



Building a Europe  
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pour et avec les enfants



Strasbourg, 10 August 2021  
CDENF(2021)PV03

## **Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF)**

### **Meeting report**

### **Plenary session dedicated to the review of the Draft Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022 – 2027)**

Strasbourg, 14-15 June 2021

*By Videoconference*

*Prepared by the Children's Rights Division*

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## **1. Opening of the meeting**

1. The Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF, “the Committee”) held a Plenary session dedicated to reviewing the draft Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) in Strasbourg from 14-15 June 2021 by videoconference. The CDENF Chair, Ms Maria-Andriani Kostopoulou (Greece), opened the meeting and welcomed the CDENF members, participants and observers.
2. Ms Regína Jensdóttir, Head of the Children’s Rights Division of the Council of Europe, informed about the main objectives of the meeting, emphasising its importance for shaping the future work of the Council of Europe in the area of the rights of the child over the next 6 years. Delegations would have the opportunity to address comments and engage in an exchange of views with regards to the draft Strategy.

## **2. Adoption of the agenda**

3. The agenda was adopted as it appears in Appendix I. The list of participants appears in Appendix II.

## **3. Statement of the Chair and the Secretariat**

4. The Committee took note of the purpose of the present meeting and agreed to the procedure proposed by the Chair for addressing the comments made on the draft Strategy, noting that any reservations expressed by delegations would be included in the final report of the meeting.
5. Mr Jeroen Schokkenbroek, Director of the Anti-discrimination Directorate, welcomed the participants and outlined the relevance of the new Strategy within the Strategic Framework of the Council of Europe ([CM/Del/Dec\(2021\)131/2a](#)) and the priorities outlined therein, notably combatting social inequalities and discrimination, supporting the role and diversity of the civil society, and the protection of vulnerable groups.

## **4. Draft Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027)**

6. Following a request made by several delegations, the Committee took the view that in order to avoid heavy reporting obligations incumbent on member States, the follow-up to the Strategy should be based, to the greatest extent possible, on data available (and not to be specially gathered for the purpose of Strategy follow-up).
7. The Committee pursued the examination and revision of the draft Strategy, as started during its 3<sup>rd</sup> plenary meeting (18-20 May 2021), based on written comments submitted by members, participants and observers in advance of the dedicated session and included a number of editorial and substantial changes to the text as reflected in the revised draft Strategy (CDENF(2021)05rev3). In addition to a number of issues of more editorial nature, delegations exchanged, notably, on the following parts of the text:

### Points relevant to several chapters of the text

8. Four delegations considered that the notion of “gender” should not be referred to in the Strategy, on the grounds that it was neither known in their respective national legal systems nor was there a commonly accepted definition of the term. Following an exchange of views, the delegations of Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and the Russian Federation, expressed reservations with regard to the use of the terms “gender”, “gender-sensitive” and “gender-based violence” throughout the draft Strategy. All other delegations were in agreement with the terms employed.
9. A few delegations considered that the Strategy should not single out any specific categories of vulnerable groups, such as “LGBTI children”, and that the Strategy should not be seen as promoting LGBTI issues. Similarly, delegations considered that “LGBTI families” were not included as part of the definition of family in their domestic legislation. The Secretariat recalled that reference to LGBTI was made in the context of anti-discrimination measures, as had already been the case in the current Strategy (2016-2021). The current text also reflected the approach adopted by the Committee of Ministers, notably through Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. Following an exchange of views, during which the majority of delegations considered it important to maintain the reference to LGBTI children and families where relevant to the Strategy, six delegations (Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation) expressed reservations with regard to any reference made throughout the text to “LGBTI children” as a specific vulnerable group or to “LGBTI families”.
10. The Russian Federation, expressed reservations with regard to the reference to documents of other regional organisations that they were not a member of, including the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child and other EU documents or legal instruments. Other delegations considered that these references should be maintained because of their important relevance and in the context of the co-operation between the Council of Europe and the EU with regard to the rights of the child. The Secretariat informed delegations that any references made to the EU consultations with children will be deleted once the outcomes of the current consultations with children in ten Council of Europe member states will have been included in the text.

### Introduction

11. One delegation opposed the reference to the text of the Secretary General’s Strategic Framework for 2021-2021 ([SG/Inf\(2020\)34](#)) in Paragraph 3 of the draft Strategy on the ground that this document did not reflect a consensus of all member States, and proposed to refer instead to the decision on the [Strategic Framework of the Council of Europe](#) taken by the Committee of Ministers at its 131<sup>st</sup> Session (Hamburg, Germany - 21 May 2021). During an exchange of views, a majority of delegations considered that the reference to the Secretary General’s Strategic Framework was relevant and should be kept in the text as a direct quote. Two delegations (Russian Federation, Hungary) expressed reservations to the inclusion of that quote.

12. The proposal made by one delegation (Bulgaria) to translate all relevant documents of the Council of Europe into all national languages of its member States was met with overall support; however, it was also pointed out that the Council of Europe could not take responsibility for such translations.

#### Chapter 2.1: Freedom from violence for all children

13. The delegations agreed to including a number of additions in the “Challenges” part, notably a reference to “hate crimes”.
14. One delegation (Russian Federation) expressed its disagreement with the wording of point 1.1.8 referring to the Istanbul Convention, as it neither wished to support nor accede to it, and proposed to delete the reference to it or, alternatively, to rephrase as follows: “Supporting its member States that request it in their preparation for signature, ratification and implementation of the Istanbul Convention, including through the provision of technical and legal expertise.” Another delegation (Hungary) joined the proposal to delete the reference to the Istanbul Convention, while the majority of delegations preferred to keep the original text.
15. The Chair proposed, in consultation with the Secretariat, by way of compromise, to amend the current text of point 1.1.8 as follows: “Supporting its member States, as *appropriate*, towards signature, ratification and implementation of the Istanbul Convention...”. As the delegation having made the original proposal could not agree with the proposed change before consulting with its national authorities, the text remained unchanged; the concerns and alternative proposal were noted in this report and will be included in the draft strategy to be finally approved at its next meeting. Following this exchange, two delegations (Hungary, Russian Federation) still expressed reservations with regard to the reference to the Istanbul Convention (notably in para. 4 and point 1.1.8) – in respect of one delegation (Russian Federation) pending confirmation of agreement with the compromise solution proposed by the Chair;
16. Following the proposal of one delegation (Belgium), the CDENF considered whether Roma children should be specifically mentioned with regard to child marriages, but considered, by a majority, that it was not indicated to mention Roma children as a specific category in the context of the paragraph, while the reference to “early marriages” was considered to be relevant.
17. The Committee finally took note of the proposal to include a reference to the European Convention on the exercise of children’s rights but considered that such reference would not be of sufficient added value to the strategic perspective of the text (also in the light of the relatively limited number of ratifications of this text).

#### **5. Any other business**

18. Participants raised no other issues.

#### **6. Date and place of next meetings**

19. The Committee took note of the dates of the following next meetings:

- 24 June 2021: Joint Bureau meeting of the CDENF and the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ)
- 16-17 September 2021: CDENF Plenary session on migration
- 13-15 October 2021: 4<sup>th</sup> CDENF Plenary meeting
- 22 November 2021: Webinar on Covid-19 and the rights of the Child: challenges related to intrafamily violence and mental health
- 23-24 November 2021: 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Working Group on responses to violence against children (CDENF-GT-VAE)
- 13-14 December 2021: 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Committee of Experts on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation and in care proceedings the CJ/ENF-ISE

## **7. Adoption of the abridged meeting report**

Due to time constraints at the end of the meeting, the abridged report was sent to delegations after the session, for approval via written procedure.

## Appendix I

### Agenda

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<b>1. Opening of the meeting</b>	
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<b>2. Adoption of the agenda and order of business</b>	<a href="#">CDENF(2021)OJ3</a> CDENF(2021)OJ3ANN CDENF(2021)LOP3
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<b>3. Statement of the chair and Secretariat</b>	
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<b>4. Draft Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Review of the draft Strategy</li></ul>	CDENF(2021)05rev (draft Strategy – restricted – as sent out for comments after the 3 <sup>rd</sup> CDENF plenary meeting)  CDENF(2021)05rev2 (draft Strategy – restricted – including comments with drafting proposals submitted by Delegations)  <a href="#">CDENF(2020)17Rev3</a> (work programme and timetable as revised at the 3 <sup>rd</sup> CDENF plenary meeting)
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<b>5. Any other business</b>	
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<b>Date and place of next meetings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Joint Bureau meeting CDCJ/CDENF : 24 June 2021</li></ul>	
<b>6.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Bureau meeting of the CDENF : 10 September 2021</li><li>- Plenary session on migration : 16-17 September 2021</li><li>- 4th plenary meeting : 13-15 October 2021</li></ul>	<a href="#">CDENF(2020)21Rev4</a> (schedule of CDENF meetings)

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<b>7. Approval of the abridged meeting report</b>	
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**Appendix II**  
**List of participants**

**MEMBERS / MEMBERS**

**ALBANIA/ALBANIE**

Ms Elona Halil Osmani  
Ministry of Health and Social Protection

**ANDORRA/ANDORRE**

Mr Jordi Olivé Cadena  
Head of the Care Service to Children and Adolescents

**ARMENIA/ARMÉNIE**

Ms Ivetta Shahbazyan  
Head of Children Rights Protection Unit  
Staff of the Human Rights Defender of the Republic of Armenia

**AUSTRIA/AUTRICHE**

**AZERBAIJAN/AZERBAÏDJAN**

Ms Raida Amirbayova  
The State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs

**BELGIUM/BELGIQUE**

Mme Valérie Gengoux  
Federal public Service Justice  
Service for criminal policy

Mr Joost Van Haelst  
Children's Rights Policy Officer  
Department for Culture, Youth and Medias  
Flemish Government

Ms Jade Imane Person  
Stagiaire en charge des questions internationales  
Observatoire de l'enfance, de la jeunesse et de l'aide à la jeunesse (OEJAJ)

**BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA/ BOSNIE ET HERZÉGOVINE**

**BULGARIA/BULGARIE**

Ms Eleonora Lilova  
Chairperson of the State Agency for Child Protection

Ms Milena Anastasova  
Chief expert at “Child Policies and Programs, Strategic Development and Co-ordinator” Directorate  
State Agency for Child Protection

Ms Maria Belichovska  
Expert at “Child Policies and Programs, Strategic Development and Co-ordinator” Directorate  
State Agency for Child Protection

### **CROATIA/CROATIE**

### **CYPRUS/CHYPRE**

Ms Despo Michaelidou  
Cypriot Commissioner for Children’s Rights

### **CZECH REPUBLIC/RÉPUBLIQUE TCHÈQUE**

### **DENMARK/DANEMARK**

Ms Suvi Sirkitta Svendsens  
Head of Section  
Legal and International Relations  
Ministry of Social Affairs and the Interior

### **ESTONIA/ESTONIE**

### **FINLAND/FINLANDE**

Ms Helinä Heikkinen  
Legal Officer  
Unit for Human Rights Courts and Conventions  
Legal Service  
Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ms Marjo Malja  
Senior Ministerial Adviser, Social affairs  
Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

### **FRANCE**

Mr Alexis Rinckenbach  
Chef du Bureau des affaires européennes et internationales  
Direction Générale de la Cohésion sociale  
Ministère des Solidarités et de la santé

Mme Stefania Chiru  
Chargée de mission  
Bureau des affaires européennes et internationales  
Ministère des Solidarités et de la Santé

### **GEORGIA/GÉORGIE**

### **GERMANY/ALLEMAGNE**



## **GREECE/GRÈCE**

Ms Maria-Andriani Kostopoulou  
Attorney at Law, Supreme Court

Ms Panagiota Margaroni  
Official  
Department of Relations with International Organisations  
Directorate of International Relations  
Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

## **HUNGARY/HONGRIE**

Ms Boglarka Eniko Barkaszi  
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Department for Multilateral Affairs  
Ministry of Human Capacities

## **ICELAND/ISLANDE**

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Ministry of Social Affairs

Ms Hjordis Eva Thordardottir  
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Ms Deidre Reidy  
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Ms Valentina Fiore  
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## **LATVIA/LETTONIE**

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Ministry of Welfare

## **LIECHTENSTEIN**

## **LITHUANIA/LITUANIE**

## **LUXEMBOURG**

Ms Marguerite Krier  
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Ms Myriam Scholer  
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## **MALTA/MALTE**

Mr Jonathan Silvio  
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## **REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA/REPUBLIQUE DE MOLDOVA**

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Secretary of State

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Mr Thomas Madden  
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*Apologised / Excusé*

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***Directorate of Anti-Discrimination / Direction de l'anti-discrimination***

Mr Jeroen Schokkenbroek  
Director / Directeur

***Children 's Rights and Sport Values Department / Service des droits des enfants et des valeurs du sport***

Ms Eida Moreno  
Head of Department / Cheffe du Service

***Secretariat to the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child / Secrétariat du Comité Directeur pour les droits de l'enfant***

Ms Regina Jensdottir  
Children's Rights Co-ordinator, Head of the Children's Rights Division / Coordinatrice des droits des enfants, Cheffe de la Division des droits des enfants

Ms Katrin Uerpmann  
Secretary to the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child / Secrétaire du Comité Directeur pour les droits de l'enfant  
Programme Officer / Responsable de programme



Ms Maren Lambrecht-Feigl  
Co-Secretary to the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child / Co-secrétaire du Comité Directeur  
pour les droits de l'enfant  
Programme Officer / Responsable de programme

Ms Maia Mamulashvili  
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Ms Maria Asensio Vellasco  
Policy Officer / Chargée de mission

Ms Faustine Labbadi  
Policy Officer / Chargée de mission

Ms Valérie Giret-Lerch  
Assistant / Assistante

Mr Tapio Koivula  
Trainee / Stagiaire

### **INTERPRETERS / INTERPRÈTES**

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Ms Elisabetta Bassu  
Mr Rémy Jain