption of the agenda and order of business
 3. Information by the Chair and Secretariat
 4. Review of progress
- Justice and the Rule of Law*
5. Council of Europe Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality (Sofia Action Plan) (*main deliverable 10*)
 6. The use of artificial intelligence for policing, the administration of justice and borders/migration – Feasibility study (*main deliverable 11*)
- Public Law*
7. Statelessness and access to nationality (*main deliverable 7 and main task xi*)
- Family law and children's rights*
8. Rights of donor-conceived persons to know their origins (*main deliverable 8 and main task xi*)
 9. Thematic review of the guidelines on child-friendly justice (focus: civil and administrative proceedings) (*main deliverable 9*)
 10. State of play of the implementation of selected conventions and/or recommendations falling under the CDCJ's responsibility, including proposals for follow-up deliverables, and awareness-raising activities in other international and global fora where relevant (*main deliverable 12 and main tasks v, xiv and xviii*)
 11. Provide input to the Committee of Ministers in view of the regular, high-level dialogue with member States and partners on delivering on the Reykjavik Principles for Democracy (*main task xiii*), and contribute, where relevant, to the process towards a New Democratic Pact for Europe (*main task ii*)
 12. Observer status with the CDCJ and its subordinate bodies
 13. Developments in member states in the area of private law
 14. Review of the CDCJ working methods
 15. Preparation of the next plenary meeting
 16. Avis du CDCJ (le cas échéant) (*principal livrable 13*)
 17. Any other business
 18. Dates and place of next meetings
 19. Adoption of the meeting report

Appendix II

Participants**MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU / MEMBRES DU BUREAU**

ANDORRA / ANDORRE	Alexandra TERÉS ERICH Judge Seu de la Justícia
DENMARK / DANEMARK	Lennart HOUMANN Vice-Chair / Vice-président Head of Department of Civil Law Ministry of Justice
FRANCE	Guillaume VIEILLARD Magistrat Chef du bureau des questions institutionnelles et diplomatiques Délégation aux affaires européennes et internationales (DAEI) Ministère de la Justice
GERMANY / ALLEMAGNE	Christoph HENRICHS Head of Section “International Law” Law of International Organisations Federal Ministry of Justice
PORTUGAL	João ARSÉNIO DE OLIVEIRA Head of International Affairs Department Directorate General for Justice Policy Ministry of Justice
SLOVENIA / SLOVÉNIE	Matija VIDMAR Secretary Office for International Cooperation and Mutual Legal Assistance Ministry of Justice
SWEDEN / SUÈDE	Signe ÖHMAN Chair / Présidente Director Division for EU Affairs Ministry of Justice

SECRETARIAT / SECRÉTARIAT

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DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE DROITS HUMAINS ET ÉTAT DE DROIT

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