

COUNCIL OF EUROPE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEES

Roles and Responsibilities

Information document prepared by the Secretariat

**Situation on 1
September 2024**

Work in intergovernmental committees lies at the heart of the Council of Europe and allows the direct participation of governmental and independent experts in its work. It significantly

contributes to the Organisation's core mission, which is "to achieve **a greater unity between its members** for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage and facilitating their economic and social progress," as stated in Article 1 of its Statute.

The intergovernmental committees represent the main tool to develop **common policy instruments and legal standards**, such as treaties and recommendations, thus supporting member states in building a common pan-European legal space, anticipating and addressing challenges in the fields of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. They enhance cooperation between member States through the exchange of knowledge, experience and good practices, as well as the analysis of common and emerging challenges.

The intergovernmental committees are directly answerable to the Committee of Ministers and are composed of member States' representatives of the highest possible rank in the relevant field.

For 2024-2027, the intergovernmental structure consists of **20 steering or ad hoc committees** and **19 subordinate bodies**. In addition, it includes five steering committees under the responsibility of the European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines & Healthcare (EDQM). The intergovernmental structure is **priority driven** and linked to the **Programme and Budget of the Organisation**.

While Steering committees have planning and steering functions, ad hoc committees have a more focused role. Subordinate bodies of steering committees bring together specific expertise on selected matters. They are usually composed of a limited number of member States' representatives and often include independent experts.



The aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose of safeguarding and realising the ideals and principles which are their common heritage and facilitating their common heritage and facilitating their economic and social progress.

This aim shall be pursued through the organs of the Council by discussion of questions of common concern and by agreements and common action in economic, social, cultural, scientific, legal and administrative matters and in the maintenance and further realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Securing human rights and fundamental freedoms

- CDDH Human Rights
- DH-SYSC ECHR System
- « 46+1 » (as appropriate)

Advancing social justice, good health and a sustainable environment

- CDBIO Human rights in biomedicine and health

EDQM

- CD-P-PH Pharmaceuticals and pharmaceutical care
- CD-P-TS Blood transfusion
- CD-P-TO Organ Transplantation
- CD-P-COS Cosmetic and consumer health
- CD-P-MCA Food contact materials and articles

- CDDH Human Rights
- ▶ • DH-ENV Human Rights and Environment

- CDPC Crime problems
- PC-ENV Environment and criminal law ◀

Reykjavík Committee - Environment and human rights
Subject to the outcome of the Reykjavík process

Acting for equality, diversity and respect

- GEC Gender Equality
- ▶ • GEC/ADI-AI Artificial intelligence, equality and discrimination
- GEC/PC-eVIO Tech-facilitated violence ◀
- CDADI Anti-discrimination, diversity and inclusion
 - ADI-ROM Roma and Travellers
 - ADI-INT Intercultural inclusion
 - ADI-SOGIESC Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics
- CDENF Rights of the child
 - ENF-VAE Prevention of violence
 - ENF-JUS Multidisciplinary and interagency services

Building trust in public institutions

- CCJE Judges
- CCPE Prosecutors
- CDCJ Legal co-operation
 - CJ/ENF-ISE Best interests of the child ◀ (parent al separation and care proceedings)
 - CJ-AV Protection of lawyers
 - CJ-OR Access to origins
- CDPC Crime problems
- ▶ • PC-CP Penological co-operation

Upholding safety, security and integrity of society and persons

- CAI Artificial intelligence
- CDPC Crime problems
 - PC-OC Co-operation in criminal matters
 - PC-RAC Criminal asset recovery
- CDCT Anti-terrorism
- CAHAMA Anti-doping

Anchoring democratic values in European societies

- CDMSI Media and Information Society
 - MSI-eSEC Online safety and empowerment
 - MSI-AI Generative artificial intelligence and freedom of expression
- CDDEM Democracy
- CDEDU Education
- CDEJ
- CCJ } CMJ Youth Co-management system
- CPJ }
- CDCCP Culture, cultural heritage and landscape

Supporting an efficient, effective and visible Organisation

- CAHDI Public international law

This programme complements the work of the European Court of Human Rights by aiming to support member States in the effective execution of judgments and the implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH)

Human rights are at the core of the statutory mission of the Council of Europe. Amongst the Organisation's most important contributions to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights in Europe are its standard-setting activities, beginning with the adoption of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). The Council of Europe also plays a leading role, both regionally and globally, in developing responses to emerging human rights challenges.



The CDDH is mandated by the Committee of Ministers to conduct intergovernmental work in the human rights fields, bearing in mind Council of Europe legal standards and the caselaw of the European Court of Human Rights (the Court). It advises and gives legal expertise to the Committee of Ministers, notably by drafting legal instruments, whose

implementation it subsequently follows. It is also mandated to advise other Council of Europe bodies to ensure that their activities duly reflect the requirements of the ECHR, as interpreted by the Court. The CDDH supports relevant co-operation activities and contributes to Council of Europe activities on abolition of the death penalty.

The CDDH's work covers two main fields: **the functioning of the ECHR system** at national European levels and the development of **responses to new and emerging human rights challenges**. Under the first heading, the current mandate of the CDDH includes work on accession of the European Union to the ECHR and the effects of two recent amending protocols. Under the second heading, its mandate includes ongoing work on human rights and the environment, human rights and artificial intelligence and impunity for serious human rights violations.

For more information see: www.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-intergovernmental-cooperation/presentation-of-the-cddh

Advancing social justice, good health and a sustainable environment

This programme covers the different dimensions of the Organisation's work for social rights, human rights in biomedicine and health, and for a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

Steering Committee for Human Rights in the fields of Biomedicine and Health (CDBIO)

Biological and medical research and developments in technology have produced spectacular advances in the health field. However, these advances raise ethical issues that affect the individual and the protection of the individual's rights and dignity (genetics, transplantation, biobanks, emerging technologies such as neurotechnologies and artificial intelligence, etc). The Council of Europe vision and approach to the application of biology and medicine are to protect human dignity and the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the individual. It is committed to work with the governments and other parties concerned to address the challenges posed by new technological developments and by the evolution of practices in the field of biomedicine. For the Council of Europe there is a crucial need for public debate, which is referred to specifically in Article 28 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Dignity of the Human Being with regard to the Application of Biology and Medicine (Oviedo Convention).



Since 1 January 2022, the Steering Committee for Human Rights in the fields of Biomedicine and Health (CDBIO) has replaced the Committee on Bioethics (DH-BIO).

Under the authority of the Committee of Ministers and bearing in mind the Council of Europe legal standards, as

well as the relevant jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights, the CDBIO is responsible for conducting the intergovernmental work on **human rights protection in the fields of biomedicine**, as well as health; in particular with regard to issues raised by the Covid-19 pandemic and evolution of practices and emerging technologies.

Key areas of work include (i) Artificial Intelligence; (ii) Biobanks; (iii) Biomedical research; (iv) Children participation in decision making; (v) Early intervention on intersex children; (vi) Equitable access to vaccine, treatment and equipment; (vii) Patient rights; (viii) Emerging technologies; (ix) End of life; (x) Genome editing; (xi) Gender equality; (xii) Health literacy; (xiii) Mental health care; (xiv) Neurotechnologies; (xv) Public dialogue.

For more information see: www.coe.int/en/web/bioethics/cdbio

European Committee on Pharmaceuticals and Pharmaceutical Care (CD-P-PH)

The quality of medicines and the way they are prescribed, delivered or simply taken by patients are key factors that can have a direct impact on the efficiency of a treatment and can put patients' health at risk. Patients do not always receive the full benefits of their treatment (e.g. due to a lack of medication adherence) and if medicines are not prescribed or taken properly, they can actually cause serious illness or even death.



Established in 2008 as the successor to the previous Public Health Committee, the European Committee on Pharmaceuticals and Pharmaceutical Care (CD-P-PH) contributes to improving public health by helping national authorities of member states make the medication process safer and more responsible, with good quality medicines and healthcare accessible across the European continent.

In the area of **pharmaceutical care and practices**, the programme of activities aims to enhance patient-centred care through the development and promotion of standards, guidance documents and recommendations on the safe and appropriate use of medicines. In the **fight against falsified medical products**, the CD-P-PH serves as a platform for exchange of information and promotes co-operation and dissemination of best practices to protect public health from falsification of medical products and related crimes, through workshops and technical and guidance documents for national competent authorities. With respect to the **classification of medicines**, the CD-P-PH establishes recommendations for the harmonisation of the conditions of supply under which medicinal products are made available to patients (with and without a prescription). This work plays a crucial role in ensuring patient safety and the accessibility of medicines in Europe.

The CD-P-PH also exercises general oversight over the activities of the **European Pharmacopoeia Commission**, with which it also collaborates on development of the European Paediatric Formulary with the aim of improving the quality of medicines for children prepared extemporaneously when no licensed product is available on the market. Finally, the CD-P-PH works on guidance for extemporaneous and stock preparations used as temporary replacements for unavailable essential licensed medicines during **medicine shortages**.

For more information see: www.edqm.eu/en/european-committee-on-pharmaceuticals-and-pharmaceutical-care-cd-p-ph

European Committee on Blood Transfusion (CD-P-TS)

Blood transfusion is one of the corner stones of public health. Transfusions are essential during many medical procedures and can save the lives of critically ill or severely injured people. The aim of the Council of Europe's work in blood transfusion is to ensure the quality, safety and effectiveness of blood and blood components and their optimal use, increase their availability and avoid wastage, while taking into account the ethical and organisational impact of new scientific developments.



The work of the Council of Europe in the area of blood transfusion began in the 1950s and is carried out under the aegis of the European Committee on Blood Transfusion (CD-P-TS). Since 2007, the European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines & HealthCare (EDQM), working under the European Pharmacopoeia Convention Partial Agreement, has provided the Scientific

Secretariat for these activities.

The CD-P-TS actively promotes voluntary non-remunerated blood donation, mutual assistance, optimal use of blood and blood components and the protection of the donor and recipient. These principles, and their associated ethical, legal and organisational aspects, underpin the work of the CD-P-TS in blood transfusion.

By updating and publishing, on a regular basis, the technical appendix to Committee of Ministers Recommendation R(95)15, also known as the Guide to the preparation, use and quality assurance of blood components (the Blood Guide), and promoting its implementation, the CD-P-TS provides technical standards aimed at ensuring the quality, safety and effectiveness of blood and blood components, together with guiding principles that underpin safe blood donation.

Further activities include the collection of international data and monitoring of practices in Europe and the transfer of knowledge and expertise between organisations and experts through training, conferences, webinars, audits and proficiency testing schemes along with the elaboration of reports, surveys and recommendations.

For more information: <https://www.edqm.eu/en/blood>

European Committee on Organ Transplantation (CD-P-TO)

Organ transplantation is one of the great medical success stories of the 20th century and is the only life-saving treatment for end-stage organ failure. The human right to health and dignity encompasses all health needs, including transplantation. All countries therefore require a legal and professional framework governing organ donation and transplantation activities, as well as quality management and transparent regulatory oversight systems that ensure donor and recipient safety, the enforcement of standards and prohibition of unethical practices.



Since 1987, the European Committee on Organ Transplantation (CD-P-TO) has actively contributed to the development and implementation of quality, safety and ethical standards in the field of organs, tissues and cells, facilitating the exchange of knowledge between countries and institutions, securing fundamental rights and ensuring respect for the human body.

Over the years, the CD-P-TO has drafted a set of Resolutions and Recommendations – subsequently adopted by the Committee of Ministers – that have had a profound impact on relevant national legislations, ethical frameworks, strategic plans, organisational aspects and professional practices. In addition, the CD-P-TO has contributed to the drafting of the Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs, which provides clarity on which practices must be prosecuted, strengthens existing mechanisms for co-operation and includes provisions to protect and assist victims. This is of the utmost importance considering that, according to the WHO, 5–10% of all transplants performed worldwide are the result of organ trafficking. The CD-P-TO is gaining better knowledge of this kind of phenomenon through its international network of National Focal Points on travel for transplantation and the Registry on International Travel for Transplantation Activity, hosted by the EDQM.

Finally, every year since 1996, the CD-P-TO has issued its Newsletter Transplant covering donation and transplantation activities and other important aspects such as management of waiting lists and organ donation refusals. Newsletter Transplant includes data from authorised centres for transplantation in almost 90 countries worldwide, providing both transparency and international benchmarking.

For more information: www.edqm.eu/en/organs-tissues-and-cells

European Committee for Cosmetics and Consumer (CD-P-COS)

The safety of cosmetic products is an essential part of consumer health protection. The CD-P-COS was created to address emerging risks to human health arising from the use of cosmetics, and to ensure that the colorants and other ink components used in tattoos are safe.



Since 2018, the CD-P-COS contributes to protecting human health across Europe by establishing **common quality and safety requirements for cosmetic products** and promoting technical collaboration in the field of market surveillance. In view of the growing numbers of young people getting tattoos, the committee also released (2017) an overview of the scientific knowledge and recommendations for the toxicity testing

needed to improve the safety of this increasingly popular practice.

The 2023 edition of the **Safe cosmetics for young children**, aimed at reducing health risks from the exposure to cosmetic products, includes Resolution CM/ResAP(2012)¹ which describes safety criteria for cosmetic formulations for infants.

Essential oils are common cosmetic ingredients used in cosmetic products for their characteristic fragrances and many other properties. Despite their natural origins, essential oils may not always be completely safe for use in all populations, prompting the CD-P-COS to compile specific quality requirements and recommendations for their risk assessment, for the attention of regulators, safety evaluators and manufacturers. The second edition of this guide will be released in 2024.

National health authorities report on their market surveillance activities for cosmetic products and the **cases of non-compliance observed** due to prohibited ingredients (e. g. nickel in face paints for children or carcinogenic nitrosamines in nail polish).

The CD-P-COS regularly exchanges with the European Network of Official Cosmetic Control Laboratories (OCCLs), co-ordinated by the EDQM.

For more information see: www.edqm.eu/en/d/297247

European Committee for Food Contact Materials and Articles (CD-P-MCA)

The safety of materials and articles for food contact is an essential part of consumer health protection. The CD-P-MCA was created to address emerging risks to human health arising from their use in everyday products. The adoption of harmonised measures and technical guides ensures that the rules applied in Europe are consistent and supports the work of manufacturers and other business operators, safety evaluators and control laboratories.



Since 2018, the CD-P-MCA defines technical standards and elaborates the Council of Europe policies that supplement EU and national legislation. Resolution CM/Res(2020)9 aims to improve the protection of consumers from contaminants (metals, antioxidants, stabilisers, colorants, plasticisers, etc.) potentially released by materials in contact with food, such as

containers, work surfaces or packaging made from paper and board, metals and alloys and cork.

Many items that come into contact with food contain metals and alloys. Common examples include stainless steel and cast-iron utensils for food preparation, metal containers used to store or transport food and aluminum foil for packaging. Supplementing Resolution CM/Res(2020)9, the **Technical Guide on metals and alloys for food contact materials and articles** is intended to assist national policy makers in adopting legislative and technical measures aimed at reducing the health risks arising from consumer exposure to certain metal ions released into food.

For more information see: www.edqm.eu/en/food-contact-materials-and-articles

Ad hoc Multidisciplinary Group on the Environment (GME)

The challenges posed by the triple planetary crisis of pollution, climate change and biodiversity loss to human rights highlight the need for the development of common responses while ensuring the participation of youth and civil society in these discussions. Human rights and the environment are intertwined, and a clean, healthy and sustainable environment is essential for the full enjoyment of human rights by the current and future generations. Environmental degradation, the decline of biodiversity, and the increasing frequency and intensity of natural disaster negatively impact health, well-being and sustainability. The Council of Europe has a longstanding and widely recognised track record in nature conservation, climate change mitigation, sustainable landscape management and

disaster risk reduction. It possesses the instruments, capacity and structures to address human rights and the triple planetary crisis, fostering co-operation and sharing experience and best practices.



On 17 May 2023, the Council of Europe member states' leaders adopted the Reykjavik Declaration including the **political recognition of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right**. With the aim of making the environment a visible priority for the Organisation, as laid out in Appendix V of the Reykjavik Declaration, the Council of Europe Secretariat was reorganised in January 2024 with the creation of a new Directorate and a new Department "Reykjavik process and the environment". An Inter-secretariat Task Force on the Environment was set up to ensure better coordination, map Council of Europe activities, collect proposals for new cross-sectoral initiatives and identify elements for a Council of Europe Strategy on the Environment.

On 10 July 2024, the Committee of Ministers decided to set up an intergovernmental committee: the Ad hoc Multidisciplinary Group on the Environment (GME) to develop a comprehensive strategy on the environment and a related action plan, with a view to adoption at the Ministerial session in May 2025.

For more information see: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-rule-of-law/reykjavik-process-and-the-environment>

Acting for equality, diversity and respect

This programme promotes equality and empowerment of women, children and persons most commonly exposed to discrimination, and fosters comprehensive inclusion policies respectful of diversity.

Gender Equality Commission (GEC)

Gender equality is an important policy goal of the Council of Europe, and it contributes to the broader efforts to promote human rights and combat all forms of discrimination. The Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine, the Covid-19 pandemic and the ensuing economic downturn have disproportionately affected women and girls, exacerbated existing inequalities, and amplified violence against them. The rise in anti-gender movements further challenges the achievements made on women's rights and gender equality standards and policies. In response to these challenges, the Council of Europe reiterated its commitment to achieve de facto gender equality including through a new Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029 and efforts to mainstream a gender equality perspective in all Council of Europe sectors and policies.



The GEC was established to bridge the gap between commitments made at international level and the reality of women in Europe, and to help ensure the mainstreaming of a gender equality perspective into all Council of Europe policies.

Key areas of work include (i) preventing and combating gender stereotypes and sexism; (ii) preventing and combating violence against women and girls and domestic violence; (iii) ensuring equal access to justice for women and girls; (iv) achieving balanced participation of women and men in political, public, social and economic life; (v) ensuring women's empowerment and gender equality in relation to global geopolitical challenges; (vi) achieving gender mainstreaming and including an intersectional approach in all policies and measures.

With the launch of the **Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029**, priority will be given to existing and emerging opportunities and challenges identified in the Reykjavik Declaration. Together with other steering committees and bodies, standards will be developed to address the impact of artificial intelligence systems on gender equality and discrimination, and to combat technology-facilitated violence against women and girls.

For more information see: www.coe.int/en/web/genderequalitygender-equality-commission

Steering Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI)

Working actively to counter discrimination in all its forms and to ensure genuine equality and full access to rights and opportunities for all members of society requires sustained efforts by all the Member States of the Council of Europe. Discrimination and hate speech lead to dangerous divisions in society as a whole, affect the participation and inclusion of all those targeted by it and threaten democracy. The Council of Europe efforts aim at supporting integrated, effective and coherent action by all the parties concerned in order to address inequality, stigmatisation and exclusion in a systemic manner, by preventing and sanctioning discrimination, racism and intolerance, hate speech and hate crime, and by devising strategies to empower minorities and manage diversity positively. This in turn will help prevent conflicts, sustain peace, help countries to recover from major crises and achieve the sustainable development goals.



CDADI steers the Council of Europe's intergovernmental work to **promote equality for all and build more inclusive societies** that offer **effective protection from discrimination and hate**, ensure **equal participation in political and public life for all without discrimination** on any ground, and where **diversity** is respected.

It advises the Committee of Ministers on all questions within its mandate, including preventing and combating hate speech and discrimination on grounds of “race”, colour, language, religion, national/ethnic origin, nationality, sexual orientation and gender identity; fighting antigypsyism and improving the effective participation and inclusion of Roma and Travellers in society; safeguarding the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and the use of regional or minority languages; ensuring equality of rights of LGBTI persons, and promoting intercultural integration.

CDADI has responsibility for four subordinate structures: (1) the Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues (ADI-ROM); (2) the Committee of Experts on Intercultural Inclusion (ADI-INT); (3) the Committee of Experts on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression and Sex Characteristics (ADI-SOGIESC); and (4) the Committee of Experts on Artificial Intelligence, Equality and Discrimination (GEC/ADI-AI).

www.coe.int/en/web/committee-antidiscrimination-diversity-inclusion

Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF)

Protecting the rights of the child is at the core of the Council of Europe’s mission to safeguard human rights, uphold democracy and preserve the rule of law. Children in Council of Europe member States are entitled to enjoy the full range of human rights safeguarded by the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and other international and European human rights instruments. The Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) outlines the goals and priorities of the Council of Europe and its member States in protecting the rights of the child and making these rights a reality for all children across six priority areas: Freedom from violence, Equal opportunities and social inclusion, Access to and safe use of technologies, Child-friendly justice, Giving a voice to every child and Children’s rights in crisis and emergency situations..



The CDENF guides the Council of Europe work in the area of **the rights of the child**. It advises the Committee of Ministers on appropriate action and proposals concerning the overall priorities to be taken in this field and develops and promotes relevant activities and instruments. The CDENF is working in an inclusive manner, involving children and other stakeholders and relevant partners, as appropriate, in its activities.

Under its Terms of Reference, the CDENF oversees the implementation of the **Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027)** which focuses on six strategic

objectives: 1. Freedom from violence for all children; 2. Equal opportunities and social inclusion for all children; 3. Access to and safe use of technologies for all children; 4. Child-friendly justice for all children; 5. Giving a voice to every child; 6. Children's rights in crisis and emergency situations. Its subordinate bodies focus on protecting children from violence and strengthening child-friendly justice in parental separation and in care proceedings (jointly with the CDCJ), and through multidisciplinary and interagency services.

For more information see: www.coe.int/en/web/children/cdenf

Building trust in public institutions

This programme focuses on upholding public institutions based on the rule of law, and on supporting efforts to build genuine democratic institutions, transparent in their functioning, independent and impartial.

European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ)

Since its creation in 1963, the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) is developing binding and non-binding standards in the field of public and private law aimed at helping Council of Europe member states meet the challenges of rapidly evolving societies, whether they concern the courts and the judiciary, access to justice, public administration, the protection of individuals, the family, or civil society.



With an output of about 150 legal instruments over 60 years of existence, the CDCJ contributes actively to establishing **common standards in the public and private law** fields at European level.

The CDCJ work covers a variety of topics and, for instance, prepared legal instruments on the independence of judges, regulating lobbying activities, protecting whistleblowers, legal aid, online dispute resolution systems in the context of civil and administrative law and on child-friendly justice, to name but a few.

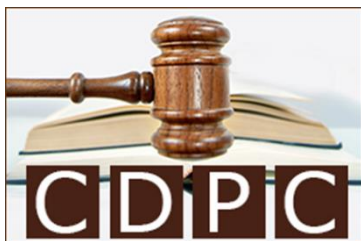
It regularly prepares practical instruments on topical issues to help member States to tackle them respecting Rule of law and Human Rights, such as recently a Guide for Practitioners on the Administrative Detention of Migrants and Asylum Seekers (2023), and a revised Handbook "The Administration and You" to take account of the increasing use of AI by public administration in their dealings with individuals (2024) In the coming years, the focus will be on a draft convention for the protection of the profession of lawyer and instruments on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation and in care proceedings (jointly with the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child - CDENF), the rights of donor-conceived persons to know their origins, stateless children and their access

to nationality, as well as a thematic review on the independence of the judiciary and a study on national climate litigation. This further demonstrates the breadth of the CDCJ's mandate, and the topical issues it continues to cover.

For more information see: www.coe.int/en/web/cdcj

European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC)

The Council of Europe has a pioneering and leading role in setting European standards and principles in various binding and non-binding legal texts and implementing activities in the fields of criminal law and procedure, criminology and penology. Intergovernmental co-operation on common and transnational criminal law and policy takes place in the broader European context, covering a full range of relevant areas including tracking, investigation, extradition, sentencing, execution of penal sanctions and measures, and rehabilitation of offenders. Current work addresses criminal law challenges posed by artificial intelligence, including self-driving cars; transnational organised crime; protection of victims' rights; combating the smuggling of migrants or criminal law responses to environmental crime.



Set up in 1958, the European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC) oversees and coordinates the Council of Europe's activities in the field of criminal law, crime prevention and crime control. To date, **over 40 criminal law conventions** have been developed under the authority of the CDPC, as well as a large number of Recommendations, declarations or reports).

The CDPC has provided key legal and technical guidance and oversight to many high-profile Council of Europe Conventions, including the Convention on Preventing and Combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention), or the MEDICRIME Convention.

In its work the CDPC is assisted by its subordinate bodies, notably: (1) the Committee of Experts on the Operation of European Conventions on Co-operation in Criminal Matters (PC-OC); and (2) The Council for Penological Co-operation (PC-CP) which develops Council of Europe standards and principles in the field of execution of custodial and non-custodial penal sanctions and measures. It holds annual Conferences of Directors of Prison and Probation Services (CDPPS) and collects the Annual Council of Europe penal statistics SPACE. The CDPC also orients and oversees the activities carried out by other committees, such as the Committee of Experts on the Protection of the Environment through criminal law (PC-ENV), the Committee of Experts on Criminal Asset Recovery (PC-RAC) and, jointly with the Gender Equality Commission, the Committee of Experts on combating technology-facilitated violence against women and girls (GEC/PC-DIG).

For more information see: www.coe.int/CDPC; www.coe.int/tcj; www.coe.int/prison

Upholding safety, security and integrity of society and persons

This programme encompasses actions to safeguard the integrity of society and persons from threats to the rule of law which undermine the enjoyment of human rights and erode trust in public institutions and their governance.

Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) raises important and urgent issues. AI is already with us – changing the information that we receive, the choices that we make and the ways in which our societies function. In the coming years it will play an even greater role in how governments and public institutions operate, and in how citizens interact and participate in the democratic process.



The Committee on Artificial Intelligence was tasked by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe with elaborating a Framework Convention on artificial intelligence and human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The potentially global, legally binding instrument is based on the Council of Europe's and other relevant international standards

on human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and is conducive to innovation. The negotiations were finalised in March 2024. The Framework Convention was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 17 May, and opened for signature in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 5 September 2024. The Committee bases its work on the recommendations of its predecessor, the Ad Hoc Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAHAI), which examined the feasibility and potential elements of a Council of Europe legal framework on AI on the basis of broad multi-stakeholder consultations. It is also responsible, through the CAI Secretariat, for the internal coordination of the Organisation's activities on AI and for the external coordination with other intergovernmental and supranational organisations. In addition to the 46 member States, the Committee is composed of 11 observer States, namely Argentina, Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, the Holy See, Israel, Japan, Mexico, Peru, the United States of America, and Uruguay, the European Union, and over 60 representatives from the private sector, civil society, research and academic institutions which have been admitted as observers by the CAI.

For more information see: www.coe.int/en/web/artificial-intelligence/cai

Committee on Counter-terrorism (CDCT)

For over forty years, the Council of Europe has helped to develop and reinforce key legal standards to prevent and suppress acts of terrorism. Taking a comprehensive approach, the Council of Europe works to help member States fight terrorism more effectively by

strengthening and improving their national legislation, as well as facilitate international co-operation. The Council of Europe main legal instruments in the counter-terrorism field are the 2005 Warsaw Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism and its Additional Protocol. The two texts provide criminalisation of a number of terrorist activities, including taking part in an association or group for the purposes of terrorism, receiving terrorist training, travelling abroad for the purposes of terrorism and financing or organising travel for this purpose. They moreover envisage development of national prevention policies, international cooperation on prevention and suppression of terrorism and main principles regarding sanctions.



The CDCT is tasked with identifying priority issues for intergovernmental legal co-operation and proposing to the Committee of Ministers areas for action in the field of counter-terrorism, by developing standard setting instruments, providing technical and analytical advice, collecting information and exchanging practises.

Since its inception in 2018, the CDCT has produced a number of key documents in the area of fight against terrorism, such as the first ever Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2018 – 2022) outlining organisational priorities for tackling terrorism and concrete steps to be taken to achieve the set goals. It has also adopted a number of ground-breaking recommendations, guidelines and publications, including the Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)8 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the use of information collected in conflict zones as evidence in criminal proceedings related to terrorist offences, Guidelines on the links between terrorism and transnational organised crime, Tool for identifying set of indicators for assessing the risk that a terrorist attack may be carried out by radicalised individuals, and the publication on Comparative practices with deradicalisation, disengagement and social reintegration.

Most recently, the CDCT agreed on a new definition of terrorism, which will provide a clear legal framework for a common understanding of the term “terrorist offence”.

For more information see: www.coe.int/en/web/counter-terrorism/

Ad Hoc European Committee for the World Anti-Doping Agency (CAHAMA)

For the Council of Europe, sport is a force for social integration and tolerance. As the most popular leisure activity in society today, sport plays a most distinctive role disregarding geographical borders and social differences. Efforts to deal with negative aspects in sport have intensified requiring more in-depth cooperation at both national and international levels to achieve greater sports standards worldwide.



Since 1967, the Council of Europe is actively involved in the fight against doping through its standard setting work, notably the 1989 Anti-Doping Convention (ETS No. 135), as well as through European coordination.

Established in 2003, the Ad Hoc European Committee for the World Anti-Doping Agency (CAHAMA) is responsible for coordinating the positions of European States on issues relating to the development of anti-doping policies worldwide. Established by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe as a specialised committee, CAHAMA main objectives are to define and represent the European position within the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and to support its activities.

For more information see: www.coe.int/fr/web/sport/cahama

Anchoring democratic values in European societies

This programme brings together action to uphold freedom of expression and media freedom, enhance participation of civil society and youth in democratic life, educational programmes on human rights, and cultural heritage and artistic freedom.

Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI)

The Council of Europe is promoting a comprehensive approach to freedom of expression and information and media freedom. It supports member states' efforts in legislation, policy and practice on media freedom, pluralism and diversity, safety of journalists and other media actors, in line with the European Convention on Human rights and its relevant case-law. The recent technological advancements have fundamentally transformed the communication patterns and behaviours of individuals, communities and societies.

Digitalisation has created unprecedented opportunities, but equally brought new threats to freedom of expression: the spread of disinformation, online hate, the decline of the public trust in the media.



The CDMSI advises the Committee of Ministers and takes part in standard-setting activities on media freedom and pluralism; safety of journalists; support for professional journalism, and more generally on the protection of freedom of expression and information online and offline, in line with **Article 10 ECHR**,

In the coming years, and in line with its Terms of Reference, the CDMSI will work on developing guidance on online safety and empowerment of content producers and users, and on the implications of generative AI for freedom of expression, as well as strategies to counter disinformation, indicators for media and information literacy and the impact of virtual realities on freedom of expression. For this biennium, the CDMSI bears responsibility for two expert committees: the Committee of Experts on Online Safety and Empowerment of Content Creators and Users (MSI-eSEC) and the Committee of Experts on the Impacts of Generative Artificial Intelligence for Freedom of Expression (MSI-AI). The CDMSI is also currently coordinating, as part of its mandate, the Council for Europe 'Journalists matter' Campaign for the Safety of Journalists (November 2023 – end 2027).

For more information see: www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/cdmsi-and-expert-committees

Steering Committee on Democracy (CDDEM)

Democracy is a core value of the Council of Europe and a universal benchmark for human rights protection. Democracy aims to preserve and promote human dignity and fundamental rights of the individual, achieve social justice, foster economic and social development, strengthen social cohesion and create a favourable climate for international peace. However, after a period of increased democratisation across Europe, many democracies appear to be backsliding, marked by declining trust in democratic institutions and processes and a shrinking space for a pluralistic civil society. Recognising the pressing need for change, the Council of Europe Heads of State and Government decided at their 4th Summit in Reykjavik 2023 to give further priority and direction to the Council of Europe's work to secure and strengthen democracy, as embodied in the Reykjavik Principles for Democracy.



Established as a follow-up to the Reykjavik Summit, the mandate of the CDDEM is to steer the Council of Europe's intergovernmental work on democracy to make **member States more resilient to pressures undermining democratic values**, promote **democratic governance** and enhance **civil participation in political decision-making**.

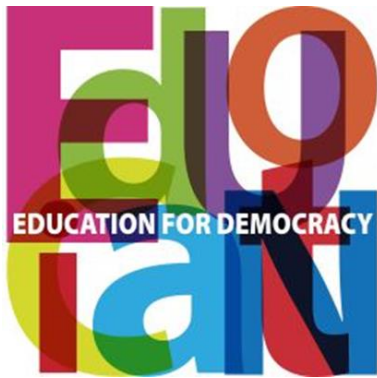
Based on the **Reykjavik Principles**, the CDDEM promotes and facilitates thematic exchanges and good practices among Council of Europe member states to develop common policy responses and standards, as well as tools, including peer reviews, to strengthen democracy, its institutions and processes and good governance at all levels – national, regional and local. The CDDEM works on **democratic renewal** through participatory and deliberative models of democracy at all levels, seeking ways to include more citizens in policy making and ensure that all members of society, notably young persons and civil society are able to play their role in democratic processes.

It also dedicated to harnessing the opportunities and minimising the negative aspects of digital transformation and artificial intelligence and assisting Ukraine in the recovery and reconstruction of democratic institutions and governance.

For more information see: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/steering-committee-on-democracy/home/>

Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU)

Education plays an important role in the lifelong process of learning and maintaining the capacity of citizens to take part actively in democratic processes. The Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture proposes a model of 20 competences, organised by values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge and critical understanding. This model remains a key resource to support policymakers and education professionals in developing democratic education strategies and programmes to build up stronger democracies and develop a culture of democracy in education.



The Steering Committee for Education (CDEDU) plays a pivotal role in overseeing the Council of Europe programmes in the field of education. The Committee develops education policies and guidelines and supports the implementation of education practices based on the core values of the Council of Europe. It provides advice to the Committee of Ministers on educational issues. The overall objective of the Education Programme is to support Member States in developing their policies, legislation and practice with a view to promoting **democratic, quality, inclusive and corruption-**

free education systems, in the framework of the implementation of the European Cultural Convention and the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Under its 2024-2027 mandate, the CDEDU started the implementation of the Education Strategy "Learners First - Education for today's and tomorrow's democratic societies" adopted by the 26th session of the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education in September 2023. The CDEDU primarily focuses on the three Strategy pillars, namely: (1) Renewing the democratic and civic mission of education; (2) Enhancing the social responsibility and responsiveness of education; (3) Advancing education through a human rights-based digital transformation.

For more information see: www.coe.int/en/web/education/cdedu

Youth Statutory Bodies

For the Council of Europe, young people are essential stakeholders in the consolidation of democracy, human rights and the rule of law and have a vital role to play in fostering the Organisation's values. The youth sector's ground-breaking co-management system is a living example of participatory democracy and a place for common reflection and co-production, combining the voice of young Europeans and that of public authorities responsible for youth issues. Using the opportunities offered by this dialogue, and in line with the Reykjavik Declaration, the Council of Europe is engaged in doing even more to involve young people in developing policies for a sustainable future. It takes a cross-cutting approach to integrating a youth perspective across all sectors, while strengthening the capacity of young people, youth leaders and youth workers across Europe to actively uphold and promote the Council of Europe's core values in the face of current and emerging challenges.



The European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ) brings together representatives of ministries or bodies responsible for youth matters from the 50 States Parties to the European Cultural Convention. The CDEJ fosters co-operation between governments in the youth sector and provides a framework for comparing national youth policies, exchanging best practices, and drafting standard-setting texts.

The Advisory Council on Youth (CCJ) comprises 30 representatives of non-governmental youth organisations and networks. It provides opinions and input from youth NGOs on all youth sector activities and ensures that young people are involved in the Council's other activities.

These two bodies come together in **the Joint Council on Youth (CMJ)**, the co-managed decision-making body of the youth sector, the longest-standing practice of participatory decision-making in the world, and one of the very few examples of shared decision-making between governments and young people with power shared in full 50:50 parity.

The smaller **Programming Committee on Youth (CPJ)** (16 members) is also co-managed and decides on the programmes of the European Youth Centres (Strasbourg and Budapest) and the European Youth Foundation (EYF).

For more information see: www.coe.int/en/web/youth/co-management

Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP)

Culture is a motor for political, social and technological transformation; art, storytelling, design and cultural heritage play a fundamental role in contributing to social innovation and people's quality of life. Culture and creativity, cultural heritage and landscape inherently contribute to ensuring freedom of expression, online and offline ; combatting growing social inequalities and poverty ; ensuring the protection of vulnerable groups ; challenging inequality, racism, xenophobia and discrimination; supporting human rights-centred artificial intelligence developments ; fighting environmental degradation and climate change ; empowering civil society ; educating to democratic citizenship and empowerment. Culture and cultural heritage must be supported as key assets for the future of the European project and especially as a vector for fostering a sense of belonging and a sense of togetherness in Europe.



The CDCPP oversees the Council of Europe's intergovernmental work in the field of culture, cultural heritage and landscape, advises the Committee of Ministers on all questions within its area of competence and supports member States in the implementation of sector specific acquis. It provides standards, policies, strategies, guidelines and good practices for the sustainable management of culture, heritage and landscape resources, as a basis for democratic and inclusive societies in a digitally evolving environment, impacted by environmental degradation.

The CDCPP oversees the numerous heritage, culture and landscape conventions, including inter alia European Cultural Convention, Council of Europe Landscape Convention, Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property

For more information see: www.coe.int/cdcpp

Supporting an efficient, effective and visible Organisation

This programme contributes to the implementation of the reform process and creating an always more agile, resilient and results-oriented organisation.

Committee of Legal Advisers on Public International Law (CAHDI)

In a political climate which encourages interdependence between states, international law is constantly developing and is increasingly becoming a key factor in the organisation of inter-state relations. The Council of Europe is accordingly working to co-ordinate its member states' activities in this field.



The unique intergovernmental forum, CAHDI promotes and facilitates interstate relations with respect to **major issues of public international law** by bringing together legal advisers to the ministries of foreign affairs of the member States and a significant number of observer States and organisations. Main activities of the CAHDI are:

Adoption of common positions on issues concerning public international law, including on Council of Europe conventions and on recommendations of the PACE.

European Observatory of Reservations to International Treaties, which covers both Council of Europe conventions and conventions concluded outside the Council of Europe, in particular those drawn up within the United Nations (UN).

Databases on public international law, which compiles contributions of Council of Europe member and observer States on domestic legislation and case-law.

Co-operation with other international entities, notably with the International Law Commission (ILC) of UN in Geneva, and other numerous non-governmental and governmental organisations, which are granted participant status at the CAHDI (EU, OECD, OSCE, Intrepol and other).

Other activities include non-legally binding instruments in international law, accession of the EU to the ECHR, peaceful settlement of disputes, developments concerning the ICC and other international criminal tribunals, current issues of international humanitarian law, and cases before the ECtHR involving issues of public international law.

For more information see: www.coe.int/cahdi