

Strasbourg, 28 March 2023

GEC (2023) Bureau 2

**GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION
(GEC)**

**18th Bureau meeting
Tuesday, 28 March 2023**

Report

1. Follow-up to GEC22

The Secretariat updated the members about the current situation regarding the [GEC22 documents](#) which had been transmitted to the Committee of Ministers (Abridged Report, 2022 Annual Report on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2013, and the Guidelines on the place of men and boys in gender equality policies and in policies to combat violence against women). The documents are on the agenda of the next meeting of the [Rapporteur Group on Human Rights](#) (GR-H) of the [Committee of Ministers](#) (18 April 2023). Following discussion and approval by the GR-H, the documents will then be further discussed and potentially adopted by the Ministers' Deputies at one of their forthcoming meetings (19 April, 3 or 10 May).

2. Preparation of [GEC annual conference \(Strasbourg, 27-28 April 2023\)](#)

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that there were still some names to be confirmed on the programme, but that it would be finalised shortly. As the conference takes place in Strasbourg during the 2nd part-Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, parliamentarians will be encouraged to participate, should their agenda allow. Petra Stienen, the Dutch Senator and member of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination of the Assembly has already confirmed her participation as a speaker in the conference and will encourage her parliamentary colleagues to attend.

The GEC Bureau reviewed the draft conference programme, including the Barbershop format of the first day, as well as the subjects and speakers of each panel discussion on the second day. The Bureau said that it was important that all member states were represented at the conference and that members should be reminded that the Council of Europe will cover the participation costs of one representative from each member state. The Chair proposed to send a message to GEC members with the preliminary draft programme encouraging participation. Given the subject matter of the conference, GEC members could also consider the possibility of sending male colleagues, where possible, should they not be able to participate themselves.

3. GEC23 (Strasbourg, 24-26 May 2023)

The Bureau reviewed the preliminary draft agenda of the next GEC meeting (24-26 May 2023). The Secretariat informed the Bureau that one full day (Thursday, 25 May) would be dedicated to the discussion of the draft Strategy on Gender Equality 2024-2029, given the importance of the topic. The draft of the strategy will be sent to GEC members shortly.

The Secretariat also informed the Bureau about discussions regarding the 4th Council of Europe Summit (15-16 May 2023, Reykjavik, Iceland) and said that the results would be reported to the GEC, including any possible follow-up actions expected from the GEC.

The GEC chair informed the Bureau about the programme of the Luxembourg Minister of Equality between Women and Men while she is in Strasbourg on 24 May.

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that all the terms of reference of Council of Europe intergovernmental committees are being revised to cover a four-year period (2024-2027). The GEC will have an opportunity to review the GEC terms of reference at the next meeting which will include the deliverables expected during this period.

The Chair said that with the continuous turnover of GEC members, it was important that for each topic discussed during the meeting, the Chair gives explanations about the invited guests and experts, the body they represent and explains the link with the work of the GEC. Not every member is entirely briefed before a meeting as they do not always have the possibility to check all the documents before the meeting or get familiarised with the organisations and bodies invited. It is essential that all GEC members feel included in the discussions during GEC meetings, and that everyone understands the functioning of the GEC, the Council of Europe and its bodies.

4. GEC/Secretariat participation in activities

- **Participation in events since previous Bureau meeting**

- *European Law Institute High Level Expert Group (Online, 17 February 2023)*

The Chair said that he did not endorse any future co-operation with the European Law Institute Expert Group and nor were any resources available for any commitment to anything further.

- [Council of Europe/Iceland side-event at the Commission for the Status of Women \(New York, 7 March 2023\)](#)

The Secretariat informed the Bureau about the Council of Europe/Iceland side-event which took place during the recent CSW in New York. More information would be given during the GEC meeting. It was important that the member states are also given an opportunity to report back about their side-events to the GEC, and to comment on the CSW agreed conclusions and any follow-up that may be required.

- *International Women's Day (8 March 2023)*

The Secretariat informed the Bureau about the Council of Europe [Joint Statement](#) issued by Icelandic Minister for Foreign Affairs and President of the Committee of Ministers Thórdís Kolbrún Reykfjörð Gylfadóttir, President of the Parliamentary Assembly Tiny Kox, and Secretary General Marija Pejčinović Burić on the occasion of International Women's Day on 8 March 2023. The [Gender Equality calendar](#) was also launched on 8 March and there was increased social media activity to promote the work of the Gender Equality Commission and the Council of Europe.

- **Forthcoming events**

- *Exchange of views between the GEC Chair and European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) (Strasbourg, 28 March 2023)*

The Chair was in Strasbourg to have an exchange of views with the members of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), where he will speak about the topic of intersectionality, as well as the study on artificial intelligence, currently being prepared jointly by the GEC and the Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion.

- *Gender mainstreaming workshop Student Affairs & Professional Development Office (Warsaw 29 March 2023)*

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that two Secretariat colleagues had been invited to carry out a workshop on gender mainstreaming in Warsaw. They had prepared a specific workshop for the students and would use it as a test case that could be adapted and used for other fora.

- *GEC annual conference (Strasbourg, 27-28 April 2023)*

See item above.

- Exchange with the Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI) and side-event (Strasbourg, 19 April 2023)

The Chair will have an exchange of views with the members of the Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI) and participate in a side-event which is being organised during the meeting. The CAI Chair will speak at the next GEC meeting, in the spirit of reciprocity, about the gender perspective in CAI's work.

5. Date of next Bureau meeting

The Chair proposed holding the next Bureau meeting on 19 April, while he was in Strasbourg for the CAI exchange of views.

Participants:

Bureau: Ralph Kass (Chair), Andri Savva (Member)

Secretariat: Caterina Bolognese, Natacha De Roeck, Tryggvi Hallgrímsson, Adrienne Looby, Evrydiki Tseliou