



CONFERENCE OF INGOs
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Terms of reference of a Committee – proposal form

INGOs wishing to propose the creation of a committee to the Conference of INGOs are invited to transmit the following information, together with the requested documents, no later than 21 March to NGO-Unit@coe.int

1. Proposed Title

Civil Society Committee on the Rights of the Child (CSC-RC)

2. Background and links with the priorities of the Conference of INGOs and the Council of Europe (please indicate also the specific documents / legal / institutional instruments you wish to refer to) (500 words max)

The Committee on the Rights of the Child will mainly cooperate with the following CoE bodies:

- the Children's Rights Division
- the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF) that is the Council of Europe intergovernmental body responsible for the standard-setting activities in the field of the rights of the child.
- Committee of experts on the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation and in care proceedings (CJ/ENF-ISE)
- the European Steering Committee for Youth (CDEJ)
- the Lanzarote Committee
- the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)
- the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR)
- the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO)
- the European Committee of Social Rights
- the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT)
- the online platform HELP (Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals)

The Committee will base its work and discourse on principles deriving from:

- the Council of Europe current Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) and the next one,
- the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child,
- the European Convention on Human Rights,
- case law of the European Court of Human Rights,
- regulations of the Council of Europe.

3. Committee's purpose(s)

- 1/ To promote the application of the rights of the child in national laws, policies, and practices, in line with international and European standards and good practice.
- 2/ To cooperate with other institutions of the CoE to provide a platform for interpretative discourse on points of European human rights law and practices relating to the rights of the child.
- 3/ To identify points of legislative reform and potential harmonization among European legal systems and practices relating to children's rights.
- 4/ To enable exchanges and develop learning of family justice professional (judges, lawyers, mediators, psychologists, social workers, etc.).

The beneficiaries of the committee's purposes are children, i.e. persons under the age of 18. Accordingly, the beneficiaries also include young people in their fundamental rights dimension. Therefore, articulation will be considered with the Youth Department of the Council of Europe which seeks to bring together and disseminate expertise and knowledge about the life situations, aspirations and ways of expression of young Europeans.

4. Its specific objective(s)

- 1/ Disseminate research results, relevant articles and INGOs' activity reports on the Rights of the Child in situations of parental separation and in domestic law proceedings by public authorities to limit parental responsibilities or place a child in care.
- 2/ Hold meetings in order to define the main lines of the implementation of the platform on how the best interests of the child and their rights are protected by laws, policies and practices.
- 3/ Formulate –on the basis of the above-mentioned reviews, INGOs activities and platform content– guidelines or other policy instruments or practical tools to support member States and other stakeholders in this area.
- 4/ Organize webinars to exchange ideas and experiences among experts, researchers and professionals, from an interdisciplinary perspective (e.g. What is coparenting? How to prepare parents to cope with separation consequences? How to deal with the separation consequences? How to develop parents' awareness of separation outcomes? How to communicate with the former partner? How to avoid violence? What are the consequences of institutional placement? Who can decide on institutional care?)
- 5/ Articulate, demonstrate and promote the role of civil society organisations in upholding i/ the fundamental rights of children and ii/ the role of parents in raising their children and guaranteeing their rights.
- 6/ Ensure the voice and influence of children and adults with experience of statutory/legal intervention (e.g. through entering state care systems) are central to the work of the committee by promoting the effective participation of children and relevant groups of people.

5. Planned activities, working methods and timetable

- 4 online meetings per year
- Designation of a board (chair and vice-chairpersons, rapporteur, facilitators of ad-hoc drafting groups)
- Establishment of ad-hoc drafting groups (ad-hoc drafting groups are focused on specific tasks of the committee. Nevertheless, delegates can circulate among ad-hoc drafting groups according to the tasks at hand, so that ideas can be discussed and shared within the committee.
- Gradual finalisation of written documents through e-mail exchanges and on-line meetings.
- Seeking decision-making by consensus

6. Expected outputs and their indicators

- annual report (The Committee shall submit: (a) an interim report on its activities for consideration at the General Assembly occurring a year after its creation; and (b) a final report on its findings, together with any draft recommendation or resolution considered appropriate, for consideration at the General Assembly held prior to the end of its mandate.)
- written contribution to the work of the mentioned CoE bodies, contributions made on the base of the INGO / NGO consultation.
- 2 newsletters per year.
- 2 meetings with 2 of the CoE bodies mentioned above (item 2).
- 1 webinar per year for the professional development of family justice professionals and social workers
- Use of online communication and dissemination methods to share and promote the work of the committee e.g. through twitter

7. Names, contact details, expertise and experiences of the Heads of the INGO delegations supporting the creation of the Committee (at least 5)

- 1- **IFSW Europe** : Dr Ruth Allen, International Federation of Social Workers – Europe region Contact ruth.allen@basw.co.uk
- 2- **Eurocef** : J-L Patrick Chiniard, President of EUROCEF, jlpatrick.chiniard@free.fr
- 3- **Defence for Children International (DCI)** : Alex Kamarotos, Executive Director, alex.kamarotos@defenceforchildren.org and Benoit Van Keirsbilck, Director of DEI-Belgique bvankeirsbilck@defensedesenfants.be
- 4- **Hope For Children**: Andria Neocleous, Director of Humanitarian Division / neocleous.a@uncrcpc.org
- 5- **Children of prisoners Europe**: Liz Ayre, Executive Director / Directrice executive, liz.ayre@networkcope.eu
- 6- **CISV International**: Anne Kraus (Luxembourg), Vice- President of the Conference of International NGOs of the Council of Europe (CoE), Representative of the Conference of INGOs to the CDEJ and Advisory Council of Youth (Council of Europe), krausanne@hotmail.com
- 7- **European Parent's Association**: Valerie Gardette, Vice-president and treasurer of European Parents' Association, vgardette70@gmail.com

8. Names, contact details, expertise and experiences of the delegates who will take part in the Committee (at least 7)

- 1- Michel Grangeat – Professor Emeritus of Educational Science – University of Grenoble Alpes – Representative of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe on the CJ/ENF-ISE – France – michel.grangeat@univ-grenoble-alpes.fr
- 2- Dr Ruth Allen – International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), Europe region Contact, Chief Executive of the British Association of Social Workers. Delegate for Europe to INGO – United Kingdom – ruth.allen@basw.co.uk
- 3- Alex Kamarotos – Defence for Children International (DCI), Executive Director – alex.kamarotos@defenceforchildren.org
- 4- Margaret Tuite – Defence for Children International (DCI) – margaret.tuite@gmail.com (tbc)
- 5- Benoit Van Keirsbilck – Director of DCI-DEI-Belgique – Belgique – bvankeirsbilck@defensedesenfants.be
- 6- Kate Philbrick OBE – Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE) – Scotland – katephilbrick@uwclub.net
- 7- Marie-Jeanne Schmitt – Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE), Board Member – Luxembourg – majeschmitt@gmail.com
- 8- Julien Khayat – manager of a child protection service in Paris – board member and alternate representative at the Council of Europe INGO conference for European Committee for Home-based Priority Action for the Child and the Family - EUROCEF
- 9- Katerina Melissari – Child Protection Coordinator, Hope For Children – CRC Policy Center – Cyprus – melissari.k@uncrcpc.org
- 10- Tapio Koivula – Junior Researcher and PhD student at the University of Lapland – International Council on Shared Parenting (ICSP) – Finland – tapiokoivula@hotmail.com
- 11- Dr. Dagmar Kopčanová – Educational psychologist, researcher, consultant and lecturer at the Research Institute for Child Psychology and Pathopsychology, Bratislava – International Council on Shared Parenting (ICSP) – Slovakia – dagmar.kopcanova@vudpap.sk
- 12- Ioannis Paparigopoulos – Lawyer – President of the Council on Shared Parenting (CSP) – International Council on Shared Parenting (ICSP)– Greece – ioannispaparigopoulos@gmail.com

9. Chairperson of the Committee proposed for election by the Conference of INGOs

Michel Grangeat, Representative of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe on the CJ/ENF-ISE

10. As an attachment, you are requested to present the expertise and experience of the candidate for the position of Chairperson of this committee, in relation to the subject matter of the committee, as well as the expertise and experience of the Heads of the delegations supporting the creation of this committee

Extract from the [Rules of Procedure of the Conference of INGOs](#))

Rules that apply for the creation and functioning of a Committee, the validation of its mandate and of reporting and the election of the Chairperson of the Committee by the Conference of INGOs

«61. Committees shall be established by the General Assembly on a proposal from the Standing Committee or from 5 Heads of Delegation to: (a) provide a focus for discussion and research on a particular issue relevant to the work of Council of Europe bodies; and (b) prepare reports on their findings together with, where appropriate, draft declarations, recommendations and resolutions for its consideration.

62. In deciding to establish a Committee, the General Assembly shall have regard to:
(a) the relevance of the proposed issue to be examined for the threeyear Strategic Plan adopted by the General Assembly and for work being undertaken, or that ought to be undertaken, by Council of Europe bodies;
(b) the availability of sufficient expertise, whether amongst Delegates or that can otherwise be called upon;
(c) the need to avoid overlap with an issue that is being addressed by an existing Committee;
(d) the willingness of at least 7 Delegates to participate in it; and
(e) the possibility of accommodating meetings of the proposed Committee in the schedules of forthcoming Sessions of the Conference.

63. The General Assembly when establishing a Committee shall specify its terms of reference and the duration of its operation. It shall then invite applications/proposals for the Chair, who shall be elected on a show of voting cards where the Session is held in Strasbourg and/or through use of voting passwords for each Session held through videoconferencing. Only Articles 100, 120 and 122 shall apply to the election of Chairs of Committees.

64. The duration of a Committee shall normally be limited to two years but, where a real need has been demonstrated, may be extended by the General Assembly for a third year.

65. Committee meetings shall be open to all Delegates and to persons invited by the Chair or the Standing Committee to take part in them. Those attending shall provide the Rapporteur with their email address for distribution of notes of meetings and draft reports.

66. Each Committee shall choose its Rapporteur at its first meeting

67. In the event of a Chair not being able to continue in this role, a replacement shall be appointed by the Standing Committee. In the event of a Rapporteur not being able to continue in this role, a replacement shall be appointed by the Committee at the first opportunity to do so.

68. The Chair of a Committee shall be responsible for:
(a) chairing its meetings;
(b) preparing its agenda in consultation with the Rapporteur and ensuring that this is sent to INGOs in accordance with Article 6;
(c) circulating notes of meetings and draft reports;
(d) inviting persons other than Delegates to participate in its meetings;
(e) liaising with any Delegate appointed by the Standing Committee to represent the Conference on a Steering Committee or other body within the Council of Europe whose remit is relevant to the issue being examined;
(f) presenting its reports submitted to the General Assembly;
(g) submitting a request for any extension of the Committee duration; and
(h) submitting interim and final reports for consideration by the General Assembly.

69. *The Rapporteur shall be responsible for:*
(a) suggesting points to be included in the agenda;
(b) preparing briefings for discussion at meetings;
(c) preparing notes of meetings;
(d) preparing interim and final reports; and
(e) deputising for the Chair in his or her absence

70. *Outside of Conference Sessions, meetings of Committees may be held in Strasbourg or elsewhere and also through videoconferencing arrangements determined by the Standing Committee.*

71. *Each Committee shall submit: (a) an interim report on its activities for consideration at the General Assembly occurring a year after its creation; and (b) a final report on its findings, together with any draft recommendation or resolution considered appropriate, for consideration at the General Assembly held prior to the end of its mandate."»*