



Building a Europe
for and with children

Construire une Europe
pour et avec les enfants



CDEFN/Bu(2024)PV01
16 April 2024

STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (CDEFN)

12th Bureau meeting

Lisbon, 11 - 12 April 2024

Meeting report

1. Opening of the meeting

The Chair, Rosário Farmhouse (Portugal), opened the meeting and welcomed all Bureau members (Finland, Italy, Norway and Slovenia) to this meeting, which was held at the invitation of the Chair in the offices of the National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and the Protection of Children and Young People.

The Chair informed the Bureau of the meeting of the Secretary General with the Presidents of the Intergovernmental Committees which had taken place in Strasbourg on 1 February 2024. Following opening addresses by the Secretary General and the President of the European Court of Human Rights, the Chairs of the different Committees exchanged views on the current challenges facing the Council of Europe, as identified in the Reykjavik Declaration, and on the ways in which the intergovernmental committees can contribute to address them. Intergovernmental committees play an essential role in the development of standards and remain a driving force for the organisation, including in the implementation of the Reykjavik Declaration. The Presidents participating in the discussion agreed that the committees shall continue to protect CoE core values, including children's rights, and to ensure consistency with the ECHR case law in the process. The Bureau agreed with the Chair that such meetings of Presidents were very useful and should be held on a regular basis in order to foster horizontal cooperation within the Council of Europe.

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 the information provided by the Secretariat on the restructuring of the Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity (DG II), Marja Ruotanen remaining its Director General. The Children's Rights Division has joined, as of 1 January 2024, the Human Dignity and Gender Equality Department (Roberto Olla being the Head of Department), thus remaining in the Directorate of Equal Rights and Dignity (under the lead of Jeroen Schokkenbroek).

4. CDENF priorities and workplan

The Bureau took note of the updated workplan for CDENF for the preparation of deliverables in 2024 and 2025.

5. 9th CDENF Plenary meeting (Strasbourg, 28-30 May 2024)

The Bureau considered and approved the draft agenda of the 9th plenary meeting to be held in Strasbourg on 28 – 30 May 2023. Bureau members welcomed the proposal of holding a thematic exchange on safeguarding children from the risks of accessing online pornographic content during this plenary meeting. In view of the topicality of the subject matter, and as considered appropriate, an invitation to online attendance to this thematic exchange may be shared with other relevant experts.

6. CDENF Subordinate bodies and groups

6.1 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 update provided by the Secretariat and welcomed the progress made by the CJ/ENF-ISE during its 9th plenary meeting (Strasbourg, 20-22 March 2024) in revising the draft recommendation on the protection of the rights and best interests of the child in care proceedings and its draft explanatory memorandum. Following completion of this work during an informal online meeting on 26 April 2024, both texts would be submitted to CDENF, CDCJ and selected stakeholders for written comments from mid-May to mid-July 2024.

The Bureau also took note of the CJ/ENF-ISE's consideration that, in view of the end of its mandate by the end of 2024, the priority should remain the finalisation of the draft recommendation on care proceedings, and that any implementation tool should be as concise and practical as possible, such as checklists for policy makers.

6.2 Committee of Experts on the Prevention of violence (ENF-VAE)

(CDENF main deliverables 8-11)

The Bureau took note of the update provided by Marjo Malja, member of the ENF-VAE, and the Secretariat on the outcome of the third meeting of the ENF-VAE (11-12 March 2024), and the planned follow-up. The Bureau commended the work of the ENF-VAE in preparing a feasibility study on comprehensive sexuality education. It agreed that this background research document was ready for submission to the CDENF plenary for examination notably of the elements of a draft recommendation contained in the feasibility study, with a view to instructing the ENF-VAE to continue its work on that basis.

The Bureau was also informed of the preliminary steps taken by the Secretariat to launch the consultation of children on the elements of a draft recommendation.

7. Other CDENF main deliverables

7.1. Report on the rights of the child and artificial intelligence

(CDENF main deliverable 6)

The Bureau took note of and provided first comments on the Draft Mapping Study on the Rights of the Child and artificial Intelligence: Legal Frameworks that Address AI in the Context of Children's Rights, prepared by the Alan Turing Institute on the basis of CDENF delegations' replies to a survey carried on in 2023, in view of providing guidance for its finalisation before its submission to the CDENF at its 9th plenary meeting.

7.2. Report on children's access to mental health care

(CDENF main deliverable 5)

The Bureau examined the draft mapping study on children's access to quality mental health care prepared by the Secretariat based on the CDENF delegations' replies to a survey carried out in 2023 and provided guidance for its finalisation before its submission to the CDENF at its 9th plenary meeting.

The Bureau also took note of the information provided by Ovidiu Majina, Children's Rights Division, on relevant cooperation activities, and notably the preparation and roll-out of training materials aimed at increasing the skills of professionals in treating trauma of children.

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

(CDENF main deliverable 7)

The Bureau took note of the information provided by the Secretariat on the preparation of the implementation review report of Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)11 on effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration, including child consultations having been carried out in Cyprus in 2023.

The Bureau also took note of the information provided by Sónia Lourenço Rosa, Head of the International Relations Unit of the National Commission for the Promotion of Rights and the Protection of Children and Young People, Portugal, about the child-consultation currently being carried out in Portugal. The Bureau expressed its appreciation to the two Delegations having supported child consultations in their respective countries as an important element feeding into the implementation review.

8. CDENF working methods

The Bureau designated its following members to follow upcoming activities led by other Committees under the Strategy for the Rights of the Child on behalf of the CDENF:

- Preparation of a non-binding legal instrument regarding stateless children's access to nationality, including guidance on child-sensitive procedures in administrative and migration law matters (working group on migration CDCJ-MIG): Solvor Bäcklund (Ružica Boškić as replacement)
- Preparation of a Draft Recommendation on the equality of rights of intersex persons (Committee of Experts on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression and Sex Characteristics (ADI-SOGIESC): Ružica Boškić (Solvor Bäcklund as replacement).

9. Thematic guidance notes on topical issues

The Bureau examined the concept note on “*Thematic guidance notes on topical issues under the Strategy for the Rights of the Child*” presented by the Secretariat and discussed themes that could be proposed for upcoming thematic exchanges.

The Bureau approved the proposal of the Secretariat to hold the first thematic exchange on “*Safeguarding children from the risks of accessing online pornographic content*” during the 9th CDENF plenary meeting. It also supported the proposals to consider, for future exchanges and guidance notes, the issues of child poverty; children and the environment (building on the exchange held in November 2023); digital use and mental health; and the safety of children in emergency situations and instructed the Secretariat to present a revised concept note to the CDENF at its upcoming plenary meeting.

10. Update on key developments and other events by participants

Bureau members shared information on their latest activities and campaigns, notably the “blue ribbon” campaign carried out in Portugal during the month of April each year to call for protecting children against violence, and a recently launched social media campaign in Norway encouraging young people to join municipal Youth Councils.

11. Any other business

Participants did not raise any additional issues.

12. Date and place of next meetings

The Bureau took note of the following dates of meetings:

CDENF Bureau meeting:

13th Bureau meeting: Strasbourg, 2 – 3 October 2024

CDENF plenary meetings:

- 9th Plenary meeting: Strasbourg 28-30 May 2024 (thematic exchange on the morning of 29 May)
- 10th plenary meeting: Strasbourg, 3-5 December 2024 (joint hybrid session with CDCJ for the approval of the recommendation on care proceedings on 4 December)
- 11th plenary meeting: Strasbourg 1-2 April 2025 followed by a midterm review conference on 3-4 April 2025 (tbc.)

13. Approval of meeting report

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

Following the meeting the Bureau followed the invitation by the National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and the Protection of Children and Young People to visit the Centro de Capacitação D. Carlos I, a residential care centre specialising in supporting adolescents with mental health difficulties particularly in their transition to adulthood.

Appendix I - Agenda

1.	Opening of the meeting	
2.	Adoption of the agenda and order of business	CDENF/Bu(2024)OJ1 Prov
3.	Information by the Secretariat	
4.	CDENF priorities and workplan <i>The Bureau is invited to review the revised workplan for CDENF submission at the 9th plenary meeting.</i>	Terms of Reference of the CDENF for 2024-2027 CDENF(2024)01prov CDENF workplan 2024-2025
5.	9th CDENF Plenary meeting (Strasbourg, 28-30 May 2024)	CDENF(2024)OJ1prov Draft agenda
6.	CDENF Subordinate bodies and groups	
6.1	<i>Committee of Experts on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation and in care proceedings (CJ/ENF-ISE)</i> (CDENF main deliverables 1, 2)	Terms of Reference of CJ/ENF-ISE CJ/ENF-ISE(2024)01prov Working methods and workplan CJ/ENF-ISE(2024)PV1 Meeting report of the 9th meeting
6.2	<i>Committee of Experts on the Prevention of violence (ENF-VAE)</i> (CDENF main deliverables 4, 5)	Terms of Reference of ENF-VAE ENF-VAE(2023)01rev3 Workplan proposal and working methods 2023-2024 ENF-VAE(2024)PV1 Meeting report of the 3rd meeting ENF-VAE(2023)04rev1 (restricted) Draft feasibility study on age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education to strengthen responses for - inter alia - preventing and combating violence, including risky or harmful sexual behaviour by children
7.	Other CDENF main deliverables	
7.1	Report on the rights of the child and artificial intelligence (main deliverable 6)	CDENF(2024)04 prov (restricted) Draft Mapping Study on the Rights of the Child and artificial Intelligence: Legal

		Frameworks that Address AI in the Context of Children's Rights
7.2	Report on children's access to mental health care (main deliverable 5 of ToR 2022-2025)	CDENF(2024)03prov (restricted) Draft mapping study on children's access to quality mental health care
7.3	Implementation review report of Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)11 on effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration (main deliverable 3)	CM/Rec(2019)11 on effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration Methodology for child consultations (summary)
8.	CDENF Working methods	Resolution CM/Res(2021)3 on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods CDENF(2022)12 CDENF working methods: Thematic mainstreaming and co-operation
9.	Thematic guidance notes on topical issues (main deliverable 17)	CDENF-Bu(2024)01 (restricted) CDENF thematic exchanges and guidance notes (2024-2027)
10.	Update on key developments and other events by participants	
11.	Any other business	
12.	Date and place of next meetings	
13.	Approval of the meeting report	CDENF-Bu(2024)PV1 Meeting report

APPENDIX II – List of participants

Bureau Members

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

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

Solvor Bäcklund
Senior Advisor
The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs
Norway

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

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

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

Katrin Uerpmann
Secretary of the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF)

Anne Kayser-Attuil
Co-Secretary of the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF)