



EUROPEAN CONVENTION  
ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
CONVENTION EUROPÉENNE  
DES DROITS DE L'HOMME  
1950 - 2025

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

GEC(2025)30rev

26 November 2025

## **GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION**

**(GEC)**

**28<sup>th</sup> meeting**

18-20 November 2025

**Abridged meeting report**

## **Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda**

The Gender Equality Commission (GEC) held its 28<sup>th</sup> meeting in Strasbourg from 18 to 20 November 2025, with Sara Slana (Slovenia) as Chair.

The GEC adopted the agenda of the meeting as it appears in Appendix 1.

## **List of items for decision by the Committee of Ministers**

The GEC examined and approved the following text and decided to submit it to the Committee of Ministers for possible adoption:

- draft Recommendation on equality and artificial intelligence, approved at the joint session held with the Steering Committee on Antidiscrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI) on 19 November 2025 (accompanied by its Explanatory Memorandum).
- draft Recommendation on accountability for technology-facilitated violence against women and girls, approved at the joint session held with the European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC) on 26 November 2025 (accompanied by its Explanatory Memorandum).

The GEC adopted the following text and decided to transmit it to the Committee of Ministers for information:

- Guidance for the development of positive narratives aimed at deflecting anti-gender rhetoric.

## **List of items for information of the Committee of Ministers**

The GEC:

- re-elected Sara Slana (Slovenia) as Chair and Sandra Lengwiler (Switzerland) as Vice-Chair, and elected Lea Spörcke (Germany) as member of the Bureau.
- held an exchange with Hallvard Gorseth, Director of Equal Rights and Dignity, on the New Democratic Pact for Europe (NDPE), during which the GEC emphasised that gender equality must be embedded at the heart of the Pact; noted that women's exclusion from decision-making processes and the gender trust gap undermine democracy; highlighted that equal participation of women and men in all their diversity is essential not only for gender equality and inclusion but also for democratic legitimacy and resilience, and that structural obstacles to women's participation, rooted in institutional and cultural inequalities, must be addressed; underlined that value-based communication is required to counter anti-gender rhetoric and tackle disinformation; stressed the importance of engaging men and boys as beneficiaries of gender equality; underlined the role of online spaces as democratic forums but also as vectors of gendered hate speech which silences women and drives them out of political and public life; highlighted that AI brings both risks and opportunities, with digital spaces often reproducing gender-based violence, and emphasised the need for safer online environments and equal access to ICT/STEM; underlined the erosion of civic space and the need to reinforce civil society, including through adequate resources, emphasising that gender equality actors and women's rights organisations face disproportionate pressure despite their central role in defending democratic values; highlighted the recommendations of the 2025 GEC Annual Conference, focusing on six priority areas (legal and policy reform; institutional accountability; technology-facilitated violence against women and girls; civil society, solidarity and funding; male engagement; and intersectionality, monitoring and knowledge sharing) and their relevance to the NDPE; and concluded by underlining the need for robust gender mainstreaming across all three pillars of the NDPE.

- agreed to focus the thematic implementation review of Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)1 on preventing and combating sexism on the justice sector and took note of information by provided by Johanna Nelles, Executive Secretary of the Istanbul Convention, on relevant recent findings of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO).
- agreed to conduct a review of the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the inclusion of gender differences in health policy under deliverable 12 of its terms of reference.
- appointed Jeanne Jezierski (France) as Rapporteur on the Rights of the Child, Andreia Lourenço Marques (Portugal) as Rapporteur on Roma and Traveller Issues, Maria Ellul (Malta) and Ralph Kass (Luxembourg) as focal points in the Working Group on gender expression of the Committee of Experts on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics (ADI-SOGIESC) and Tryggvi Hallgrímsson (Iceland) as focal point in the Working Group of the Steering Committee on Education (CDEDU) to develop a Council of Europe Scoreboard on Gender Equality in Education.
- took note of the information provided by the Chair of the GEC and Malta on the GEC Annual Conference “Tackling sexism and violence against women: an essential step towards equal participation”, held on 17-18 September 2025 in Malta under the Maltese Presidency of the Committee of Ministers.
- began a discussion on possible future activities of the GEC to be included in its next terms of reference and agreed to hold an exchange of views on this matter at its next meeting.

As regards the other items on its agenda, the GEC:

- took note of the information provided by the Chair and of the Bureau members on their activities since the 27<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting of the GEC and took note of the report of the 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Bureau.
- took note of the information provided by the Secretariat regarding the adoption by the Committee of Ministers of the terms of reference of the GEC for 2026-2027 and of the workplans of the GEC for 2025 and for 2026-2027.
- took note of the information provided by Radan Šafařík (Czechia), Vice-Chair of the Committee of Experts on Artificial Intelligence, Equality and Discrimination (GEC/ADI-AI), on the outcomes of the 4<sup>th</sup> and final meeting of the GEC/ADI-AI.
- took note of the information provided by the Tryggvi Hallgrímsson (Iceland), Vice-Chair of the Committee of Experts on combating technology-facilitated violence against women and girls (GEC/PC-eVIO), on the outcomes of the 4<sup>th</sup> and final meeting of the GEC/PC-eVIO.
- took note of the information provided by the Secretariat regarding the ongoing data collection and preparation of the first report of the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029.
- took note of the information provided by the expert consultants on narrative-building and value-based framing in relation to the Guidance for the development of positive narratives to deflect anti-gender rhetoric and took note of the report of the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting

of the Working Group on developing positive narratives in the context of anti-gender movements.

- took note of the information provided by member States regarding national developments in relation to the ratification and implementation of the Istanbul Convention.
- held an exchange of views with Kalliopi Mingeirou, Chief of the Ending Violence against Women and Girls Section at UN Women, on UN Women's UNiTE campaign and work on technology-facilitated violence against women and girls.
- took note of the information provided by Sandra Lengwiler (Switzerland) and held an exchange on Switzerland's national campaign to prevent domestic violence, sexual violence, and gender-based violence.
- held a World-Café style event on co-operation projects undertaken by the Gender Equality Division on the following themes: perpetrators programme, digital violence against women and girls, women's access to justice and civil society engagement.
- held an exchange of views with Evgenia Giakoumopoulou, Secretary of the Committee of Experts on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics (ADI-SOGIESC), on Recommendation CM/Rec(2025)7 on equal rights for intersex persons.
- held an exchange with Dr Shreya Atrey, expert consultant, and the Secretariat of the CDADI on the Feasibility study on preventing and combating intersectional discrimination in Europe adopted by the CDADI, and noted with appreciation that the comments made by the GEC during the consultation process were duly reflected in the text.
- took note of the information provided by the Secretariat on gender mainstreaming activities undertaken by the various structures and bodies of the Council of Europe.
- held an exchange of views with Francine Raveney, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS), on the All-In Plus project aiming to promote greater gender equality in sports and its legacy.
- held an exchange of views with Agnes Schneeberger, TV and VOD Market Analyst at the European Audiovisual Observatory, on women's participation in the audiovisual sector.
- took note of the information provided by its representatives in the meetings and activities of other Council of Europe intergovernmental bodies.
- took note of the information provided by the Secretariat about the Annual Conference of the GEC to be organised under the Monegasque Presidency of the Committee of Ministers (Strasbourg, 9 June 2026).
- took note of the information provided by the Secretariat and the Republic of Moldova about the side-event to be co-organised by the Council of Europe and the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Moldova to the United Nations during the 70th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70), as well as of updates from member States about planned side-events during CSW70.

- took note of the information provided by the representatives of Malta, the Republic of Moldova and Monaco regarding the gender equality programmes of their presidencies of the Committee of Ministers.
- took note of the information provided by the representatives of Denmark and Cyprus about their gender equality agendas during their presidencies of the Council of the European Union.
- took note of the information provided by the Secretariat in relation to the gender equality perpetual calendar on the Council of Europe gender equality website and agreed to proceed with its update by 31 January 2026.
- adopted the present abridged report of its 28<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **Resource implications**

The financing of the activities described in this report is assured.

### **Evaluation of completed activities**

The GEC took note of the completion of three deliverables. It underlined the importance of the draft Recommendation on equality and artificial intelligence and the draft Recommendation on accountability for technology-facilitated violence against women and girls, stressing that these instruments are essential to ensure that gender equality remains central to regulatory and policy developments concerning new technologies, contributing to the Organisation's leading role in standard-setting in the field. It also stressed the relevance of the Guidance for the development of positive narratives to deflect anti-gender rhetoric and its usefulness in addressing anti-rights narratives in the current context, further noting the importance of ensuring its effective dissemination at national level.

The GEC conducted an evaluation of activities led and completed in 2024-2025. Eight deliverables were foreseen in the terms of reference for this period, and all have been completed, reflecting steady progress across the GEC's mandate with strengthened coordination within the Council of Europe and with relevant intergovernmental committees. The GEC successfully oversaw the transition from the Gender Equality Strategy 2018–2023 to the 2024–2029 Strategy. Implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy 2024–2029 has advanced, supported by new implementation monitoring tools designed to reinforce an evidence-based approach across member States. The GEC has also continued to promote an intersectional and inclusive approach, ensuring that gender equality policies take into account the full range of experiences of women and men in all their diversity. Overall, the GEC has maintained its role as a key platform for policy development in the field of gender equality, providing political guidance, fostering cooperation across sectors and ensuring that gender equality remains firmly linked to the Organisation's democratic and human rights objectives.

### **Other observations**

None.

## APPENDIX I

## Agenda

**1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda**

|                      |                                              |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| GEC(2025)OJ2rev2     | Draft agenda                                 |
| GEC(2025)OJ2ann rev2 | Draft annotated agenda and order of business |

**2. Report from the Chair and Bureau of the GEC**

|               |                                          |
|---------------|------------------------------------------|
| GEC-BU(2025)4 | Report of the 28th meeting of the Bureau |
|---------------|------------------------------------------|

**3. Mandate and workplan of the GEC**

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|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <a href="#">CM(2023)131-addfinal</a> | Terms of reference of the GEC     |
| GEC(2025)1rev                        | Workplan of the GEC for 2025      |
| GEC(2025)21                          | Workplan of the GEC for 2026-2027 |

**4. Gender Equality Strategy 2024-2029****5. Elections and appointments**

|               |                                                           |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| GEC(2025)2rev | List of rapporteurs and focal points appointed by the GEC |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|

**6. Preventing and combating gender stereotypes and sexism*****6.1. Work of the Committee of Experts on Artificial Intelligence, Equality and Discrimination (GEC/ADI-AI)***

|                      |                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| GEC(2025)22          | Draft Recommendation on equality and artificial intelligence                                                              |
| GEC(2025)23          | Draft Explanatory Memorandum to the Recommendation on equality and artificial intelligence                                |
| GEC/ADI-AI(2025)8rev | Report of the 4th meeting of the GEC/ADI-AI                                                                               |
| GEC(2025)26          | Compilation of comments on the draft Recommendation on equality and artificial intelligence                               |
| GEC(2025)27          | Compilation of comments on the draft Explanatory Memorandum to the Recommendation on equality and artificial intelligence |

***6.2. Thematic implementation review of Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)1 on preventing and combating sexism***

|             |                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| GEC(2025)14 | Proposed theme and methodology for the thematic implementation review of Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)1 on preventing and combating sexism |
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## **7. Preventing and combating violence against women and girls and domestic violence**

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### ***7.1. Work of the Committee of Experts on combating technology-facilitated violence against women and girls (GEC/PC-eVIO)***

|                     |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| GEC(2025)24         | Draft Recommendation on accountability for technology-facilitated violence against women and girls                                                              |
| GEC(2025)25         | Draft Explanatory Memorandum to the Recommendation on accountability for technology-facilitated violence against women and girls                                |
| GEC/PC-eVIO(2025)10 | Report of the 4th meeting of the GEC/PC-eVIO                                                                                                                    |
| GEC(2025)28         | Compilation of comments on the draft Recommendation on accountability for technology-facilitated violence against women and girls                               |
| GEC(2025)29         | Compilation of comments on the draft Explanatory Memorandum to the Recommendation on accountability for technology-facilitated violence against women and girls |

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### ***7.2. Implementation of the Istanbul Convention***

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### ***7.3. Co-operation activities on violence against women and domestic violence***

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### ***7.4. Exchange of views with Kalliopi Mingeirou, Chief, Ending Violence against Women and Girls Section, UN Women***

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## **8. Ensuring equal access to justice for women and girls**

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### ***8.1. Co-operation activities on women's access to justice***

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## **9. Achieving balanced participation of women and men in political, public, social and economic life**

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### ***9.1. Exchange of views with Francine Raveney, Deputy Executive Secretary, Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport***

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## **10. Ensuring women's empowerment and gender equality in relation to global and geopolitical challenges**

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### ***10.1. Developing positive narratives in the context of anti-gender movements***

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|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| GEC(2024)7       | Workplan of the Working Group on developing positive narratives in the context of anti-gender movements                 |
| GEC-WG-PN(2025)2 | Report of the 2nd meeting of the Working Group                                                                          |
| GEC(2025)15      | Guidance for the development of positive narratives aimed at deflecting anti-gender rhetoric                            |
| GEC(2025)16      | Supporting document to the Guidance for the development of positive narratives aimed at deflecting anti-gender rhetoric |

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**11. Achieving gender mainstreaming and including an intersectional approach in all policies and measures**


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*11.1. Exchange of views with Agnes Schneeberger, European Audiovisual Observatory*

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*11.2. Gender mainstreaming in Council of Europe activities*

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*11.3. Cooperation with other Council of Europe sectors*

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**12. Gender equality activities in multilateral settings**


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*12.1. Gender equality activities of the Presidencies of the Committee of Ministers*

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*12.2. United Nations - Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70)*

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*12.3. Gender equality activities of the Presidencies of the Council of the European Union*

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**13. Evaluation of activities in 2024-2025 and discussion on future activities**


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|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| GEC(2025)17 | Evaluation of activities 2024-2025                                                                                                                                                                         |
| GEC(2025)18 | Background document to assess the need to review the implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the inclusion of gender differences in health policy |
| GEC(2025)19 | Overview of implementation reviews of Council of Europe gender equality recommendations                                                                                                                    |

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**14. Update of the gender equality perpetual calendar**


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| GEC(2025)20 | Explanatory note on the gender equality perpetual calendar and its proposed update in 2026 |
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**15. Preparation of the next meeting**


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**16. Other business**


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**17. Adoption of the abridged report**


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