



Building a Europe
for and with children

Construire une Europe
pour et avec les enfants

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 27 November 2023

CDENF(2023)AR03

Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF)

Draft Abridged report of the 8th plenary meeting
(Strasbourg, 14-16 November 2023)

Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

The Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF) held its eight plenary meeting in Strasbourg (France) on 14-16 November 2023, with Rosário Farmhouse (Portugal) in the Chair.

The agenda of the meeting is contained in the Appendix. The full meeting report including the list of participants will be available on the CDENF website.¹

At its plenary meeting, the CDENF

- **took note of** and **approved** its workplan, subject to the adoption of its new terms of reference for 2024-2027 by the Committee of Ministers;
- **entrusted** its Bureau, with the support of the Secretariat, to follow up on relevant activities of other Council of Europe Committees and bodies in view of ensuring CDENF contributions and representations as appropriate;
- **took note of** and **exchanged** on the first implementation report of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022–2027), reflecting the transversal approach adopted throughout all priority areas, and **instructed** the Secretariat to integrate last contributions and circulate it to the CDENF for information;
- **exchanged** on the modalities for following the further implementation of the Strategy, notably its mid-term review;
- **revised and adopted** its Opinions on PACE Recommendations 2262 (2023) - “Preventing addictive behaviours in children” and 2263 (2023) – “Mental health and well-being of children and young adults”, to be transmitted to the Committee of Ministers;
- **welcomed** the adoption, on 6 September 2023, of Recommendation CM/Rec(2023)8 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on strengthening reporting systems on violence against children; the approval, jointly with the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) of the draft Recommendation on the Rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation proceedings and the adoption of its accompanying draft Explanatory Memorandum; the adoption of the Guide on Children’s participation in decisions about their health, prepared jointly with the Steering Committee for Human Rights in the fields of Biomedicine and Health (CDBIO); and the finalisation of the report on Children as Human Rights Defenders;

¹ www.coe.int/cdenf

- **emphasised** that the future priorities of the Council of Europe should be guided by the Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027);
- **elected** Solvor Bäcklund (Norway) and Alfredo Ferrante (Italy), as members of the Bureau for a second term of office of two years, and Marjo Malja (Finland) for a first term of office of two years, renewable once, starting on 1 January 2024;
- **took note** of the relevant information and updates provided by the representatives of:
 - o the Council of Europe Children’s Rights Division Co-operation Unit;
 - o the Consultation Group on the Children of Ukraine (CGU);
 - o the Committee of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Committee);
 - o the Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues (ADI-ROM);
 - o the Coordinator for the Rights of the Child of the European Commission;
 - o the Child Rights International Network (CRIN);
- **took note** of the following dates for upcoming meetings:
 - CDENF²
 - o 28-30 May 2024, Strasbourg, 9th CDENF plenary meeting
 - CDENF Bureau
 - o 11-12 April 2024 (venue tbc), CDENF Bureau meeting

Strategic Objective 1: Freedom from violence for all children

- **took note** of the information presented by Maria Vargova (Slovakia), Chair of the Committee of Experts on the prevention of violence (ENF-VAE), on the progress achieved by the Committee;
- **agreed** on the questionnaire to review the implementation of CM/Rec(2009)10 on Council of Europe policy guidelines on integrated national strategies for the protection of children from violence, to be circulated to CDENF Delegations for replies by 31 January 2024;

Strategic Objective 2: Equal opportunities and social inclusion for all children

- **took note** of the information provided by the Secretariat on progress achieved with regard to the preparation of a mapping study on children’s access to quality mental health care, which would now be finalised in 2024;

Strategic Objective 3: Access to and safe use of technologies for all children

- **took note** of the information provided by the Secretariat on progress achieved with regard to the preparation of a Report on the rights of the child and artificial intelligence and **proposed** next steps;

Strategic Objective 4: Child-friendly justice for all children

- **held** a joint session with the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) in order to approve the draft Recommendation on the protection of the rights and best interests of the child in parental separation proceedings and adopt its draft Explanatory Memorandum as prepared by their joint committee of experts, the Committee of Experts on the Rights and the Best Interests of the Child in Parental Separation and in Care Proceedings (CJ/ENF-ISE). Following a final reading and amendments, the CDENF **approved** the recommendation and **adopted** its Explanatory Memorandum, and so did the CDCJ.
- **decided**, jointly with the CDCJ, that this draft Recommendation should be submitted for adoption by the Committee of Ministers together with the future draft recommendation on the protection of the rights and best interests of the child in care proceedings which will be finalised by the end of 2024, given the proximity of the two recommendations. This would also coincide with the completion of the implementation tools still to be prepared for both recommendations;
- **took note** of and **welcomed** the publication of a Mapping study on multidisciplinary and interagency child-friendly justice models responding to violence against children “Barnahus: a European journey”, produced with the support of the Icelandic Presidency of the Committee of Ministers;

² Note by the Secretariat: Following plenary meeting, the date for the 10th CDENF would still need to be confirmed in view of other events taking place at the same time.

Strategic Objective 5: Giving a voice to every child

- **adopted** the Guide to children's participation in decisions about their health;
- **exchanged** on the possible follow-up to be given to the Guide; notably through the possible development of appropriate child-friendly materials, and **agreed** to explore options for translation of the guide into other national languages;
- **revised** and **approved** the Report on children as defenders of human rights in view of its publication;
- **held** an exchange of views on the conclusions and the follow-up to the report;
- **heard** a presentation by the Head of the National System for the Integral Development of the Family (SNDIF) of Mexico, on the Mexican methodology for child consultations;

Strategic Objective 6: Children's rights in crisis and emergency situations

- **took note** of a presentation on the first results stemming from the survey carried out among national delegations to review the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)11 on effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration and **exchanged** on key points for the upcoming implementation review report, to be adopted in 2024;
- **took note** of the information provided by the Secretariat on the methodology developed for the targeted child consultations to feed into the implementation review, and of the option for interested Delegations to still join this exercise;
- **held** a thematic exchange on Children's rights and the environment, with online participation of the following experts:
 - Velina Todorova, Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child;
 - Aoife Nolan, President of the European Committee of Social Rights;
 - Nicola Wenzel, Vice-Chair and Rapporteur of the Drafting Group on Human Rights and Environment (CDDH-ENV) of the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH);
 - Natalia Kobylarz, Senior Lawyer at the Registry of the European Court of Human Rights (in person).
- **adopted** this abridged report at the end of the meeting.

Appendix

Agenda

-
1. **Opening of the meeting**

 2. **Adoption of the agenda and order of business**

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

 4. **CDENF workplan: Overview of main activities, priorities and meetings**

 5. **Implementation of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022–2027)
First Implementation Report of the Strategy (2022-2023)**
Main task (ii)

5.1 Strategic Objective 1: Freedom from violence for all children

Committee of Experts on the prevention of violence (ENF-VAE)

- a. **Draft feasibility study on age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education to strengthen responses for inter alia preventing and combatting violence against children, including sexual violence and harmful behaviour**
- b. **Implementation review of Recommendation CM/Rec(2009)10 on Council of Europe policy guidelines on integrated national strategies for the protection of children from violence including the development of model prevention approaches**

Main deliverables 8, 10

5.2 Strategic Objective 2: Equal opportunities and social inclusion for all children

Mapping study on children’s access to quality mental health care

Main deliverable 5 and main task (xiv)

5.3 Strategic Objective 3: Access to and safe use of technologies for all children

Draft report on the rights of the child and artificial intelligence

Main deliverable 16

5.4 Strategic Objective 4: Child-friendly justice for all children

Committee of Experts on the rights and best interests of the child in parental separation and in care proceedings (CJ/ENF-ISE)

Draft Recommendation on the protection of the best interests of the child in parental separation proceedings

Main deliverable 2

- for approval, joint session with CDCJ –

5.5 Strategic Objective 5: Giving a voice to every child

-
- a. **Draft Guide to good practice concerning the participation of children in the decision-making processes on matters regarding their health (BIO/ENF-CP)**

- for adoption -

Main deliverable 4 and main task (xiv)

- b. **Report on children as defenders of human rights**

- for approval -

Main deliverable 6

5.6 Strategic Objective 6: Children's Rights in Crisis and Emergency Situations

- a. **Thematic exchange on Children's rights and the Environment**

Main task (iv)

- b. **Implementation review report of Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)11 on effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration**

Main task (viii) and main deliverable 7

6. Transversal issues:

- a. Transversal approaches as promoted by the Strategy
(gender-sensitivity, anti-discrimination, child participation)
- b. Contribution to the UNSDG Agenda 2030

Main task (xxi)

7. Co-operation with other relevant Council of Europe bodies and other organisations (and other institutions)

- a. Council of Europe bodies and sectors
- b. International organisations
- c. INGOs

8. 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 (xvii)

9. Opinions requested by the Committee of Ministers

10. CDENF Working methods

11. Elections to the Bureau

12. Any other business

13. Date and place of next meeting

14. Approval of the abridged meeting report

The annotated agenda and order of business is available at: www.coe.int/cdenf