



STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (CDENF)

9th Bureau meeting

Monday, 26 September 2022,

Council of Europe Office, Paris

9.00 am – 12.30 pm / 2.00 pm – 4:30 pm

Meeting report

1. Opening of the meeting

The Chair, Ms Rosario Farmhouse (Portugal), opened the meeting and welcomed all Bureau members. All participants introduced themselves in a tour de table.

2. Adoption of the agenda and order of business

The Bureau adopted the agenda as it appears in Appendix I. The list of participants appears in Appendix II.

3. Information by the Secretariat

The Bureau **took note** of information provided by the Secretariat on:

- the role and responsibilities of the Bureau according to the [CDENF Terms of Reference](#) and [Resolution CM/Res\(2021\)3](#) on [intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods](#)
- the consideration of the draft Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on Human Rights Principles and Implementing Guidelines on age assessment for children in migration by the Rapporteur's Group on Social and Health questions of the Committee of Ministers;
- the 2nd meeting of the Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI, 21-23 September), entrusted with the elaboration of legal framework on the development, design, and application of artificial intelligence, based on the Council of Europe's standards on human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and conducive to innovation, which the Secretariat attended on behalf of the CDENF;
- the implementation report on the previous Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021), that had been taken note of by the Committee of Ministers at its 1442nd meeting, 14-15 September 2022.

4. **CDEF workplan: State of play of main activities**

The Bureau was informed of current activities undertaken to deliver on the CDEF Terms of Reference, in particular taking note of:

- the structure and function of the workplan of the CDEF for CDEF for the first biennium of its mandate (2022-2023), with an outlook to the second biennium....
- the ongoing tender call aimed at creating a pool of experts who could be called upon to support the CDEF in producing certain deliverables foreseen in its Terms of Reference together with sectors contributing to the implementation of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022 - 2027);
- the invitation to share the tender call with potentially interested national experts (independent consultants, academics, NGO representatives etc.) to ensure that they could participate in the call;
- the upcoming activities to be launched in the context of children's rights and artificial intelligence, access to mental health services and children as human rights defenders;
- the complementary activity on child-friendly justice via a study on the use of the Barnahus model across Europe, which was directly related to the Strategy, financed through a voluntary contribution coming from the Icelandic government on the occasion of the upcoming Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers.

The Bureau instructed the Secretariat to send out a reminder of the tender call to all CDEF Delegations, underlining the importance of submitting an offer within the set deadline (10 October 2022) if collaborating with the Council of Europe was an option in the next years; to be shared by CDEF members with potential consultants with expertise in the different areas covered by the Strategy for the Rights of the Child.

5. **Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027):**

The Bureau was informed about the state of progress made by the Secretariat in developing implementation tools facilitating follow-up of and reporting back on the Strategy in particular:

- the communication tools related to the Strategy, including the Communication Strategy, a Power Point template, a promotional video on the Strategy and a child-friendly version that had been drafting and was currently being consulted with the "young delegation" from the Rome conference.;
- electronic forms for reporting back on national legislative and policy action taken in relation to the Strategy; these forms were currently being developed in co-operation with the Council of Europe department of information technology (DIT) and were meant to be initialised once a year (after the second yearly CDEF meeting) to gather information on national action by the beginning of the following year.

Members of the Bureau commented on these tools as follows:

- there was great interest in obtaining access to the child-friendly version of the Strategy as soon as possible, as certain delegations would consider the translation of this version into their national language (e.g. the delegation of Norway);
- Bureau members enquired whether the video, which they could see as a "preview" and which was very much appreciated as such, could still be complemented by a few further pictures better reflecting the current reality of war, migration or poverty experienced by many children in Europe; they would also be interested to have access to the final version in order to translate it into their national languages;
- if a presentation of the child-friendly version of the Strategy was foreseen at the CDEF meeting in November, it was suggested to do this in the presence of children who had contributed to the Strategy or been present in Rome (online or in person).

6. 6th CDENF Plenary meeting (15-17 November 2022)

The Bureau **considered the draft agenda** of the 6th Plenary meeting to be held on 15-17 November 2022.

The Bureau agreed on the importance to welcome and integrate incoming CDENF members, and exchanged on different options, such as organising an “ice-breaking” session, holding a reception by the Bureau over coffee at the beginning of the meeting, or to set up pairs of experienced and new CDENF members for exchange.

The Bureau considered different options to share information on recent national developments during CDENF plenary meetings, at the outset of the Strategy item (orally or in writing) and decided not to hold an oral exchange at the 6th plenary meeting, as the Strategy implementation process was not yet sufficiently advanced and in view of the substantial number of other tasks on its agenda.

The Bureau then considered the following items on the CDENF agenda in more depth:

CDENF agenda item 6.2.:

The Bureau was reminded of the need to set up the new Committee of Experts on the prevention of violence (ENF-VAE) for the period 2023/2024 and **decided on the following steps:**

- **CDENF meeting on 15-17 November 2022:** explaining the work process ahead and launching the call for experts to join the new Committee, first orally at the CDENF meeting, then via a written call to follow;
- **October/November 2022:** on basis of the Strategy expert pool to be established following the recent tender call, choose a partner consultant for this area, and request a first outline of a 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);
- **Early 2023:** consideration of the list of candidates with the Bureau to select 8 experts to compose the group; submission of the proposed list of experts to the CDENF for approval;
- **7th CDENF meeting (March 2023, exact dates to be confirmed):** CDENF to approve the list and set up the group
- **May 2023:** first meeting of the VAE Sub-Committee to kick off the work based on the first outline prepared (Second meeting in October 2023).

CDENF agenda item 6.3.: equal opportunities and social inclusion

The Bureau **instructed the Secretariat**, to select, following the current Strategy tender call, an expert on access to mental health to support this activity and invite him/her to the meeting to initiate the activity.

CDENF agenda item 6.4.: access to and safe use of technologies

The Bureau **instructed the Secretariat**, to select, following the current Strategy tender call, an expert on children’s rights and artificial intelligence to support this activity and invite him/her to the meeting to initiate the activity.

Asked about what could be the emphasis of this activity to ensure complementarity with the work carried out by different actors, notable the Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI), Bureau members suggested the following topics as possible areas to focus on: child participation to benefit of children’s experience in research and policy making, child right’s impact assessment (CRIA), impact of new technologies on brain development, impact of AI (e.g. algorithms) on young children; it was also suggested to revert to the conclusions of the Rome Strategy conference to see outstanding children’s rights issues discussed there.

CDENF agenda item 7: Transversal issues:

The Bureau **reflected** on how the CDENF could meaningfully contribute to the UNSDG Agenda 2030, and review progress towards it. It was noted that, as the Strategy for the Rights of the Child referred to the UNSDGs throughout all of its priority areas, this item should be addressed at a later stage and in the context of reporting back on Strategy implementation.

CDENF agenda item 9: 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

The Bureau **considered** how to frame this main task and implement it in compliance with its Terms of Reference. It was decided that, for the time being, the Secretariat should briefly inform the CDENF on what activities have been carried out in 2022, followed by an exchange of views by the CDENF; a more elaborate format could still be introduced at a later stage.

CDENF agenda item 12: Transversal issues:

The Bureau **agreed that priority** should be given to nominate a gender equality Rapporteur (as explicitly foreseen in the CDENF terms of reference) and a Rapporteur on new technologies including artificial intelligence (which would be particularly relevant for following up the work of the CAI and complementary work to be carried out by the CDENF) and **instructed the Secretariat** to launch a relevant call for expression of interest before the CDENF meeting. At the same time, the CDENF should be informed that the gender equality rapporteur would be invited to a thematic training for all GE rapporteurs organised by the Gender Equality Commission of the Council of Europe, to be held at the end of November in Strasbourg.

7. CDENF Subordinate bodies and groups: update on current activities:

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

The Bureau took note of the upcoming meeting, stakeholder consultation and conference organised in co-operation with the Irish Presidency of the Committee of Ministers in Dublin, Ireland (3-5 October 2022) and the fact that the CDENF would receive the draft Recommendation on the best interests of the child in parental separation and care proceedings for examination and providing guidance for the final drafting process in the beginning of November 2022.

b) Working Group on responses to violence against children (CDENF-GT-VAE)

The Bureau **expressed the wish** that the draft Recommendation and Guidelines on strengthening reporting systems on violence against children, once finalised by the CDENF-GT-VAE Working Group just after 3 October (deadline for last comments by members of the Group), should be sent to members and observers at the same time and as soon as possible (ideally on 7 October with a deadline for response by 7 November); written comments coming from CDENF members and observers should then be presented in a compilation document sent out in advance of the plenary meeting, in view of allowing for a comprehensive review aiming at the approval of the draft Recommendation by the CDENF at that meeting.

c) Drafting Group on Developing a Guide to good practice concerning the participation of children in the decision-making process on matters regarding their health (BIO/ENF-CP)

Mr Joost van Haelst (Belgium), Co-Chair of the drafting Group, informed the Bureau of the progress achieved during the last meeting of the group (22-23 of September), and that the group considered the draft mature enough for consultation with selected stakeholders, subject to final review following last comments by members of the Drafting Group. The CDENF would then be invited to disseminate the draft guide among relevant national stakeholder for consultation. A targeted child consultation would be carried out in parallel by the consultant through the Teddy Network for Excellency in paediatric research.

An online meeting to discuss the outcomes of the consultations would be held in the beginning of December. An additional physical meeting of the Drafting Group in January 2023 remained to be confirmed depending on the needs of such meeting and in the light of the budgetary provisions of both Secretariats involved in this activity (CDENF and CDBIO). It is planned to present the Guide to both Steering Committees during their first plenaries meeting in 2023 in view of its adoption before the end of 2023.

8. CDENF Working methods

Thematic mainstreaming and co-operation between Council of Europe intergovernmental Committees

Closely related to the CDENF agenda (see item 6 above), the Bureau **agreed** that two thematic rapporteurs should be appointed as a priority: gender equality and new technologies including artificial intelligence and that a relevant call be sent out to the CDENF after the Bureau meeting.

The Bureau took note of the proposal by the Secretariat in CDENF-Bu(2022)14 regarding the methodology to be used for implementation reviews of Committee of Ministers Recommendations. The idea would be to aim at a mainstreamed outline for implementation reviews, but to vary in working methods according to how much in-depth research on a given topic was considered useful. Working methods could possibly reach from pilot studies in a small number of countries to surveys including all 46 member states. The Secretariat would enquire whether an implementation review only including a limited number of countries is acceptable as a working method, or if it always had to involve research in a maximum number of member states.

9. Upcoming events

Events organised in collaboration with the Irish Presidency of the Committee of Ministers 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), Monday 3 October – 5 October 2022:

- Monday 3 October: conference
- Tuesday 4 October: stakeholder hearing
- Wednesday 5 October: meeting of the Committee of Experts

CDENF meetings:

- 6th CDENF plenary meeting: 15-17 November 2022
- 7th CDENF plenary meeting: March 2023 (2 days between 28 and 30 March Reykjavik, Iceland (tbc; subject to authorisation))
- 8th CDENF plenary meeting: October/November 2023 (exact dates to be confirmed), Strasbourg

10. Any other business

Participants did not raise any other issues.

11. Date and place of next meeting

December 2022 (online, date to be confirmed): Joined meeting of the Bureaus of CDENF and CDCJ in view of giving further guidance to the Committee of Experts CJ/ENF-ISE

10th CDENF Bureau meeting: Friday, 10 February 2023 (in person, Paris venue to be confirmed).

With regard to the organisation of upcoming Bureau meetings, Bureau members underlined the benefits of holding physical meetings, to be organised subject to relevant budgetary provisions, and to be complemented by online meetings as appropriate. The Bureau also expressed an interest in exceptionally holding a meeting in another member State, if the Council of Europe rules and budgetary provisions would allow for this, and instructed the Secretariat to explore the different options

12. Approval of meeting report

The meeting report was circulated shortly after the meeting and approved by all Bureau members via written procedure.

Appendix I - Agenda

1.	Opening of the meeting - Welcome by the Chair - Tour de table	
2.	Adoption of the agenda and order of business	CDENF/Bu(2022)OJ4prov
3.	Information by the Secretariat	<i>Update by the Secretariat</i>
4.	CDENF workplan: State of play of main activities - Ongoing activities - Instigation of first steps towards upcoming activities	Terms of Reference of the CDENF for 2022-2025 CDENF(2022)10 CDENF workplan
5.	Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027): - Development of implementation tools facilitating follow-up of and reporting back on the Strategy: - Communication Strategy - Electronic forms for reporting back - Pool of experts	Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027)
6.	6th CDENF Plenary meeting (15-17 November 2022)	CDENF(2022)OJ3prov Draft agenda of the 6 th Plenary meeting
7.	CDENF Subordinate bodies and groups: update on current activities: a) Committee of Experts on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation and in care proceedings (CJ/ENF-ISE) b) Working Group on responses to violence against children (CDENF-GT-VAE) c) Drafting Group on Developing a Guide to good practice concerning the participation of children in the decision-making process on matters regarding their health (BIO/ENF-CP)	<i>Update by the Secretariat</i>
8.	CDENF Working methods - Thematic mainstreaming and co-operation between Council of Europe intergovernmental Committees - Working methods for the implementation review of CM Recommendations under the CDENF's ToR	Resolution CM/Res(2021)3 CDENF(2022)12 Thematic mainstreaming and co-operation between Council of Europe intergovernmental Committees CDENF-Bu(2022)14

9. Upcoming events

10. Any other business

11. Date and place of next meeting

APPENDIX II – List of participants

Bureau Members

Ms Rosário Farmhouse (Chair)
President of the National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and Protection of Children and Young People, Portugal

Ms Ružica Boškić (Vice-Chair)
Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Slovenia

Ms Solvor Bäcklud
Senior Advisor, The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs

Mr Alfredo Ferrante
Chief of Service, Department for Family Policies
Italian Presidency of the Council of Ministers

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

DGII – Directorate General of Democracy – Children's Rights Division

Ms Katrin Uerpmann
Secretary to the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF)
Programme Officer

Ms Maren Lambrecht-Feigl
Co-Secretary to the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF)
Programme Officer