



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONFERENCE DES OING DU
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Committee on Migration Issues

Housing of migrant persons, a Major Challenge for the Respect of Human Rights

NEWSLETTER N°4

INTRODUCTION –

[Édito](#)

Dear Colleagues,

The new school year is now behind us, and it is time to fully resume our work within the Committee on Migration Issues. I hope you had a restorative summer and that together we can find the energy needed to continue our commitment.

The coming months promise to be particularly intense:

- Presentation of our **recommendation on housing** for a vote at the next General Assembly,
- Further development of our work on **artificial intelligence and migration**,
- Continued reflections on **education**,
- Establishment of **monitoring on the EU Pact** on Asylum and Migration,
- Cooperation with the **Frontex Consultative Forum**,
- Not to mention our **collaborations with other entities of the Council of Europe**, which strengthen the impact of our actions.

We must also express our concern about the tightening, observed over the summer, of certain rules applied to migrants in several countries, particularly in Greece, which further undermine the respect of fundamental rights.

I look forward to continuing with you the coordination of the Committee's work and encourage each of you to share any worrying facts observed in the field, so that together we can raise awareness and give them the necessary visibility.

Christine MONTY

President of the Committee on Migration Issues
Conference of INGOs – Council of Europe

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MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

BOARD'S MEETING

Since **March 2025**, the members of the **Board of the Committee on Migration Issues** have met several times to ensure **effective follow-up of the work** and **strategic coordination**.

The most recent meetings took place on:

- 10 March 2025
- 08 April 2025
- 10 June 2025

These meetings make it possible to:

- Develop strategic guidelines to strengthen the effectiveness of the Committee;
- Set the agenda of meetings and the schedule of upcoming sessions;
- Anticipate and prepare the upcoming General Assemblies of the Conference of INGOs;
- Establish a provisional timetable of forthcoming deadlines;
- Encourage open exchanges on major issues affecting the organisation and actions of the Committee.

In addition to these formal meetings, the Bureau maintains regular and flexible communication, notably by telephone, email, and through a shared Drive space, where meeting minutes and all ongoing working documents are centralised.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Our next Committee meeting will be held during the upcoming General Assembly of the Conference of INGOs. The date, time, and room will be communicated to you shortly.¹

This meeting will be an opportunity to review the progress of our work, exchange on our next areas of reflection, and clarify our priorities. These regular gatherings allow Committee members to follow the development of ongoing projects, share ideas for new initiatives, and ensure consistency between our actions and strategic objectives. In recent months, they have fostered constructive exchanges on the progress of working groups, opened up new avenues for reflection, and allowed us to adjust our priorities. Everyone's contributions remain valuable, enriching our discussions and effectively guiding our actions.

EXCHANGES WITH ENTITIES OUTSIDE THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Following the efforts made over the past few months to strengthen the impact of the Committee on Migration Issues' expertise, the process has finally come to fruition: our committee has now joined the **Frontex Consultative Forum**. This advancement represents a major step, as it allows

¹ It should be noted that Christine Monty, President of the Committee on Migration Issues, will not be able to attend this meeting due to her participation in an exchange with Frontex representatives on behalf of the Committee. Daniel Guery, Vice-President of the Committee, will facilitate this meeting, which will be prepared in advance to ensure the continuity and coherence of our work.

us to make the voice of NGOs heard and to bring our expertise directly to the heart of European migration policies — an ambition that many of you have long supported.

Our first contribution was submitted to the Frontex Consultative Forum regarding the recommendation on the guidelines for “toys for children and families during return” (to their country of origin or arrival). This was a great opportunity to work closely with the “Children’s Rights” Committee. The document will be published online shortly.

EXCHANGES WITH NGOS AND NETWORKS OUTSIDE OUR COMMITTEE

The Committee on Migration Issues places particular importance on exchanges and cooperation with NGOs whose expertise complements that of its members. This openness helps enrich our work and strengthen the impact of our actions in the field of migration and housing. In this context, we have specifically reached out to the Border Violence Monitoring Network to contribute to our work on artificial intelligence and migration, as well as to FORIM to develop reflections on sport and migrants.

COLLABORATION WITH COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S BODIES

PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Our Committee actively participates in the work of the [Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons](#) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, regularly attending its meetings.

These exchanges also provide an opportunity to establish and strengthen essential contacts, fostering close cooperation with key actors within the Council of Europe and thereby enhancing the impact of our own work.

DIVISION OF MIGRATION AND REFUGEES

Mr. Nikolaos Sitaropoulos, appointed Head of the [Division of Migration and Refugees](#), continues to show great interest in our work, and we maintain particularly constructive relations with him, which have allowed us to contribute to the **development of the next Council of Europe Action Plan**.

We also wish to extend a **warm message of gratitude to Mr. Rüdiger Dossow**, who recently retired. His smile, availability, and good humor have marked our exchanges and made working together always enjoyable. We wish him a happy retirement and remain ready to welcome him should he wish to participate in our Committee's work.

Our gratitude also goes to **Mr. Jean-François Goujon**, Legal Adviser in the Division of Migration and Refugees and the Committee on Migration Issues' point of contact. We wish him great satisfaction in his new role. He has been invaluable for our collaboration with the Division of Migration and Refugees.

Furthermore, meetings of the [Inter-Secretariat Coordination Group on Migration](#) (CGM), organized by the Division of Migration and Refugees, are held regularly and provide a valuable opportunity to exchange with all Council of Europe actors involved in migration issues.

The 21st meeting, held on **28 April 2025 in Strasbourg**, was largely devoted to preparing **the next Council of Europe Action Plan on Migration and Refugees (2026–2029)**. Following Nikolaos Sitaropoulos' introduction, participants heard contributions from the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA), IOM, and UNHCR, which presented their priorities and identified potential synergies with the upcoming Action Plan. Discussions focused on the protection of fundamental rights at borders, access to justice, alternatives to detention, social rights and inclusion, with particular attention to vulnerable groups (women, children, persons with disabilities).

During this meeting, the **Conference of INGOs**, through our committee, reiterated the indispensable role of civil society in defending the rights of migrants and the need to involve NGOs throughout the development and implementation of the Action Plan.

It should be noted that our committee is now directly associated with this process and contributes, based on its field experience, to defining the priorities and concrete actions of the future Action Plan.

COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

We regularly follow the **statements and positions of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights**, which inform our reflections and actions.

In turn, we ensure that he is kept informed of our activities and receive the work of our committee that we consider particularly important, to foster a constructive dialogue and strengthen the complementarity of our efforts.

EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) has a specialized division for handling cases related to migrants, under the responsibility of **Ms. Sophie Piquet**. We maintain regular contact with her, sharing our work and analyses, which allows us to ensure a constant alignment between our reflections and the most significant case law developments of the Court.

WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

COMMUNIQUÉS

During its General Assembly on 9 April 2025, the Conference of INGOs adopted the statement [“Internal security and border management in the context of migration: Respect for human rights is essential.”](#) This text emphasizes the urgency of guaranteeing effective access to fundamental rights at borders and now serves as a reference framework for our actions and contributions.

On the occasion of World Refugee Day (20 June), our Committee published the statement [“Rethinking Reception in Light of Rights and Dignity”](#).

On 25 July 2025, the Conference of INGOs [expressed deep concern](#) following the adoption by the Greek Parliament of Article 79 of Law 5218/2025, which temporarily suspends the right to apply for asylum for individuals arriving in Greece from North Africa, while providing for their immediate expulsion without registration.

This statement strongly reaffirms that the right to asylum and the principle of non-refoulement are fundamental, non-negotiable rights, even during periods of high migratory pressure. The Conference calls on the Greek authorities to repeal this provision without delay and urges concrete European political and financial solidarity to support frontline states such as Greece.

WORKS ON HOUSING

The work carried out so far has allowed us to build a solid foundation of knowledge, thanks to the contributions of the various working groups and feedback from field experiences, notably those related to the mission conducted in Poland.

On this basis, the draft **Recommendation on the Housing of Migrants** has now been finalized. To ensure it can be submitted for a vote at the next Assembly, we forwarded it to the Standing Bureau during the summer, in compliance with the established deadlines. This text, which incorporates cross-cutting aspects, intercultural inclusion, specific vulnerabilities, and emergency reception, is intended to become a reference for our partners and institutional decision-makers, promoting inclusive policies that respect fundamental rights.

We warmly thank all those who contributed, directly or indirectly, to the development of this work. Their expertise, feedback, and collective commitment have been essential to successfully completing this project.

WEBINARS

Webinar “Education and Migration”

The **Committee on Migration Issues** organized its third webinar on the theme “Education and Migration.” This event brought together experts, representatives from universities, NGOs, and

European institutions, who shared their experiences and best practices in promoting inclusion through education.

Key highlights included:

- Presentations of innovative university programs,
- Testimonials from young people on the move engaged in vocational learning pathways, as well as initiatives aimed at strengthening the skills and resilience of refugees through visual arts and storytelling.

Supplementary documents and resources shared during the webinar are available online: access [here](#).

Upcoming Webinars

- A webinar “Education and Migration: Teacher Training”
- A webinar “AI and Migration” scheduled for 13 November. A program and invitation will be sent to you shortly.

MEETINGS – CONFERENCES

Conference-Debate “**Learning for All in the Face of Societal Challenges: Human Rights, Migrant Integration, and Social Cohesion in a Diverse Society**”

On 27 May 2025, the **Conference-Debate** “Learning for All in the Face of Societal Challenges: Human Rights, Migrant Integration, and Social Cohesion in a Diverse Society” took place, organized by **Caritas Europa** and the **Global Committee for Lifelong Learning (CMAtlv)**, both active members of our Committee on Migration Issues.

This exchange highlighted the essential role of education and lifelong learning as drivers of inclusion and social cohesion.



The replay of the event is available [here](#)

SOME ECHOES FROM INGOS, INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES AND COUNCIL OF EUROPE ACTORS

- [ECHR interim measure](#) blocking expulsions in Greece, following the suspension of the right to asylum.

COMMUNIQUÉS :

- [Statement by Ms. Sandra Zampa](#) (Italy, SOC), Rapporteur on “Challenges and Needs of Public and Private Actors Involved in Migration Management” within the Committee on

Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons of the Parliamentary Assembly, regarding maritime safety, following an NGO boat targeted by a Libyan patrol.

- [Statement by UNHCR](#) expressing serious concern over the suspension of access to asylum in Greece.
- [Statement by UNHCR and GNCHR](#) expressing concern over the rise of hostile discourse targeting migrants, refugees, and civil society in Greece.
- [Statement by IOM](#) concerning the death of Pope Francis.

NEWSLETTERS :

- DIVISION OF MIGRATION AND REFUGEES, COE - [NEWSLETTER](#)
- BVMN monthly report – [June 2025](#)

LES COMPTE-RENDUS À CONSULTER :

- Parliamentary Conference, 23–24 April 2025, Strasbourg: [“Designing Effective Public Policies to Prevent and Manage Cases of Missing Migrants.”](#) (English version of the text not found).

LES ARTICLES À CONSULTER :

- [Ekathimerini, 21 August 2025](#), revealing new government measures in Greece aimed at restricting access for NGOs working on migration, notably by removing them from the official register if they challenge policies or question authorities.
- The Aegean NGO Network [alerting](#) to new restrictions imposed on NGOs in reception centers in Greece and calling for urgent action.
- Various publications by the association I Have Rights on the [“Reform of the Framework and Procedures for the Return of Third-Country Nationals”](#) in Greece; the [suspension of the right to asylum in Greece](#); and the [Greek state’s failure to meet data protection obligations in the migration context](#).