

Strasbourg, 5 November 2018

GEC(2018)1 Rev1

**GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION
(GEC)**

GEC Work Plan 2018 - 2019

In the framework of the Terms of Reference of the Gender Equality Commission (GEC) (see appendix 1), bearing in mind the six strategic priorities included in the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy (2018-2023) and subject to availability of resources, **the following activities will be the focus of the biennium 2018-2019.**

This Work Plan will be kept under review to fully reflect the breadth of activities carried out by the member States and the different services of the Council of Europe to implement the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023. The GEC will regularly update its Work Plan also in case it needs to react quickly to unexpected developments, events or circumstances.

Member States are encouraged to promote and disseminate the Council of Europe gender equality standards, materials and initiatives at national level, including through translations and use of social media. They are also encouraged to keep the Secretariat informed about initiatives at the national level so that they can be promoted and disseminated through the Council of Europe Gender Equality website and other forms of communication.

Strategic objective 1: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1. Finalise the preparation of a draft Recommendation on preventing and combating sexism, and transmit it to the Committee of Ministers for its consideration.
2. Prepare a factsheet with the main elements of the Recommendation to prevent and combat sexism, including the agreed definition of sexism.
3. In co-operation with the Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI) follow-up the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2013) on gender equality and media in member States.
4. Continue to raise awareness about online and offline sexist hate speech, including through co-operation projects and in co-ordination with other sectors of the Council of Europe.
5. Promote and support the implementation of the recommendations from the Amsterdam Conference (2013) on media and the image of women including through co-operation activities with the member States. Update the compilation of good practices from member States on this topic.
6. Promote and support the implementation of recommendations from the Helsinki Conference (2014) on combating gender stereotypes in and through education including through co-operation activities with the member States. Update the compilation of good practices from member States on this topic.

Strategic objective 2: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

1. Continue activities to promote the signature and ratification of the Istanbul Convention in the member and non-member States and among other regional and international partner organisations, by making available expertise and sharing good practices.

2. Support member States in their efforts to implement the Istanbul Convention, including through activities around the collection of papers on specific provisions of the Istanbul Convention. Subject to resources available, consider preparing additional papers on the Istanbul Convention in particular on Article 9: non-governmental organisations and civil society; and Articles 20-21-22-23: support services.
3. Develop and implement co-operation activities to support member States in their path to ratification of the Istanbul Convention, with a particular focus on legal and policy frameworks. Provide operational advice on institutional tools and structures to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence.
4. Subject to resources available, continue working with member States to adapt and implement at the national level the HELP course on violence against women and domestic violence.
5. Ensure synergies, co-ordination and as appropriate follow-up action, regarding work, activities and monitoring results of the respective monitoring bodies of the Istanbul Convention, the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and the Lanzarote Convention.

Strategic objective 3: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

1. Keep up to date the compilation of case-law of the European Court of Human Rights on gender equality issues (prepared by the Gender Equality Unit).
2. Prepare a new factsheet on access to justice for women victims of violence.
3. Prepare an e-course for legal professionals (HELP Programme) on women's access to justice.
4. Engage with relevant Council of Europe committees and bodies (e.g. the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice - CEPEJ, the European Committee on Legal Co-operation – CDCJ and the Consultative Council of European Judges – CCJE and of European Prosecutors – CCPE) so that their activities take account of issues related to women's access to justice and Council of Europe's work in this field. Through activities undertaken in this area, contribute to the implementation of the Council of Europe Action Plan on "Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality".
5. In co-operation with other Council of Europe sectors, undertake activities such as research and good practices to address multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination affecting women as regards their access to justice.

6. Promote and support the implementation of the recommendations from the Bern Conference (2016) "Towards guaranteeing equal access of women to justice" including through co-operation projects.

Strategic objective 4: Achieve a balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

1. Consider follow-up measures to address the main findings and recommendations from the third monitoring round of the implementation of CM Recommendation (2003)³, including activities at the national level as well as co-operation projects. Continue promotion of the analytical report in the member States and in other relevant sectors of the Council of Europe (such as the Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress, Venice Commission, the Electoral Assistance Division).
2. Continue co-operation with the Venice Commission, the Electoral Assistance Division and other relevant Departments of the Council of Europe in their work to integrate gender equality in electoral processes.
3. Contribute to the organisation and participate in the 2018 World Forum on Democracy, which will focus on women's political, public and economic participation.

Strategic objective 5: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

1. Support the integration of a gender equality dimension in CoE policies and measures regarding migration, asylum and integration, in order to secure the human rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls, men and boys, regardless of traditional or cultural attitudes.
2. Prepare a factsheet on existing Council of Europe standards aimed at preventing migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and children from falling victim to gender-based violence, sexual abuse, trafficking, exploitation and negative social control, and support the implementation of such standards at the national level.
3. Gather information and data on the situation of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls, including through contacts and in co-operation with member States and relevant international organisations.
4. Encourage independent Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms to address the gender-specific needs of migrant, refugee and asylum-seekers, including girls and boys, into their monitoring work, where applicable, and to make recommendations in this regard.

Strategic objective 6: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

1. Organise and carry out training of Gender Equality Rapporteurs (GERs), including the preparation of relevant materials and tools to help them in their work. Organise and carry out regular exchanges of views between GERs and the GEC.

2. Provide advice and expertise to the Committee of Ministers and other Council of Europe committees and bodies on gender mainstreaming and gender-sensitive budgeting, upon request and on the basis of existing standards and tools. This includes ongoing initiatives in the fields of sport, cinema, youth policies, democratic governance, etc.
3. Continue the regular exchanges of views between the GEC and other sectors of the Council of Europe carrying out work on gender mainstreaming.
4. Continue disseminating and giving visibility to activities and work on gender mainstreaming carried out by member States and relevant sectors of the Council of Europe including through regular update of the website dedicated to gender mainstreaming.

I. Progress review

1. Prepare and disseminate the annual report on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023, and its submission to the Committee of Ministers.
2. Continue monitoring developments at the national level and compile an annual document on action taken by the member States to implement the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy.

II. International co-operation

1. Continue engaging and co-operating with the United Nations (in particular UN Women, the Commission on the Status of Women – CSW; the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women – CEDAW; the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization - UNESCO; and the Economic Commission for Europe – UNECE).
2. Organise events on the standards and activities of the Council of Europe in the area of gender equality during the regular annual sessions of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women.
3. Contribute to the regional review of the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
4. Contribute towards the implementation of the United Nations Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, in particular Sustainable Development Goal 5 (“Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”) and Goal 16 (“Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”).

5. Continue engaging and co-operating with the European Union (in particular the European Commission, European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), the European Parliament, and the Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)). Continue contributing to the work of the European Commission's Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men. Continue co-operation with the European Network of Equality Bodies (Equinet).
6. Continue engaging and co-operating with the Organization of American States (OAS), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
7. Continue engaging with relevant international and regional NGOs in the field of gender equality and women's rights.

III. Communication

1. Continue issuing a quarterly on-line newsletter on gender equality, featuring Council of Europe's work on gender equality and gender mainstreaming.
2. Disseminate a factsheet on the Council of Europe's contribution to the UN 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG5.

See Appendix 2 for the table of activities.

Appendix 1 – Terms of reference of the GEC for 2018-2019

Under the supervision of the Committee of Ministers, the GEC will steer the intergovernmental work in the field of gender equality. In particular, the GEC is instructed to:

- promote gender equality as a visible priority for the Organisation (internally and externally) and, to this end, support all committees and bodies of the Organisation in ensuring that a gender equality perspective is maintained in their activities;
- conduct needs' assessments and provide advice on the development of standards, co-operation and monitoring activities within its field of competence;
- provide expertise to member States on the development of legislation, policies, practice, training schemes and awareness material to support implementation of internationally agreed standards at national level; and facilitate exchange of experience and good practice;
- support the implementation of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy (2018-2023);
- support governments, parliaments, local authorities, civil society and private sector for the purposes of achieving real change on gender equality in member States;
- promote the inclusion in the political agendas of the Council of Europe member States and beyond of the need to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women and domestic violence;
- identify a topic of particular relevance in the field of gender equality and organise a thematic conference to exchange experience, good practices and facilitate progress on this topic;
- advise the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General on appropriate action to be taken and likewise provide advice as requested on such questions as may arise;
- engage in co-ordination and joint planning at regional and international level with the European Union, including the Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), UN, in particular UN Women and the United Nations Global Compact, the World Bank, the OAS, the OSCE, the OECD, and other intergovernmental organisations and the civil society with the aim of strengthening equality and enhancing women's rights as an integral part of universal human rights; promote the visibility of the Council of Europe's standards at these levels through participation in meetings at the level of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Human Rights Council;
- take due account to building cohesive societies and to promoting and protecting rights of persons with disabilities in line with the Council of Europe Disability Strategy 2017-2023 in the performance of its tasks;
- follow the implementation of the non-binding instruments that it has prepared as well as conventions for which it has been given supervision by the Committee of Ministers;

- contribute to co-operation and support activities to national initiatives in this field;
- without prejudice to the mandates of intergovernmental committees of the Council of Europe that already follow the work of monitoring mechanisms, follow the activities of the relevant monitoring and other bodies or convention mechanisms;
- in accordance with decision CM/Del/Dec(2013)1168/10.2 of the Committee of Ministers, carry out, at regular intervals, within the limits of the available resources and bearing in mind its priorities, an examination of some or all of the conventions for which it has been given responsibility, in co-operation, where appropriate, with the relevant convention-based bodies, and report back to the Committee of Ministers.

The terms of reference of the Gender Equality Commission for 2018-2019 include the following specific tasks:

- Prepare a draft Committee of Ministers' Recommendation to prevent and combat sexism.
- Contribute towards the implementation of the United Nations Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Agenda 2030, in particular Sustainable Development Goal 5 ("Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls") and Goal 16 ("Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels").
- Launch the new Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy (2018-2023) and its implementation action plan.
- Prepare annual reports on the implementation of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy (2018-2023).
- Consider the revision of the Committee of Ministers' Recommendation Rec(79)10 concerning migrant women.

Appendix 2 – Table of Activities

Activity	Responsible	2018	2019	Comment / update
Objective 1. Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism				
Finalise draft recommendation on preventing and combating sexism for Committee of Ministers	GE Unit + GEC + CM			
Preparation of a factsheet on sexism	GE Unit + GEC			Following adoption of the draft Recommendation by the CM
Follow-up the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2013) on gender equality and media in member states	GE Unit, GEC and CDMSI			
Raise awareness about online and offline sexist hate speech	GE Unit + GEC			
Promote and support implementations of recommendations from the Amsterdam conference	GE Unit and Media			
Update the compilation of MS good practices on media and the image of women	GE Unit + GEC			
Promote and support implementations of recommendations from the Helsinki conference	GE Unit + GEC			
Update the compilation of MS good practices on combating stereotypes in and through education	GE Unit + GEC			
Objective 2. Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence				
Promote the signature and ratification of the Istanbul Convention	GE Unit/VaW Division			

Activity	Responsible	2018	2019	Comment / update
Prepare papers on the Istanbul Convention:				
<i>Article 9 – non-governmental organisations and civil society</i>	GE Unit + external experts + GEC			
<i>Articles 20-21-22-23 support services</i>				
Develop and implement co-operation activities to support member states towards ratification	GE Unit/Co-operation Unit			
Adapt and implement the HELP course on VaW and domestic violence with member states	GE Unit /Co-operation Unit/HELP Unit			
Follow-up action to work of monitoring bodies of the Istanbul, Lanzarote and Action against Trafficking in Human Beings Conventions	GE Unit/ VaW/Children and Trafficking Divisions			
Objective 3. Ensure the equal access of women to justice				
Update compilation of case-law of the Court on GE issues	GE Unit			
New factsheet on access to justice for women victims of violence	GE unit/Co-operation Unit + GEC			
Prepare an e-course for legal professional on women's access to justice (HELP)	GE Unit/Co-operation Unit/HELP Unit			
Engage with committees and bodies so that their activities take account of women's access to justice	GE Unit + GEC/ CEPEJ/CDCJ/CCJE/ CCPE			
Undertake activities to address forms of discrimination affecting women's access to justice	GE Unit and other relevant sectors			

Activity	Responsible	2018	2019	Comment / update
Promote recommendations from the Bern Conference	GE Unit + GEC			
Objective 4. Achieve a balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making				
Follow-up to the Analytical Report on the 3rd round of monitoring CM Recommendation (2003) ³	GE Unit + GEC			
Continue co-operation with Venice Commission and the Electoral Assistance Division to support their work on gender equality in electoral processes	GE Unit + VC + EAD			
Contribute to the organisation and participate in the 2018 World Forum on Democracy	GE Unit + GEC/World Forum Secretariat			
Objective 5. Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls				
Support the integration of a gender equality dimension in policies and measures regarding migration, asylum and integration	GE Unit/SRSG Migration			
Prepare a factsheet on existing standards aimed at preventing migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and children from falling victim to gender-based violence, sexual abuse, trafficking, exploitation and negative social control	GE Unit + GEC			
Gather information and data on the situation of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls	GE Unit + GEC			
Encourage monitoring mechanisms to address the gender-specific needs of migrant, refugee and asylum-seekers, into their work, and to make recommendations in this regard.	GE Unit/Monitoring mechanisms			
Objective 6. Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures				
Organise and carry out training of Gender Equality Rapporteurs	GE Unit + GERs			October/November 2018

Activity	Responsible	2018	2019	Comment / update
Organise and carry out regular exchanges of views between Gender Equality Rapporteurs and Gender Equality Commission	GERs + GEC			
Provide advice and expertise to CM and other committees and bodies on gender mainstreaming and gender-sensitive budgeting	GE Unit + GEC			
Exchanges between GEC and other sectors of the Council of Europe carrying our work on gender mainstreaming	GE Unit + GEC			
Continue disseminating and giving visibility to gender mainstreaming activities and work through regular update on website	GE Unit			
Progress Review				
Prepare and disseminate the annual report on the implementation of the Strategy 2018-2023	GE Unit + GEC			
Compile annual document on action taken by the MS to implement the Strategy.	GE Unit + GEC			
International co-operation				
Continue engaging and co-operating with international organisations	GE Unit + GEC			
Organise events on the standards and activities in the area of gender equality during the regular annual sessions of the UN CSW	GE Unit + GEC			
Contribute to the regional review of the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.	GE Unit + GEC			
Contribute towards the implementation of the UN Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Agenda 2030	GE Unit + GEC			

Activity	Responsible	2018	2019	Comment / update
Continue engaging and co-operating with the EU, contributing to the work of the EC AC on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men. Continue co-operation with the Equinet	GE Unit + GEC			
Continue engaging and co-operating with the OAS, OSCE and OECD	GE Unit + GEC			
Continue engaging with relevant international and regional NGOs in the field of gender equality and women's rights.	GE Unit + GEC			
Communication				
Continue issuing a quarterly on-line newsletter on gender equality	GE Unit			
Factsheet on the Council of Europe's contribution to the UN 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals	GE Unit			