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CONFERENCE OF INGOs  
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

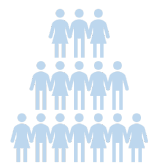
CONFERENCE DES OING DU  
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

## Committee on Migration Issues

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

### NEWSLETTER N°3

#### INTRODUCTION –



Édito

Dear colleagues,

Although we have held few plenary meetings since the beginning of the year, the Migration Issues Committee has nonetheless remained rich and dynamic. Indeed, a delegation from our Committee visited Poland from February 10 to 14 on a field observation mission. Their conclusions and feedback have begun to fuel our reflections and strengthen our exchanges with the various entities of the Council of Europe.

In addition, our monitoring of “migration issues” continues to function well, thanks in particular to the regular information transmitted by certain NGO members of our Committee, reporting human rights violations linked to migration. Finally, we are continuing our webinars dedicated to education, which are attracting a great deal of interest and proving particularly enriching for our work as a whole.

I look forward to seeing all those who are able to join us on the first day of the INGO session, Monday April 7 at 4 pm, during which we will reflect together on the continuation of our work.

**Christine MONTY**

Chair of the Committee on Migration Issues  
Conférence of OING's, Council of Europe

## SUMMARY



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## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

### BOARD MEETINGS

Since January 2025, the members of the **Board of the Migration Issues Committee** have met several times to ensure **effective monitoring of work** and **strategic coordination**.

The most recent meetings took place:

- January 10, 2025
- February 05, 2025
- March 10, 2025

These small committee meetings enable us to:


- ✓ Take stock of project progress.
- ✓ Define strategies to improve the Committee's efficiency.
- ✓ Set agendas and dates for future meetings.
- ✓ Prepare future general meetings.
- ✓ Establish a retroplanning of upcoming deadlines.
- ✓ Exchange views freely on key topics impacting the Committee's organization and actions.

The study trip to **Poland** required numerous adjustments, mobilizing the **Board in ongoing coordination**.

Furthermore, in addition to these formal meetings, the **Board communicates regularly and flexibly**, via **telephone, e-mail and a shared folder on Drive**, where **meeting minutes** and **working documents in progress** are centralized.

### COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Our next Committee meeting will take place:

 April 7, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.

**Location: Council of Europe, Agora, Room G06**

This next meeting will be an opportunity to **review the progress of our work, discuss our next areas of focus, and define our priorities and collaborations for 2025**.

These regular meetings bring Committee members together to **monitor the progress of ongoing projects, share ideas for new initiatives, and ensure consistency between our actions and our strategic objectives**.

## EXCHANGES WITH ENTITIES OUTSIDE THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

For the past year, the **Committee on Migration Issues** has been striving to enhance and promote the expertise of its **member NGOs**, in order to strengthen the impact of our actions and make an informed contribution to **migration issues**.

With this in mind, we have asked **Frontex** to join their **Consultative Forum**, as well as the **European Union Asylum Agency**, in order to bring the voice of **civil society** to bear on **European decision-making bodies**.

More recently, based on the expertise of the **NGO Renate**, the Committee drew up a contribution for the **UN** on **migrant domestic workers** and **human trafficking**, addressing key issues such as **prevention**, **protection of rights** and **access to justice**. This work was warmly welcomed by the **United Nations**, underlining the importance of our analyses and recommendations.

## EXCHANGES WITH NGOS OUTSIDE OUR COMMITTEE

The **Committee on Migration Issues** attaches particular importance to **exchanges and cooperation with NGOs** whose **expertise** complements that of its members. This approach aims to **enrich our work** and **reinforce the impact** of our actions in the field of **migration and housing**.

Our survey on the **housing of migrants in vulnerable situations** illustrates this **desire for openness**. **NGOs who are not members of the Committee** contributed to the survey, sharing their **analyses and field experiences**, in order to offer a more **global vision** of the **challenges and best practices** in this field.

In the same vein, our **study trip to Poland** enabled us to meet with **Caritas Poland**, an **active member** of our Committee through **Caritas Europa**, strongly involved in **welcoming and supporting migrants**. The trip was also an opportunity to **exchange views** with other **local NGOs** of varying sizes, who are not members of the Committee but whose **expertise** in the field is essential for a better **understanding of migration realities** and **appropriate responses**.

## COLLABORATION WITH COUNCIL OF EUROPE BODIES

### PACE

Our Committee actively contributes to the work of the **Migration Commission of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe**, notably by **regularly participating in its meetings**.

At the most recent session, held on **March 11, 2024** in **Paris**, **Daniel and I** were able to present the **main findings of our field study trip to Poland**. This presentation was an opportunity to **share our observations** with the members of the Commission, to **enrich their reflections** and to **highlight the challenges facing Poland** as well as the **good practices identified** during our mission.

In addition, these meetings enabled us to establish **essential contacts** for the continuation and deepening of our work by **fostering close cooperation with various key players within the Council of Europe**.

### SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE VS DIVISION OF MIGRATION AND REFUGEES

**David Best**, **Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe** stepped down at the end of December, along with his assistant, **Jean-François Goujon-Fischer**. **Mr Best** had taken up his post almost simultaneously with the start of **our Committee's mandate**, and had always been very open and available to work with us.

Following a reorganization, the **Division on Migration and Refugees (DMR)** was created within the **Directorate General for Human Rights and the Rule of Law (DG1)** on **February 1, 2025**, to ensure continuity in the work of the former Special Representative. Its mandate is to offer **assistance and support** to member states, notably through the **Network of Focal Points on Migration**, to research, collect and analyze information concerning the **human rights situation of migrants and refugees**, and to complement and coordinate the activities of other relevant **Council of Europe bodies**. The DMR represents the Council of Europe in the **Frontex and AUEA Consultative Forums**, while continuing and strengthening collaboration with other international partners (**UNHCR, IOM, EU, etc.**) and **civil society**.

**Mr Nikolaos Sitaropoulos** has been appointed **Head of Division**. Within a few days of his appointment, we contacted him and his advisor, **Mr. Rüdiger Dossow**, both of whom were keen

to work closely with **our Committee**. **Mr. Sitaropoulos** has enthusiastically agreed to speak at the **third webinar on education on April 3**.

## COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

We maintain close links with the **Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights** and his **close collaborators**. Prior to our departure for **Poland**, an initial working meeting was held to **analyze possible synergies** between our two entities in the context of this **study tour**. A second meeting is due to take place shortly to **deepen exchanges** and **strengthen this collaboration**.

## ECHR

The **European Court of Human Rights (ECHR)** has set up a **special division** to hear and decide cases concerning **migrants**. This division, headed by **Sophie Picquet**, regularly informs us of the **most significant judgments** handed down by the Court, enabling us to integrate these **jurisprudential developments** into our work and reflections.

## CGM

Meetings of the **Inter-Secretariat Coordination Group on Migration**, organized by the **Migration and Refugees Division**, are held regularly and provide a major opportunity to meet the various **Council of Europe players working on migration issues**. The latest meeting, held in **Strasbourg on March 24, 2025**, highlighted the **Council of Europe's actions and standards in the field of border controls and migration procedures**.

**Gianluca Esposito**, **Director General of Human Rights and Rule of Law (DGI)**, and **Clare Ovey**, **Director of Human Rights**, opened the session. Discussions focused on the **protection of human rights at the EU's external borders** and the role of **European institutions** in upholding these standards. **Aydan Iyigüngör**, representative of the **European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights** and co-chairman of the **FRONTEX Consultative Forum**, presented the agency's work to **protect fundamental rights** in cooperation with **national border forces**.

Participants then addressed the issues of **screening, detention, and access to justice for migrants**, with insights from the **European Court of Human Rights**, the **Parliamentary Assembly's Migration Committee**, the **Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights**, and the **European Committee for the Prevention of Torture**. CGM members also noted the worrying rise in **hate speech against migrants** and its increasing dissemination in **political rhetoric**.

The meeting concluded with a presentation of the next meeting of the **network of correspondents in charge of migration issues (June 19-20 in Strasbourg)** and a first **brainstorming session** on the preparation of a new **Council of Europe action plan on migration and asylum**.

Please note that we are invited to take part in drawing up the action plan on the basis of our own experiences.

## COMMITTEE WORK

### PRESS RELEASE

A **press release** has been issued following the **observation and analysis mission** carried out in **Poland**, from **February 10 to 14, 2025**, by a delegation from the **Conference of INGOs' Migration Issues Committee**. During this trip, the delegation met with various **institutional players** and visited several **border areas**, in order to draw up a precise **assessment of the migration situation** in the country. The observations gathered and presented here are intended to highlight the main issues relating to **migratory flows** and the **reception of displaced persons**. These preliminary findings, shared in particular with **diplomatic representations**, will serve as a basis for guiding the **Committee's future work** and strengthening its **collaboration with other Council of Europe bodies**.

### REPORT

Following distribution of the **press release**, a **detailed report** was drawn up by **Salomé Brun**. It was **e-mailed to you on March 6**. This document will shortly be **put to the vote** at the **General Assembly**, to enable other **Council of Europe bodies** to take it on board and legitimately use it as a basis for their work.

The report presents the **main findings and recommendations** of the **observation and analysis mission** carried out in **Poland** by a delegation from the **Conference of INGOs' Migration Issues Committee**. It is divided into **two main sections**:

- The situation at the **Polish-Belarussian border**, where the **management of migratory flows** is strongly influenced by a **security prism**, to the detriment of the **right to asylum** and the **protection of fundamental rights**;
- The situation at the **Polish-Ukrainian border**, where the initial **solidarity-based approach** is showing signs of running out of steam, highlighting the need to move from an **emergency approach** to **long-term integration measures**.

In particular, the document analyzes issues relating to **migrant accommodation** (open centers, closed centers, unaccompanied minors) and **collaboration between institutional players and NGOs**, while highlighting the **key role** played by **civil society**. Finally, it stresses the importance of **strengthening coordination** and ensuring strict compliance with **international obligations** to guarantee **effective protection of human rights**.

## CONTRIBUTION ON MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS

The **Committee on Migration Issues** recently contributed to the preparation of the **United Nations Special Rapporteur's report on trafficking in human beings**. This initiative is part of the work carried out under the guidance of **Mr. Rüdiger Dossow, Programme Manager of the Division on Migration and Refugees at the Council of Europe**.

Entitled **"Migrant Domestic Workers and Trafficking in Persons: Prevention, Protection of Rights and Access to Justice,"** the [contribution is now available online](#). It notably draws on the expertise of the **NGO RÉNATE**, a member of our Committee, whom we warmly thank for the quality of their work and their commitment.


## WORKS ON ACCOMMODATION

The **work carried out to date** forms a **solid base of knowledge**, thanks in particular to contributions from the various **working groups** and **feedback from the report on Poland**. We are now going to analyse the **results of our survey** and compare them with the thinking already underway.

On this basis, our ambition is to draw up a **comprehensive recommendation** taking into account all the important points: **transversal aspects, intercultural inclusion, specific vulnerabilities, and emergency reception**. This recommendation will serve as a reference for our **partners and institutional decision-makers**, to contribute to **inclusive policies** that respect **fundamental rights**.

## WEBINARES ON EDUCATION

The **third and final webinar** in our **"Education and Migration"** series will be held on **Thursday, April 3, 2025, from 5 to 7 p.m.**, and will focus on:

 **Higher education, vocational training and young migrants**  
 **Participation link :** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84503322360>

Le programme de ce webinaire est disponible sur la page du site du comité sur : <https://rm.coe.int/migration-com-webinar3-education-and-migration-03-04-25-fr/1680b40f8a>



We invite you to take part in this latest exchange in order to continue the reflection and identify concrete levers of action to promote access to education for young migrants.

This cycle of webinars has explored the **educational challenges faced by migrants from different angles:**



**First webinar :**



**Thursday, October 24, 2024 – Access to education for migrants: issues and challenges**



**Deuxième webinaire :**



**Thursday, January 16, 2025 – The education of young migrants and compulsory schooling**



**Presentations and videos from past webinars are available online on the Migration Issues Committee page.**

## **ECHOES FROM INGOs, AGENCIES**

### **AND ACTORS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE**



**DIVISION OF MIGRATION AND REFUGEES, COE - NEWSLETTER**

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/migration-and-refugees/newsletter-2025>

**CCDH, COE**

[Drafting group on Human Rights and Artificial Intelligence](#)

**ASSEDEL :**

[Digital Borders: The Impact of Technology on Migration and Refugee Rights in Europe](#)

[Greece's Non-Compliance with International Refugee Law: Systematic Pushbacks and Legal Violations](#)

**France Terre d'asile :**

[Une analyse sur la situation à la frontière polono-Belarus](#)

**I have Rights**

Echo from the association where Salomé Brun spent several months on assignment

[La lettre de Février 2025](#)