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Strasbourg, 16 October 2023

GEC (2023) Report

**GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION
(GEC)**

*23rd meeting
24-26 May 2023*

REPORT

I. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1. Ralph Kass (Luxembourg), Chair of the Gender Equality Commission (GEC), opened the meeting and welcomed the new GEC members. Presenting the agenda, he emphasised that discussions on the new Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029 would be the main agenda item of the meeting. The list of participants is attached to this report (Appendix II) as is the list of decisions (Appendix III).
2. The GEC adopted the draft agenda as it appears in Appendix I to this report.

II. Report from the GEC Chair

3. The GEC took note of the information from the Chair about his activities since taking up his mandate. At the round table organised by the Council of Europe and the UNHCR in the Czech Republic (26 January 2023), he presented Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)27 on protecting the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls. He participated in two online meetings of the European Law Institute high-level expert group to discuss potential topics for projects on gender equality, such as data collection on violence against women and girls or on consent. During the European Commission against Racism (ECRI) 88th plenary meeting (29 March – 1 April 2023), the wish to reinforce the alliance between GEC and ECRI was expressed. At the plenary meeting of the Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI) (1-3 February 2023) he provided an update on the GEC/CDADI study on artificial intelligence systems, equality including gender equality and discrimination.
4. Marja Ruotanen, Director-General of Democracy and Human Dignity, congratulated the Chair for his active work since his election and recalled the importance of exchanging with the Council of Europe intergovernmental and monitoring bodies in order to promote gender equality and ensure gender mainstreaming in their work. She informed the GEC that a meeting of the Chairs of intergovernmental committees would take place early 2024.
5. Following from the Chair's exchange with ECRI, Caterina Bolognese (Secretary to the GEC and Head of the Gender Equality Division) proposed an alternating participation of the ECRI and GEC Chairs in each other's committees and that the GEC invite the ECRI Chair to a GEC plenary meeting in 2024. The proposal was approved.

III. Follow-up to the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (Reykjavik, Iceland, 16-17 May 2023)

6. Director-General Marja Ruotanen stressed the importance of the 4th Summit in the 75 years of the Organisation's life. She explained that the Reykjavik Declaration underlined that "gender equality and the full, equal and effective participation of women in public and private decision-making processes are essential to the rule of law, democracy and sustainable development [and] the pioneering role of the Council of Europe, including through the Istanbul Convention, in the fight against violence against women and domestic violence." The future challenges of digital technology were also highlighted and she expressed her hope that a framework convention on artificial intelligence will be adopted in early 2024.
7. The Director-General informed the GEC members that particular attention was placed on ensuring comprehensive accountability in the context of the Russian Federation's

aggression against Ukraine, with the creation a Register of Damage as a first step towards an international compensation mechanism. She explained that conflict-related sexual violence would be covered in this framework. She also highlighted the Declaration on the situation of children of Ukraine, focusing on the protection of Ukrainian children against trafficking, violence and ill-treatment.

8. The GEC took note of the information about the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government.

IV. Exchange of views with Taina Bofferding, Minister of Equality between Women and Men, Luxembourg

9. The GEC held an exchange of views with Taina Bofferding, Luxembourg Minister of Equality between Women and Men, noting with interest Luxembourg's experience running a national anti-sexism campaign based on the Council of Europe "See it, Name it, Stop it" campaign and the resulting package of communication tools available to member States interested in running such national campaigns.
10. In her presentation, the Minister stressed that combatting gender stereotypes and sexism was one of the seven key priorities of the National Action Plan adopted in Luxembourg in 2020. She acknowledged the relevance and importance of the Committee of Ministers' Recommendation on preventing and combating sexism, the first instrument with a clear definition of sexism, identifying all areas of life where sexism takes place and inviting member states to launch awareness-raising campaigns. She presented the tools developed for their national campaign inspired by the communication tools of the Council of Europe's sexism campaign: the seven short thematic clips, the action page and the brochure. The seven clips were widely broadcasted on the television, the radio as well as in cinemas and on social media. The national campaign was officially launched on 23 November 2022, with a press conference in which the Council of Europe took part.
11. The Minister underlined that the social media campaign had attracted more interest from women and girls than from men and boys. The campaign also triggered some negative feedback from populist movements and a certain level of interest in parliamentary questions about sexism. The media and social media campaign ended on 31 January 2023, but the dissemination of its objectives would continue via the action page, the brochure and the organisation of relevant events such as the "Theater of prevention" on the issue of sexism.
12. In her concluding remarks, the Minister recognised that sexism remains a controversial issue. She encouraged the GEC members to follow Luxembourg's example and to cooperate with the Council of Europe for the development of similar campaigns, since the Council of Europe's tools can be perfectly adapted to a national context.

V. Election of Vice-Chair of the Gender Equality Commission

13. The GEC members elected Maria Ellul (Malta) as its Vice-Chair until 31 December 2023.

VI. Terms of reference of the Gender Equality Commission 2024-2027

14. The GEC discussed the possible main deliverables for 2024-2027, including the proposal to draft two new recommendations on the subjects of artificial intelligence (together with CDADI) and technology-facilitated violence against women (together with CDPC). It took note of the draft Terms of Reference of the GEC for 2024 to 2027.

VII. Council of Europe Transversal Programme on Gender Equality

1. Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023

a. Objective 1 – Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

- Guidelines on the place of men and boys in gender equality policies and in policies to combat violence against women – update

15. The GEC took note of the information provided by the Secretariat regarding the advanced state of play as regards the adoption by the Committee of Ministers of the draft guidelines on the role of men and boys in gender equality policies and in policies to combat violence against women and girls.

b. Objective 2 – Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

- Exchange of views with Iris Luarasi, President of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO)

16. The GEC held an exchange of views with Iris Luarasi, the President of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO).

17. The President of GREVIO expressed her appreciation of the good co-operation between the GEC and GREVIO. She informed the GEC that in addition to the 29 country baseline evaluation reports adopted and published so far, seven additional reports would be published in 2023. GREVIO planned to adopt final reports on Croatia, Luxembourg and North Macedonia, to be published in the coming months. Preliminary draft reports assessing the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Greece, Ireland, Liechtenstein and the Republic of Moldova were also on the agenda. The President explained that GREVIO's baseline evaluation procedure was coming to an end in 2024, with evaluation visits and draft reports foreseen on the United Kingdom and Ukraine. In parallel, the thematic evaluation round has been launched, and the first four parties have received the new questionnaire ("Building trust by delivering support, protection and justice"). Evaluation visits under the new thematic monitoring round would take place in the autumn in Albania, Austria, Denmark and Monaco.

18. The President of GREVIO also touched on the situation of women fleeing Ukraine as a result of Russia's aggression. GREVIO has started looking into this in its evaluation procedures, as many of the Convention's provisions are relevant to Ukrainian women having moved to other European countries, such as service provision for victims of sexual and gender-based violence in need of psychosocial counselling and support, and provisions on asylum and migration as regards access to accommodation and health care, and in relation to vulnerability screening for victims of gender-based violence. The forthcoming evaluation reports would include these elements.

19. The President of GREVIO mentioned activities regarding the digital dimension of violence against women, including within the Platform of Independent Expert Mechanisms on Discrimination and Violence against Women. She highlighted many possibilities for the cross-fertilisation of knowledge and experiences between the Istanbul Convention and the Budapest Convention on cybercrime in this particular context. She encouraged the GEC to associate the GREVIO in the discussions on the future work with the European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC) to prepare a draft Recommendation on technology-facilitated violence against women and girls.
20. She also stressed GREVIO's interest in the next Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029 and in the draft recommendation on the impact of artificial intelligence systems, the discriminatory risks they cause, and their potential for promoting gender equality.
21. An exchange followed with GEC members. Asked about how GREVIO would conduct the baseline evaluation of Ukraine in the difficult circumstances of war, the President of GREVIO explained the need to adjust to the current conditions and to look also at the situation of Ukrainian women who have fled to neighbouring countries.
22. The President of GREVIO indicated that the mandate of 10 GREVIO members, including hers, would expire on 31 May. She thanked the GEC and expressed her hope that this good co-operation with GREVIO would continue. The Chair thanked the GREVIO President for her commitment and fruitful co-operation during her mandate and confirmed the importance of continuing this close dialogue.
 - Sharing experiences by States Parties on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention and information on further ratifications
23. The GEC took note of the information provided by Greece on the review of their national legislation on domestic violence to modernise the provisions and on the amendments to the criminal code and code of criminal procedure concerning femicide (although the term is not recognised *per se* and falls under murder with intent). Greece has also put in place stricter penalties for crimes against sexual dignity, qualified revenge pornography as a criminal offence and has launched a new digital panic button application. The Republic of Moldova has prepared a draft law based on GREVIO's recommendations and will increase capacity to analyse cases of femicide through training. New legislation on sexual violence was also adopted. Cyprus has set up a national coordinating body on violence against women and developed a strategy and action plan. The law now establishes femicide as a separate, specific offence. It has also withdrawn reservations to Articles 44 and 59 of the Istanbul Convention. In Latvia discussions on ratification of the Istanbul Convention have resumed following the much-publicised case of the murder of a woman by her ex-partner. Luxembourg will present GREVIO's recommendations to the national government following reception of the report. Ukraine has prepared a draft law aiming at closing certain gaps in the existing law on preventing and combating domestic violence. The draft includes a list of organisations providing support to victims of gender-based violence and domestic violence as well as Ukrainian consulates and embassies abroad. Capacity building will be provided to law enforcement officials and social services on conflict-related sexual violence. Actions are being taken to strengthen the capacity of services providing assistance to victims of gender-based violence. Importantly, rehabilitation programmes for Ukrainian military personnel suffering from psychological trauma have been developed, as there is a clear correlation with increased domestic violence. The Czech Ministry of Justice has recently submitted to its government a proposal for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention.

- Update by the Secretariat of co-operation projects undertaken by the Gender Equality Division concerning violence against women and domestic violence
24. The Secretariat presented an overview of the ongoing co-operation activities being carried out in certain European Union countries (Bulgaria, Lithuania, Romania, and Slovakia) through the Norway Grants financing mechanism; in Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine) through bilateral projects as well as a regional project promoting women's access to justice; in the Western Balkans (Kosovo*, Türkiye) and through targeted support. Two key legislation-related outputs in 2022 were the "Gap analysis of the legislative and policy framework in the field of violence against women and domestic violence in Azerbaijan in line with Council of Europe and other international standards" and the "Assessment of the alignment of Kosovo*'s laws, policies and other measures with the standards of the Istanbul Convention".
 25. The Secretariat explained that the project in Ukraine had been adapted because of the war, allowing for emergency professionals to be trained regarding sexual violence in times of conflict in order to be responsive to concrete needs. The project in the Republic of Moldova had also been adapted along similar lines.
 26. The Secretariat informed the GEC that the Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) course on violence against women was available in 25 languages, and the HELP course on women's access to justice in 11 languages. A new specific HELP module on violence against women for law enforcement personnel has proven to be very successful (e.g. in Republic of Moldova and Ukraine).
 27. The Secretariat further informed the GEC that in the future, pending the availability of funding, a greater focus would be put on addressing gender stereotypes and promoting the tools recently developed by the GEC and adopted by the Committee of Ministers.
 - Presentation of the multi-country programme "Ending violence against women: multi-country programme"
 28. The Secretariat presented the multi-country programme "Ending violence against women". A methodology was developed for civil society organisations to promote the Istanbul Convention, together with the Women Against Violence Europe (WAVE) network and UN Women. To date, NGOs have been supported in the Czech Republic, Latvia and Poland, with activities under way in Bulgaria, Hungary and Lithuania. The toolkit and methodology are available on the programme's dedicated website. Members were invited to contact the Secretariat should they have any specific requests on these tools.
 29. The GEC took note of the information provided by the Secretariat concerning the co-operation activities on combating and preventing violence against women and domestic violence.

*All references to Kosovo, whether the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations' Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

c. Objective 3 – Ensure the equal access of women to justice

- State of play including follow-up to the Study on the Impact of Covid-19 on women's access to justice
30. The Secretariat presented an update of the ongoing co-operation activities being carried out in the area of equal access to justice for women, focusing on the legal or institutional barriers which women in particular face. This includes the gaps in the implementation of existing legislation, as well as the socio-economic and cultural barriers which may exist in the justice system, such as gender stereotypes and gender bias in the judiciary. The need to address and actively tackle these barriers has been reinforced by the findings of the 2022 research "Impact of Covid-19 on Women's Access to Justice", to which the GEC contributed.
 31. The GEC was informed that a new regional project on Women's Access to Justice in the Western Balkans started in 2023, expanding the geographical area in which work on access to justice is carried out and bringing the total number of beneficiaries to 12 (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo*, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Ukraine and Türkiye). This work aims to strengthen competences through capacity building of legal professionals and to improve women's empowerment through raising awareness about their legal rights, particularly among women victims of violence. It also contributes towards ratification and full implementation of the Istanbul Convention as it relates to women's access to justice.
 32. The GEC took note of the information from the Secretariat about the different activities being undertaken in the field of women's access to justice.
 - Exchange of views with Christel Schurrer, Deputy Secretary to the Commission for the efficiency of justice (CEPEJ) and Secretary to the Working Group on the evaluation of judicial systems (CEPEJ-GT-EVAL)
 33. The GEC held an exchange of views with Christel Schurrer, Deputy Secretary to the European Commission for the efficiency of justice (CEPEJ) and Secretary to the CEPEJ-GT-EVAL.
 34. Christel Shurrer presented the work of the CEPEJ and the updates in relation to the CEPEJ Evaluation questionnaire to include more questions related to gender, targeting not only the quantitative aspects of measuring efficiency of justice systems, but also the pertinent qualitative aspects.
 35. The GEC took note of the information from the CEPEJ Secretariat about the CEPEJ's activities and the gender dimension is integrated in them.

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

- Exchange of views with Penelope Denu, Head of the Secretariat to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), on Resolution 2394 on Gender Representation in the Parliamentary Assembly
36. The GEC held an exchange of views with Penelope Denu, Head of the Secretariat to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination of the PACE.
 37. Penelope Denu presented Resolution 2394 (2021) on Gender Representation in the Parliamentary Assembly. Whereas figures in the PACE show a very gradual trend towards greater gender balance (around 40% representation of women, above the 30% average women representation in national parliaments of Council of Europe member States), more women are substitute members, fewer women are rapporteurs, chairs or vice-chairs of committees or vice-presidents of the Assembly. The aim of Resolution 2394 was to remedy this by introducing measures designed to increase the participation of women in positions of responsibility in the Assembly: delegations are now only authorised to propose vice-presidents of the Assembly who are men if the delegation is composed of at least 40% women; rapporteurs in committees and ad hoc committees must now comprise at least one-third of women; and political groups are invited to follow the same principle, in particular when appointing committee bureau members, members of ad hoc committees, spokespersons, group leaders and members of ad hoc election observation committees.
 38. Penelope Denu explained that national delegations appointed since January 2023 must reflect a “one in three” principle for gender balance. The text of the Resolution also included a formal undertaking by the Assembly to require a minimum of 40% of women in all delegations as from the opening of the 2026 session. To make the Resolution acceptable to all members of the Assembly, the notion of non-permanence of the new rules was introduced. Proposals by the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination to use inclusive language enabling the Resolution to consider non-binary representation were rejected. Implementation has thus far been surprisingly smooth and all delegations have respected the new rules in January 2023, the limit being the impossibility of obliging political groups to follow.
 39. Penelope Denu concluded by highlighting that, despite the encouraging results, a 50/50 representation was still far from reach. Other means could also be used, such as increasing women’s participation in public decision-making, the implementation of feminist foreign policies or encouraging the participation of under-represented groups.
 40. The GEC took note of the information from the PACE Secretariat about the Resolution on gender representation and its implementation since January 2023.

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

- Committee of Ministers Recommendation on protecting the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls – update on translations, dissemination and promotion
41. GEC members were informed that the Recommendation on protecting the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls had been translated into Croatian.
 - Exchange of views with Leyla Kayacik, Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) of the Council of Europe on Migration and Refugees
 42. The GEC held an exchange of views with Leyla Kayacik, the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) on Migration and Refugees. The Chair thanked the SRSG for the excellent cooperation and stressed the importance of taking into account the needs and situations of women and girls in the area of migration, as provided by the 2022 Recommendation.
 43. The SRSG indicated that the Recommendation was promoted in her different country visits and fact-finding missions. These visits were followed by reports submitted to the Committee of Ministers, including recommendations about how the Council of Europe could help member States in overcoming challenges. In 2022, the SRSG focused on people fleeing Ukraine and how existing Council of Europe tools could be used to protect the human rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls.
 44. The SRSG stressed that the findings of visits included notably challenges related to gender-based violence and protection of victims, and access to health care including sexual and reproductive health care and mental health care. At the beginning of the war in Ukraine, cases of sexual violence were not visible, but meetings with NGOs highlighted the extent of the problem. This requires action aiming at early identification of victims and specialised targeted training of staff, especially frontline workers on these issues. Some information was provided to refugees, but linguistic barriers and insufficient assistance to victims, including psychological support for women victims were problematic. Examples of activities of the Office of the SRSG were mentioned, such as training workshops in Moldova on the above-mentioned issues and a future workshop in Poland on children and trauma.
 45. The SRSG mentioned her coordination role as regards the action of the different Council of Europe sectors on migration, in the framework of the Action Plan on Protecting Vulnerable Persons in the Context of Migration and Asylum in Europe (2021-2025). She also indicated her readiness to organise events together with member States, notably to raise awareness and disseminate information about the Recommendation on migrant women.
 46. The GEC took note of the information provided, in particular as regards possible closer synergies to promote implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)17 on protecting the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls.

Objective 6 - Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

- Gender mainstreaming in Council of Europe activities
47. The Secretariat informed the GEC about the ongoing gender mainstreaming activities within the different sectors of the Council of Europe. Some individual GEC members, supported by the Secretariat, participate as GEC representatives in the work of certain steering committees, such as the Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI), the Committee of Experts on Hate Crime (PC/ADI-CH) and the Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues (ADI-ROM). The Secretariat also participated in the work of the Committee on Gender equality in Anti-Doping (CAHAMA-GECA) and more recently, in the Committee on the Prevention of Violence against Children (ENF-VAE). This work ensures gender mainstreaming in intergovernmental work. The increased request for input shows that more and more sectors are working on specific standards on gender equality issues in their areas.
 48. The Secretariat stressed new developments in the sport sector with a new gender equality project entitled ALL-IN PLUS, focusing on data collection, identifying promising practices and promoting women's sport through the media. Other particular examples of gender mainstreaming work pursued include the sectors working on minority languages, on national minorities and on intercultural integration.
 49. The Secretariat informed the GEC that there are now more than 50 Gender Equality Rapporteurs (GERs) appointed by steering committees and monitoring bodies. The next GERs training session would take place at the end of September 2023. It was also explained that a Council of Europe course on gender equality and gender mainstreaming was under preparation. It should be available online on the HELP platform in the second half of 2023 and it may in time be available to GEC members and prove useful to them as well.
 50. The GEC took note of the presentation by the Secretariat about the ongoing activities related to gender mainstreaming in the work of the Council of Europe.
 - Reports from members of the GEC, experts and Secretariat who have participated in the following meetings of Council of Europe bodies:
 - Committee of Experts on Hate Crime (PC/ADI-CH) – preparation of a draft comprehensive Recommendation on combating hate crime
 51. The GEC took note of the report by Andreia Lourenço Marques (Portugal) about the work of the Committee of Experts on Hate Crime (PC/ADI-CH) regarding the preparation of a draft comprehensive Recommendation on combating hate crime. She explained that the discussions on the text were quite advanced and regretted that in the last version of the draft (March 2023), the GEC comments and gender equality issues had not been sufficiently taken into consideration. A new draft of the Recommendation was under preparation, in which she hoped that the GEC suggestions would be better reflected.
 - Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues (ADI-ROM) – preparation of a draft Recommendation on equality for Roma and Traveller women and girls
 52. The GEC took note of the information provided by Elena Grozdanova (North Macedonia) regarding the preparation of the draft Recommendation on equality for Roma and Traveller women and girls. She explained that the work on the draft Recommendation was proceeding swiftly. A new version of the draft Recommendation was sent for written

comments and would be reviewed by Elena Grozdanova - assisted by the Secretariat - and by the Bureau. The draft Recommendation would provide useful guidance for the GEC to integrate the needs and situations of Roma and Traveller women and girls in its activities.

- 18th Ministerial Conference of the Pompidou Group (13-14 December 2022, Lisbon, Portugal)

53. The GEC took note of the report by Andreia Lourenço Marques (Portugal) about the Pompidou Group's 18th Ministerial Conference in which she participated. The Pompidou Group has been very active in integrating a gender equality perspective. The December 2022 Ministerial Conference called for a human rights-centred approach to address drug addictions and related disorders. In their "Lisbon Declaration", participants called for exploring strategies to address addictions related to the use of communication and information technologies, as part of a broad policy direction to be followed by the Pompidou Group in the near future. Participants also looked at the impact of current trends in drug trafficking, from increased use of performance- and image-enhancing drugs to behavioural addictions, such as excessive and compulsive video gaming, gambling and online shopping.

g. Follow-up to the Conference on "Men and boys in gender equality policies"
(Strasbourg, 27-28 April 2023)

54. The GEC took note of the information provided by the Icelandic representative about the very successful conference on men and boys and gender equality policies (Strasbourg, 27-28 April 2023). The Secretariat informed the GEC that the report of the conference was being prepared and would be published later in 2023.

2. Preparation of the draft Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029

55. The Chair recalled that, in accordance with its terms of reference, the GEC has been mandated to develop a third Council of Europe Gender Strategy for the period 2024-2029. This exercise takes place in a difficult context for gender equality, with major backlashes for women's rights including an increase in violence against women and domestic violence noted in particular since the Covid-19 pandemic. Structural inequalities affecting women and girls have been exacerbated and achievements in the field of gender equality are challenged by various anti-gender movements. In addition, the on-going war in Ukraine has created significant migration flows, affecting mainly women and girls, from Ukraine to other European countries. The new Gender Equality Strategy should strive to provide answers to these challenges.

56. The Chair introduced the draft Strategy as presented in the consolidated version (GEC(2023)2) which contained all proposed amendments sent by GEC members, observers and participants through the written consultation. He explained that the concrete amendments received were all included in the text. Any other comments and feedback were included in the compilation document. The Chair highlighted the need for a constructive, co-operative and efficient way of going through the received amendments in the light of the high number of amendment suggestions received. He underlined the importance of ensuring the quality of the final text, which would serve as a major reference document and toolbox for member States in designing and implementing gender equality policies during the next six years, even though it may not have the status of a legally binding document such as a treaty.

57. The Secretariat presented the timeline of the upcoming work on the Strategy, as agreed by the GEC at its previous plenary meeting in November 2022.
58. The Chair proposed the following methodology for consideration of the text: to agree on the structure and scope, then to go through the text paragraph by paragraph with a view to finding compromise wherever necessary.
59. The Chair opened the discussion on the structure of the proposed Strategy. He reminded members that the draft Strategy follows the structure of the current Strategy and is arranged around six strategic objectives. While supporting the overall ambition and content of the document, one delegation suggested to delete the newly introduced operational objectives under each strategic objective, as such a document should not dictate what member States shall do. This was supported by one delegation, whereas others expressed a different understanding of these operational objectives, which articulated the strategic objectives without adding new obligations. The Secretariat also explained that it was a common approach in the Organisation to formulate strategic objectives together with more concrete operational objectives which do not add new obligations but rather give guidance for implementation. Following the discussion, the Chair concluded that the operational objectives would be kept but, where relevant, the formulation would be reviewed, without weakening the ambition of the strategy. With this, **members agreed to the overall structure of the draft strategy.**
60. The Chair then guided the GEC through the text, paragraph by paragraph, opening discussions on the proposed amendments. The following is a summary of those discussions.
61. The GEC discussed terminology in particular the expression “in all their diversity” (cf. para. 1) and the footnote explaining what is meant by this. Two delegations (Hungary and Azerbaijan) expressed its opposition to this formulation. One delegation (Bulgaria) also indicated that referring to both “sex” and “gender” as separate concepts was contrary to their national legislation. However, the majority of delegations supported the original wording. It was concluded that the original wording “in all their diversity” would be kept. The Chair asked the Secretariat to reflect on a wording to capture various different grounds of discrimination without having to always include a long list of those grounds.
62. Several members highlighted the importance of being as inclusive as possible and of underscoring the role of men and boys as agents and beneficiaries of change in the achievement of gender equality, as highlighted in the new paragraph 4bis.
63. One delegation suggested to replace “violence against women” throughout the document by “sexual and gender-based violence”. Several delegations insisted to keep the original wording with the explicit mention of “women” and to change it only in specific cases where the different wording might be warranted.
64. Where relevant, “girls” and/or “boys” were added after “women” and/or “men”.
65. Following the exchanges, the Chair instructed the Secretariat to change the wording from “household work” to “unpaid care and domestic work” and similarly from “sexist and gender-based hate speech” to “sexist hate speech” and from “LGBTI people” to “LGBTI persons” and to add “disinformation” after “misinformation” throughout the text of the draft Strategy, as well as to any fix grammatical issues. The Chair also asked the Secretariat to reflect on when to use “victim”, “survivor”, and/or “victim/survivor”, and include the relevant proposals in the text.

66. In the time allotted for discussion of the draft Strategy, the GEC managed to review 58 paragraphs, i.e. the introductory chapter as well as the first two strategic objectives. The Chair explained that the GEC's consideration of the remainder of the draft would continue in the plenary meeting in November 2023, the aim being to conclude discussion and approve the draft Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029 at that meeting.
67. The Chair appealed to members not to re-open discussion on already reviewed paragraphs when the work would resume in the November plenary. This approach was supported by several delegations.
68. Nevertheless, two delegations (Azerbaijan and Hungary) reserved the right to return to the paragraphs already discussed, highlighting the need to find common agreement on terminology.
69. One delegation (Türkiye) expressed the view that the new Strategy should focus on issues regarding women and girls while the current draft includes an unbalanced amount of language on LGBTQI+ persons.
70. The Secretariat advised to reserve at least 1.5 days to the discussion and approval of the draft Strategy in the November plenary.
71. The GEC instructed the Secretariat to revise the draft Gender Equality Strategy (2024-2029) pursuant to the discussions of paragraphs 1 to 58, then distribute and post a revised document in both working languages on the GEC24 restricted webpage at the very latest by 20 October 2023.
72. The GEC decided that issues on which agreement was reached would not be reopened at the GEC24 meeting on 14-16 November 2023, during which the GEC should finalise and approve the Strategy, with a view to transmitting it, by 10 December 2023, to the Committee of Ministers for discussion at the Rapporteur Group on Human Rights (GR-H) and adoption by the Ministers' Deputies.

VIII. Co-operation with other Council of Europe sectors

- Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI) and its subordinate bodies
 - Study on the impact of artificial intelligence, its discriminatory risks and its potential for promoting equality, including gender equality
73. The Chair welcomed Ivana Bartoletti to the meeting. Along with Raphaële Xenidis, she had worked on the draft study on the impact of artificial intelligence, its potential for promoting equality, including gender equality, and the risks to non-discrimination (GEC(2022)09/CDADI(2022)21_Revised). Ivana Bartoletti set out the key points of the revised study and the final chapter on recommendations, as promised to the GEC in the November plenary. More detailed information could be found in her presentation available on the meeting webpage.

74. The Secretariat then provided an update on the work of the Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI). A first reading of the zero draft Convention on Artificial Intelligence would be completed in the CAI plenary on 31 May – 2 June. The GEC was informed that the draft included gender and sex as grounds of discrimination in the draft articles on equality and non-discrimination. Gender equality and women's rights were also included in the preamble. The Secretariat explained that the timeline of the CAI remained ambitious, with an extension until early 2024.
75. Some GEC members asked questions about various aspects of the study, including on the complexity of the topic and various different dimensions relevant to the analysis of the impact of AI on gender equality. Radan Safarik, the GEC representative to the CAI, gave a brief overview of the work. Louise Riondel, co-secretary of the CAI, also took the floor and gave an update on the work of the CAI, addressing some of the complexities brought up by the GEC members.
76. The GEC decided to approve the GEC/CDADI Study on the impact of artificial intelligence, its discriminatory risks and its potential for promoting equality, including gender equality.
77. The Secretariat informed the GEC about the next steps following the joint adoption of the study with the CDADI (whose plenary meeting was to take place on 27-29 June 2023). According to the GEC's terms of reference, subject to the results of the study, a draft recommendation on the topic should be jointly prepared by a subordinate body to the CDADI and the GEC in 2024-2025. The GEC would need to appoint four GEC members to this work group during their next plenary in November 2023.

IX. Thematic Discussion

- Exchange of views with Tatyana Teplova, Head of Policy Coherence for the SDGs Division and Senior Counsellor, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), on the OECD's work in the area of gender-based violence.
78. The GEC held an exchange of views with Tatyana Teplova, OECD Head of Policy Coherence for the SDGs Division and Senior Counsellor. She presented the results of the OECD's upcoming study on gender-based violence and stressed that violence affects all social and economic categories, all races, and all profiles, and that no country was spared.
 79. Tatyana Teplova underlined that violence against women has been recognised as a priority issue in 33/41 OECD member states, and that the OECD's work is complementary to the Council of Europe's excellent work in this area, in particular the Istanbul Convention.
 80. Tatyana Teplova explained the methodology of the OECD study and focused on the three main pillars of the framework: Systems, Culture and Accountability. These pillars are based on a quantitative and qualitative analysis of good national practices, but also on disparities, and on identifying the challenges to be met. In particular, the first pillar of systems refers to the laws and strategies at political level, to combat all forms of violence against women, and about care for victims/survivors. The Systems pillar stresses the importance of the role of State and other public actors. The second pillar based on Culture focuses on the importance for systems and services to be tailor-made to the needs and experiences of victims/survivors of violence. Addressing the real causes of violence, financing the services and involving men and boys are really important challenges. The third pillar is related to the legal framework and access to justice.

81. Finally, Tatyana Teplova presented certain interesting findings regarding the three abovementioned pillars: a) None of the countries included in the index had a complete legislative framework for all forms of violence, with gaps in domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment, child marriage and mutilation, b) less than half of the countries had a dedicated budget, c) only 43% of the OECD countries surveyed said they had tools to take account of the cross-sectoral needs of victims/survivors and d) countries have introduced efforts to make information accessible on judicial mechanisms.
82. The Chair thanked Tatyana Teplova for her presentation. The GEC took note of the information provided by the OECD representative about the OECD's forthcoming report on gender-based violence.

X. Co-operation with international/regional organisations

- CSW67 – Commission on the Status of Women (New York, 6 - 17 March 2023)

83. The GEC took note of information about the side-event “Responding to Regional and Global Challenges: Protecting the Rights of Migrant, Refugee and Asylum-seeking Women and Girls”, organised under the aegis of the Icelandic Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, in the margins of the Commission for the Status of Women in March 2023. The recording of the side-event is available on the GEC's website.

- Council of the European Union – gender equality agenda:

84. The GEC took note of the information provided by Radan Safarik (Czech Republic), Elisabeth White (Sweden) and Lara Ferguson (Spain) about the gender equality programmes of their respective presidencies of the Council of the European Union.

XI. International Women's Day (8 March 2023)

85. The GEC took note of the information provided by the Secretariat and the members about events organised to mark International Women's Day 2023, including the launch of the Gender Equality Perpetual Calendar.

XII. Current and future activities at national and international level

86. The GEC took note of the information provided by the representatives of Iceland, Latvia and Liechtenstein about the gender equality programmes of their respective presidencies of the Committee of Ministers.

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

87. Members were invited to make proposals for the agenda of the next GEC meeting (November 2023). Members agreed to give priority to the finalisation of the Gender Equality Strategy and to dedicate sufficient time for this. They also expressed their keen interest in holding an exchange of views with the new President of the European Court of Human Rights.

XIV. Other business

88. No other point was raised.

XV. Dates of forthcoming meetings

89. The GEC agreed on the dates and place of the 24th GEC meeting: 14-16 November 2023 in Strasbourg.

XVI. Adoption of the abridged report of the 23rd GEC meeting (24-26 May 2023)

90. The GEC agreed on the abridged report of the meeting and instructed the Secretariat to transmit it to the Committee of Ministers for note to be taken of it.

APPENDIX I

Agenda

- I. **Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda**
Draft Agenda *GEC(2023)OJ1 Revised*
- II. **Report from the GEC Chair**
- III. **Follow-up to the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe** (Reykjavik, Iceland, 16-17 May 2023) *Adopted final outcome*
- IV. **Exchange of views with Taina Bofferding, Minister of Equality between Women and Men of Luxembourg**
- V. **Election of Vice-Chair of the Gender Equality Commission** (May-December 2023)
- VI. **Terms of reference of the Gender Equality Commission 2024-2027**
Draft Terms of Reference
- VII. **Council of Europe Transversal Programme on Gender Equality**
 1. **Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023**
 - a. **Objective 1 – Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism**
 - Guidelines on the place of men and boys in gender equality policies and in policies to combat violence against women - next steps
 - b. **Objective 2 – Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence**
 - Exchange of views with Iris Luarasi, President of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO)
 - Sharing experiences by states parties on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention and information on further ratifications
 - Update by the Secretariat of co-operation projects undertaken by the Gender Equality Division concerning violence against women and domestic violence
 - Presentation by the Secretariat of the multi-country programme “Ending violence against women”
 - c. **Objective 3 – Ensure the equal access of women to justice**
 - State of play including follow-up to the Study on the Impact of Covid-19 on women’s access to justice
 - Exchange of views with Christel Schurrer, Deputy Secretary to the Commission for the efficiency of justice (CEPEJ) and Secretary to the Working Group on the evaluation of judicial systems (CEPEJ-GT-EVAL)
 - d. **Objective 4 - Achieve a balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making**
 - Exchange of views Penelope Denu, Head of the Secretariat to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of

Europe (PACE), on Resolution 2394 on Gender Representation in the Parliamentary Assembly

[Resolution 2394 \(2021\)](#)

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

- Committee of Ministers Recommendation on protecting the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls – update on translations, dissemination and promotion
- Exchange of views with Leyla Kayacik, Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees

f. Objective 6 - Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

- Gender mainstreaming in Council of Europe activities *Oral presentation*
- Reports from members of the GEC, experts and Secretariat who have participated in the following meetings of Council of Europe bodies:
 - [Committee of Experts on Hate Crime \(PC/ADI-CH\)](#) – preparation of a draft comprehensive Recommendation on combating hate crime *Oral presentation*
 - [Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues \(ADI-ROM\)](#) - preparation of a draft Recommendation on equality for Roma and Traveller women and girls *Oral presentation*
 - 18th Ministerial Conference of the [Pompidou Group](#) (13-14 December 2022, Lisbon, Portugal) *Oral presentation*

g. Follow-up to the Conference on “Men and boys in gender equality policies” (Strasbourg, 27-28 April 2023)

2. Preparation of the draft Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029

GEC(2023)01

GEC(2023)01 Revised (proposed changes tracked)

GEC(2023)02 (compilation of proposed changes received)

VIII. Co-operation with other Council of Europe sectors

- [Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion \(CDADI\)](#) and its subordinate bodies

Presentation of the Study on the impact of artificial intelligence, its potential for promoting equality, including gender equality, and the risks to non-discrimination

Draft study GEC(2022)09/CDADI(2022)21 Revised

- Presentation by Eva Pastrana, Head of the Division of Justice and Human Rights Training, of the [Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals \(HELP\) online courses](#)

IX. Thematic Discussion

- Exchange of views with Tatyana Teplova, Head of Policy Coherence for the SDGs Division and Senior Counsellor, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), on gender-based violence

X. Co-operation with international/regional organisations

- CSW67 – Commission on the Status of Women (New York, 6 - 17 March 2023)
 - Side-event on “Responding to Regional and Global Challenges: Protecting the Rights of Migrant, Refugee and Asylum-seeking Women and Girls, organised by the Council of Europe and the Permanent Mission of Iceland to the United Nations, during the Icelandic Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (New York, 7 March 2023)
 - Report from member states about CSW events and agreed conclusions
- Council of the European Union – gender equality agenda:
 - [Czech Presidency](#) (July - December 2022)
 - [Swedish Presidency](#) (January - June 2023)
 - [Spanish Presidency](#) (July - December 2023)

XI. International Women’s Day (8 March 2022)

- [Council of Europe Gender Equality Perpetual Calendar](#)

XII. Current and future activities at national and international level

- Gender equality agendas of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers Presidencies:
 - [Iceland](#) (November 2022 - May 2023)
 - [Latvia](#) (May - November 2023)
 - Liechtenstein (November 2023 - May 2024)

XIII. Proposals for the agenda of the next meeting, including thematic discussions**XIV. Other business****XV. Dates of forthcoming meetings**

- 24th meeting of the Gender Equality Commission: Strasbourg, 14-16 November 2023

XVI. Adoption of the abridged report of the 23rd GEC meeting (24-26 May 2023)

APPENDIX II**List of Participants****Members/Membres**

Albania	Etleva Sheshi Director Directorate of Social Inclusion and Gender Equality Policies General Directorate of Social Protection Ministry of Health and Social Protection
Andorra	Monica Alvarez Isart Head of Service of Equality Polices Ministry of Social Affairs, Youth and Equality Christel Codina Torres Psychologist of the Service of Equality Polices Ministry of Social Affairs, Youth and Equality
Armenia	Lilit Shakaryan Head of Division of Cooperation with International Monitoring Bodies Department of Human Rights and Humanitarian Issues Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Austria	Eva Fehringer Director Federal Ministry of Labour International and European Social Policy and Labour Law
Azerbaijan	Jala Ibrahimova Deputy Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the Council of Europe
Belgium	Carine Joly Adviser Institute of Gender Equality
Bulgaria	Aleksandra Dimitrova Deputy to the Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the Council of Europe Mari Stanisheva Rozaliya Mircheva <i>Trainees</i>
Croatia	Maja Sporiš Adviser, Government Office for Gender Equality
Cyprus	Andri Savva (Bureau Member) Officer, Office of Commissioner for Gender Equality
Czech Republic	Radan Šafařík Head of the Secretariat of the Government Council for Equality of Women and Men Acting Director of the Gender Equality Department Zuzana Andreska Gender Equality Department Office of the Czech Government
Denmark	Kira Appel Deputy Head of Department/Chief Consultant Department for Gender Equality Ministry of Digital Government and Gender Equality
Estonia	Lee Maripuu Head of Gender Equality Policy Ministry of Social Affairs
France	Stefania Chiru Lena Tisserant European and International Affairs Office Directorate General of Social Cohesion Ministry of Solidarity/Ministry Delegate for Gender Equality

Greece	Christina Agoritsa Policy Officer-Independent Department of European and International Cooperation General Secretariat for Demography, Family Policy and Gender Equality Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
Hungary	Dóra Tonté Senior Adviser Women's Policy Unit Department for Adoption and Women's Policy Ministry of Culture and Innovation
Iceland	Guðjón Björn Guðbjartsson Specialist Department of Equality and Human Rights, Prime Minister's Office
Ireland	Deirdre Ní Néill Assistant Principal Officer Inclusion, Equality and Gender Equality Unit, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth
Latvia	Agnese Gaile Senior Expert Department of Social Policy Planning and Development Ministry of Welfare
Liechtenstein	Helen Lorez-Schweig Deputy Permanent Representative Permanent Representation of Liechtenstein to the Council of Europe
Lithuania	Sandra Čergelytė Equal Opportunities & Women and Men Equality Group Ministry of Social Security and Labour
Luxembourg	Ralph Kass (Chair/Président) Senior Advisor 1st Class Ministry of Equality between Women and Men Christopher Witry Attaché Ministry of Equality between Women and Men Patrick Engelberg Permanent Representative
Malta	Maria Ellul Manager II (Research) Human Rights Directorate Ministry for Justice, Equality and Governance
Republic of Moldova	Lilia Pascal Head, Division of Policy for ensuring Gender Equality Ministry of Labour and Social Protection
Monaco	Margaux Girardin Trainee Directorate of Human Resources and Training of the Public Service
The Netherlands	Lisanne Post Senior Policy Officer Directorate for gender equality and LGBTI equality Ministry of Education, Culture and Science

Norway	<p>Petter Sørlien Senior Adviser Ministry of Culture and Equality Department of Equality, Non-discrimination, and International Affairs</p> <p>Tori Loven Kirkebø Adviser Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs</p>
Portugal	<p>Andreia Lourenço Marques International Relations Adviser Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality</p>
Romania	<p>Ramona-Maria Ciucă Deputy to the Permanent Representative Permanent Representation of Romania to the Council of Europe</p>
Slovak Republic	<p>Marián Lizanec Principal State Advisor Department of Equality of Women and Men and Equality of Opportunities Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic</p>
Slovenia	<p>Sara Slana Secretary Equal Opportunities Department Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities</p>
Spain	<p>Lara Ferguson Vázquez de Parga Senior Adviser Director's Support Unit Institute of Women State Secretariat for Equality and against Gender Violence Ministry of Equality</p>
Sweden	<p>Elisabeth White Deputy Director Ministry of Employment Division for Gender Equality</p>
Switzerland	<p>Micaela Lois International Affairs Officer, Federal Department of Home Affairs Federal Office for Gender Equality (FOGE)</p>
Türkiye	<p>Onur Dinçer Expert on Family and Social Policy General Directorate on the Status of Women Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Affairs</p>
Ukraine	<p>Kateryna Levchenko Government Commissioner for Gender Equality Policy</p>
United Kingdom	<p>Charles Ramsden Head, International Policy Government Equalities Office</p>

Non-member states having observer status with the Council of Europe

Holy See	<p>Anne-Julie Kerhuel Section for Relations with States Secretariat of State</p>
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Non member states/*Etats non-membres*

Morocco	<p>Fatima Barkan Adviser to the Private Office of the Minister of Justice Ministry of Justice</p>
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Mexico	Eva Pizano Cejka Deputy Permanent Observer
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Participants/Participant es

Conference on INGOs	Anita Schnetzer Spranger Chair/ <i>Présidente</i> Zonta International (ZI) Cianán B. Russell Senior Policy Officer ILGA Europe
Group of Experts on Action Against Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO)	Iris Luarasi President, GREVIO
Working Group on artificial intelligence	Ivana Bartoletti
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	Tatyana Teplova Head of Policy Coherence for the SDGs Division and Senior Counsellor
European Institute for Gender Equality	Maruša Gortnar Head of Unit - Research and Policy Support Unit
European Network of Migrant Women	Alyssa Ahrabare Project Officer of the European Network of Migrant Women
Ministry of Equality between Women and Men of Luxembourg	Taina Bofferding Minister of Equality between Women and Men, Luxembourg Maryse Fisch 1st government counsellor

Secretariat

Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity

Directorate-General of Democracy and Human Dignity	Marja Ruotanen Director-General
Directorate of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance	Claudia Luciani Director
Human Dignity and Gender Equality Department	Roberto Olla Head of Department

Gender Equality Division	Caterina Bolognese Head of Division/ Secretary to the GEC
	Anne Brunellière Division Assistant
	Cécile Gréboval Programme Manager, Senior Gender Equality Adviser
	Tryggvi Hallgrímsson Policy Adviser
	Christa Jakobsson Policy Adviser
	Evrydiki Tseliou Administrative Assistant
	Catherine Altmann Administrative Assistant
Co-operation Unit	Sécolène Chesneau Project Manager
	Larissa Kireeva Project Manager
	Alla Krytynskaia Project Assistant
	Anca Sandescu Project Manager
	Sabrina Wittmann
Violence Against Women Division	Sabrina Wittmann
Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Unit (SOGI)	Gabriella Calleja

Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law

Directorate of Human Rights

Council of Europe-European Commission for the efficiency of justice(CEPEJ)	Christel Schurrer Deputy Secretary to the CEPEJ and Secretary to the CEPEJ-GT-EVAL
Council of Europe's Commission on Artificial Intelligence (CAI)	Louise Riondel Co-Secretary to CAI
Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP)	Eva Pastrana Head of Justice and Human Rights Training Division

Directorate of Communications

Digital communications and Editorial Division	Jeremy Moakes Head of Division
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Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees

Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Migration and Refugees	Leyla Kayacik, SRSG Jean-François Goujon-Fischer
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Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly

Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination	Penelope Denu Head of Secretariat
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Directorate-General of Administration

Interpretation, Travel, Events and Multimedia	Sylvie Boux-Stintzy <i>Interpreter</i> Bettina Ludewig Interpreter Kielwasser Josselin ITEM Multimedia
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APPENDIX III

List of decisions taken

The Gender Equality Commission (GEC), chaired by Ralph Kass (Luxembourg),

1. adopted the draft agenda as it appears in Document GEC(2023)OJ1 Revised.
2. took note of the information from the GEC Chair about his activities since taking up his mandate.
3. took note of the information from the Secretariat about the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government.
4. took note of the information from the CEPEJ Secretariat about their activities and how they integrate the gender dimension.
5. took note of the information from the Gender Equality Division about the different activities being undertaken in the field of women's access to justice.
6. took note of the information from the Secretariat to the Parliamentary Assembly about the Resolution on gender representation and its implementation since January 2023.
7. took note of the information about the side-event "[Responding to Regional and Global Challenges: Protecting the Rights of Migrant, Refugee and Asylum-seeking Women and Girls](#)" which was organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iceland and the Council of Europe at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).
8. took note of the information from GEC members about their experience of the CSW.
9. took note of the information provided by Radan Safarik (Czech Republic), Elisabeth White (Sweden) and Lara Ferguson (Spain) about the gender equality programme of their respective presidencies of the Council of the European Union.
10. took note of the information provided by the Secretariat and the members about events organised to mark International Women's Day 2023, including the gender equality perpetual calendar.
11. took note of the presentation by the Secretariat about the ongoing activities related to gender mainstreaming in the Council of Europe activities.
12. held an exchange with Taina Bofferding, Luxembourg Minister of Equality between Women and Men, noting with interest Luxembourg's experience running a national anti-sexism campaign based on the Council of Europe "See it, Name it, Stop it" campaign and the resulting package of communication tools available to member States interested in running such national campaigns.
13. took note of the exchange of views with Iris Luarasi, President of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.
14. took note of the information put forward by member states regarding national developments and experiences regarding the ratification and implementation of the Istanbul Convention.
15. took note of the ongoing co-operation projects being undertaken in the area of violence against women and domestic violence including the "[Ending violence against women: multi-country programme](#)" which began in 2022.
16. took note of the information provided by the GEC representatives in the ongoing work in the areas of hate crime, the rights of Roma and Traveller women and girls, and drugs and addiction.
17. instructed the Secretariat to revise the draft Gender Equality Strategy (2024-2029) based on discussions during the plenary until paragraph 58 as it appears in document GEC(2023)01 Rev, then distribute and post a revised draft Strategy in both languages on the GEC24 restricted webpage at the very latest by 20 October 2023 and took note of the positions expressed by the delegations from Azerbaijan and Türkiye, which will be reflected in the report of the 24th Gender Equality Commission meeting;

18. decided that issues on which agreement was reached would not be reopened at the GEC24 meeting on 14-16 November 2023, during which the GEC should finalise and approve the Strategy, with a view to transmitting it, by 10 December 2023, to the Committee of Ministers for discussion at the Rapporteur Group on Human Rights (GR-H) and adoption by the Ministers' Deputies.
19. decided to approve the GEC/CDADI Study on the impact of artificial intelligence, its discriminatory risks and its potential for promoting equality, including gender equality.
20. elected Maria Ellul (Malta) as its Vice-Chair until 31 December 2023.
21. held an exchange of views with Leyla Kayacik, the SRSG on Migration and Refugees, taking note of the information provided, in particular as regards possible closer synergies to promote implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)17 on protecting the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women.
22. took note of the information provided regarding the state of play as regards adoption of the draft guidelines on the role of men and boys in gender equality policies and in policies to combat violence against women and girls.
23. took note of the information provided by the Icelandic representative about the Conference on men and boys and gender equality policies (Strasbourg, 27-28 April 2023).
24. took note of the draft Terms of Reference of the GEC for 2024 to 2027.
25. took note of the information provided by the representatives of, Iceland, Latvia and Liechtenstein about the gender equality programme of their respective presidencies of the Committee of Ministers and took note of forthcoming events.
26. took note of the information provided by the representative OECD about the work on gender-based violence.
27. took note of the proposed items for the next plenary meeting of the GEC and agreed that the GEC Bureau would decide which ones to include in the agenda of the next meeting.
28. agreed on the dates of the next GEC meeting: 24th meeting of the Gender Equality Commission (Strasbourg, 14-16 November 2023).
29. agreed on the abridged report of the meeting and instructed the Secretariat to transmit it to the Committee of Ministers for note to be taken of it.