

AS/Ega (2026) CB 02

25 March 2026

To the members of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

Synopsis

of the meetings held in Paris on 20 March 2026

The Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, meeting in Paris on 20 March 2026, from 9 to 11am and from 2.40 to 5pm, with Ms Béatrice Fresko-Rolfo (Monaco, ALDE), Chairperson, in the Chair, as regards:

- **Composition of the Sub-Committees:** noted that there were no modifications in the composition of the Sub-Committees;
- **Promoting the Istanbul Convention and improving its implementation: building on lessons learnt** (*Rapporteur: Ms Zita Gurmai, Hungary, SOC*): considered and approved a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution;
- **Paving the way for culture of consent** (*Rapporteur: Ms Zita Gurmai, Hungary, SOC*): considered and approved a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution, as amended;
- **Countering discrimination based on religion and protecting freedom of religion and belief in Europe** (*Rapporteur: Mr Francesco Verducci, Italy, SOC*): decided to change the title of the report as follows: *Countering discrimination based on religion and protecting freedom of religion or belief in Europe*; considered and approved a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution, as amended;
- **Enhancing co-operation between parliaments and equality bodies** (*Ms Tuula Haatainen, Finland, SOC*): considered a preliminary draft report;
- **Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) (New York, United States, 11-13 March 2026)**: heard report from Ms Zita Gurmai, took note of a press release and considered and unanimously adopted a statement;
- took note of a proposal by Ms Aysu Bankoğlu (Türkiye, SOC) to propose to the Bureau that an urgent debate on “Women’s access to justice” be held during the June 2026 part-session;
- **Work programme:** took note of the work programme;
- **Preventing and combating vicarious violence as a form of gender-based violence against women:** considered and adopted a draft motion for a resolution on *Preventing and combating vicarious violence as a form of gender-based violence against women* to be tabled on behalf of the Committee;
- **The impact of artificial intelligence on the lives of older persons: opportunities, risks and policy responses:** considered and adopted a draft motion for a resolution on *The impact of artificial intelligence on the lives of older persons: opportunities, risks and policy responses* to be tabled on behalf of the Committee;
- **Call for candidates for rapporteurs for report:**
 - called for candidates for the report *Countering the backlash against women’s rights: a European response* and took note of the candidature of Baroness Lyn Brown (United Kingdom, SOC);

- called for candidates for the report *Mainstreaming remembrance: preserving the historical memory of Roma and Travellers to counter Antigypsyism* and took note of the interest of Mr Georgios Stamatis (Greece, EPP/CD);
 - called for candidates for the report *Comprehensive protection of children in rainbow families across Europe* and took note of the candidatures of Ms Kate Osborne (United Kingdom, SOC) and Ms Lucia Plaváková (Slovak Republic, ALDE);
 - called for candidates for the report *Strengthening the affective and emotional dimension of comprehensive sexuality education to prevent and combat discrimination, hate crime and gender-based violence* and took note of the candidature of Mr Francesco Verducci (Italy, SOC);
 - the rapporteurs for the above-mentioned reports will be appointed at the next Committee meeting in April;
 - **Appointment of a rapporteur for opinion:** appointed by acclamation Ms Béatrice Fresko-Rolfo (Monaco, ALDE) rapporteur for opinion on *Review of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic* subject to the completion of the obligation to update her declaration of interests to include the rapporteur role, within the relevant deadline;
 - **Call for candidates for a General Rapporteur on the rights of LGBTI persons:** called for candidates for a General Rapporteur on the rights of LGBTI persons and took note of the candidatures of Ms Kate Osborne (United Kingdom, SOC) and Ms Lucia Plaváková (Slovak Republic, ALDE);
 - the General Rapporteur on the rights of LGBTI persons will be appointed at the next Committee meeting in April;
 - **Requests for extensions of reference:** decided to ask the Bureau to grant an extension for a period of six months for the reference for the report on *Artificial intelligence and gender equality: risks and challenges* (Rapporteur: Ms Edite Estrela, Portugal, SOC) (until 24 December 2026) and an extension for a period of two months for the report on *Violent pornography* (Rapporteur: Ms Laura Castel, Spain, UEL) (until 30 June 2026);
 - **Appointment of representatives:**
 - appointed Mr Georgios Stamatis (Greece, EPP/CD) to participate in the 13th Plenary meeting of the Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues (ADI-ROM) (Strasbourg, 1-2 April 2026) (subject to the availability of funds);
 - appointed Ms Béatrice Fresko-Rolfo (Monaco, ALDE) to attend the European Social and Economic Committee (CESE), (Brussels, 29 April 2026) (subject to the availability of funds);
 - appointed Ms Tuula Haatainen (Finland, SOC) to take part in the Network of Parliamentarians to Promote the Implementation of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights;
 - **Activities of the Parliamentary Network Women Free from Violence, the Parliamentary Platform for the rights of LGBTI persons in Europe and the General Rapporteur on Roma and Travellers:** heard statements by the General Rapporteurs;
 - **Artificial intelligence and gender equality: risks and challenges** (Rapporteur: Ms Edite Estrela, Portugal, SOC): held a hearing, with the participation of:
 - Mr David Milner, Head of the Human Rights Intergovernmental Co-operation Division and Secretary of the Steering Committee for Human Rights, DG I, Council of Europe (online);
 - Ms Charlotte Gilmartin, Head of the Policy Unit and Secretary of the Gender Equality Commission, Gender Equality Division, DG II, Council of Europe;
- who presented new Council of Europe tools on this issue: [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2026\)1 of the Committee of Ministers on equality and artificial intelligence](#), [CM/Rec\(2026\)2](#); [Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on accountability for technology-facilitated violence against women and girls](#); and a [CCDH Handbook on Human Rights and Artificial Intelligence](#);
- **Protecting ethnic and religious diversity in Syria** (Rapporteur: Ms Bisera Kostadinovska-Stojchevska, North Macedonia, SOC): held a hearing, with the participation of:
 - Dr Karim El Mufti, Professor of political science, international affairs and international law, Saint Joseph University, Beirut, Lebanon;
 - Dr Myriam Benraad, Honorary Professor at the University of Exeter, Researcher, Institut de Recherches et d'études sur le Monde Arabe et Musulman, Paris;

- **International Women's Day 2026 (8 March):** considered a joint statement by the President of the Assembly and the Chairperson of the Committee;
- **Reporting back:** heard reports from:
 - Mr Georgios Stamatis (Greece, EPP/CD) on his participation in the Parliamentary Conference on Artificial Intelligence (London, 15-16 December 2025);
 - Mr Georgios Stamatis (Greece, EPP/CD) on his participation in "From Promise to Practice: Oslo Consultation on Combatting Religious Intolerance and Strengthening the Implementation of HRC Resolution 16/18" (Oslo, 13-14 January 2026);
 - Mr Georgios Stamatis (Greece, EPP/CD) on his participation in the National Forum "Decent Home, Secure Future: Housing Conditions as a Key Determinant of Child Rights" organised within the framework of the EU and Council of Europe Joint Programme ROMACT in partnership with the Bulgarian National Council for Cooperation on Ethnic and Integration Issues (Sofia, 17 March 2026);
- **Vigdís Prize for Women's Empowerment:** took note of the procedure and the deadline of 27 March 2026 for the submission of nominations;
- **Václav Havel Human Rights Prize 2026:** took note of the procedure and the deadline of 30 April 2026 for the submission of nominations;
- **Next meetings:**
 - at the invitation of the Chairperson of the Greek delegation, decided to hold a meeting in Athens on 28-29 May 2026, authorised by the Bureau of the Assembly on 2 March 2026;
 - took note of its next meetings as follows:
 - Strasbourg, during the second part-session 2026 of the Assembly (20-24 April);
 - Athens, 28-29 May 2026;
 - Strasbourg, during the third part-session 2026 of the Assembly (22-26 June);
 - Paris, 18 September 2026 (Council of Europe office) (*to be confirmed*);
 - Strasbourg, during the fourth part-session 2026 of the Assembly (28 September–2 October);
 - Paris, 30 November 2026 (Council of Europe office) (*to be confirmed*).

The No Hate Parliamentary Alliance, meeting jointly with the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination in Paris, on 20 March 2026, from 11am to 12.30pm, with Mr Francesco Verducci (Italy, SOC), Co-ordinator of the Alliance, in the Chair, as regards:

- **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 2026 (21 March):** considered and unanimously adopted a statement by the General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance;
- **Eradicating racial discrimination: ways forward:** held an exchange of views with the participation of:
 - Ms Michaela Moua, EU Anti-Racism Coordinator, European Commission (*online*);
 - Ms Kyra Ghedhab, Secretary General, SOS Racisme – Touche pas à mon pote, France.

The Sub-Committee on the Rights of Minorities, meeting in Paris on 20 March 2026, from 2.30 to 2.35pm, with Ms Wanda Nowicka (Poland, SOC), the oldest member present, in the Chair, as regards:

- **Election of the Bureau of the Sub-Committee:**
 - postponed the election of the Chairperson due to a lack of candidates;
 - postponed the election of the Vice-Chairperson due to a lack of candidates;

The Sub-Committee on Disability and Multiple and Intersectional Discrimination, meeting in Paris on 20 March 2026 from 2.35 to 2.40pm, with Ms Wanda Nowicka (Poland, SOC), the oldest member present, in the Chair, as regards:

- **Election of the Bureau of the Sub-Committee:**
 - re-elected by acclamation Ms Mariia Mezentseva-Fedorenko (Ukraine, EPP/CD) as Chairperson;
 - postponed the election of a Vice-Chairperson due to a lack of candidates;
- **Next meeting:** left it to its Chairperson to propose the date and place of the next meeting.

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