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ENF-VAE(2024)PV02
Strasbourg, 26 September 2024

Committee of Experts on the Prevention of Violence (ENF-VAE)

Meeting report

Fourth meeting
(in presence)

Strasbourg, 24-25 September 2024
Agora building, Room G05

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ENF-VAE

Agenda item 1: Opening of the meeting

1. The fourth meeting of the Committee of experts on the prevention of violence (ENF-VAE, hereafter the Committee) was opened by the ENF-VAE Chair, Mária VARGOVA (Slovakia), who welcomed all participants.

2. The Committee was then greeted by Anne KAYSER, Secretary to the Committee**,** who thanked colleagues for their support in the preparation of the meeting and looked forward to the work ahead.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the agenda and order of business

3. The Committee adopted the agenda as it appears in Appendix I.

Agenda item 3: Statement by the Chair and the Secretariat

4. The Committee took note of the information provided by the Secretariat on the state of implementation of the Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027, including relevant action of the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF).

5. It also took note of the information provided by the Secretariat on the state of implementation of its Terms of Reference as well as its revised workplan.

Agenda item 4: Implementation review report on Recommendation CM/Rec(2009)10 on Council of Europe policy guidelines on integrated national strategies for the protection of children from violence

6. Dr Susanna Greijer, consultant, presented the first draft of the implementation review report of the Recommendation. The Committee took note of the presentation.

7. The Committee examined the draft report in view of providing guidance for its finalisation. It took note of the comments provided by the Observers and Participants. Among others, the following was pointed out:

   - The analysis based on the replies of the member states shows that, in **most of the areas** covered by the policy guidelines on integrated national strategies for the protection of children from violence, the **implementation benchmark set at 80% was exceeded,** which is commended. In some circumstances (such as the existence of a legal framework for protection of children against violence) an achievement of 100% of the member states should be the target.
   - Some of the strengths identified in the report, such as **awareness raising campaigns** carried out in 100% of the responding states, cannot curb weaknesses leading to **underreporting cases of violence**.
   - Issues related to **how** reporting is being done, the need to develop **helplines** and to **empower** children as actors and not passive subjects in reporting cases were raised.
   - Part of the response could also be found in the **methodology and the focus of the campaigns**, as well as in the **adequacy of trainings,** including trauma informed trainings of social workers and at university level.
   - **Safeguarding policies** should be made mandatory wherever children are present, and Council of Europe guidance would be welcomed on this issue.
   - Language towards the need to promote a **full ban against corporal punishment,** both in law and in practice, should be reinforced in the conclusions of the report, and action should be taken to follow-up with the Council of Europe member states that haven't banned corporal punishment.
   - While the analysis shows that 73% of the states enforced laws that include **age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education** in the school curricula, its importance to prevent

violence against children was underlined and the need to voice clear recommendations for member states to adopt such curricula was underlined.
- **Collection of disaggregated data** and the development of better systems to process systematically organized data, including within the Council of Europe, needs to be strengthened.

8. The Committee instructed the consultant and the Secretariat to revise the draft report in light of the discussion and comments of the Committee and agreed to share the revised draft with the ENF-VAE Committee before sharing it with CDENF in view of its possible adoption during its 10th plenary meeting (Strasbourg 3-5 December 2024).

9. The Committee also took note the presentation of the report on **Progress and delay in achieving universal prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment in Council of Europe member states** by Sonia Vohito from *End Corporal Punishment* and invited her to regularly update this report. The Committee exchanged on the situation highlighted in the report and on possible actions to support universal prohibition of corporal punishment. Among those actions, the opportunity to update existing awareness-raising materials or for the CDENF to consider holding an exchange or tour de table on the issue were suggested. To this end, the Committee agreed to share the report with the CDENF.

Agenda item 5: Age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education to strengthen responses for - inter alia - preventing and combating violence, including risky or harmful sexual behaviour by children

5.1 Guidance Note on Safeguarding children from the risks of accessing online pornographic content

10. The Committee took note of the presentation made by Maree Crabbe, consultant to the ENF-VAE, of the progress on drafting a Guidance note on Safeguarding children from the risks of accessing online pornographic content.

11. The Committee welcomed CDENF's decision to address this important topic. It expressed satisfaction on the structure and content of the preliminary version of the draft Guidance Note, to be shared with the CDENF for discussion during its 10th plenary meeting (Strasbourg 3-5 December 2024).

12. The Committee also agreed to take the elements of this Guidance Note into account when drafting the Recommendation on Age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education and working on the Guidance on Harmful sexual behaviour.

5.2 Recommendation on Age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education to strengthen responses for - inter alia - preventing and combating violence, including risky or harmful sexual behaviour by children

13. The Committee took note of the presentation made by Meghan Campbell, consultant to the ENF-VAE, on the preliminary elements of a draft Recommendation on Age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education.

14. It held an exchange on the preliminary elements of a draft Recommendation on Age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education and took note of the comments provided by the Observers and Participants of ENF-VAE;

15. Among others, the following was pointed out:
- The **title** of the recommendation should take into account the sensitivity of the subject. Several options using different combinations will be considered.
- The recommendation should include elements about how to wrap up the **messaging around comprehensive sexuality education**.

- Where **sensitive terms** have been previously defined in Council of Europe work, draw from these definitions.
- Spotlight provisions should include **digital safety** and technological issues.
- The language around **gender equality** should be streamlined, being mindful of the sensitivities in different member states.
- Make clear that comprehensive sexuality education is provided in **formal, informal and non-formal contexts** and that all those who provide such education should have adequate training.

16. The Committee instructed the consultant and the Secretariat to pursue the drafting of a Recommendation on age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education in light of the discussion and comments of the group. If ready, a first draft of the Recommendation could be shared with the ENF-VAE and the CDENF in view of comments prior to the 10th CDENF plenary meeting (Strasbourg, 3-5 December 2024).

5.3 Child consultations on comprehensive sexuality education

17. The Committee took note of the presentation by Elina Stenvall, consultant, on the progress made to carry out child consultations on comprehensive sexuality education.

18. The Committee was informed on the state of play of the child consultations and shared ideas on the different groups of children that can be consulted.

19. During the discussion, among others, the following was pointed out:
    - It is useful to seek children's views on **how** they should be taught, by **whom**, **where**, **when** and on **what** they want to know about comprehensive sexuality education.
    - The consultation should include larger themes such as **digital safety**.
    - Children could be given **orientations** or examples to be able to choose between different options on how they should be taught.
    - It is essential to give **feedback** to children and acknowledge that their views are taken into account.
    - Having a strong **safeguarding** policy is essential: children have to feel that there is a safe environment and need to have access to psychological support in case of need.

20. The Committee invited the secretariat and the consultant to continue its work on the issue.

Agenda item 6: Prevention of sexual violence and harmful or risky behaviour by children

21. The Committee took note of the presentation of the consultant, shared views on the updated study and agreed on its publication.

22. The Committee was invited to reflect on the next steps to prepare a Guidance on the prevention of sexual violence and harmful or risky behaviour by children, which is the last ENF-VAE deliverable due in 2027.

Agenda item 7: State of play of the preparation of the mid-term review of the Strategy for the Rights of the Child

23. The Committee took note of the presentation of the secretariat on the advancement of the organisation of the mid-term review and shared views on how to feed-in the session regarding prevention of violence against children.

Agenda item 8: Update on key developments and other events by members, participants and observers

24. The Committee took note of the update of key activities related to its mandate as shared by its members:

- Finland has started to reflect on highly contentious divorce cases, particularly to protect children from violence. A study on the matter will be published next year. Furthemore, the national strategy on violence against children – a rather ambitious action plan – will come to an end in 2025 but a new eight-years plan is currently in preparation. This will include a further implementation of the Lanzarote Convention and Barnahus projects.
- In Austria, new elections are coming at the end of September 2024, making it difficult to discuss future projects on children's rights. However, a campaign for the protection of children in all forms was launched, featuring images of children created by AI (April 2024). The children involved in the campaign provided feedback, and it was well received.
- In Iceland, a new law focuses on the "integration" of services in the best interest of the child's well-being. The aim is to anticipate and reduce the number of child protection cases and it is currently in its third year of implementation. In addition, cooperation after divorce is being promoted through online courses for parents undergoing divorce proceedings, with very positive results.
- In Hungary, development regarding children's rights have been updated. Moreover, the Red Cross has produced a report, highlighting the importance of Barnahus. Stage 5 of Barnahus is currently being implemented, and the government is planning to open a 6th center.
- In Slovakia, all funds for human rights NGOs have been frozen, but there are some positive developments. For example, minimum quality standards for helplines have been established, with funding provided to call centers that meet these standards. As well, safer internet centers are being created through the INHOPE network, and Barnahus centers are being developed alongside architectural studies. A national methodology for child adoption is also in the approval process. Additionally, a major campaign is being prepared in collaboration with Bratislava Design University and a popular Slovak NGO to protect children from grooming and cyber violence, providing support for parents.
- Missing Children Europe updated on a conference focusing on online child sexual abuse and manipulation (namely CESAGRAM). This conference will be organized on December 9-10, 2024, with invitations to be sent through the secretariat of the Committee.
- The Lanzarote Committee updated the group on child consultations that were carried out by the Committee in the last monitoring round on protecting children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by ICTs, and that could be linked to the work of ENF-VAE. Moreover, the Lanzarote Committee will share an invitation for a side event on emerging technologies, with the private companies involved, during its Plenary (5-8 November 2024) in Vienna.

Agenda item 9: Any other business

25. No further issue was raised.

Agenda item 10: Date and place of next meetings

26. The Committee took note that the next meeting of ENF-VAE would be held, in person, in Strasbourg on 27-28 May 2025.

Agenda item 11: Adoption of the meeting report

27. The Committee agreed to approve the meeting report.

Appendix 1

Agenda and Order of Business

1.	**Opening of the meeting**	Reference documents • List of participants – ENF-VAE(2024)LoP2 • List of members • Report of the third meeting – ENF-VAE(2024)PV01
2.	**Adoption of the agenda and order of business**	Working documents • Agenda – ENF-VAE (2024)OJ2 • Annotated agenda – ENF-VAE(2024)OJ2ANN
3.	**Statement of the Chair and Secretariat**	Reference documents • Terms of reference of the ENF-VAE • Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022-2027) • CoE Conventions and Recommendations – Key Resources for implementing the Strategy (2022-2027) CDENF(2022)INF2 • Working methods and workplan – ENF-VAE(2023)01 rev4 E
4.	**Implementation review report on Recommendation CM/Rec(2009)10 on Council of Europe policy guidelines on integrated national strategies for the protection of children from violence** *(deliverable (2) of the terms of reference)*	Working document • Implementation review of Recommendation CM/Rec(2009)10 on Council of Europe policy guidelines on integrated national strategies for the protection of children from violence – ENF-VAE(2024)04 (restricted) Reference documents • Table of replies from member States – ENF-VAE (2024)01 • Questionnaire – CDENF(2023)24 • CM/Rec(2009)10 on Council of Europe policy guidelines on integrated national strategies for the protection of children from violence • Methodology to conduct implementation reviews of Committee of Ministers' Recommendations – CDENF(2022)27 • Progress and delay in achieving universal prohibition and elimination of corporal punishment in Council of Europe member states – ENF-VAE(2024)06 (restricted)
5.	**Age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education to strengthen responses for – inter alia – preventing and combating violence, including risky or harmful sexual behaviour by children** (*deliverable (3) of the terms of reference)*	Working document • Preliminary draft Guidance note on Safeguarding children from the risks of accessing online pornographic content - CDENF(2024)20 (restricted)

		Reference documents • 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 – CDENF(2024)08 • Concept Note on child consultations on comprehensive sexuality education – ENF-VAE(2024)02rev • Concept note for a thematic exchange on Safeguarding children from the risks of accessing online pornographic content – CDENF(2024)05 • Report of the thematic exchange on Safeguarding children from the risks of accessing online pornographic content - CDENF(2024)11
6.	**Prevention of sexual violence and harmful or risky behaviour by children** (*deliverable (14) of the terms of reference)*	Working document • Updated study on Sexual violence and harmful sexual behaviour displayed by children: Nature, causes, consequences and responses, Prepared by: Professor Simon Hackett, Durham University, United Kingdom – ENF-VAE(2024)05 (restricted) Reference document • Sexual violence and harmful sexual behaviour displayed by children: Nature, causes, consequences and responses – CDENF-GT-VAE(2020)04
7.	**State of play of the preparation of the mid-term review of the Strategy for the Rights of the Child**	
8.	**Update on key developments and other events by members, participants and observers**	
9.	**Any other business**	
10.	**Date and place of the next meetings**	Proposals to be confirmed: • 5th meeting of ENF-VAE: 27-28 May 2025 • 6th meeting of ENF-VAE: 7-8 October 2025
11.	**Approval of the meeting report**	

Draft Order of Business

Date	Time (UTC+1)	Agenda items
24 September 2024	Morning 09.30 am - 12.30 pm	Items 1-4
	Afternoon 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm	Item 4 (continued)
25 September 2024	Morning 09.00 am - 12.30 pm	Item 5
	Afternoon 2.00 pm - 4.30 pm	Items 6-11

GENERAL REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Terms of reference of ENF-VAE 2024-2027
Resolution CM/Res(2021)3 on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods

MEETING REPORTS

ENF-VAE(2023)PV01	Report of the first meeting of the ENF-VAE
ENF-VAE(2023)PV02	Report of the second meeting of the ENF-VAE
ENF-VAE(2024)PV01	Report of the third meeting of the ENF-VAE

Appendix 2

List of participants

MEMBERS / *MEMBRES*

Austria / *Autriche*
Alina Seel
Austrian Federal Chancellery / *Chancellerie fédérale autrichienne*
Head of Department / *Cheffe de département*
Directorate General VI – Family and Youth / *Direction générale VI - Famille et jeunesse*

Finland / *Finlande*
Marjo Malja
Ministry of Social Affairs and Health / *Ministère des affaires sociales et de la santé*
Senior Ministerial Adviser, Social Affairs / Conseillère ministérielle principale, Affaires sociales

France **Excused/*Excusée***
Solenne Donal
Juge des enfants / *Juvenile judge*
Tribunal Judiciaire de Paris / *Paris Judicial Court*

Greece / *Grèce*
Eftychia Katsigaraki
Ministry of Justice, General Directorate of Special Legal Affairs & Human Rights / *Ministère de la Justice, Direction générale des affaires juridiques spéciales et des droits de l'homme*
General Director / *Directrice Générale*

Hungary / *Hongrie*
Viktoria Sebhelyi
Independent consultant / *Consultante indépendante*

Iceland / *Islande*
Pall Olafsson
Director, Department of Prosperity / *Directeur, ministère de la Prospérité*

Slovakia / *Slovaquie*
Mária Vargová (Chair / *Présidente*)
National Coordination Centre for Resolving the Issues of Violence against Children / *Centre national de coordination pour la résolution des problèmes de violence à l'égard des enfants*
Director / *Directrice*

Spain / *Espagne*
Pepa Horno
Independent consultant on childhood, affectivity and protection of children / *Consultante indépendant sur l'enfance, l'affectivité et la protection de l'enfance*

MEMBERS CC / *MEMBRES CC*

Türkiye / *Turquie*
Şuheda Dilay Kızılca
Ministry of Family and Social Services / *Ministère de la Famille et des services sociaux*
Junior Expert on Family and Social Services / *Expert junior en matière de services sociaux et familiaux*

PARTICIPANTS

European Commission / *Commission Européenne*
Chrisoula Arcoudis
DG Justice and Consumers / *DG Justice et consommateurs*

Gender Equality Commission /*Commission pour l'égalité de genre (GEC)*
Sara Slana
Member in respect of Slovenia / *Membre representant la Slovénie*

Advisory Council on Youth / *Conseil consultatif sur la jeunesse*
Margo Vorykhava
Co-chair of the Advisory Council on Youth / *Co-Présidente du Conseil consultatif sur la* jeunesse

OBSERVERS / *OBSERVATEURS*

Missing Children Europe
Lea Meindre-Chautrand
Senior Advocacy Officer / Responsable de plaidoyer

CONSULTANTS

Susanna Greijer
Research, Legal and Policy Consultant on children's rights / *Consultante en recherche, en droit et en politique sur les droits de l'enfant*

Sonia Vohito
Legal Policy Specialist, End Corporal Punishment / *Spécialiste en politique juridique*

Meghan Campbell
Reader in international human rights law, University of Birmingham / *Professeure en droit international des droits de l'homme, Université de Birmingham*

Maree Crabbe
Director, It's time we talked / *Directrice, "It's time we talked"*

Elina Stenvall
Director, SOS Children's Villages Finland / *Directrice, SOS Villages d'enfants Finlande*

Simon Hackett
Professor (Director of Research) in the Department of Sociology, Durham University / *Professeur (directeur de recherche) au Département de sociologie de l'Université de Durham*

COUNCIL OF EUROPE SECRETARIAT / *SECRÉTARIAT DU CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE*

DGII – Directorate General of Democracy / *Direction générale de la Démocratie*

Children's rights division / Division droits des enfants
Regina Jensdottir
Head of the Children's Rights Division / *Cheffe de la Division des droits des enfants*

Maia Mamulashvili
Communication officer / *Chargée de communication*

Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child / *Comité Directeur Pour les Droits de l'Enfant*
Katrin Uerpmann
Secretary of the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF) / *Secrétaire du CDENF*

Magdalena Bochinska
Policy advisor / *Conseillère politique*

Lanzarote Committee of the Council of Europe / *Comité Lanzarote du Conseil de l'Europe*
Naomi Trewinnard
Legal advisor / *Conseillère juridique*

Cooperation Unit - Children's Rights Division / *Unité de coopération - Division des Droits des Enfants*
Maria Asensio Velasco
Project Officer / *Responsable de projet*

Mireya Garcia de Murcia
Project Officer / *Responsable de projet*

Gender Equality Division / *Division de l'égalité de genre*
Cécile Gréboval
Programme Manager / *Responsable de programme*

Roza Cseby
Project Assistant/ *Assistante de projet*

Parliamentary Assembly / *Assemblée Parlementaire*
Grazia-Alessandra Sino
Project manager / *Responsable de projets*

Violence against women Division / *Division sur la violence à l'égard des femmes*
Francesca Montagna
Administrator / *Administratrice*

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Unit / *Unité Orientation Sexuelle et Identité de Genre*
Gabriella Calleja
Co-Secretary of the ADI-SOGIESC / *Co-secrétaire du ADI-SOGIESC*

SECRETARIAT OF THE ENF-VAE / *SECRÉTARIAT DU ENF-VAE*

Anne Kayser
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Children's Rights Division (DGII) / *Division des Droits des enfants (DGII)*

Justine Vizier
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Audrey Winum
Project Assistant / *Assistante de projet*
Children's Rights Division (DGII) / *Droits des enfants (DGII)*

INTERPRETERS / *INTERPRETES*

Sally Bailey-Ravet
Katia di Stefano
Michael Hill
Remy Jain