

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Paris, 7 October 2026

CDCJ-BU(2026)04

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

125th meeting
6-7 October 2026

Council of Europe Office in Paris, 55 avenue Kléber
Room 1 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 125th meeting on 6-7 October 2026 in Paris (Council of Europe Office), with 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, bureau members and secretariat

3. The bureau took note of the information provided by João Arsénio de Oliveira (Portugal) on the results of the last plenary meeting of the CEPEJ of relevance to the work of the CDCJ and by Christoph Henrichs (Germany) on the annual conference of the European Law Institute (ELI) held in Paris in September 2026 where he presented the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer.

4. The bureau took note of the information provided by the secretariat about recent developments having occurred since the last plenary meeting of the CDCJ (2-4 June 2026).

4. Review of progress

5. The bureau took note of the update by the secretariat on progress made in implementing CDCJ activities and achieving its deliverables for 2026-2027 (document [CDCJ\(2026\)01 rev2](#)), and the updated calendar of meetings, consultations and events for 2026-2027 (document [CDCJ\(2026\)09 rev2](#)).

6. It took note of the decision of the Committee of Ministers of 23 September 2026 whereby agreement was given to adding to the terms of reference of the CDCJ for 2027 (i) a feasibility study on the resilience of civil service for democratic stability, and (ii) the revision of Recommendation No. R (86) 12 concerning measures to prevent and to reduce the excessive workload in the courts, as well as to extending the current terms of reference of the Committee of Experts on Access to Origins (CJ-OR) until 31 December 2027.

7. The bureau examined the possible future CDCJ activities including draft terms of reference of the CDCJ for 2028-2031 as proposed in document [CDCJ\(2026\)17 prov \(restricted\)](#), prepared by the secretariat on the basis of the discussion held at the 106th plenary meeting (2-4 June 2026) in the context of the preparation of the next Council of Europe programme and budget (2028-2031).

8. In the context of the discussion on future activities, the bureau considered the draft terms of reference of the CDCJ limited working group on justice and the workload of courts (CDCJ-JUS). It made some small amendments and decided that a non-exhaustive list of observers should be included. It agreed that CDCJ delegations should be provided with the draft terms of reference sufficiently ahead of the plenary meeting for them to consider proposing national experts to become members of the CDCJ-JUS.

Justice and the Rule of Law

5. Council of Europe Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality (Sofia Action Plan) – Focused thematic review of the implementation of selected aspects of the Sofia Action Plan (main deliverable 10)

9. The bureau welcomed the publication of the [Report on the thematic review focused on the career and training of judges](#) prepared in the framework of the follow-up to the Council of

Europe Plan of Action on strengthening judicial independence and impartiality (Sofia Action Plan).

10. It examined the draft concept note prepared by the secretariat (document [CDCJ\(2026\)04 prov2](#)), including a draft programme, for the launch conference of the report of the first thematic review. The conference, entitled “Strengthening Judicial Independence: Career and Training of Judges”, will be held on 17 November 2026, within the framework of the plenary meeting of the CDCJ. The bureau agreed to this proposal and instructed the secretariat to continue making the necessary practical arrangements for the organisation of this event, including communication around the event.

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

11. The bureau took note of the information provided by the secretariat on the feasibility study on the use of artificial intelligence for policing, the administration of justice and borders/migration, to be adopted by the end of 2027 in line with the CDCJ terms of reference.

12. It exchanged views online with the consultant, Dr Sabrina Hammoudi, on the draft outline of the feasibility study she proposed in document CDCJ(2026)18 prov. The bureau agreed to the approach taken by the consultant, including on identifying whether standard-setting action is needed or not in the different areas at stake.

Public Law

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

13. The bureau took note of the update by the secretariat on progress made in the work of the CDCJ Limited Working Group on Migration (CDCJ-MIG), based on the list of decisions of the 6th meeting of the CDCJ-MIG (22-23 September 2026) (document [CDCJ-MIG\(2026\)PV2](#)).

14. It examined the draft revised recommendation on the nationality of children and its draft revised explanatory memorandum as well as the draft checklist for policy makers (restricted documents CDCJ(2026)19 prov, CDCJ(2026)20 prov and CDCJ(2026)21 prov, respectively), as resulting from the last meeting of the CDCJ-MIG. The consultant, Prof. René de Groot, assisted bureau members with this examination.

15. It considered that the use of the concept of “gender responsive” that has been introduced in the recommendation required defining in the explanatory memorandum ahead of the plenary. It proposed to simplify the wording of principle 19. It agreed with the approach taken with the checklist of keeping it as short as possible and based exclusively on the content of the draft revised recommendation.

16. These three texts will be examined at the upcoming plenary meeting with a view to the approval of the draft revised recommendation - prior to its transmission to the Committee of Ministers for adoption – as well as the adoption of its draft revised explanatory memorandum and the draft checklist for policy makers.

17. In addition, the secretariat mentioned several events organised in connection with statelessness where the work of the CDCJ on child statelessness was to be presented: (i) a “Regional Expert Roundtable on the Prevention of Childhood Statelessness in Europe and Central Asia” co-organised on 20-21 October 2026 in Warsaw by UNHCR, OSCE-ODIHR, the European Network on Statelessness (ENS) and the Council of Europe; (ii) a multistakeholder meeting on “A Decade of Cooperation on Statelessness: From Knowledge Exchange to Future Action” organised on 24 November 2026 in Luxembourg by the European Migration Network

(EMN) to celebrate 10 years of the EMN Platform on Statelessness (the Platform) and present the EMN Inform “Statelessness in the European Union, Norway, Georgia and Serbia”; and a side event entitled “From Safeguards to Solutions: 65 Years of Preventing Statelessness”, to be held in Geneva on 13 October 2026 alongside the UNHCR Executive Committee’s 7th plenary session, to mark the 61th anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

Family law and children’s rights

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

18. 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).

19. The Chair of the CJ-OR, Thomas Knoll-Biermann (Germany) and the consultant, Laurence Brunet, presented issues that had arisen with the draft recommendation on the rights of donor-conceived persons to know their origins (CJ-OR(2025)10 prov5 – *restricted*) as a result of the adoption by the Committee of Ministers on 17 June 2026 of [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2026\)10](#) on establishing harmonised measures for the protection of third-party gamete donors as prepared by the European Committee on Organs, Tissues and Cells ([CD-P-TO](#)). They raised outstanding issues, including whether to set a maximum number of recipients per donor; whether to require registries and, if so, how to align them with Recommendation CM/Rec(2026)10; and how to address transitional arrangements concerning past cases of donor anonymity and the provision of support services free of charge.

20. The bureau instructed the secretariat to prepare a non-paper ahead of the upcoming plenary meeting which would outline the impact of Recommendation CM/Rec(2026)10 on some of the principles contained in the draft recommendation on the rights of donor conceived persons to know their origins.

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

21. The bureau took note of the update provided by the secretariat on the outcome of the written consultation on the draft report (Gap Analysis) on the thematic review of the Guidelines on Child-Friendly Justice (document CDENF(2026)13 - *restricted*). The secretariat reminded the bureau that the draft report would be adopted at a joint session of the three steering committees (CDCJ, CDENF and CDPC) during the plenary meeting CDENF to be held on 25-27 November 2026 and that members of the CDCJ would be invited to follow this meeting online to participate in its adoption.

22. The bureau took note of the revised draft Gap Analysis Report as revised by the secretariats of the CDENF, the CDCJ and the European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC) (document CDENF(2026)06 rev) in the light of the comments received from the members of these committees. It considered more specifically possible follow-up, namely either a revision of the guidelines or supplementing them with practical documents in thematic areas. The bureau was of the view that the most appropriate option would be the second one, i.e. supplementing the existing guidelines with thematic documents. In this context, it identified the area of technological developments and artificial intelligence as the priority area.

- 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*)

Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer Treaty Office (CETS No. 226) – follow-up

23. The bureau took note of signatures by Albania, Austria and Spain of the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer (CETS No. 226, Luxembourg Convention) since the 106th plenary meeting (2-4 June 2026).

24. The bureau took note of the update on the promotion of the Luxembourg Convention (document [CDCJ\(2025\)03 prov6](#)).

- 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 took note and welcomed the update provided by the secretariat on the document on the strategic input of the CDCJ to the Reykjavik principles for Democracy and the New Democratic Pact for Europe (document [CDCJ\(2026\)06 prov2](#)). Based on draft reply to a questionnaire on democratic security, the Vice-Chair, Lennart Houmann, was to represent the Committee in an "Exchange with Council of Europe intergovernmental committees and monitoring bodies on democratic security: trends, challenges and foresight", organised within the framework of the New Democratic Pact on 12 October 2026.

12. Developments in member states in the area of public law

26. The bureau took note of the information provided by member states on developments in their legislation in the area of public law (document CDCJ(2026)23), in particular in connection with the management of the workload of courts.

13. Exchange of views

27. The bureau held an exchange of views online with the President of the European Law Institute (ELI), Teresa Rodríguez de las Heras Ballell, and its Secretary General, Vanessa Wilcox, to explore opportunities for closer co-operation and dialogue between ELI and the CDCJ, including through the possibility of observer status with the CDCJ.

14. Preparation of the next plenary meeting

28. The bureau agreed to the draft agenda of the 107th plenary meeting of the CDCJ to take place in a hybrid format on 17-19 November 2026 (document [CDCJ\(2026\)OJ2 prov](#)).

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

29. 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.

16. Any other business

30. The bureau made a first assessment of the implementation of the revised Working Methods of the CDCJ (document [CDCJ\(2026\)02](#)). It considered that the organisation of two breakout groups to reflect on future topics had proved successful and had contributed to making the process more dynamic and fruitful. Going forward, where the topics lend themselves to it, smaller breakout groups should be organised to further stimulate discussions.

17. Dates and place of the next meetings

31. The bureau took note of the calendar of meetings, consultations and events for 2026-2027 as it appears in document [CDCJ\(2026\)09 rev2](#).

32. The bureau decided to hold its next meeting on 17-18 March 2027.

18. Adoption of the meeting report

33. 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, bureau members and secretariat
4. Review of progress
 - a. Stocktaking: implementation of CDCJ activities for 2026-2027
 - b. Calendar of meetings, consultations and events for 2026-2027
 - c. Future CDCJ activities

Justice and the Rule of Law

5. Council of Europe Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality (Sofia Action Plan) – Focused thematic review of the implementation of selected aspects of the 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*)

Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer Treaty Office (CETS No. 226) – follow-up

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. Developments in member states in the area of public law
13. Exchange of views
14. Preparation of the next plenary meeting

15. CDCJ Opinions (if any) (*main deliverable 13*)
16. Any other business
17. Dates and place of next meetings
18. 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 HENRICH 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

PARTICIPANT·ES

COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON ACCESS TO ORIGINS / COMITÉ D'EXPERTS SUR L'ACCES AUX ORIGINES (CJ-OR) <i>online</i>	<u>For Agenda Item 9 / Pour le point 9 de l'ordre du jour</u> Thomas KNOLL-BIERMANN Chair of the CJ-OR Tel: (+49) 30 18580 - 9112 E-mail: knoll-th@bmj.bund.de
EUROPEAN LAW INSTITUTE / INSTITUT EUROPÉEN DU DROIT (ELI) <i>online</i>	<u>For Agenda Item 13 / Pour le point 13 de l'ordre du jour</u> Teresa RODRÍGUEZ DE LAS HERAS BALLELL President / Présidente Vanessa WILCOX Secretary General / Secrétaire Générale

CONSULTANT·ES

CONSULTANT ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE / CONSULTANTE EN INTELLIGENCE ARTIFICIELLE <i>online</i>	<u>For Agenda Item 6 / Pour le point 6 de l'ordre du jour</u> Sabrina HAMMOUDI Docteure en droit public Chercheuse associée à l'Université de Montpellier (Faculté de droit - CREAM), Maître d'enseignement à l'Université Catholique de Lyon Consultante en stratégie IA à destination des organisations
CONSULTANT TO THE CDCJ-MIG / CONSULTANT DU CDCJ-MIG <i>online</i>	<u>For Agenda Item 7 / Pour le point 7 de l'ordre du jour</u> René de GROOT Professor emeritus Maastricht University
CONSULTANT TO THE CJ-OR / CONSULTANTE DU CJ-OR <i>online</i>	<u>For Agenda Item 8 / Pour le point 8 de l'ordre du jour</u> Laurence BRUNET Chargée de mission au Centre de référence des maladies rares du développement génital à l'Hôpital du Kremlin-Bicêtre Chercheuse associée à l'Institut des Sciences Juridique et Philosophique de la Sorbonne, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne/CNRS

**DGI - DIRECTORATE GENERAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND RULE OF LAW /
DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE DROITS HUMAINS ET ÉTAT DE DROIT**

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