

Strasbourg, 1 August 2023

GEC (2023) Bureau report 4

**GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION
20th Bureau meeting (online)**

Wednesday, 26 July 2023

REPORT

The Secretariat (Caterina Bolognese) informed the GEC Bureau of the arrival of new colleagues who will be in charge of the GEC Secretariat: Camille Gangloff and Valerie Poppe.

Bureau member Andri Savva informed the GEC Bureau that she is leaving her Ministry for another function and, in that regard, she will no longer be a member of the GEC as of September 2023. Her replacement in respect of Cyprus will start at that time. The Chair thanked Andri Savva for her dedication to the work of the GEC over the years. The Secretariat indicated that, as a result, the position as Bureau member will remain vacant until the end of the year. Elections will be held during the 24th GEC meeting (14-16 November) for 2024-2025.

1. Appointment of a GEC representative in the Committee of Experts on the Prevention of Violence, (ENF-VAE), subordinate committee to the Steering Committee on Children (CDENF)

Sara Slana, GEC member for Slovenia, has expressed interest to follow the work on comprehensive sexuality education of the Committee of Experts on the Prevention of Violence (ENF-VAE). The GEC Bureau approved her appointment and asked the Secretariat to inform Sara Slana about its decision and of the date and place of the next ENF-VAE meeting (11-12 October 2023, Strasbourg).

2. Draft Terms of Reference of the Gender Equality Commission (2024-2027) and its subordinate bodies, the Committee of Experts on Artificial Intelligence, Equality and Discrimination (GEC/ADI-AI) and the Committee of Experts on combating technology- facilitated violence against women and girls (GEC/PC-eVIO) (2024-2025)

The Secretariat provided updated information about the draft terms of reference that will be presented by the Secretary General in August for discussion and adoption by the Committee of Ministers in the autumn, together with the Programme and Budget 2024-2027.

The main changes compared to the document discussed during the 23rd GEC meeting in May relate to the deadline of the work on combating technology-facilitated violence against women and girls to be done jointly with the CDPC (31/12/2025 instead of 31/12/2027 to ensure a

timely follow-up to the Reykjavik Declaration) and the frequency of the new Gender Equality Strategy implementation reports (once every two years instead of every year).

The Bureau was informed that the GEC will be asked to appoint four GEC members or co-opted representatives (member States representatives with the required expertise) to the GEC/ADI-AI and 4 others to the GEC/PC-eVIO at its 24th meeting.

The Bureau took note of the information provided by the Secretariat on the draft Terms of Reference.

The Chair expressed concerns about the capacity to identify four GEC members or co-opted representatives for both the GEC/ADI-AI and the GEC/PC-eVIO at the next meeting and asked the Secretariat to inform the GEC members about this point prior to the meeting so that they have time to consider it. The Chair also asked the Secretariat to provide to GEC members a concise and clear explanation of the role of the members to be appointed to the two subordinate bodies mentioned above, and the work expected of them. It would also be useful for members to be reminded of the role of members appointed to represent the GEC in other committees.

The Secretariat recalled that the work of both subordinate bodies will require close co-ordination with other steering committees (respectively the CDADI and the CDPC) and that the Chair of the subordinate bodies would not necessarily have to be a GEC (or partner committee) member, but could also be a co-opted member, eg as was the case for the GEC-MIG.

3. Appointment of Rapporteurs on mainstreamed perspectives

The Bureau took note that the GEC will be invited at its 24th meeting, on 14-16 November 2023, to appoint up to four Rapporteurs on mainstreamed perspectives¹. In addition, the Bureau agreed that a focal point on sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) issues should be appointed within the GEC. Such a role would emphasise the GEC's intersectional approach, while indicating that SOGI issues are not the primary focus of its mandate and work.

The Bureau agreed to propose to the GEC to confirm Andreia Lourenço Marques, GEC member for Portugal as *Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities*.

The Bureau agreed to ask Elena Grozdanova, the GEC member for North Macedonia if she would like to remain *Rapporteur on Roma and Traveller issues*, given that she represents the GEC in the ADI-ROM Committee currently preparing a draft Recommendation on Equality for Roma and Traveller Women and Girls.

¹ Mainstreamed perspectives at the Council of Europe concern certain human rights issues that are of particular importance for the fulfillment of its mission and covered by sectoral strategies, such as the Gender Equality Strategy. The GEC is in particular asked in its terms of reference to take into account the following perspectives: youth, children's rights, rights of persons with disabilities and Roma and Traveller issues.

The Bureau agreed to ask Sara Slana, GEC member from Slovenia and GEC representative in the ENF-VAE (cf. point 1 above) if she would be available to be *Rapporteur on Children's rights*.

The Bureau confirmed the importance of integrating a youth perspective in the work of the GEC and agreed to invite a representative of the Council of Europe Youth Committees for an exchange with the GEC at a future plenary meeting. A call for expression of interest to become Rapporteur on Youth should be launched among GEC members.

4. Update on the preparation of the 2023 Annual Report on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023

The Secretariat informed the Bureau of new modalities to facilitate data collection for the last report of the current Strategy. The Bureau members took note of the presentation of the Survey Monkey Global questionnaire and six GES priority-specific questionnaires. They also noted that the links to each questionnaire are individual, and may be used only by the addressee. To facilitate reporting on the Strategy by member States, the Bureau members instructed the Secretariat to ensure that the GEC member alone has access to the Survey platform and can coordinate his/her country's responses. This year's questionnaires will be sent to GEC members at the beginning of September with a deadline mid-January 2024.

5. Draft agenda for the November plenary meeting

The Bureau took note of the proposed draft agenda for the November plenary meeting. The Bureau asked for two days to be foreseen to continue and complete the discussion on the draft Gender Equality Strategy (GES) 2024-2029. As was decided at the 23rd GEC meeting in May 2023, the consolidated draft GES, including the amendments discussed from paragraphs 1 to 58 would be sent to the GEC prior to the meeting.

The Bureau proposed that, as Ms Síofra O'Leary, President of the ECtHR, may not be available on 16 November due to a possible Grand Chamber meeting, she could be invited to exchange with the GEC on 14 or 15 November. The Bureau instructed the Secretariat to contact Ms Síofra O'Leary's office about her availability on 14 or 15 November; to add to the draft programme the name of new GREVIO President; and to contact ODIHR in order to confirm their participation in an exchange of views as well as the theme of that exchange.

6. Date of the 25th GEC meeting

The Bureau took note of the tentative date of 16-18 April 2024 for the GEC's 25th plenary session

Participants:

Bureau: Ralph Kass (Chair), Maria Ellul (Vice-Chair), Andri Savva (Member)

Secretariat: Caterina Bolognese (Head of Division), Camille Gangloff, Cécile Gréboval, Valerie Poppe, Evrydiki Tseliou