

Strasbourg, 31 January 2024

GEC (2024) Bureau 1

GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION (GEC)
22nd Bureau meeting
25 January 2024

DRAFT REPORT

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of agenda

The Bureau adopted the agenda.

2. Developments since the 24th GEC plenary meeting

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that the new Programme and Budget 2024-2027 of the Organisation was adopted by the Committee of Ministers in November 2023, together with the new terms of reference of the intergovernmental structures including those of the GEC.

The Secretariat updated the Bureau about the restructuring of the Secretariat and provided a brief description of the new organigramme in place as of 1st January 2024. The GEC Secretariat is now part of the Directorate of Equal Rights and Dignity.

The Secretariat also informed the Bureau that the draft Gender Equality Strategy (GES) 2024-2029 agreed by the GEC at its 24th meeting on 14-16 November 2023, was reviewed by the editorial services and sent to the Committee of Ministers. The item is on the agenda of the GR-H meeting on 20 February 2024.

3. GEC terms of reference 2024-2027

The Bureau discussed the draft GEC workplan 2024 and asked the Secretariat to provide the Bureau with information about the meeting of co-ordinating bodies on violence against women, planned in April 2024 under the aegis of the Liechtenstein Presidency of the Committee of Ministers.

The Bureau took note of the state of preparation of the 1st meeting of the GEC/ADI-AI (20-21 February 2024) and that the draft Framework Convention on artificial intelligence, human rights, democracy and the rule of law should be finalised by the CAI at the end of March. The draft text of the framework convention is available online but the draft explanatory report is still confidential. The text contains provisions on equality, including gender equality, and non-discrimination.

The Bureau took note that the 1st meeting of the GEC/PC-eVIO should take place in June 2024 and that the CDPC has appointed members from Finland, Italy, Norway and the United Kingdom. The Bureau took note that Spain would send a representative at their own costs.

4. Elections, appointments and working methods

Following the decision of the GEC at its 24th plenary meeting, the Bureau appointed Dora Tonté (Hungary) as Rapporteur on youth.

The Bureau asked the Secretariat to include a reminder to members about the call for interest in the position of focal point on SOGI issues when sending the convocation to the next GEC meeting.

5. Preparation of the GEC 25th plenary meeting (16-18 April 2024)

- Draft agenda

The Bureau discussed the draft agenda of the 25th GEC plenary meeting based on the proposals made during the 24th plenary meeting and agreed to organise the following general exchanges of views, pending availability of the relevant interlocutors:

- with Ana Peláez Narváez, Chair of CEDAW;
- with Bertil Cottier, Chair of ECRI.

An exchange of views would also be organised with a representative of ODIHR on gender equality in political and public life.

The Bureau agreed to extend the invitation to Marc Angel, Vice-President of the European Parliament, to take part in a panel discussion at a future GEC meeting, as he informed the Secretariat that he would not be available to attend the GEC meeting in April 2024.

The Bureau agreed to hold a thematic exchange on two or three promising practices on combating sexism as follow-up to the report on the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)1 on preventing and combating sexism, namely on legislation, data collection and awareness-raising. The interactive exchange would cover what worked, what did not, the transferability of the practice, resources and support needed. The Bureau tasked the Secretariat to send a message to GEC members asking for expressions of interest in presenting and exchanging on a promising practice. Should there be more than three proposals, the Bureau would select the promising practices to be presented.

- 2023 Annual report on the GES (2018-2023)

The Secretariat provided updated information on the preparation of the 2023 Annual Report on the Gender Equality Strategy (2018-2023) and the significant number of replies from the member states and the CoE entities. The draft report would be discussed and adopted during the next plenary.

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that it would review the method of data collection for the preparation of future biennial reports.

6. Gender mainstreaming and work of other bodies/ committees

The Secretariat updated the Bureau about the development of a mainstreaming tool tailored to monitoring bodies following an evaluation which underlined the need for support in mainstreaming gender equality issues in their work.

The Secretariat provided information about the launch of the HELP course on gender equality and gender mainstreaming which should take place around 8th March for International

Women's Day. The course would be freely available to all on the HELP platform. The course could also be adapted/translated at national level, for example in the framework of cooperation projects.

The Secretariat provided information about the ongoing development of internal guidelines on gender-sensitive language, which are much needed, to ensure consistency and the use of more inclusive language in the Organisation.

The Bureau took note that Sara Slana (Slovenia), GEC Bureau member, may participate in the meeting of the Committee of Experts on the prevention of violence (ENF-VAE) on 11-12 March 2024.

7. Future events

The Bureau took note of the programme of the 2nd meeting of the Presidents of Intergovernmental Committees with the Secretary General (1 February 2024) and the role of the GEC Chair as rapporteur for the Working Group 2 on "Challenges to Council of Europe fundamental values and how to address them: the fight against discrimination and anti-gender movements, the use of new digital technologies, protection of the environment".

The Secretariat provided information about the preparation of the side-event at the CSW 68 on the theme of "The role of men in combating gender stereotypes and promoting gender equality in the media". The Bureau asked the Secretariat to inform the GEC about the side-event once it is more advanced so they can inform their respective delegations.

The Secretariat provided an update on the concept of the 2024 GEC annual conference to launch of the Gender Equality Strategy (2024-2029), to be held in Strasbourg under the auspices of the Lithuanian CM Presidency on 30 May 2024. The Bureau asked the Secretariat to share the concept note once it is ready.

The Bureau took note of the NGO conference to be organised in Budapest (11-12 July 2024) which will gather recipients of grants given through the cooperation activities to raise awareness on the Istanbul Convention and counter disinformation, as well as other interested stakeholders.

8. Any other business

The Chair proposed to invite the new Commissioner for Human Rights, Michael O'Flaherty, to a future GEC meeting to exchange on his priorities.

9. Proposed date of the next Bureau meeting

The Bureau agreed to have their next online meeting on 21 March 2024 from 10h-12h.

Participants:

Bureau: Ralph Kass (Chair), Maria Ellul (Vice-Chair), Sara Slana (member)

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