

STEERING COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

(CDDH)

Elements for the CDDH terms of reference 2024-2027¹

¹ As prepared by the Secretariat, on the basis of the CDDH terms of reference for 2022-2025 reviewed in light of the Summit declaration and new challenges identified, and including proposals by the CDDH Bureau, highlighted.

Terms of reference of the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH)

Set up by the Committee of Ministers under Article 17 of the Statute of the Council of Europe and in accordance with [Resolution CM/Res\(2021\)3](#) on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods.

Category: Steering committee

Duration: 1 January 2024 - 31 December 2027²

Programme: xxx

Sub-programme: xxx

Main tasks

Under the authority of the Committee of Ministers and bearing in mind the Council of Europe legal standards as well as the relevant case law of the European Court of Human Rights, the CDDH will conduct the intergovernmental work of the Council of Europe in the human rights field and will advise and give its legal expertise to the Committee of Ministers on all questions within its field of competence. In particular, the CDDH is instructed to:

- i. ensure the follow-up of the relevant decisions taken at the 4th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe (Reykjavik, 16-17 May 2023),³ and in particular contribute to the implementation of the key strategic priorities relating to its specific field of expertise as identified in the Strategic Framework of the Council of Europe, and respond to the respective key findings and challenges set out in the Secretary General's 2023 Report on the state of democracy, human rights and rule of law "An Invitation to Recommit to the Values and Standards of the Council of Europe";
- ii. work on the protection, development and promotion of human rights in Europe to:
 - a. contribute to enhancing the protection of human rights by improving the effectiveness of the control mechanism of the European Convention on Human Rights and the implementation of the Convention at national and European levels, this work being a permanent priority for the CDDH;
 - b. provide effective responses at the normative and general policy levels to the challenges posed to human rights in European societies;
- iii. follow the implementation of the non-binding instruments that it has prepared as well as conventions for which it has been given responsibility by the Committee of Ministers;
- iv. advise other bodies of the Organisation to ensure that their activities concerning human rights duly reflect the requirements of the European Convention on Human Rights and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights;
- v. contribute to co-operation and support activities to national initiatives in the field of the protection, development and promotion of human rights;
- vi. without prejudice to the mandates of intergovernmental committees of the Council of Europe that already follow the work of monitoring mechanisms, follow the activities of the relevant monitoring and other bodies protecting human rights;

² These terms of reference are approved for the first biennial period 2024-2025. For the second biennial period 2026-2027, they are approved on a provisional basis, subject to confirmation upon the adoption of the budget for 2026-2027.

³ XX.

- vii. orient and oversee the work of its subordinate bodies, notably the Committee of Experts on the System of the European Convention on Human Rights (DH-SYSC) and, subject to the result of main deliverable 2, the Drafting Committee on Human Rights and Environment (DH-ENV);
- viii. oversee and finalise the work on the accession of the European Union to the European Convention on Human Rights;
- ix. respond to the human rights challenges that European societies face by means of providing guidance to member States through preparation of non-binding instruments of the Committee of Ministers (e.g. declarations, recommendations or guidelines) while ensuring co-ordination and co-operation with relevant Council of Europe bodies;
- x. in co-ordination notably with the presidencies of the Committee of Ministers and representatives of civil society, ensure follow-up to the national implementation of various recommendations of the Committee of Ministers prepared by the CDDH;
- xi. organise thematic debates on the right of access to official documents taking into account the entry into force of the Tromsø Convention (CETS 205);
- xii. hold an exchange of views annually in order to evaluate its activities and advise the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General on future priorities in its sector, including possible new activities and those that might be discontinued;
- xiii. take due account of the following mainstreamed perspectives in the performance of its tasks: gender, youth, children's rights, rights of persons with disabilities, and Roma and Traveller⁴ issues;
- xiv. where relevant, contribute to building cohesive societies and to strengthening the role and meaningful participation of civil society in its work;
- xv. in accordance with decisions CM/Del/Dec(2013)1168/10.2 of the Committee of Ministers, carry out, at regular intervals, within the limits of the available resources and bearing in mind its priorities, an examination of some or all of the conventions for which it has been given responsibility,⁵ in co-operation, where appropriate, with the relevant convention-based bodies, and report back to the Committee of Ministers;
- xvi. contribute to the achievement of, and review progress towards, the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular with regards to Goal 3: Good health and well-being, Goal 5: Gender equality, Goal 8: Decent work and economic work, Goal 10: Reduced inequalities, Goal 13: Climate action and Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong institutions.

⁴ The term "Roma and Travellers" is used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term "*Gens du voyage*", as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies. The present is an explanatory footnote, not a definition of Roma and/or Travellers.

⁵ Cf. relevant decisions of the Committee of Ministers ([CM/Del/Dec\(2013\)1168/10.2](#)) and list of Conventions in document CM(2023)132.

Main deliverables

Under the authority of the Committee of Ministers, the CDDH is instructed to complete these deliverables, within the following deadlines:

	Category	Deadline
1. Draft non-binding legal instrument on the effective protection of human rights in situations of crisis based on lessons learnt from the Covid-19 pandemic	C	30/06/2024
2. Study on the need for and feasibility of a further instrument or instruments in the field of human rights and the environment	C	30/06/2024
3. Report evaluating the effectiveness of the system for the selection and election of the judges of the European Court of Human Rights and the means to ensure due recognition for those judges' status and service on the Court and providing additional safeguards to preserve their independence and impartiality (cf. DH-SYSC terms of reference)	C	31/12/2024
4. Report evaluating the first effects of Protocol No.16 (cf. DH-SYSC terms of reference)	C	30/06/2025 31/12/2024
5. Handbook on human rights and artificial intelligence	C	31/12/2025 4
6. Final agreement on instruments setting out the modalities for the accession of the European Union to the European Convention on Human Rights	A - C	31/12/2024
7. Report evaluating the first effects of Protocol No.15 (cf. DH-SYSC terms of reference)	C	31/12/2025
8. Study on the need for and feasibility of (an) additional non-binding instrument(s) to complement the 2011 Committee of Ministers' Guidelines on the eradication of impunity for serious human rights violations	E	31/12/2025
9. Subject to the result of main deliverable 3, follow-up to the report evaluating the effectiveness of the system for the selection and election of Court's judges etc. (cf. DH-SYSC terms of reference)	E	30/06/2026
10. Study on the feasibility of updating Committee of Ministers Recommendation No. R(97)22 to member States containing Guidelines on the Application of the Safe Third Country Concept	E	30/06/2026
11. Subject to the result of main deliverable 8, draft non-binding instrument(s) to complement the 2011 Committee of Ministers' Guidelines on the eradication of impunity for serious human rights violations	E	31/12/2026
12. Subject to the result of main deliverable 2, draft instrument(s) in the field of human rights and the environment (cf. DH-ENV terms of reference)	A	30/06/2027
13. Subject to the result of main deliverable 10, updated Committee of Ministers Recommendation No. R(97)22 to member States containing Guidelines on the Application of the Safe Third Country Concept	E	31/12/2027
14. Report on the use of new technologies by the European Court of Human Rights	E	31/12/2027
15. Report on new tendencies in litigation before the European Court of Human Rights		31/12/2027
16. Implementation review – Reports on its examination of implementation of following Committee of Ministers Recommendations to member States: - CM/Rec(2018)11 on the need to strengthen the protection and promotion of civil society space in Europe - CM/Rec(2019)5 on the system of the European Convention on Human Rights in university education and professional training - CM/Rec(2019)6 on the development of the Ombudsman institution - CM/Rec(2021)1 on the development and strengthening of effective, pluralist and independent national human rights institutions - CM/Rec(2021)2 on measures against the trade in goods used for the death penalty, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. - CM/Rec(2021)4 on the publication and dissemination of the European Convention on Human Rights, the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights and other relevant texts - CM/Rec(2022)20 on human rights and the protection of the environment	D E for CM/Rec(2021)4	Up to 2 per year
Key A: deliverable foreseen in the 4 th Summit final outcome document B: deliverable foreseen by a convention C: deliverable under preparation (2022-2023 terms of reference or Committee of Ministers' decision) or deliverable foreseen in the terms of reference provisionally approved for 2024-2025 and reviewed where relevant in the framework of the preparation of the draft Programme and Budget 2024-2027 D: review of implementation/ re-examination foreseen by the recommendation/ protocol/ convention E: newly proposed deliverable		