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Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

Activities in 2014-2015

Information memorandum

by Ms Gülsün Bilgehan, Chairperson, Turkey, Socialist Group

1. Introduction

1. In 2010, the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men became the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination. Its mandate now covers all aspects of the fight against discrimination, on whatever ground (age, gender, national or social origin, sexual orientation, disability, etc.), as well as all forms of racism and intolerance.

2. This widening of the committee's remit had been decided as part of a comprehensive reform of the Parliamentary Assembly, the purpose of which was to "*strengthen its political relevance and effectiveness, to make it more visible and to increase its members' involvement*". A further objective was to "*reinforce the interaction between the Assembly and national parliaments and to strengthen interparliamentary co-operation*".¹

3. A review of the committee's activities for the period 2012-2013 was carried out by Ms Tina Acketoft in her capacity as Chair of the committee and provided some useful guidelines for the committee's work.² In 2014, for example, the terms of reference of the General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance were approved, it was decided to set up the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and the Sub-Committee on Disability and Inclusion was formed.

4. The purpose of this memorandum is to take stock of the period 2014-2015 and to make some proposals with a view to submitting them to the members for consideration. The period under review coincides with Ms Gisela Wurm's chairmanship of the committee (2014) and my own in 2015.

2. Review of activities in 2014-2015

2.1. Wider thematic coverage

5. The work of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination centres on three main themes: preventing and combating racism and intolerance, violence against women and discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. The terms of reference of the three rapporteurs match these priorities. The committee has also tackled more specific themes: the rights of minorities, gender equality and the rights of persons with disabilities. These themes are reflected in the terms of reference of the three sub-committees.

6. Over the period 2014-2015, the committee presented **15 reports** which were debated at plenary sessions and meetings of the standing committee.³ This compares with the figure of 13 reports presented over the period 2012-2013.

7. In 2014-2015, the themes addressed were as follows:

- violence against women (3 reports),
- gender equality (2 reports),
- combating discrimination based on disability, gender identity or religion (3 reports),
- racism, intolerance and hate speech (3 reports),
- equality and non-discrimination (in access to justice, in times of economic crisis, parliamentary co-operation with national human rights institutions) (3 reports),
- the rights of minorities (1 report).

8. The themes covered in these reports are indicative of the wider range of topics examined by the committee under its new terms of reference. An overview of the reports produced or in preparation in 2014-2015 shows that the transition which began in 2010 has been successfully completed.

9. In order to prepare the reports, the committee undertook **12 fact-finding visits**: to Portugal, Greece, Iceland, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Tunisia, Morocco, Spain, Finland, Sweden and Norway.

10. The variety of the subject matter is a feature of the reports currently being prepared and which will be debated in 2016-2017:

¹ Parliamentary Resolution 1822 (2011), paragraph 3.

² AS/Ega Inf (2013) 30, Activities in 2012-2013, Memorandum by Ms Tina Acketoft, Chairperson, Sweden, Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, 29 November 2013.

³ See full list in Appendix 1.

- violence against women (3 reports),
- gender equality (2 reports),
- combating discrimination based on religion or disability (2 reports),
- racism, anti-Semitism, hate speech (2 reports),
- the rights of minorities (1 report).

11. Over the period 2014-2015, the committee also presented **5 opinions**. The list⁴ of these opinions shows that the committee played a full part in the process of awarding neighbouring states partner for democracy status, thereby helping to increase the visibility of the committee and its various themes (notably women's rights, LGBT rights and the fight against discrimination).

2.2. Diversification and visibility of activities and structures

12. Over the past two years, the committee pursued its goal of diversifying its activities, managing to strike a balance between report-drafting and other activities aimed at heightening the impact and prominence of its work.

13. The **Parliamentary Network Women Free from Violence** pressed ahead with its efforts to raise awareness and promote the Istanbul Convention, thanks to the voluntary contributions which it received. The entry into force of the Istanbul Convention in August 2014 was an important milestone in this promotional work. The implementation phase is now under way and the Network has had to consider what resources are available to it, to ensure that national parliaments and the Parliamentary Assembly play their full role in monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention.

14. In 2014, the committee took the initiative of forming the **No Hate Parliamentary Alliance**, which was launched in January 2015. The Alliance is made up of parliamentarians determined to act and speak out against manifestations of hatred and racism and with the attacks that occurred in Brussels, Paris and Copenhagen in late 2014/early 2015, its creation, alas, has proved all too timely. Its activities have involved organising hearings on topical issues such as the limits of freedom of expression, anti-Semitism and preventing Islamophobia while combating radicalisation leading to terrorism. As at 15 December 2015, the Alliance had 54 members.

15. The committee has appointed **three general rapporteurs**: one on violence against women, one on the rights of LGBT persons and one on racism and intolerance. The general rapporteurs have helped to raise awareness of the issues within their respective remits and to raise the Assembly's profile in these areas.

16. In 2014, the committee decided to keep the sub-committees on gender equality and on rights of minorities but not the sub-committee on racism and xenophobia, whose remit is now covered by the new general rapporteur on racism and intolerance. It also set up a new sub-committee on disability and inclusion. The terms of reference of the **three sub-committees** were renewed in 2015 and hearings and exchanges were held during the Assembly sessions.

17. Over the period 2014-2015, **three ad hoc sub-committees** were also set up to take part in international conferences:

- 3rd International Conference of the North-South Process for the Empowerment of Women on "*Women's participation in political life in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries: Challenges and opportunities*", 17-18 June 2014, in Rabat (Morocco);
- Conference "*Safe from fear, safe from violence*" celebrating the entry into force of the Istanbul Convention, 18-19 September 2014, in Rome (Italy);
- Conference on "*Monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention: new synergies*", on 20 October 2015, in Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

18. The visibility of the committee's work was increased over the period under review, thanks to social media. The hearings held in connection with the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and the Parliamentary Network Women Free from Violence were relayed on social media. The network's Facebook page has grown significantly and in December 2015, the number of *likes* passed the 2,000 mark. In addition, in November 2015, the committee created a Twitter account (@PACE_Equality) to provide real-time information on the activities of the committee and its members.

⁴ See full list in Appendix II.

2.3. Co-operation with other Assembly committees and Council of Europe structures

19. In carrying out its activities, the committee attached considerable importance to co-operation with other Assembly committees, thus recognising the cross-cutting nature of many of the issues that it tackles.

20. First and foremost, the committee was given a role in the new committee on the election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights, set up in January 2015. The chair of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination sits on this new committee in an ex officio capacity, thus enabling it to have a say in the process of selecting judges for the European Court of Human Rights.

21. In 2014-2015, the committee organised joint meetings with the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development (on the sexual exploitation of girls and on preventing Islamophobia while combating radicalisation of young people), the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights (on discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity), and with the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs (on the gender dimension and corruption).

22. At the same time, the committee established good working relations with the main Council of Europe bodies working in its areas of competence. It held numerous exchanges of views on specific topics and/or on mutual co-operation with, *inter alia*, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Deputy Secretary General (notably on violence against women), the Commissioner for Human Rights, the Venice Commission, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and other bodies which come under the Directorate General of Democracy. In 2014, it also held a joint meeting with the Council of Europe Committee of Experts on the Rights of People with Disabilities (DECS-RPD) on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the community.

23. As is its custom, the committee invited members of relevant Council of Europe monitoring bodies and Gender Focal Points in the countries concerned to attend those of its meetings which were organised outside Strasbourg and Paris (Vienna, March 2014).

2.4. Co-operation with other international organisations and institutions

24. In 2014-2015, the committee held exchanges of views or organised events involving representatives of the following bodies:

- European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA),
- European Parliament (Employment and Social Affairs Committee and Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee),
- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU),
- OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR),
- UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

2.5. Guest speakers

25. The committee had the honour of welcoming a number of prominent figures to its thematic exchanges of views. Ms Gabriele Heinisch-Hosek, Austria's Federal Minister for Education and Women, and Ms Samira Meraïi Friâa, Tunisia's Minister for Women, Family and Children's Affairs, attended meetings of the committee and the Parliamentary Network Women Free from Violence. The President of the Parliamentary Assembly also figured prominently, not least in the work of the Alliance which benefited extensively from her support and efforts to promote the Alliance among leading international figures, including His Holiness Pope Francis and the Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon.

26. A performance of the theatrical show "*Wounded to death*" by Ms Serena Dandini and Ms Maura Misiti was staged during the Parliamentary Assembly session in April 2014.

2.6. Attendance

27. The average attendance rate for committee meetings continued to rise in 2014, reaching 52.8%, before falling back to 41.5% in 2015.⁵ Attendance at Assembly sessions remained high but fell over the course of the biennium (averaging 58% in 2015 and 67% in 2014). Likewise, the attendance rate for committee meetings held at sites other than Strasbourg hovered around 27% throughout 2015, compared with approximately 35% in 2014.

⁵ The average attendance rate for committee meetings was 44% in 2012 and 49% in 2013.

28. It should also be pointed out that attendance at sub-committee meetings is low overall, with some meetings failing to attract more than five members.

29. These figures should not detract, however, from the high quality of the committee's discussions and I wish to thank the members for their input during reviews of texts, hearings and exchanges of views, and the information provided by them in the free debates. I particularly wish to commend the committee on the constructive and respectful atmosphere in which it conducted its discussions in 2014-2015.

3. Proposals for future action

3.1. Themes

30. In terms of **priorities**, racism, intolerance and hate speech have clearly emerged as themes that should receive continued attention in the years to come, given that these are particularly pressing concerns in Council of Europe member States. There is a significant danger that the fight against terrorism and radicalisation leading to terrorism, which is under way in many States, could not only lead to curbs on individual freedoms but also fuel xenophobia and the tendency to stigmatise certain groups.

31. Gender equality and violence against women should remain high on the committee's agenda. The position of women in economic life has not been addressed as such by our committee and yet is an issue that merits attention, along with the position of women in public space and in particular the all-too-common problem of harassment.

32. The themes related to discrimination should likewise be explored in greater depth so as to make full use of our committee's expertise in these matters and step up our co-operation with the various organisations and institutions actively engaged in this area. An analysis of cases of multiple or intersectional discrimination could prove especially valuable given the cross-cutting nature of the issues covered by the committee (violence against women and disability, membership of a minority group and LGBT persons, specific discrimination against women belonging to certain ethnic groups, etc.).

33. The committee could also hold hearings on topical issues on a more regular basis.

34. Committee members are invited to take the initiative and to table motions for resolutions or recommendations while bearing in mind the committee's main themes and the need to preserve a degree of variety in terms of the subjects addressed.

3.2. Improving the activities and structures

35. Something that sets the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination apart from almost every other Assembly committee is the emphasis given to activities other than report-drafting. My assessment of the awareness-raising work carried out by the Parliamentary Network Women Free from Violence and the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance is very positive:

- it enhances the impact made by the Assembly, by contributing to the implementation of Assembly texts;
- it encourages Assembly members to become actively involved and enables them to make full use of their dual mandate, by providing them with tools for translating the measures adopted in Strasbourg into action at national level;
- it raises the Assembly's profile in Council of Europe member States and in international organisations and institutions.

36. I therefore have no hesitation in recommending that the committee continue this course of action, while bearing in mind that the Network's and the Alliance's awareness-raising activities cannot be stepped up without the active participation of members and the support of national governments, not least through voluntary contributions.

37. I also feel it would be advisable to step up the campaigning and awareness activities on discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. I would urge the General Rapporteur on the rights of LGBT persons to make proposals along these lines.

38. Lastly, I would ask members to be active on social media and to relay the committee's activities.

3.3 Members' involvement

39. I would like firstly to congratulate the members acting as rapporteurs, general rapporteurs, bureau members, members of the Parliamentary Network Women Free from Violence and the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and indeed all the members who have actively participated in the committee's work on their involvement and readiness to assist throughout 2014 and 2015.

40. The fact, however, that overall, attendance at committee meetings declined last year should prompt us to think about what could be done to encourage more members to participate in the committee's work.

41. Particular concern has been expressed about the sub-committee meetings, where attendance is often very low. One exception was the joint hearing between two sub-committees in October 2015, which was well attended by members. Identifying cross-cutting themes would thus seem to be an avenue worth exploring for the sub-committees, to enable them to make a greater impact.

42. The activity report for the period 2012-2013 called for greater vigilance regarding gender distribution amongst the rapporteurs for report, nine of whom were men compared to five women. The situation improved over the period 2014-2015, and the numbers are now virtually equal: out of the 15 reports debated in total, 8 rapporteurs were women and 7 were men. On examining the reports in preparation, however, it will be observed that the pattern is changing once again, this time in favour of women: out of the 9 reports currently being prepared, only 3 rapporteurs are men.

43. I would thus urge the male members of the committee to increase their attendance and play a more active part in meetings and to volunteer to act as rapporteurs.

3.4. Co-operation

44. The committee should:

- continue maintaining good working relations with all the Council of Europe structures which deal with issues within its remit, and
- improve dialogue and co-operation with other international bodies and organisations.

45. The committee should, in particular, consider organising joint campaigning and awareness activities on key themes. The contacts established in 2015 with the European Parliament in connection with the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance and the Parliamentary Network Women Free from Violence should be developed further in this respect.

Appendix 1
List of reports of the committee debated in 2014-2015

2014

- Res. 1212 Women's rights and prospects for Euro-Mediterranean co-operation
 Rec. 2053 Rapporteur: Ms Saïdi, Belgium, SOC
- Res. 1967 A strategy to prevent racism and intolerance in Europe
 Rec. 2032 Rapporteur: Mr Gunnarsson, Sweden, SOC
- Res. 1968 Tackling racism in the police
 Rapporteur: Mr Davies, United Kingdom, EC
- Res. 1983 Prostitution, trafficking and modern slavery in Europe
 Rapporteur: Mr Mendes Bota, Portugal, EPP/CD
- Res. 1985 The situation and rights of national minorities in Europe
 Rec. 2040 Rapporteur: Mr Kalmár, Hungary, EPP/CD
- Res. 1998 Improving co-operation between national human rights institutions and
 Parliaments in addressing equality and non-discrimination issues
 Rapporteur: Ms Zappone, Ireland, UEL
- Res. 2027 Focusing on the perpetrators to prevent violence against women
 Rapporteur: Ms Kyriakidou, Cyprus, SOC

2015

- Res. 2039 Equality and inclusion for people with disabilities
 Rec. 2064 Rapporteur: Ms Quintanilla Barba, Spain, EPP/CD
- Res. 2032 Equality and the crisis
 Rapporteur: Mr Villumsen, Denmark, UEL
- Res. 2036 Tackling intolerance and discrimination in Europe with a special focus on Christians
 Rapporteur: Mr Ghiletschi, Republic of Moldova, EPP/CD
- Res. 2048 Discrimination against transgender people in Europe
 Rapporteur: Ms Schembri, Malta, SOC
- Res. 2054 Equality and non-discrimination in the access to justice
 Rapporteur: Mr Badea, Romania, EPP/CD
- Res. 2069 Recognising and preventing neo-racism
 Rapporteur: Ms Santerini, Italy, SOC
- Res. 2079 Equality and shared responsibility: the role of fathers
 Rapporteur: Ms Hetto-Gaasch, Luxembourg, EPP/CD
- Res. 2084 Promoting best practices in tackling violence against women
 Rapporteur: Ms Gafarova, Azerbaijan, EC

Appendix 2
List of opinions presented by the committee in 2014-2015

2014

- Res 1969 Evaluation of the Partnership for Democracy in respect of the Palestinian National Council
Rapporteur: Ms Bilgehan, Turkey, SOC
- Res 1984 Request for Partner for Democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly
submitted by the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic
Rapporteur: Ms Bourzai, France, SOC
- Res 2011 Counteraction to manifestations of neo-Nazism and right-wing extremism
Rec 2052 Rapporteur: Ms Kazakova, Russian Federation, NR

2015

- Res 2061 Evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of Morocco
Rapporteur: Ms Gafarova, Azerbaijan, EC

Appendix 3
Lists of hearings and exchanges of views
held by the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

2014

Equality and the Crisis:

- hearing on the impact of the crisis on equality and the work of national human rights Institutions with the participation of Dr Des Hogan, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, Dublin (January 2014);
- hearing with the participation of Mr Nils Muižnieks, Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe; and Mr Alejandro Cercas, member of the European Parliament, Coordinator of the S&D Group at the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs since 2009 and rapporteur on the Role and operations of the Troika with regard to the euro area programme countries - Employment and social aspects of the role and operations of the Troika (June 2014);
- exchange of views with Mr Luis Jimena Quesada, President of the European Committee of Social Rights (September 2014).

Prostitution, trafficking and modern slavery in Europe: hearing on recent developments on prostitution in France with the participation of Ms Irène Aboudaram, Doctors of the World International Network, and Mr Grégoire Théry, Secretary General of *Mouvement du Nid* (January 2014).

Exchange of views with Mr Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe on violence against women, as well as on discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity (January 2014).

Discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity - Implementation of Strasbourg Court judgments: joint hearing with the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, with the participation of Mr André Potocki, Judge to the European Court of Human Rights in respect of France, and Mr Nigel Warner, Adviser to ILGA-Europe (January 2014).

Cooperation with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA): exchange of views with Mr Morten Kjaerum, Director, Mr Ioannis Dimitrakopoulos, Head of Department Equality and Citizens' Rights, and Mr Mario Oetheimer, Freedoms and Justice Department (March 2014, Vienna).

Equality and non-discrimination: focus on Austria: exchange of views with Ms Ingrid Nikolay-Leitner, Ombudsperson for Equal Treatment (March 2014, Vienna).

Tackling intolerance and discrimination in Europe with a special focus on Christianity: hearing with the participation of Ms Gudrun Kugler, Observatory on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians and Professor Stefan Hammer, Department of Legal Philosophy, Law of Religion and Culture, Law Faculty, University of Vienna (March 2014, Vienna).

Abortion legislation: developments in Spain and the rest of Europe: hearing with the participation of Ms Vicky Claeys, Regional Director of the International Planned Parenthood Federation European Network (IPPF EN), and Mr Régis Brillat, Head of the Department of the European Social Charter, Executive Secretary of the European Committee of Social Rights (April 2014).

The situation of women in emerging democracies following the Arab revolutions:

- hearing with the participation of Ms Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, and Ms Wassyla Tamzali, Algerian lawyer, essayist and editorial writer, former director of the UNESCO Programme for the promotion of the status of women in the Mediterranean region (June 2014);
- exchange of views with Ms Nezha El Ouafi and Mr Mohammed Mehdi Bensaid, members of the Partner for Democracy delegation of Morocco (June 2014).

Current affairs: the Boko Haram kidnapping and the widespread human rights violations against girls and women in Nigeria: hearing with the participation of Dr Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos, Professor, French Institute of Geopolitics, Paris 8 University, Associate Researcher, Population and Development Centre (CEPED) and Associate Fellow, Africa Programme, Chatham House (June 2014).

Discrimination against transgender people in Europe: hearing with the participation of Ms Julia Ehrh, Executive Director, TGEU – Transgender Europe (June 2014).

Exchange of views with Ms Brigitte Gonthier-Maurin, Chairperson of the Delegation for Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women of the French Senate: held an exchange of views on the activities of the Delegation and recent developments regarding women's rights in France (September 2014).

Gender dimensions of corruption: joint hearing with the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, with the participation of Mr Matthias Kopetzky, member of the Board of Institute Internal Audit, Leader of the Anti-Fraud Study Group, Austria, and Ms Helena Lišuchová, GRECO Gender Equality Rapporteur and Bureau member, Head of International Co-operation Department, Ministry of Justice, Czech Republic (October 2014).

One of us? The right of persons with disabilities to live in the community: joint hearing with the Council of Europe's Committee of experts on the rights of persons with disabilities (DECS-RPD) with the participation of Ms Gabriella Battaini-Draconi, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe; Mr Nils Muižnieks, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe; Ms Karina Chupina, Senior trainer for the Council of Europe Youth Sector, President of the Federation of hard of hearing young people; and Professor Gerard Quinn, Director of the Centre for Disability Law and Policy at the University of Galway, Ireland (October 2014).

Recognising and preventing neo-racism: exchange of views with Ms Christine Lazerges, Chairperson of the French National Advisory Commission on Human Rights (December 2014).

Gay to straight conversion therapy and regulation of psychotherapists: hearing with the participation of Mr Dominic Davies, Director, Pink Therapy (United Kingdom) (December 2014).

The employment rights of female workers from Eastern Europe: hearing with the participation of Ms Marina Manke, Regional Labour Migration and Human Development Specialist, International Organization for Migration, Regional Office for South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Vienna (December 2014).

2015

Equality and shared parental responsibility: the role of fathers:

- hearing with the participation of Mr Leslie Shaw, former applicant to the European Court of Human Rights in the case Shaw v. Hungary, and Mr Grégory Thuan Dit Dieudonné, Attorney-at-Law, Strasbourg (January 2015);
- hearing with the participation of Professor Hildegund Sünderhauf-Kravets, Faculty of social sciences, Protestant University of Nuremberg; and Ms Anne Solaz, Research fellow, National Institute for Demographic Studies (INED), Paris (March 2015).

Assessing the impact of measures to improve women's political representation:

- hearing with the participation of Ms Réjane Sénac, CNRS Research Fellow, Chairperson of the Committee on Parity in politics, administration and in the economic and social life of the High Gender Equality Council, France (March 2015);
- hearing with the participation of Ms Maria del Carmen Alanis Figueroa, member of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), Judge of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, Mexico, and Ms Zeina Hilal, Programme Officer, Gender Partnership Programme, Interparliamentary Union (September 2015).

Recognising and preventing neo-racism: hearing with the participation of Mr Jean-Paul Lehnens, member of the European Commission against racism and intolerance (April 2015).

Preventing Islamophobia while combating radicalisation of young people: exchange of views with Ms Anne Brasseur, President of the Parliamentary Assembly, and Ms Gabriella Battaini-Draconi, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, with the participation of Professor Tahir Abbas, Department of Sociology, Fatih University, Istanbul, Turkey; Mr Bernard De Vos, Ombudsman for Children's Rights of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels, Belgium, and Dr Francesco Ragazzi, Lecturer of International Relations, Institute of Political Science, Leiden University, the Netherlands (June 2015).

Guaranteeing equal rights and protecting women against violence in the armed force:

- hearing with the participation of Ms Françoise Gaudin, Senior administrative officer in equality of rights at the Ministry of Defence, France (June 2015);
- hearing with the participation of Ms Julia Pascual, journalist, co-author of the book “*La guerre invisible*” (December 2015).

Systematic collection of data on violence against women: hearing with the participation of Ms Sylvia Walby, Distinguished Professor of Sociology, UNESCO Chair in Gender Research, Lancaster University, United Kingdom, and Ms Therese Murphy, Head of Operations, European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), Vilnius, Lithuania (June 2015).

Sociological aspects and realities of gender: interactive discussion led by Ms Céline Petrovic, Doctor of Sciences in Education, lecturer on “*Gender and Education*”, University of Strasbourg, and Mr Stéphane Galas, specialised instructor on gender issues (September 2015).

Exchange of views with Ms Manizha Naderi, Executive Director of the organisation Women for Afghan Women, candidate for the Vaclav Havel Prize (September 2015).

Renewed commitment in the fight against anti-Semitism in Europe: hearing with the participation of Mr Henri Nickels, Head of Sector Equality, Equality and Citizens’ Rights Department, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Vienna (Austria); Ms Cristina M. Finch, Head of the Tolerance and Non-Discrimination Department, ODIHR/OSCE, Warsaw (Poland); Mr Vincent Tiberj, sociologist, Research Fellow at the Centre for European Studies of Sciences Po Paris, Professor at Sciences Po Bordeaux, France (December 2015).

Appendix 4
List of hearings organised in the framework of the sub-committees
and activities of their respective members

Sub-Committee on Gender Equality

Women's parliamentary network of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia: exchange of views with the participation of Ms Marija Obradović, first coordinator of this network (June 2014).

Women Free from violence in the United Kingdom: the Istanbul Convention, joint meeting with the Parliamentary Network Women Free from Violence and the All-Party parliamentary Group on equalities of the British Parliament (December 2014, London).

The situation of women belonging to minorities: hearing with the participation of Ms Inger Elin Utsi, member of the Sami Parliament, Norway; Ms Cerasela Claudia Bănică, Centre for Advocacy and Human Rights (CADO), Romania; Ms Tove H. Malloy, member of the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in respect of Denmark (September 2015, joint hearing with the sub-committee on the rights of minorities).

Members' activities

Ms Sahiba Gafarova (Azerbaijan, EC) participated in the 59th Committee Session on the status of women (CSW), in New York, from 9 to 20 March 2015.

Sub-Committee on Disability and Inclusion

The Rights of People with Disabilities: exchange of views with the participation of Ms Irena Kowalczyk-Kedziora, Secretary of the Council of Europe Committee of Experts on the Rights of People with Disabilities (June 2014).

The political participation of people with disabilities: hearing with the participation of Ms Martha Stickings, Research Support Officer, Equality and Citizens' Rights Department, Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union (April 2015).

Sub-Committee on the Rights of Minorities

Trends and challenges for minority protection in Europe: exchange of views with the participation of Ms Michèle Akip, Head of Secretariat of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, Directorate General of Democracy, Council of Europe (June 2015).

The situation of women belonging to minorities: hearing with the participation of Ms Inger Elin Utsi, member of the Sami Parliament, Norway; Ms Cerasela Claudia Bănică, Centre for Advocacy and Human Rights (CADO), Romania; and Ms Tove H. Malloy, member of the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in respect of Denmark (September 2015, joint hearing with the Sub-Committee on Gender Equality).

Activities of members

Ms Athina Kyriakidou (Cyprus, SOC), participated in the 50th meeting of the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in Strasbourg on 17 March 2015, in Strasbourg.

Mr Damien Thiéry (Belgium, ALDE) participated in the thematic debate on "*Regional and minority languages in Europe: recent developments, challenges and good practices*", organised by the Chamber of Regions, Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg (France), 21 October 2015, in Strasbourg.

Appendix 5
List of activities of the General Rapporteur on the rights of LGBTs people

2014 – Robert Biedroń (Poland, SOC)

13-14 May – 2nd European IDAHO Forum (International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia), in Valletta (Malta).

16-17 May – Conference “*Is Moldova the Region’s Champion State in Ensuring LGBT Rights?*”, organised by Genderdoc-M, in Chisinau, (Republic of Moldova).

3-4 June – Round table “*Equality for all*”, organised by the Committee on the European Committee for Social Cohesion, Human Dignity and Equality (CDDECS), Strasbourg.

12 September – International Conference organised by the Hirschfeld-Eddy-Foundation and the NGOs Labris and Civil Rights Defenders Belgrade on “*The Future belongs to us: LGBT Rights on the road to the European Union*”, Belgrade (Serbia).

29-31 October – 27th World Conference of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA), Mexico City (Mexico).

2015 – Jonas Gunnarsson (Sweden, SOC)

15 May – Statement on the occasion of the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia.

3 June – Statement on Moscow Gay Pride refusal and Mr Alekseyev’s arrest.

22-23 October – International Conference on “*Transgender Questions in the medical and social context*”, organised by the NGO Insight, in cooperation with the Bureau of the Ombudsman of Ukraine, Kyiv (Ukraine).

24 October – Statement on Depathologisation of transgender people.

5-6 November – International Conference on gender, diversity and social inclusion, organised by the Kaos Gay and Lesbian Cultural Research and Solidarity Association, Ankara (Turkey).

10 December – Conference on “*Council of Europe and the role of National Human Rights Institutions, Equality bodies and Ombudsman offices in promoting equality and social inclusion*”, organised by the parliamentary Ombudsman of Finland, the Finnish Centre for Human Rights and the Council of Europe, in Helsinki (Finland).

Appendix 6
List of activities of the Parliamentary Network Women Free from Violence
and of the General Rapporteur on Violence against Women and political coordinator

2014 – Mr Mendes Bota (Portugal, EPP/CD)

29 January 2014 – *Sexual exploitation of girls*, Strasbourg, hearing with the participation of Ms Gabriella Battaini-Drăgăni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe; Ms Livia Anonisanu, Director of the Programme Center for Partnership and Equality (Romania); Ms Roshan Heiler, Director of the SOLWODI counselling centre (Germany).

4 March 2014 – *Focusing on the victims' needs*, Vienna, hearing with the participation of Ms Gabriele Heinisch-Hosek, Federal Minister for Education and Women, Austria; held a hearing on, with the participation of Ms Luisella Pavan-Woolfe, Ambassador, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the Council of Europe and Ms Ursula Till-Tentschert, Programme Manager at the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights.

10-11 March 2014 – Participation of the General Rapporteur in the 58th Committee Session on the status of women, New York.

19 March 2014 – Participation of the General Rapporteur in the thematic debate on violence against women organised by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg.

9 April 2014, Strasbourg – Theatre show *Wounded to death*, with the participation of: Anne Brasseur, Gabriella Battaini-Drăgăni, Serena Dandini, Maura Misiti, Carole Mathieu Castelli, Najat Al-Astal, Gülsün Bilgehan, Ismeta Dervoz, Tatiana Pârvu, Carmen Quintanilla Barba, Fatiha Saïdi, Maria Edera Spadoni.

24 June 2014 – *Violence against women with disabilities*, Strasbourg, hearing with the participation of Ms Gabriella Battaini-Drăgăni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe; Ms Ana Peláez Narváez, member of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Director of International Relations at the Spanish National Organisation of the Blind (ONCE) (*by video-conference*); Emeritus Professor Gill Hague, Professor of Violence Against Women Studies, Centre for Gender and Violence Research, School for Policy Studies, University of Bristol, United Kingdom.

18-19 September 2014 – Conference Safe from fear, safe from violence, Roma.

25 September 2014 – Participation of the General Rapporteur in the Nordic Seminar on *“The best practices to fight against violence against women”*, Reykjavik (Iceland).

30 September 2014 – *Sexual violence against women in armed conflicts*, Strasbourg, hearing with the participation of Ms Gabriella Battaini-Drăgăni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Ms April Pham, GenCap Advisor at the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (Switzerland); Ms Monika Hauser, Director of *medica mondiale* and recipient of the 2012 North-South Prize of the Council of Europe (Germany) and Ms Hana Ayele, member of the network *Survivor speak OUT* (United Kingdom).

2015 - Ms Sahiba Gafarova (Azerbaijan, EC)

23 April 2015 – *Forced marriages*, Strasbourg, hearing with the participation of Ms Gabriella Battaini-Drăgăni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe; Ms Lucy Monaghan, Joint Head of the Forced Marriage Unit, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (United Kingdom); Ms Ellen Høvik, Campaign Manager, Plan Norway.

16 June 2015 – Parliamentary Seminar on the Istanbul Convention, Tbilissi (Georgia).

24 June 2015 – *Female genital mutilation*, Strasbourg, hearing with the participation of Ms Naana Otoo-Oyortey, Executive Director of FORWARD (United Kingdom) and President of the Board of End FGM European Network (Belgium); Dr Pierre Foldès, Surgeon, and Ms Frédérique Martz, Director, Reproductive Health Institute (ISG), St-Germain-en-Laye, France; Ms Gabriella Battaini-Drăgăni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

30 September 2015, Strasbourg :

- *The role of national parliaments in monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention*, Strasbourg, hearing with the participation of Ambassador Erdoğan Şerif Işcan, Permanent Representative of Turkey to the Council of Europe and Chairperson of the Committee of the Parties to the Istanbul Convention, and Ms Gabrielle Battaini-Dragoni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe;
- exchange of views with Ms Samira Meraïi Friâa, Minister for Women, Family and Children Affairs of Tunisia.

20 October 2015 – Conference on “*Monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention: new synergies*”, Sarajevo (Bosnia-and-Herzegovina) and bilateral meeting with Ms Dubravka Šimonović, Special Rapporteur of the United Nations on violence against women, its causes and its consequences.

25 November 2015 – Statement on the International Day for elimination of violence against women.

Appendix 7
List of activities of the No Hate Parliamentary Alliance (2015)
and of the General Rapporteur on combating racism and intolerance (2014-2015)

2014 – Ms Maria Giannakaki (Greece, SOC)

29 – 30 October 2014 – Participation in the 8th meeting of the Ad-Hoc Committee of Experts on Roma Issues (CAHROM), in Sarajevo (Bosnia-and-Herzegovina).

13 November – Participation in the 10th Anniversary of the Berlin Conference on antisemitism, organised by the German authorities and the OSCE, in Berlin (Germany).

10 December – Exchange of views with the members of ECRI, in Strasbourg.

2015 – Ms Milena Santerini (Italy, SOC)

29 January – *Combating anti-Semitism in Europe*, Strasbourg, hearing with the participation of Mr Maurice Sosnowski, Chairperson of the Coordination Committee of Jewish Organisations in Belgium; Ms Snežana Samardžić-Marković, Director General, Directorate General for Democracy, Council of Europe, and Ms Jane Braden-Golay, President of the European Union of Jewish students.

19 March, Paris:

- *Council of Europe's No Hate Speech Movement*: exchange of views with the participation of national coordinators of the Movement: Mr Jan Dabkowski, Poland, Mr Bruno del Mazo de Unamuno, Spain, Mr Eirik Rise, Norway;
- *Freedom of expression and hate speech*: hearing with the participation of Mr Nicolas Hervieu, lecturer at Université Panthéon-Assas (Paris).

23 June - *Preventing Islamophobia while combating radicalisation of young people*, Strasbourg, hearing with the participation of Ms Anne Brasseur, President of the Parliamentary Assembly, Ms Gabriella Battaini-Dragnoni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe; Professor Tahir Abbas, Department of Sociology, Fatih University, Istanbul, Turkey; Mr Bernard De Vos, Ombudsman for Children's Rights of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels, Belgium, and Dr Francesco Ragazzi, Lecturer of International Relations, Institute of Political Science, Leiden University, the Netherlands.

29 September - *"Refugees not welcome": political and media approaches to the current refugee and migrant crisis*: Strasbourg, hearing in presence of Ms Anne Brasseur, President of the Parliamentary Assembly, and with the participation of Mr Tim Finch, Consultant and Writer, former Director of Communications, Refugee Council (United Kingdom), and Mr Yousef Kak, General Practitioner, Syrian refugee, living in France.

2-3 November – Participation of the General Rapporteur in the *"2015 Meetings on the religious dimension of the intercultural dialogue"*, organised by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, Sarajevo (Bosnia-and-Herzegovina).

19 November – Participation of the General Rapporteur in the World Forum for Democracy, Lab 8 on anti-Hate responses, Strasbourg.