

Strasbourg, 9 June 2023

GEC (2023) Bureau 3

**GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION
19th Bureau meeting**

**Monday, 22 May 2023
11:00 am – 12:00 pm (Strasbourg time)
Room B5.04C**

Report

1. Draft Terms of Reference for the years 2024 to 2027, including Terms of Reference for subordinate bodies

The Secretariat explained the state of play regarding development of the Terms of Reference and their adoption by the Committee of Ministers by late 2023. Future Recommendations and the move to a less frequent reporting on implementation of the Strategy within the Terms of Reference were also discussed. The possibility to re-name the Gender Equality Commission as a “Steering Committee” was also raised, and Bureau members preferred to maintain the status quo and keep the current, established name.

2. Appointment of GEC representatives in other Council of Europe bodies to promote mainstreamed perspectives

The Secretariat presented the results of the meetings and the need to include GEC members in the Organisation’s work. The Chair expressed the need to encourage GEC members to undertake responsibilities and participate in the work of different sectors, specifically related to youth, children, disability and Roma rights. The GEC members from Portugal and North Macedonia have been following disability and Roma rights issues respectively. The Secretariat has reached out to GEC members regarding other roles. It was agreed that the issue could be brought up in the upcoming 23rd GEC Plenary for further discussion. As a priority, a representative would need to be appointed to follow the work on comprehensive sexuality education of the Committee of Experts on the Prevention of Violence (ENF-VAE).

3. Comments by GEC member on the draft Recommendation on the rights of Roma and Traveller women and girls

The member from North Macedonia has submitted notes for the upcoming meeting. Proposed comments on the draft will require the approval of the Bureau. The deadline to submit additional comments on the draft Recommendation is set for 5 June.

4. Upcoming plenary meeting (GEC23) – questions?

The Bureau discussed in particular the challenge of advancing in discussions of the draft Gender Equality Strategy so as to ensure that the GEC manages to complete work on the future Strategy by the end of its November plenary meeting. A preparatory meeting between the Secretariat and the Chair would be held ahead of the 23rd GEC plenary, on 23 May, to go over the documents, including the comments received.

5. Possible invitations to the November plenary meeting (GEC 24)

The following possible interventions were discussed:

CAI Chair

- Thomas Schneider, the Chair of the CAI, was invited to the May plenary, but was unable to attend. GEC Secretariat had enquired with the CAI Secretariat whether Mr. Schneider would be able to participate in the GEC Nov plenary, but he has other commitments during that period. The mandate of the CAI is coming to end in December 2023 but will be extended to 2024. It might be possible to invite the CAI Chair to a GEC plenary again in 2024.

○ CEDAW President

- The CEDAW President, who visited the Council of Europe during the most recent PACE session, is very interested in closer cooperation with the GEC. She suggested, for example, that the GEC/CDADI study on AI could be presented in the margins of a CEDAW meeting in 2024. The Bureau members was also in favour of the idea of extending an invitation to the CEDAW Chair to a future GEC meeting (reciprocating CEDAW's invitation to the GEC Chair in 2022).

6. Possible dates of future GEC plenary meetings

Certain members have requested to modify the usual schedule of the Gender Equality Commission's plenary meetings, in particular so that travel to and from the meetings does not encroach upon participants' weekends. The Bureau asked the Secretariat to look into the possibilities for adapting the scheduling of future plenary sessions.

Participants:

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

Secretariat: Roberto Olla (Head of Human Dignity and Gender Equality Department), Caterina Bolognese (GEC Secretary), Cécile Gréboval, Christa Jakobsson, Tryggvi Hallgrímsson, Evrydiki Tseliou