



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONFERENCE DES OING DU
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Committee on Migration Issues

Accommodation for Migrants, a Major Issue for the Respect of Human Rights.

NEWSLETTER N°1

1

INTRODUCTION – UPDATE ON THE COMMITTEE'S NEW MANDATE

After three years of a fruitful mandate, the Migration Committee has proposed a mandate for this new period 2024-2026 focused on the issue of Accommodation for Migrants. In order to maintain the strategy of a holistic approach in the image of the previous Committee, its members agreed on the relevance of considering accommodation as a central element of the approach to the human rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.



Since its validation at the General Assembly in April 2024, the Committee has undertaken to work at a regular pace, following a new work organization, based on the assessments of past experiences.

Thus, the Committee was organized as follows:

- A bureau, composed of the president, the vice-president, a communications officer, and a field expert;
- Four thematic working groups;
- Focal points focusing on the various Council of Europe bodies with which the Committee collaborates;

At the end of 2024, the Committee is pleased to already have a number of works, begun or even finalized, testifying to a fruitful organization and operation.

Editorial

Dear colleagues,

In April 2024, I accepted with some timidity to take over the chairmanship of our new committee. Just a few months later, in October 2024, at the Conference of INGOs, it was already time to take stock of our activities. What to share in the allotted time? There was so much to say! We had to make choices, because the richness and diversity of the actions carried out since then are remarkable. Each initiative, each project is a reflection of the commitment of each and every one of you, which has allowed our committee to develop, strengthen and expand its influence significantly.

Our mission is far from over, and the stakes remain immense. We will continue to fight for the rights of people in a situation of migration, for human dignity, and for inclusive policies that take into account the reality of all.

I would like to warmly thank each and every one of you for your unwavering commitment. Together, we have already achieved so much, and I am convinced that the coming months will be just as successful and full of further progress.

Thank you again for your dedication.

Christine MONTY President of the Committee on Migration Issues

2

SUMMARY



Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----------|
| INTRODUCTION – UPDATE ON THE COMMITTEE'S NEW MANDATE | 1 |
| COMMITTEE MEETINGS..... | 3 |
| Bureau meetings | 3 |
| Committee Meetings | 3 |
| Exchanges with contacts external to the Committee | 3 |
| COLLABORATIONS WITH COUNCIL OF EUROPE BODIES | 4 |
| THE CONFERENCE OF INGOS | 4 |
| PACE'S MIGRATION COMMISSION..... | 4 |
| LESSON OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES | 4 |
| SRSG | 5 |
| THE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS | 5 |
| WORK OF THE COMMITTEE | 5 |
| WORKING GROUPS..... | 5 |
| ROUND TABLE - REFUGEE DAY..... | 6 |
| PRESS RELEASES | 6 |
| EDUCATION WEBINAR(S) | 6 |
| A FIELD VISIT..... | 7 |
| PRESENTATION..... | 7 |
| CALL FOR COLLABORATION..... | 8 |
| SOME ECHOES OF INGOS, AGENCIES | 9 |
| AND COUNCIL OF EUROPE ACTORS..... | 9 |
| NEWSLETTERS TO FOLLOW | 9 |
| THE REPORTS TO CONSULT | 9 |

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Bureau meetings

Over the period from April to October 2024, the members of the board met several times, including in April, June and September 2024.

These meetings are an opportunity for smaller groups to:

- To take stock of ongoing projects, in particular to take stock of the progress of the working groups,
- Establish strategies for optimal effectiveness of the Committee,
- Establish the agenda and the date of the next meeting,
- Discuss the next general assemblies,
- Determine a retroschedule for the current period,
- To freely address any type of important subject in the design and work of the Committee.

The office communicates in a regular and unstructured way by e-mail, and has a shared folder on drive bringing together the minutes of meetings and non-final working documents.

Committee Meetings

Since April 2024, the Committee on Migration Issues has met 4 times: in April 2024, July 2024, September 2024 and October 2024. All the reports are on the [Drive](#).

These regular meetings are an opportunity to bring together the members of the Committee in order to discuss the work in progress, exchange ideas for future achievements, and take stock of the general progress of the Committee, in parallel with the stated objectives.

Over the past few months, these meetings have above all been an opportunity to discuss the progress of the work of the various groups, to question certain points and to discuss the targeted objectives.

Exchanges with contacts external to the Committee

Apart from its regular members, the Migration Issues Committee also exchanges with external contacts.

In the organization of its field trip, the Committee is in contact with UNHCR, IOM, FRONTEX, etc.

4

COLLABORATIONS WITH COUNCIL OF EUROPE BODIES

THE CONFERENCE OF INGOS

As a Committee of the Conference of INGOs, the Committee on Migration Issues is in close contact with the Standing Committee of the Conference, and particularly its Vice-President, who is the permanent contact.

In addition, the last general assembly of the conference was an opportunity to take stock of the progress of the work, to exchange face-to-face with some collaborators, and to call on new organizations to bring their expertise and contribution to the work in progress.

The Committee's presentation can be found on the [drive-thru](#).

We presented the organization of our work on the accommodation of migrants, as well as our many actions in connection with current events. We also announced the three webinars on the theme of education.

We invited all members of the Conference of INGOs to actively engage in the work of our committee on migration issues, by sharing information from the field when they have it and by participating in our survey on the accommodation of vulnerable migrants.

Following this presentation, several members from outside our committee were challenged by our work and decided to join us, including Jean-Luc Simon, President of DPI Europe, who contributed on the issues of accommodation for migrants with disabilities, and Shirin Azadpour from the INGO "Lifelong Learning" who presented her action [Camplus](#) on vocational training in migrant camps.

PACE'S MIGRATION COMMISSION

Our committee systematically participates in all working sessions of the PACE Migration Committee. This presence allows us not only to strengthen our contacts, but also to follow their work closely and to provide, where possible, information from the field. This is how we were able to directly relay SOS Humanity's concerns about the management of migrants in Tunisia.



In addition, our [press release](#) on the Friedez report was well received. We were given time to speak at a meeting to present it and share our analyses.

CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

Contact has just been initiated with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. Several avenues of collaboration are already targeted:

- In the framework of the [Congress'](#) Multilateral Project on Migration

- On the integration of migrants, which should be added to the work programme of the Committee on Social Inclusion (SOC)

The contacts have now been made and the exchanges between the Congress and the Conference of OLING through our Committee will be able to materialize in 2025.

SRS

Our regular exchanges with Mr. Best, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, have highlighted new opportunities for collaboration and engagement. At their request, we were able to contribute upstream to the preparation of their study trip to Finland, thus enriching their reflections and the avenues to be explored on the spot.

This summer, we shared with him the MIAMSI statement on the situation of Senegalese migrants in the Canary Islands, with the aim of informing him and raising awareness of this urgent issue. More recently, our discussions have focused on the situation in Poland, which is of particular concern to us because of the laws adopted by the Polish government in response to a complex migratory crisis. We are currently preparing our study trip to Poland, in close collaboration with his team.

Finally, at the request of Mr. Best, we are working to strengthen our co-operation with other entities involved in migration issues, including organisations outside the Council of Europe.

THE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Contact has been made in recent weeks with the Commissioner's office, with a view to preparing study visits to Poland. Several appointments are scheduled before departure.

5

WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

WORKING GROUPS

The establishment of working groups within the Migration Issues Committee represents a strategic and relevant approach to optimize the areas of expertise of each of the member organizations. In a context where the challenges related to the accommodation of migrants are complex and varied, this organization makes it possible to take advantage of the specific skills and experiences of the different NGOs, thus promoting a more effective and adapted collective response.

The working groups make it possible to structure the reflections around the key themes identified, such as intercultural inclusion, the situation of particularly vulnerable people or reception methods. By focusing on these specific angles, each group can deepen its analyses and develop targeted policy recommendations. This specialization promotes an exchange of knowledge and expertise, allowing members to share best practices and develop innovative solutions that consider the realities on the ground.

Four working groups have been identified to address the issue targeted by the Committee:

1. **Cross-cutting aspects** : This group analyses the impact of legal status on access to housing and fundamental rights, taking into account the different types of accommodation and the challenges for civil society organisations.
2. **Intercultural inclusion** : It aims to support the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities Programme by developing strategies to manage diversity as a societal asset, influencing policy orientations through an advisory group.
3. **Particularly vulnerable people** : This group focuses on the housing of vulnerable people, including women and children, and its influence on their social inclusion and access to basic rights and services.
4. **First Reception**: Accommodation at the first reception is crucial for the future of displaced people, requiring a collective commitment to ensure human dignity and security, with recommendations to be developed by the Committee.

These working groups are thus an essential lever for maximising the collective expertise of member organisations, ensuring a coherent and targeted approach to migration challenges and strengthening the influence of civil society in the development of public policies.

The working groups are currently drafting preliminary papers on the findings reached after several months of research and collaboration.

ROUND TABLE - REFUGEE DAY

On Friday, June 21, 2024, a round table on Refugee Day took place. In a hybrid format, this event brought together a panel of relevant speakers, approaching the issue of support for displaced people, refugees and asylum seekers through the prism of the obstacles to access by NGOs on the ground.

The [agenda](#) and the [replay](#) of the event are available on the Committee's website.

PRESS RELEASES

In April 2024, the outgoing Migrants' Rights Committee issued a [Statement](#) on the impact of election campaigns on the perception of migration issues in public debate. This statement was an opportunity to recall a flourishing collaboration with PACE's Committee on Displaced Persons.

Subsequently, in September 2024, a new [Statement](#) was published following the tragic upsurge in shipwrecks in the Mediterranean Sea.

EDUCATION WEBINAR(S)

In line with the work of the previous Committee, a series of online events is planned between 2024 and 2025 on the issue of education in a migration context.

° **Thursday, October 24, 2024:** Access to education for migrants: issues and challenges
*The [concept note](#) and [agenda](#) for this webinar are available online on the [Committee's website](#).
 The [speeches](#), [audio](#) and [video recordings](#) are also available on [our Committee's drive-thru](#)*

° **Thursday, January 16, 2025:** Education of young migrants and compulsory schooling

° **April 2025:** Higher education, vocational training and young migrants

6

A FIELD VISIT

PRESENTATION

This study tour to Poland represents a strategic opportunity for the Committee on Migration Issues to immerse itself in the realities on the ground, build strong partnerships and promote concrete actions to improve the accommodation and inclusion of migrants in an increasingly complex context. Based on the success of the field study tour carried out in Greece in November 2022 by the previous Committee, it was quickly decided to carry out a similar project for the Committee on Migration Issues.

The relevance of a study trip by the Committee on Migration Issues to Poland, particularly to the Polish-Belarusian and Polish-Ukrainian borders, lies in the urgency and complexity of the current migration issues in this region. By visiting the field, the Committee will be able to meet directly with civil society, which plays a crucial role in supporting migrants, as well as in highlighting the challenges they face.

Poland's borders have become hotspots for migration flows, where thousands of refugees and migrants often face precarious conditions. Poland, while facing increasing migratory pressures, also must navigate a tense political context, as recent news shows. By engaging with civil society actors, the Committee hopes to gather first-hand accounts of the realities experienced by displaced persons, including shelter, health, and access to essential services.

This study trip will also provide a better understanding of the specific issues of intercultural inclusion and identification of people in vulnerable situations. Non-governmental organizations on the ground are often at the forefront of providing life-saving support, and their expertise can offer invaluable insights to guide the Committee's policies and recommendations.

Thus, this visit will allow the Committee to give a voice to civil society, which is essential to guarantee respect for the fundamental rights of migrants. The results obtained will be analysed, studied and presented strategically to the various Council of Europe bodies with which the Committee collaborates. By integrating these experiences and voices into its work, the Committee will be able to better advocate in its work for policies and approaches that truly address the needs of people on the move, thus contributing to the development of a more inclusive and human rights-respecting framework within the Council of Europe and beyond.

CALL FOR COLLABORATION



The Committee's work on migration issues is important.

Everyone is called upon to take part in the activities according to the specificity of their INGO, their competence and their own interest.

Two calls are topical:

➤ Join a working group:

1. **Cross-cutting aspects** : This group analyses the impact of legal status on access to housing and fundamental rights, taking into account the different types of accommodation and the challenges for civil society organisations.
Contact: Marc Van de Reeck - mvdreeck@gmail.com
2. **Intercultural inclusion** : It aims to support the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities Programme by developing strategies to manage diversity as a societal asset, influencing policy orientations through an advisory group.
Contact: Michèle Moritz - michele.moritz@wanadoo.fr
3. **Particularly vulnerable people** : This group focuses on the housing of vulnerable people, including women and children, and its influence on their social inclusion and access to basic rights and services.
Contact person: Daniel Guéry – guery.daniel@sfr.fr
4. **First Reception** : Accommodation at the First Reception is crucial for the future of displaced people
Contact person: Salomé Brun - salome_brun@orange.fr

➤ Answer the survey, the questionnaire on the accommodation of vulnerable migrants:

Download the [questionnaire](#) which is on the Committee's website.

To be sent back **before the end** of November to guery.daniel@sfr.fr



SOME ECHOES OF INGOS, AGENCIES AND COUNCIL OF EUROPE ACTORS



NEWSLETTERS TO FOLLOW:

Odysseus network

Vulnerability in the New Pact: an empty promise to protect, or an operational concept?

<https://eumigrationlawblog.eu/vulnerability-in-the-new-pact-an-empty-promise-to-protect-or-an-operational-concept/>

France Terre d'asile (*in French*):

[September 2024 Newsletter](#)

PICUM :

[September 2024 Newsletter](#)



THE REPORTS TO CONSULT:

The Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) of the Council of Europe on Migration and Refugees has travelled to Finland, particularly in relation to the influx of migrants instrumentalised by Russia. You will find below:

- The link to access the [presentation page of the trip](#)
- The link to be able to read the [visit report](#)

And for the record, the link to access the Council [of Europe Action Plan](#) on the Protection of Vulnerable Persons in the Context of Migration and Asylum in Europe (2021-2025)