

Strasbourg, 15 November 2019

GEC (2019) Abridged Report November

**GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION  
(GEC)**

*16th meeting*

*13-14 November 2019, 9:30 am – 5:30 pm*

*15 November 2019, 9:30 am – 1:00 pm*

*List of items discussed and decisions taken*

*Abridged Report*

The Gender Equality Commission (GEC), chaired by Charles Ramsden (United Kingdom):

1. adopted its agenda as set out in Appendix I to the present abridged report.
2. took note of the revised draft terms of reference for 2020-2021 of the GEC and appointed a rapporteur for persons with disabilities (Andreia Lourenço Marques, Portugal).
3. elected unanimously Charles Ramsden (United Kingdom) as Chair of the GEC, and Andreia Lourenço Marques (Portugal) and Ljiljana Loncar (Serbia), as Vice-Chairs for one year as from 1 January 2020.
4. held an exchange of views with Brigitte Grésy, the newly-appointed President of the High Council of Equality (HCE) of France and discussed areas of common interest, including the proposal for a GEC representative to present the Recommendation on preventing and combating sexism to the members of the HCE.
5. took note of the final report of the conference “Tackling Gender Stereotypes and Sexism” which was revised following the last meeting, taking comments and feedback into consideration.
6. reviewed the draft 2019 annual report on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy, and particularly its new thematic section on online gender-based violence. Members were invited to send any additional contributions and drafting proposals to the Secretariat by 15 December 2019.
7. shared information about the activities being undertaken in member states with a view to promoting the Recommendation on preventing and combating sexism.
8. took note of and welcomed the various visibility tools which have been prepared to promote the CM Recommendation on preventing and combating sexism. The tools include an action webpage and a video which has been dubbed/translated into several languages.
9. took note of the deadline for the call for proposals for the NGO grant to promote the Recommendation and campaign against sexism (18 November 2019).
10. took note of work under way to prepare a report on follow-up to CM/Rec(2013)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on gender equality and the media. The members were invited to send their input and feedback on the draft to the GEC secretariat by 15 December 2019.

11. held an exchange of views with Liri Kopaçi-Di Michele, Head of the Secretariat to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination of the Parliamentary Assembly.
12. held an exchange of views with Marceline Naudi, President of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO).
13. held an exchange of views with Elisabeth Walaas, President of the Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention).
14. held a “tour de table” about recent experiences of states parties on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention and about other States’ preparations for ratification.
15. held an exchange of views with Martin Kuijer, substitute member of the Venice Commission (the Netherlands), Co-rapporteur of the opinion on the Constitutional implications of the ratification of the Istanbul Convention.
16. discussed the concept for a study about good practices on promoting gender sensitive approaches to access to justice. GEC members interested in taking part in the study were invited to inform the Secretariat.
17. took note of the draft terms of reference for the GEC-MIG Drafting Committee. The GEC also selected the eight member State representatives whose participation costs will be borne by the Council of Europe (Austria, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Serbia, Slovak Republic).
18. took note of the printed version of the factsheet on the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women, as well as the shorter “Key Recommendations” version requested by members at the last GEC meeting.
19. heard an overview and update about gender mainstreaming in Council of Europe activities.
20. took note of the presentation by Carlien Scheele reflecting on the positive role of the Senior Gender Equality Adviser and Senior Human Resources Adviser at the Council of Europe. Since her secondment would soon be ending (and she would be taking up her new post as director of EIGE on 1 February 2020), she encouraged member States to consider seconding an adviser to the Council of Europe.
21. held an exchange of views with Philippe Wéry, Gender Equality Rapporteur of the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH), about the Roadmap on Mainstreaming Gender and Human Rights. GEC members were invited to send their comments on the Roadmap in writing to the Secretariat by 22 November 2019.

22. adopted the elements for a reply of the Committee of Ministers to PACE Recommendation 2157 (2019) "Towards an ambitious Council of Europe agenda for gender equality" and instructed the Secretariat to transmit them to the Committee of Ministers.
23. took note of the presentation on current and planned co-operation projects managed by the Gender Equality Division.
24. took note of the information provided by Georgia concerning a high-level international conference on "Women's Access to Justice - Moving closer to full ratification and implementation of the Istanbul Convention", which will take place on 7-8 April 2020 in Tbilisi, Georgia, in the framework of the PGG II programme.
25. took note of the presentation by the representative of Denmark about a project, foreseen under the 2020 Danish Presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers, to research the emergence of extremist online communities opposed to gender equality.
26. endorsed the appointment of Käthlin Sander (Estonia) as GEC representative on the Ad Hoc Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAHAI).
27. heard a presentation by Nina Lichtner, Secretariat of the Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY), on a new webpage compiling online resources on combating online violence against women and children.
28. took note of the presentation by Stan Frossard, Secretariat of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS), of the results of the Council of Europe/European Union joint project "ALL IN: Towards gender balance in sport" on policies and programmes addressing gender inequalities in sport.
29. heard a presentation about the Council of Europe contribution to the Beijing+25 review process, including participation in plenary sessions and co-organisation of side events at the UNECE regional review meeting in Geneva on 29-30 October 2019. Members also discussed the Council of Europe and member states' contributions to the global review process in 2020, including at CSW 64 (New York, in March), the Generation Equality Forum (Paris in July) and the UNGA (New York in September). The GEC welcomed opportunities for a higher profile in international fora for the Council of Europe's contribution to furthering the global goals on gender equality, in particular given such innovations as the Recommendation on sexism and the potential universal reach of the Istanbul Convention.

30. took note of the presentation by the representative of France concerning the Generation Equality Forum (Paris, July 2020).
31. held an exchange of views with Valentina Beghini, Senior Technical Officer, Gender Equality and Diversity & ILOAIDS Branch, International Labour Organization about its Convention concerning the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work.
32. took note of the gender equality agenda of Croatia during the forthcoming Presidency of the Council of the European Union (January-June 2020), including a meeting of the High Level Group on gender mainstreaming (Zagreb, 28-29 January 2020), to be immediately followed by a high-level conference on participation of women in the labour market (Zagreb, 30-31 January 2020).
33. took note of the information in the summary document of events participated in by GEC members and Secretariat since the last meeting.
34. took note of the gender equality agenda during the French (May-November 2019), Georgian (November 2019-May 2020) and Greek (May-November 2020) Presidencies of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.
35. took note of proposals to hold thematic debates on: the approach towards prostitution: does neutrality encourage the backlash, and is it in line with the Istanbul Convention and the Beijing Platform for Action? (Iceland); climate change (Spain); national/institutional mechanisms on gender equality (Ukraine, France); 30th anniversary of non-violent Velvet Revolution (Slovak Republic); review of Beijing Platform (France, Iceland); sexual and reproductive health and rights (Serbia) and to consider how and whom to inform of the results of the debates.
36. took note of the international conference being hosted by Estonia on men and equal opportunities in 2020.
37. took note of the dates of the next meeting: 17th GEC meeting, Strasbourg, 27-28-29 May 2020 Pending discussions with the Greek Presidency, venue and dates for the 18th GEC meeting will be confirmed early in 2020.
38. adopted the abridged report of the 16th GEC meeting (13-14-15 November 2019) and agreed to its transmission to the Committee of Ministers.

## APPENDIX I

### Agenda

- I. **Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda**
- II. **Draft 2020-2021 terms of reference of the Gender Equality Commission**
  - Appointment of a Rapporteur for persons with disabilities
- III. **Election of the Chair and two Vice-Chairs (January to December 2020)**
- IV. **Exchange of views with Brigitte Grésy, President of the High Council of Equality, France**
- V. **Council of Europe Transversal Programme on Gender Equality**
  1. **Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023**
    - a. **Report of the conference “Tackling Gender Stereotypes and Sexism”**  
(Helsinki, 28-29 March 2019)
    - b. **Draft 2019 annual report on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy**
    - c. **Objective 1 – Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism**
      - Committee of Ministers Recommendation on preventing and combating sexism (CM/Rec(2019)1) – follow up
      - Visibility tools about the sexism recommendation
      - Call for proposals – NGO grant to promote the fight against sexism
      - Draft analytical report on the follow-up to the implementation of CM/Rec(2013)1 on gender equality and the media
      - Presentation by Liri Kopaçi-Di Michele, Head of the Secretariat to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination of the Parliamentary Assembly

**d. Objective 2 - Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence**

- Exchange of views with Marceline Naudi, President of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO)
- Exchange of views with Elisabeth Walaas, President of the Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention)
- Sharing experiences by states parties on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention
- Exchange of views with Martin Kuijter, substitute member of the Venice Commission (the Netherlands), Rapporteurs of the opinion of the Venice Commission on the Constitutional implications of the ratification of the Istanbul Convention

**e. Objective 3 - Ensure the equal access of women to justice**

- Study on good practices on promoting gender sensitive approaches to access to justice

**f. Objective 4 - Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making**

- Experience of co-operation activities

**g. Objective 5 - Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls**

- Drafting Committee on migrant women (GEC-MIG)
- Factsheets on the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

#### **h. Objective 6 - Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures**

- Presentation of gender mainstreaming in Council of Europe activities
- Reflection on the role of Senior Gender Equality Adviser at the Council of Europe
- Presentation by Philippe Wéry, Gender Equality Rapporteur of the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) of the CDDH Roadmap on Mainstreaming Gender and Human Rights

#### **i. Committee of Ministers request for information and comments on a Recommendation by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe**

*- Elements of a reply to the CM on PACE Recommendation 2157 (2019) "Towards an ambitious Council of Europe agenda for gender equality"*

#### **VI. Co-operation projects/programmes**

- General overview of co-operation projects undertaken by the Gender Equality Division
- Partnership for Good Governance II - Women's Access to Justice project: Regional Conference on "Moving closer to full ratification and implementation of the Istanbul Convention" (7 - 8 April 2020, Tbilisi, Georgia)

#### **VII. Thematic discussion**

New tendencies and counter-reactions to gender equality - Denmark

#### **VIII. Co-operation with other Council of Europe sectors**

- Appointment of Käthlin Sander (Estonia) as GEC representative on the Ad Hoc Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAHAI)
- Presentation by Stan Frossard, Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) of the Council of Europe/European Union joint project "ALL IN: Towards gender balance in sport" on policies and programmes addressing gender inequalities in sport
- Presentation by Nina Lichtner, Secretariat of the Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY), of the compilation of online resources on combating online violence against women and children



## **IX. Co-operation with international/regional organisations**

- Council of Europe's contribution to the Beijing+25 review process following UNECE meeting
- Exchange of views with Valentina Beghini, Senior Technical Officer, Gender Equality and Diversity & ILOAIDS Branch, International Labour Organization about its Convention concerning the elimination of violence and harassment in the world of work
- Council of the European Union - gender equality agenda:
  - o Croatian Presidency (January-June 2020)

## **X. Events attended by GEC members, experts and the Secretariat**

## **XI. Current and future activities at national and international level**

- Council of Europe gender equality agenda:
  - o French Presidency (May-November 2019)
  - o Georgian Presidency (November 2019-May 2020)
  - o Greek Presidency (May-November 2020)

## **XII. Other business**

## **XIII. Proposals for the agenda of the next meeting, including thematic discussions**

## **XIV. Dates of forthcoming meetings**

- *17th GEC meeting, Strasbourg, 27-28-29 May 2020 (Room 7 – main building)*
- *18th GEC meeting, Strasbourg, 2-3-4 December 2020 (Room 7 – main building)*

## **XV. Adoption of the abridged report of the 16th GEC meeting (13-14-15 November 2019)**