CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Committee on Migration Issues

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

NEWSLETTER N°2

INTRODUCTION –

Édito

Dear colleagues,

Since our last meeting in Strasbourg, and thanks to your contributions, the Committee continues to make progress in its work. We would particularly like to thank all those who took an active part in our recent discussions and in the development of our current projects.

Today, we reiterate our call for collective mobilization around our survey on the housing of vulnerable migrants, as well as an invitation to participate in our Committee's next major initiatives.

Thank you again for your dedication.

Christine MONTY
Chair of the Committee on Migration Issues
Conférence of INGO's, Council of Europe

SUMMARY



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COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Board meetings

Since October 2024, the board members have met several times, notably in November 2024.

These meetings provide an opportunity to :
- Take stock of ongoing projects, including the progress of working groups,
- Establish strategies for optimal Committee efficiency,
- Set the agenda and date for the next meeting,
- Discuss upcoming general meetings,
- Determine retroplanning for the current period,
- Discuss any topic of importance to the design and work of the Committee.

The board communicates on a regular, unstructured basis by telephone and e-mail, and has a shared folder on the drive containing meeting minutes and working documents that have not yet been finalized. Depuis le mois d'octobre 2024, les membres du bureau se sont rencontrés à plusieurs reprises, notamment en novembre 2024.

Committee meetings

Please note:
Our next Committee meeting will take place :
📅 January 9, 2025 at 5 pm

Link : Aucun objet | Microsoft Teams | Meetup-Join

This next meeting will provide an opportunity to take stock of work in progress and to clarify our objectives for the coming months, external collaborations and priorities for 2025.

These regular meetings are indeed an opportunity to bring Committee members together to report on work in progress, to discuss participation in various events, to exchange ideas for future achievements, and to take stock of the Committee's overall progress, alongside its stated objectives.

Exchanges with entities outside of the Council of Europe

Our committee is actively committed to developing links with entities outside the Council of Europe, with the aim of broadening our impact and reinforcing the effectiveness of our actions. One example of this commitment is our work with Frontex. We leverage our unique expertise to inform and support other policy-makers on key migration and asylum issues. These strategic partnerships enable us not only to share our analyses, but also to promote concerted and innovative approaches to human rights and migration management.

Contacts have been made with the UNHCR, whose competence is no longer in question. We already meet their representatives regularly at various meetings, notably at the PACE Migration Commission.

Exchanges with NGO non-member of our Committee

As part of our work on housing and migration, our committee is expanding its collaborations with external NGOs to benefit from their expertise and strengthen our impact.

In particular, we have established links with FEANTSA, the European Federation of National Associations Working with the Homeless, which conducts in-depth research into the link between migration and homelessness. Our current survey on the experience of vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees in relation to accommodation provides us with a valuable opportunity to coordinate our efforts and enrich our mutual analyses.

We are also collaborating with KAICIID, an organization committed to the inclusion of migrants and inter-religious dialogue. These synergies open up new perspectives for developing concerted solutions to today's migration challenges.

Presentation of our Committee

I was delighted to accept an invitation from CMatlv (World Committee for Lifelong Learning), a member organization of our committee, to present our work at their General Assembly. For this occasion, I produced a presentation document specially designed for people outside the Council of Europe. This document is at your disposal should you wish to use it or share it in your own work.

For his part, Daniel presented the Committee as part of a visit by the European Committee of Catholic Schools to the premises of the Council of Europe (Palais de l'Europe). Participants came from over 40 different countries.

Finally, Marc will also have the opportunity to present the Committee with IRC- Hellas in Greece (International Red Cross) on December 18.

COOPERATION WITH COUNCIL OF EUROPE BODIES

PACE

Our Committee will be taking part in the next session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, to be held in Paris on December 9 and 10

SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Our Committee will take part in the next CGM meeting with Mr David Best, Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, on Thursday December 5, 2024 with all the Council of Europe players working on the subject of migration.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE DEVELOPMENT BANK

The Council of Europe Development Bank organized a conference entitled
“Responding to homelessness through social investment”. Daniel was invited to attend, and was able to meet several heads of department at the Council of Europe, as well as the Director of FEANTSA (see “Exchanges with NGOs outside our Committee” above).

COMMITTEE WORK

WORKING GROUPS

As a reminder, four working groups have been identified to address the issues targeted by the Committee:

1. **Horizontal Aspects** : This group analyzes 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 organizations.

2. **Intercultural inclusion** : It aims to support the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities program 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 accomodation of vulnerable people, especially women and children, and its influence on their social inclusion and access to basic rights and services.**
   For a better analysis of the various situations, we can refer to the text of the Odysseus network blog from the University of Louvain (Belgium). Salomé Vischer (New Humanity), a member of our Committee, has kindly provided a summary. Our thanks to her.

4. **First Reception** : Initial accommodation is crucial to the future of displaced people, requiring a collective commitment to guarantee human dignity and safety, with recommendations to be drawn up by the Committee.

   The horizontal aspects working group has produced **an in-depth summary.** It highlights fundamental criteria to guide decision-makers in choosing suitable accommodation models, such as guaranteeing human dignity, safety, stability and integration. This note, which forms an essential basis for our reflections, also helps us to identify the issues linked to the lack of adequate accommodation solutions, and to formulate recommendations in favor of inclusive and ethical policies.

   The Intercultural Cities Working Group recently published an important working summary, accessible here, which addresses the challenges and solutions for fostering inclusive and cohesive dynamics in our cities.

   This document explores ways of promoting positive intercultural interactions in cities, taking into account the social, economic and educational dimensions. It stresses the importance of creating spaces for authentic, inclusive dialogue, and puts forward practical recommendations for local authorities, NGOs and educational players. The aim is to build communities where diversity is perceived as an asset, while addressing the tensions and misunderstandings associated with migration and cultural diversity.

   In-depth work on **accommodation for people in vulnerable situations** is progressing. Notable contributions include:

- **Famille au Grand Cœur**, on accommodation of LGBTQ migrants
- **DPI Europe**, concerning the specific needs of people with disabilities.
- **Caritas Hongrie** : un exemple d'accueil d'une famille
- **RENATE / Germany** : different realities in different Länders

   We would like to thank these organizations for their valuable contributions.

   Relaunch of the survey on accommodation for vulnerable migrants :
   We remind you of the importance of completing the survey, available here :

Link to the survey

The deadline for responses has been extended to December 31, 2024.
Please circulate this survey to your contacts with experience to share.

Send to : guery.daniel@sfr.fr

VARIOUS

Action in a Strasbourg secondary school to help homeless (migrant) pupils

Fernand, Christine and Daniel met a teacher from the Lezay Marnesia secondary school in Strasbourg, who was involved with other colleagues in helping homeless pupils whose parents are asylum seekers (first application or appeal situation). The cold and bad weather made their situation truly impossible.

The teachers pointed out the contradiction between the situation of these children evicted from their camp and the number of empty staff housing units. Some teachers occupied the college and slept there with the families of the 8 homeless pupils.
The administrative bodies concerned (Education, Municipality, Department) passed the buck and took no further action, despite the presence and help of associations, NGOs and other supporters.

The dialogue with these teachers showed once again that the question of accommodation must be addressed by linking the various players, organizations and administrations concerned, and that individual compassion and goodwill are not enough.

Administrative rules are there to ensure compliance with the law, but a humane and ethical approach leads us to question practices, as case law often demonstrates.

EDUCATION WEBINAR (S)

Following on from the work initiated by the previous Committee, a series of online events will be organised between 2024 and 2025 to explore issues related to education in a migration context.

Following our first webinar on access to education for migrants: issues and challenges on October 24, the next Webinar on education and migration (n°2) will take place:

January 16, 2025 à 5 pm (CET)
Theme: Education of young migrants and compulsory schooling.

More details in the attached document and via this Zoom link:
Lien vers la salle Zoom

The date of the third webinar will also be sent to you shortly..

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

ECHOES FROM INGO, AGENCIES

AND ACTORS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

NEWS LETTERS TO CONSULT :

Newsletter PICUM (anglais) November 2024

REPORTS TO CONSULT :

EUROCERF : WORLD CHILDREN'S DAY: Crucial issues for 2025 in the face of global challenges