



Strasbourg, 27 March 2026

CDPC-BU(2026)01

EUROPEAN COMMITTEE ON CRIME PROBLEMS (CDPC)

Bureau meeting

Paris, 26-27 March 2026
Council of Europe Office

Opening at 9:30 a.m., Thursday
Closing around 5:30 p.m., Friday

LIST OF DECISIONS

Criminal Law Secretariat

DGI-CDPC@coe.int / www.coe.int/cdpc

1. Opening of the meeting

The meeting started at 9.30 a.m. on Thursday, 26 March 2026, chaired by its President, Mr Lorenzo Salazar (Italy).

2. Adoption of the draft agenda and order of business

The Bureau adopted the draft agenda and the order of business of the meeting.

3. Information by the President, members of the CDPC Bureau and the Secretariat

The Bureau members held an exchange of views on the most recent and significant criminal law issues in their national frameworks and in Europe and were invited to make suggestions for possible new initiatives by the CDPC in the criminal law field.

The Bureau took note of information provided by Ms Eva Pastrana, Head of the Criminal Law Division and Secretary to the CDPC, on the main instruments approved by the CDPC during its November 2025 Plenary (the Additional Protocol to the Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism (CETS No. 198); the Recommendation on Accountability for Technology-facilitated Violence against Women and Girls; and the Recommendation on Education in Prisons), specific priorities for the CDPC (FIMI - see below) and priorities of the Council of Europe and its Secretary General, including the implementation of the New Democratic Pact, the concept of democratic security as Europe's strategic imperative and the enhancing of the role and visibility of the Council of Europe and its core areas of work.

4. Foreign information manipulation and interference, including disinformation (FIMI)

The Bureau acknowledged the completion by the expert committee PC-FIMI, working under the CDPC's mandate, of the draft Feasibility Study on the possible elaboration of a Council of Europe legal instrument on foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI), including disinformation, exploring challenges in relation to election interference, media concentration and capture, media freedom and democratic and information literacy, organised crime, cybercrime, corruption, and the malign use of AI and other technologies. This study examines legal challenges and gaps regarding the criminalisation of certain conducts related to FIMI, and identifies potential approaches regarding prevention, awareness-raising and education measures on FIMI, including disinformation, in line with the CDPC Terms of Reference.

Mr Kristian Bartholin, PC-FIMI Secretary, provided an overview of the process and key findings. Between January and March 2026, PC-FIMI convened four three-day meetings, including two online. The draft study was finalised on 13 March 2026, with active delegates' engagement, guidance by the President, Ms Heini Huotari, and Vice-President, Ms Agnieszka Legucka, and in cooperation with the CDPC Secretariat, colleagues across the organisation and other relevant intergovernmental committees.

In the Feasibility Study, the PC-FIMI Committee concluded that a Council of Europe legal instrument on FIMI is feasible. It highlighted the risk that FIMI and associated hybrid threats pose to democratic institutions and process, democratic and national security, human rights, and the rule of law. The PC-FIMI was divided on whether and how to criminalise certain behaviours related to FIMI. The committee considered further work on FIMI is necessary. It could not agree on the

preferred type of legal instrument: some experts favoured a recommendation; others supported a convention.

The Secretariat explained the advantages of a framework convention as an acceptable compromise offering various options to its parties and greater flexibility for implementation in domestic law, including the fact that criminalisation could be left as an optional element for parties.

A debate ensued with the CDPC Bureau members, who highlighted the political and time pressure under which the study was developed. Some members considered that the tight timeframe will have had an impact on the study outcomes and that caution is therefore needed for the steps ahead. While acknowledging the conditions under which this study was undertaken, the CDPC Bureau considered that more time would be desirable for future similar exercises. One salient point of the Bureau discussions on which non concurring opinions were expressed was whether criminalisation was needed and possible.

The Bureau praised the work done by the PC-FIMI and the Secretariat.

As the study will be submitted to the Committee of Ministers directly with a view to its adoption during the ministerial meeting on 14 and 15 May 2026 in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, the Secretariat invited the CDPC Bureau to suggest to the Plenary to accompany the endorsement of the feasibility study with advice to the Committee of Ministers on the best possible instrument and next steps ahead.

On 27 March, the CDPC Plenary analysed and approved the draft study during a Plenary convened specifically for that purpose (see separate ad hoc CDPC Plenary List of Decisions).

5. Council for Penological Cooperation (PC-CP)

The Bureau took note of the List of Decisions of the 40th PC-CP Working Group Meeting, held on 3-5 February in Strasbourg, and engaged in an exchange of views with the Secretary of the PC-CP, Ms Louise Riondel.

The Recommendation on education in prisons, prepared by the PC-CP was successfully presented to the legal cooperation rapporteur group of the Committee of Ministers (GR-J) on 24 March 2026, which recommended that the Deputies adopt it in its 8 April 2026 session without further debate.

a. Foreign nationals in prison - updating CM/Rec (2012)12 concerning foreign prisoners and its Explanatory Memorandum

The Bureau took note that, in line with its mandate, the PC-CP Working Group was continuing its work on revising and updating Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)12 concerning foreign prisoners, together with its Explanatory Memorandum. This work is expected to also encompass probation and be completed by the end of 2026.

b. Updated Council of Europe Probation Rules and Explanatory Memorandum

The Bureau took note that, in line with its mandate, the PC-CP will review the Council of Europe Probation Rules and Explanatory Memorandum. In this context, the Secretariat is currently preparing a first draft of the revised text on the basis of a survey on the use and revision of the Rules which was prepared jointly with the Confederation of European Probation and sent to the

Directors General of probation services. The deadline for the completion of this work is the end of 2027.

c. 31st Conference of Directors of Prison and Probation Services (CDPPS) (Valletta, Malta, 3-4 June 2026)

The Bureau took note that the 31st Council of Europe Annual Conference of Directors of Prison and Probation Services will be held at the Grand Hotel Excelsior, in Valletta, Malta on 3 and 4 June 2026, under the title “Persons with Specific Needs and Vulnerabilities”. It is co-organised with the Correctional Services Agency of Malta. The Conference will be held in plenary sessions and in four workshops dedicated to the following themes: Foreign nationals; Older persons; Women; and Cooperation between prison and probation services. The CDPC President and the CDPC delegate from Malta were invited to attend the Conference.

6. Committee of Experts on the operation of European conventions on co-operation in criminal matters (PC-OC)

The Bureau took note of the list of decisions of the 39th meeting of the PC-OC Mod meeting of 17-19 March 2026 and of the oral information provided by its Secretary, Mr Hasan Bermek.

The Bureau notably took note of the progress made by the PC-OC on a draft paper on the role of the Council of Europe conventions in the context of international cooperation relating to core international crimes and the articulation between these conventions and the Ljubljana-The Hague Convention, noting that the draft paper is expected to be adopted by the PC-OC at its upcoming Plenary meeting in May 2026 and presented to the CDPC Plenary in June 2026.

It also took note of the progress made by the PC-OC regarding tools and practical guidance being developed in several areas, including on the issues of the relationship between asylum and extradition procedures, time limits for surrender, confidentiality in MLA proceedings, exchange of criminal records, and the follow-up to a questionnaire on the application of the Convention on the transfer of sentenced persons.

On the specific area of Smuggling of Migrants, and the Council of Europe Action Plan on Fostering International Cooperation and Investigative Strategies in Fighting the Smuggling of Migrants Action 2 (Consider evaluating and improving mutual legal assistance mechanisms and other methods of international cooperation), the PC-OC Mod stated that the current legal framework for international cooperation in criminal matters is appropriate, as it is designed to address all crimes. Nonetheless, it will continue to explore practical ways to increase efficiency and, where appropriate, prioritise the handling of these cases by practitioners.

The Bureau also took note of the state of play regarding several non-member States, which are at different stages in their accession process to Council of Europe conventions on judicial cooperation in criminal matters, including the fact that the PC-OC’s opinion on the accession of Kyrgyzstan to the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, which had been endorsed by the CDPC at its last Plenary meeting in November 2025, had already been transmitted to the Committee of Ministers. The CDPC President recommended to give visibility of third-country accessions to key stakeholders such as the EU, Eurojust and the European Judicial Network.

7. Environment and Criminal Law

The Bureau took note of the information provided by the Secretary of the CDPC concerning the Convention on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law, including measures undertaken to promote its signature by Council of Europe member States and by the European Union, notably through outreach at United Nations level. As of March 2026, the Convention has been signed by Latvia, Luxembourg, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova and the European Union. France has indicated that it is making progress towards its prompt signature.

The Bureau further noted that responsibility for the promotion and implementation of the Convention has been administratively transferred to the Directorate of Social Rights, Health and Environment.

8. Smuggling of Migrants

The Bureau took note of an update provided by the CDPC Secretary on the establishment and planned work of the Committee of Experts on combatting the SoM (PC-TM): over 30 members have been nominated to the PC-TM, with its 1st meeting scheduled for 28 and 29 April 2026 in Strasbourg.

The Bureau was reminded that the PC-TM will have to draft a comprehensive Recommendation on deterring and fighting the smuggling of migrants (SoM), with particular emphasis on international cooperation, effective legal frameworks, and the protection of victims and those assisting them, taking into consideration the CDPC adopted feasibility report assessing the need for and feasibility of a possible instrument in this field. The two consultants who prepared that report will support the drafting process and present a first discussion paper (based on their previous study) in the first PC-TM meeting. The draft Recommendation is expected to be finalised by the end of 2027. It is part of the 4-point agenda of the Secretary General and the conclusions of the Informal Ministerial Conference that took place on 10 December 2025. The PC-TM will follow normative developments in this field at EU level.

The PC-TM will also assist in the implementation of the Council of Europe Action Plan on Fostering International Cooperation and Investigative Strategies in Fighting the SoM. The PC-OC is urged to contribute to this process (see above under section 6).

9. Combating technology-facilitated violence against women and girls

The Bureau was informed that the Recommendation on Accountability for Technology-Facilitated Violence against Women and Girls was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 4 March 2026.

A Bureau delegate recalled the intense discussions and how, at its November 2025 Plenary, the CDPC, jointly with the Gender Equality Commission, had approved the draft Recommendation and its Explanatory Memorandum, which were then again thoroughly deliberated by the GR-J in February 2026 prior to adoption.

The Recommendation figured prominently in events attended by the Secretary General at the 70th session of UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York in March. A launch event has been scheduled for the afternoon of 10 June 2026 coinciding with the CDPC Plenary.

10. Asset recovery

The Bureau was reminded that, at its Plenary meeting in November 2025, the CDPC had approved the draft Additional Protocol supplementing the Council of Europe Convention on

Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism (CETS No. 198), together with its draft Explanatory Memorandum.

Following an exchange of views with the then President of the PC-RAC, Mr Cornel Virgiliu Calinescu, both documents were submitted to the GR-J for examination at its meeting of 12 February 2026, with a view to their subsequent adoption by the Committee of Ministers.

The Parliamentary Assembly, applying an exceptional procedure, is expected to adopt an opinion during its session of 20 to 24 April 2026.

The aim is to have it adopted at a Ministerial Session under the Moldovan presidency in May 2026, with the opening for signature planned at a later stage.

11. Artificial Intelligence and criminal law

The CDPC was reminded by the Secretariat member, Mr Radu Pantiru, that in July 2025, a questionnaire on artificial intelligence and criminal law had been circulated to member States. Following the receipt of replies from twenty-eight States, the Secretariat invited two experts to prepare a Mapping Study on the basis of the information provided and convened the fourth meeting of the CDPC-AICL Working Group on 18 December 2025, during which the President was elected, Mr Stefano Filletti (CDPC Bureau member).

At that hybrid meeting delegations examined the draft Mapping Study and proposed a number of improvements. The Study identified deepfakes as one of the issues of greatest concern among member States. In light of these findings and bearing in mind that the work of the Working Group had been stalled for several years while awaiting the adoption of the Framework Convention on AI, the Secretariat proposed, and delegations agreed, to concentrate the Group's future work on the issue of deepfakes. It was therefore decided to circulate to the AICL delegations, at the beginning of January 2026, a short questionnaire specifically dedicated to this topic.

The CDPC Bureau also took note that, in view of the practical orientation required for the next phase of work, the Secretariat of the Council of Europe decided, at the beginning of 2026, to rely on expertise from a legal practitioner. It was therefore agreed that future cooperation within the CDPC-AICL would continue with Judge Alfonso Peralta only.

Following the receipt of sixteen replies to the deepfakes questionnaire from the nineteen delegations represented in the Working Group, the Secretariat, in cooperation with Judge Peralta, prepared a Discussion Paper summarising the main findings.

The fifth meeting of the CDPC-AICL Working Group was held online on 20 February 2026. During that meeting, delegations approved the final version of the Mapping Study based on the July 2025 questionnaire. They also took note of the results of the deepfakes questionnaire and agreed that work towards a legal instrument addressing deepfakes should continue, in line with the position expressed by a strong majority. The Working Group further noted that a majority of delegations expressed a preference for a non-binding instrument, in particular a Recommendation, and reached preliminary agreement on its possible structure and main elements.

As requested during that meeting by the delegation of the United Kingdom, the question of the validity of the CDPC mandate concerning the deliverable of "Draft legal instrument on criminal liability related to the use of artificial intelligence" was raised during the CDPC Bureau meeting. The Bureau discussed the matter and decided that the mandate of the CDPC, as defined by the

Committee of Ministers in relation to this deliverable, did not need to be reconsidered. One Bureau member made the point that further work should be done in relation to the scope and rationale, and another agreed that there needed to be caution on the scope of the instrument, particularly regarding FIMI and defamation.

The Bureau finally took note that the next online meeting of the CDPC-AICL Working Group is scheduled for 22 May 2026, at which delegations will be presented with a zero draft of the proposed Recommendation on deepfakes (i.e. digital forgeries).

12. Restorative justice

The Bureau took note of the extended deadline until the end of 2027 for its deliverable: “Draft guidelines for implementing Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)8 on restorative justice in criminal matters”, the renewed interest from the PC-CP to support progress in this area and updates from the Secretariat. The Secretariat has already started working in coordination with the PC-CP and the European Forum on Restorative Justice.

The Bureau also took note of the appointment by the PC-CP of Ms Carla Ciavarella as contact point to the CDPC on restorative justice.

13. Information points

a. Steering Committee for New and Emerging Digital Technologies (CDNET) (Former CAI)

The Bureau took note of the list of decisions adopted at the 14th meeting of the Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI), held on 14 November 2025.

The Bureau further heard a presentation by Mr Vadim Pak, followed by an exchange of views with him.

Mr Pak informed the Bureau that, as of 1 January 2026, the CAI completed its mandate and was replaced by the CDNET. The latter is scheduled to hold its first meeting from 15 to 17 April 2026, in conjunction with a thematic conference provisionally entitled “Algorithmic Age: Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law”. CDPC members were invited to participate in this conference.

The Bureau also took note that the European Parliament has approved the European Union’s ratification of the Convention. It further noted that Brazil and Cabo Verde have become observers, while the Republic of Korea and Malaysia have expressed interest in obtaining observer status. In addition, all observers of the CAI have been granted observer status within the CDNET.

b. Combatting organised crime relating to drug trafficking (Pompidou Group)

The Bureau took note that the Joint Expert Group, tasked with developing policy guidelines on combating organised crime related to drug trafficking based on the case law of the European Court of Human Rights (OC-DT), held its 8th meeting on 2 February 2026. The meeting focused on reviewing and providing comments on the draft-zero Policy Guidelines prepared by the Secretariat and on producing a document entitled The Key Priorities.

The Bureau was also invited to exchange views with its President, Mr Lorenzo Salazar, who liaises with the Pompidou Group, on the status of the possible development of the Guidelines into a potential Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

c. Terrorism

The Bureau took note of the opening for signature of the Protocol amending the Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (CETS No. 196), scheduled for 26 May 2026 in Strasbourg, and of the invitation extended to member States to sign it at the earliest opportunity.

It also took note of information regarding new activities launched by the Committee on Counter-Terrorism (CDCT) at its 15th Plenary meeting, in particular the preparation of a draft Recommendation on non-criminal law measures applicable to violent extremist groups and networks whose activities are conducive to terrorism; ongoing analysis of the situation concerning trafficking in and (un)lawful acquisition of firearms, including small arms, and explosives by terrorists and violent extremists; and a survey on the use of artificial intelligence in the context of e-evidence.

Finally, the Bureau noted that work on the draft Recommendation on the prosecution of terrorist offences, serious violations of international humanitarian law, and other core international crimes committed in the context of non-international armed conflicts is nearing completion and is expected to be examined and approved by the CDCT at its next Plenary meeting in May 2026.

d. Medicrime

The Bureau took note of the report of the 10th Plenary meeting of the Committee of the Parties, held on 9 to 10 December 2025. It also took note of the first meeting of the Working Group on the unauthorised removal, including theft, of medical products from the supply chain, which took place on 20 October 2025. In this context, the Bureau noted that the MEDICRIME Secretariat had been instructed to prepare a proposal for a future MEDICRIME Strategy.

The Bureau further took note of the circulation to States Parties of a questionnaire entitled “Gender equality dimensions in the implementation of the MEDICRIME Convention”, as well as of the request for observer status submitted by the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) to the Committee of the Parties.

Finally, the Bureau took note of several events, namely the INTERPOL Steering Committee meeting for Operation PANGAEA XVIII, held on 25 to 26 February 2026 with the participation of the Vice-Chair, the participation of the Secretariat in an EU project on forensic tools applied to investigations, organised by FIAP (Foundation for the Internationalisation of Public Administrations) in Belgrade from 10 to 12 March 2026, and the Council of Europe/World Anti-Doping Agency International Conference on Limiting Access to Doping in Europe, to be held in Paris on 28 May 2026.

e. Trafficking in Human Organs

The Bureau took note of the information provided by the Secretariat of the Santiago de Compostela Convention on developments since the last CDPC Plenary meeting in November 2025.

In particular, the Bureau noted the organisation of the International Day against organ trafficking on 25 March 2026; the signature of the Convention by Bosnia and Herzegovina; the ongoing work on a paper addressing the distinction between Trafficking in Human Organs (THO) and Trafficking in Human Beings for the purpose of organ removal (THBOR); the request for observer status submitted by the organisation *Doctors Against Forced Organ Harvesting*; and the dissemination to all States Parties and signatories of a flash survey on “mandatory reporting of transplantations abroad”.

f. Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property

The Bureau took note of the information provided by the Secretariat of the Nicosia Convention on developments since the last CDPC Plenary meeting in November 2025, recalling that responsibility for the Convention was transferred to the CDPC in the previous year.

The Bureau further noted that no new signatures have been recorded and that the subject is included on the agenda of the forthcoming CATS meeting as it is among the priorities of the Cypriot Presidency of the Council of the EU.

g. Hate Crime

The Bureau heard an update from the CDPC Secretariat on the report of the 11th Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI) meeting, held from 1 to 3 July 2025, the adoption by the Committee of Ministers of the Recommendation on equal rights for intersex persons, and in March 2026, the Recommendation on Equality and Artificial Intelligence and other updates relevant to CDPC delegates.

The Bureau also took note of the upcoming Conference on the Recommendation on combating hate crime and hate speech, to be held on 28-29 May 2026 and organised by the University of Limerick in Ireland, in partnership with the CDADI.

Finally, the Bureau noted the plans to organise the 3rd No Hate Speech Week, to be held on 17-19 June 2026 in Strasbourg, as well as the planned launch of a Mission-Driven Initiative entitled “Enhancing multi-stakeholder responses to hate speech and hate crime”, funded through the EEA (European Economic Area) and Norway Grants.

h. Child Friendly Justice

The Bureau took note of the process regarding the possible update on the Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on Child-friendly Justice. A shorter Gap Analysis prepared by the two consultants engaged by the Committee on Children’s Rights (CDENF), titled “Thematic Review Report of the Guidelines on Child-friendly Justice” will be sent to the steering committees of the CDENF, CDCJ and CDPC on 4 May 2026, ahead of its hybrid/remote presentation on 3 June 2026 from 14:00 to 14:35 CEST. At their June Plenary sessions, the CDENF, CDCJ and CDPC delegates will be requested to provide comments with a deadline for 7 September 2026.

The CDENF will invite the Chairs of the CDPC and CDCJ (online for members) to its Plenary meeting in November (25-27 November 2026) to adopt the Thematic Review Report - with a clear conclusion on whether work should go ahead to update the Guidelines on Child-Friendly Justice or not.

14. Any other business

None.

15. Dates of the next meetings

The next Bureau meeting will be scheduled in Venice on 19-20 October 2026 (starting on Monday 19 at 14:00 and ending on Tuesday 20 at 17:30).