



Strasbourg, 31 May 2021

CDENF(2021)AR01rev

Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF)

Abridged report (revised)

3rd Plenary Meeting

Strasbourg, 18-20 May *Videoconference*

Prepared by the Children's Rights Division

children@coe.int www.coe.int/cdenf

Abridged report

Meeting details

The Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF; here-after "the Committee") held its 3rd meeting in Strasbourg in an online format on 18 – 20 May 2021 with Ms Maria-Andriani Kostopoulou (Greece) in the Chair.

The agenda of the meeting is contained in Appendix 1.

[The full report of the meeting including the list of participants will be made available soon.]

1. Opening of the meeting

The Chair **opened** the meeting and welcomed the CDENF members, participants and observers.

Ms Elda Moreno, Head of the Children's Rights and Sports Values Department, welcomed the participants and informed them about the main objectives of this third plenary meeting.

2. Adoption of the agenda and order of business

The Committee adopted its agenda and order of business as it appears in Appendix I.

3. Statement of the Chair and the Secretariat

The Committee took note of the formalities for the upcoming elections of its Chair, its Vice-Chair and one Bureau member.

4. CDENF's tasks and activities: review of progress and next steps

The Committee took note and approved the updated CDENF workplan for the biennium.

4.1 Examination of the implementation of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) (CDENF specific task (i))

The Committee

- **heard** a presentation by Mr Ásmundur Einar Daðason, Minister of Social Affairs and Children (Iceland), on innovative legislation and administrative measures to foster children's prosperity and wellbeing, and held an exchange of views with him;
- took note and welcomed the planned events organised under the Hungarian Chairmanship to the Committee of Ministers, namely the conferences entitled "Foster Care" on 22 September and "Rights, opportunities and well-being of children and young people in the digital age" on 7-8 October, to take place in Budapest, Hungary;
- **took note** of the updated action plan, and appreciated the progress achieved towards the implementation of the current Strategy;
- took note of the information provided by the Secretariat on the progress towards the preparation of the final implementation report.

4.2 Draft Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) (CDENF specific tasks (ii) and (vi))

The Committee

- was informed on the state of play of the drafting process for the new Strategy;
- agreed on the structure and priority areas of the new Strategy;
- **started to examine and revised** the introductory part of the draft Strategy, notably in the light of comments submitted in advance of the meeting by one Delegation, and further oral proposals presented during the meeting;
- agreed on a number of changes to the draft, and took note of certain aspects which could require notes of reservations by delegations;
- noted that a revised draft of the Strategy would be circulated by <u>Friday</u>, <u>21 May</u>; with an invitation to send written comments, in the format of concrete drafting proposals, which had not been raised and dealt with during this meeting to the Secretariat by 4 June 2021;
- decided to pursue with the examination of the draft during a CDENF plenary session on 14-15 June by video conference (replacing the originally scheduled session on Migration, which would be postponed until 16-17 September);
- took note of and welcomed the invitation of the upcoming Italian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers to host the Launching Conference of the new Strategy for the Rights of the Child in spring 2022 (exact dates to be confirmed).

4.3 The protection of the best interests of the child in situations of parental separation and in childcare proceedings (CDENF specific task (iv) 1))

The Committee

- took note of the progress made by the Committee of Experts on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation and in care proceedings (CJ/ENF-ISE), as presented by its Chair, Mr Seamus Carroll (Ireland);
- was reminded that further comments on the draft feasibility studies could be submitted to the CJ/ENF-ISE Secretariat in writing by 4 June 2021;
- entrusted the CDENF Bureau to examine and adopt the revised feasibility studies in the light of the comments received by delegations and to decide on the instrument/tools to be prepared by the CJ/ENF-ISE, at a joint Bureau meeting with the Bureau of the CDCJ on 24 June 2021.

4.4 Work to enhance the implementation of international and Council of Europe standards on the protection of children from violence in member states (CDENF specific task (iii))

The Committee

- took note of the progress made by the Working Group as presented by its Chair, Ms Rosário Farmhouse (Portugal),
- heard presentations by the consultants, respectively on the draft Recommendation on strengthening mechanisms for professional to report violence against children (VAC) and the results of a first analysis undertaken within the Working Group;

- was reminded that any substantive comments to the draft Recommendation could be submitted in writing by 14 June 2021;
- **revised and approved** a questionnaire related to the VAC reporting mechanisms, to be disseminated via the CDENF after this meeting with a deadline for response by 6 September 2021.

4.5 The rights of children and children's participation in the decision-making process in the biomedical field (CDENF specific tasks (iv) 2 and (vi))

The Committee

- heard a presentation by the consultant to the Secretariat, on the results of the preparatory survey carried out by the Committee on Bioethics (DH-BIO) among Delegations and stakeholders;
- agreed with the proposal made by the Bureau of the DH-BIO towards the constitution of a joint drafting group, under the authority of the two parent Committees, to begin its work on the elaboration of a guide, containing principles and good practices on involving children in medical decision-making, during the second half of this year, with a view to preparing a draft guide for adoption by the two parent Committees by the end of 2022;
- noted the invitation to make written proposals/expression of interest, <u>by 30 June 2021</u>, for the designation of the Chair and two further CDENF members to the drafting group.
- **entrusted** the Bureau with designating the Chair and the two further CDENF members of the drafting group; taking into account, in particular, geographical distribution, gender balance and relevant legal systems.

4.6. COVID-19 related responses and actions

The Committee **agreed** to postpone the webinar on Covid-19 and children's rights regarding the challenges related to intrafamily violence, to be held jointly with the session on mental health on

22 November 2021.

5. CDENF priorities 2022-2025

The Committee

- heard a presentation by the Secretariat on the new modalities for all intergovernmental Committees' terms of reference, to cover a four years' cycle, and on the Bureau proposal for the CDENF priorities for 2022-2025;
- exchanged and agreed on the key priorities of the CDENF for 2022-2025.

6. Transversal issues

The Committee

held an exchange of view on progress made towards Target 16.2 of the UNSDGs with representatives of the Office of the UNSRSG, of UNICEF, of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and with two national delegations on recent or current "voluntary national reviews" (Czech Republic and Portugal).

7. Co-operation projects

The Committee

- **took note** of the oral presentation by the Secretariat of ongoing co-operation projects within the Children's Rights Division.

8. Co-operation and synergies with other relevant Council of Europe bodies and committees, international organisations and civil society

The Committee

- **heard presentations** by the following representatives of other international organisations, Council of Europe bodies and INGOs on recent and current activities:
 - Ms Valeria Setti, European Commission Co-ordinator for the Rights of the Child
 - Ms Astrid Podsliakowski, Project Manager Rights of the Child, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
 - Mr Bruce Adamson, Chair, European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC)
 - Mr Jean-Pierre Grin, Vice-Chair of the Sub-Committee on Children of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
 - Ms Elizabeth Gosme, Director, COFACE Families Europe
 - Mr Michel Grangeat, Representative, Council of Europe Conference of INGO's
- **heard** an update by the Secretariat on the organisation of a Regional Exchange as contribution to the 2021 UNCRC Day of General Discussion on "Children's Rights and Alternative Care", to take place under the auspices of the Hungarian Chairmanship to the Committee of Ministers in an online format on 1 June 2021;
- entrusted the Secretariat with the preparation of a written contribution, based on the responses to the survey conducted among Delegations and the outcome of the Regional Exchange, reflecting the Council of Europe acquis in this area, to be submitted to the UNCRC as contribution to its Day of General Discussion (to take place on 21 September 2021).

9. Elections of the Bureau

The Committee, by secret ballot,

- **elected** Ms Maria Andriani KOSTOPOULOU (Greece) as its Chair for a second term of office of one year;
- elected Ms Rosário FARMHOUSE (Portugal) as its Vice-Chair for a second term of office of one year;
- elected Mr Joost VAN HAELST (Belgium) as a Bureau member to complete his predecessor's term (until 31 December 2021). The term of office may be renewed once.

10. Any other business

None.

11. Date and place of next meetings

The Committee **agreed** on the dates of the following next meetings:

- Regional Exchange on Children and Alternative Care: 1 June 2021;
- CDENF Plenary session on the Strategy: <u>14-15 June 2021</u> (replacing the session on migration);
- (new) CDENF Plenary session on migration: 16-17 September 2021;
- 4th CDENF Plenary meeting: 13-15 October 2021;
- Webinar on Covid-19 and the rights of the Child: challenges related to intrafamily violence and mental health: <u>22 November 2021</u>;
- (new) Meeting of the CJ/ENF-ISE: <u>December 2021</u> (2 days, tbc, replacing the meeting scheduled for 16-17 September 2021).

12. Approval of the abridged report

The Committee **approved** the abridged report of this meeting as prepared by the Secretariat, and presented on screen before the end of the meeting.

Appendix 1

Agenda

| 1. | Opening of the meeting | |
|-----|---|---|
| | | CDENF(2021)OJ1 |
| 2. | Adoption of the agenda and order of business | CDENF(2021)OJ1ANN |
| | | CDENF(2021)LOP1 |
| 3. | Statement of the Chair and Secretariat | |
| 4. | CDENF's tasks and activities: review of progress and next steps | CDENF(2020)21rev3 |
| | Review of the updated CDENF workplan for the biennium | |
| 4.1 | Examination of the implementation of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) | CDENF(2020)02rev (action plan) |
| | a. Review of the updated action planb. Information on the outline of the implementation report and next steps | CDENF(2020)25rev (draft outline) |
| 4.2 | Draft Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) a. Examination of the draft Strategy b. Update on progress made with child consultations c. Update on the Strategy launching conference in 2022 | CDENF(2021)05 (draft Strategy – restricted) CDENF(2020)17Rev2 (work programme and timetable) |
| 4.3 | The protection of the best interests of the child in situations of parental separation and in childcare proceedings a. Update on progress made by the Committee of experts on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation and in care proceedings (CJ/ENF-ISE); working methods and workplan b. Delegation to the Bureau of the adoption of the feasibility studies and decision on the instrument/tools to be prepared by the CJ/ENF-ISE | CJ/ENF-ISE(2021)PV1 (report 3 rd meeting) CJ/ENF-ISE(2021)01rev (working methods and workplan) CJ/ENF-ISE(2021)03A (draft feasibility study on parental separation - restricted) CJ/ENF-ISE(2021)03B (draft feasibility study on care proceedings - restricted) |
| 4.4 | Work to enhance the implementation of international and Council of Europe standards on the protection of children from violence in member states a. Update on the progress made by the Working Group on responses to violence against children (CDENF-GT-VAE) towards the preparation of a draft Recommendation on the Strengthening mechanisms for professionals to report violence against children and discussion of the first draft; b. Approval of a questionnaire to be disseminated via the CDENF. | CDENF-GT- VAE(2021)PV1 (report 4 meeting) CDENF-GT- VAE(2021)01rev (draft recommendation) CDENF-GT- VAE(2021)02rev (summary report) |

| | | CDENF-GT- VAE(2021)03rev (draft survey) |
|-----|---|---|
| 4.5 | The rights of children and children's participation in the decision-making process in the biomedical field a. Presentation of an overview on the results of the survey carried out by the Committee on Bioethics (DH-BIO) among Delegations and stakeholders b. Update on working methods and next steps towards the establishment of a joint drafting group. | DH-BIO/INF(2020)20 DH-BIO(2021)11 (Proposal for setting up of a drafting group for the development of the Guide jointly with the CDENF) |
| | | CDENF(2021)12 (report of the 1st webinar) COVID-19 pandemic and children: challenges, responses and policy implications |
| 4.6 | COVID-19 related responses and actions 1st CDENF webinar on COVID-19 and education: presentation of report and conclusions 2nd CDENF webinar: proposals for the next event | Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on upholding equality and protecting against discrimination and hate during the Covid-19 pandemic and similar crises in the future |
| 4.7 | CDENF opinions for the Committee of Ministers (for information only) | CM/AS(2020)Rec2167- final (CM reply to PACE Recommendation 2167 (2020)) CM/AS(2020)Rec2169- final (CM reply to PACE Recommendation 2169 (2020)) CM/AS(2021)Rec2175- final (CM reply to PACE Recommendation 2175 (2020)) |
| 5. | CDENF priorities 2022 - 2025 Exchange on new priorities for the work of the CDENF for the upcoming four years' cycle, taking into account the new priorities and actions defined under the draft Strategy | CDENF(2021)06 (Priorities of the CDENF for 2022-2025- Restricted) |
| 6. | Transversal issues Review of progress towards the UNSDGs through an exchange of views with representatives of other international organisations, notably UNICEF, the UNSRSG office, and the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children and national delegations | CDENF(2021)07 (programme for the exchange of views) |
| 7. | Co-operation projects | |
| | | |

| | Co-operation and synergies with other relevant Council of Europe bodies and committees, international organisations and civil society | EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child (2021- |
|-----|---|---|
| 8. | a. <u>European Union</u>: EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child b. <u>UNCRC</u>: Organisation of a Regional Discussion as contribution to the 2021 UNCRC Day of General Discussion on "children's rights and alternative care" c. <u>ENOC</u>: Child Rights Impact Assessments (CRIA) d. <u>Representatives of further bodies and organisations</u>: Council of Europe bodies and committees, international organisations and civil society organisations | Draft Programme Regional Discussion on Children's Rights and Alternative Care |
| | Elections of the Bureau | |
| 9. | Election of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson and of (a) new Bureau member(s) | CDENF(2021)INF1 |
| | Nominations/Expressions of interest to be submitted to the CDENF Secretariat by Wednesday, 19 May, 14:00 h | |
| 10. | Any other business | |
| 11. | Date and place of next meetings | CDENF(2020)21Rev3 |
| | Plenary session on migration: 14-15 June 2021 4th plenary meeting: 13-15 October 2021 | (schedule of CDENF meetings) |
| 12. | Approval of the abridged report | |

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Abridged report

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and one Bureau member.

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- agreed on the structure and priority areas of the new Strategy;
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- **agreed** on a number of changes to the draft, and took note of certain aspects which could require notes of reservations by delegations;
- noted that a revised draft of the Strategy would be circulated by <u>Friday</u>, <u>21 May</u>; with an invitation to send written comments, in the format of concrete drafting proposals, which had not been raised and dealt with during this meeting to the Secretariat by 4 June 2021;
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4.3 The protection of the best interests of the child in situations of parental separation and in childcare proceedings (CDENF specific task (iv) 1))

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- was reminded that any substantive comments to the draft Recommendation could be submitted in writing by 14 June 2021;
- revised and approved a questionnaire related to the VAC reporting mechanisms, to be disseminated via the CDENF after this meeting with a deadline for response by 6 September 2021.

4.5 The rights of children and children's participation in the decision-making process in the biomedical field (CDENF specific tasks (iv) 2 and (vi))

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- **noted** the invitation to make written proposals/expression of interest, <u>by 30 June 2021</u>, for the designation of the Chair and two further CDENF members to the drafting group.
- **entrusted** the Bureau with designating the Chair and the two further CDENF members of the drafting group; taking into account, in particular, geographical distribution, gender balance and relevant legal systems.

4.6. COVID-19 related responses and actions

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22 November 2021.

5. CDENF priorities 2022-2025

The Committee

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6. Transversal issues

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7. Co-operation projects

The Committee

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8. Co-operation and synergies with other relevant Council of Europe bodies and committees, international organisations and civil society

The Committee

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- **heard** an update by the Secretariat on the organisation of a Regional Exchange as contribution to the 2021 UNCRC Day of General Discussion on "Children's Rights and Alternative Care", to take place under the auspices of the Hungarian Chairmanship to the Committee of Ministers in an online format on 1 June 2021;
- entrusted the Secretariat with the preparation of a written contribution, based on the responses to the survey conducted among Delegations and the outcome of the Regional Exchange, reflecting the Council of Europe acquis in this area, to be submitted to the UNCRC as contribution to its Day of General Discussion (to take place on 21 September 2021).

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10. Any other business

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11. Date and place of next meetings

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12. Approval of the abridged report

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and presented on screen before the end of the meeting.

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| 4. | CDENF's tasks and activities: review of progress and next steps | CDENF(2020)21rev3 |
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| 4.1 | Examination of the implementation of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) | CDENF(2020)02rev (action plan) |
| | c. Review of the updated action pland. Information on the outline of the implementation report and next steps | CDENF(2020)25rev (draft outline) |
| 4.2 | Draft Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) d. Examination of the draft Strategy e. Update on progress made with child consultations f. Update on the Strategy launching conference in 2022 | CDENF(2021)05 (draft Strategy – restricted) CDENF(2020)17Rev2 (work programme and timetable) |
| 4.3 | The protection of the best interests of the child in situations of parental separation and in childcare proceedings c. Update on progress made by the Committee of experts on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation and in care proceedings (CJ/ENF-ISE); working methods and workplan d. Delegation to the Bureau of the adoption of the feasibility studies and decision on the instrument/tools to be prepared by the CJ/ENF-ISE | CJ/ENF-ISE(2021)PV1 (report 3 rd meeting) CJ/ENF-ISE(2021)01rev (working methods and workplan) CJ/ENF-ISE(2021)03A (draft feasibility study on parental separation - restricted) CJ/ENF-ISE(2021)03B (draft feasibility study on care proceedings - restricted) |
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| | | CDENF-GT- VAE(2021)03rev (draft survey) |
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| 4.5 | The rights of children and children's participation in the decision-making process in the biomedical field c. Presentation of an overview on the results of the survey carried out by the Committee on Bioethics (DH-BIO) among Delegations and stakeholders d. Update on working methods and next steps towards the establishment of a joint drafting group. | DH-BIO/INF(2020)20 DH-BIO(2021)11 (Proposal for setting up of a drafting group for the development of the Guide jointly with the CDENF) |
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| 6. | Transversal issues Review of progress towards the UNSDGs through an exchange of views with representatives of other international organisations, notably UNICEF, the UNSRSG office, and the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children and national delegations | CDENF(2021)07 (programme for the exchange of views) |
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| | h. Representatives of further bodies and organisations: Council of Europe bodies and committees, international organisations and civil society organisations Elections of the Bureau | Alternative Care |
| 9. | Election of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson and of (a) new Bureau member(s) Nominations/Expressions of interest to be submitted to the CDENF Secretariat by Wednesday, 19 May, 14:00 h | CDENF(2021)INF1 |
| 10. | Any other business | |
| 11. | Date and place of next meetings Plenary session on migration: 14-15 June 2021 4th plenary meeting: 13-15 October 2021 | CDENF(2020)21Rev3 (schedule of CDENF meetings) |
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