

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Information Documents  
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**Quarterly report of Council of Europe Offices**

**January - March 2019**

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**A. LIAISON OFFICES**

**Introduction**

The Council of Europe Offices in charge of liaison with one or more international organisations or institutions:

- represent the Secretary General vis-à-vis international organisation(s) or institution(s);
- follow the activities carried out by the relevant international organisation(s) or institution(s) and report on developments relevant to the Council of Europe activities and policies;
- provide support for the organisation of and follow-up to high level co-ordination meetings and other meetings or events between the Council of Europe and the relevant international organisation(s) or institution(s);
- promote effective co-operation between the Council of Europe and the relevant international organisation(s) or institution(s);
- identify opportunities for joint activities and provide advice and support in planning, negotiation, implementation and reporting on these activities;
- conduct a proactive media policy in order to raise the visibility of the Organisation.

The present document covers the reporting period January-March 2019. Following decision [CM/Del/Dec\(2013\)1175/1.6E](#) of 3 July 2013, activity reports have been published every three months, starting with July-September 2013.

## **Brussels - Council of Europe Office in charge of liaison with the European Union**

### **Key features and statistics**

Some 433 information messages and documents as well as 12 weekly reports were prepared and sent to Strasbourg by the Information Officer. 80 notes for the files were sent from the Office in addition to the information messages sent by the Head of Office directly.

33 members of Council of Europe staff visited the Office during the period, including:

- Secretary General Jagland: meeting Commission President Mr Juncker, lunch with Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Çavuşoğlu, and address to the EU Council's Political and Security Committee (PSC), 14 March 2019.
- Human Rights Commissioner, Ms Mijatović, European Parliament Conference on Roma, 19 March 2019, meeting EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Mr Gilmore, meeting EEAS Managing Director on HR, global and multilateral issues, Ms Knudsen.
- President and the Secretary of the Venice Commission, MM Buquicchio and Markert, European Parliament hearing on the respect for the rule of law in the enlargement process (18 March 2019).
- Director General Giakoumopoulos, DGI, PACE hearing on the rule of law organised by the Rules committee (15 January). Meetings with EU officials.
- Director Jan Kleijssen, DGI, on 28-29 March, EEAS Inter-Service group meeting, meeting EEAS MD Knudsen, meeting Director Sioli in DG Connect, on AI, meeting the head of 1VP Timmermans Cabinet, Mr Smulders.
- Director for Human Rights, Mr Poirel, and the CEPEJ Secretariat, for a public presentation of the newly adopted "Ethical charter of the use of AI in judicial systems", 23 January 2019.
- Head of the Execution of the ECtHR decisions, Mr Sundberg, for an event in the European Parliament, on judicial remedies in Turkey (29/1),

14 other members were in Brussels during the period. The Office hosted 30 events and visits and welcomed 197 external visitors.

### **Other meetings involving the Office**

The **Head of Office**, Zoltan Taubner, had regular informal contacts with his EU counterparts and represented the Office in various events. He welcomed and accompanied the high-level visits mentioned above as well as received or otherwise met with the colleagues who passed by the Office, as mentioned below.

He notably met the Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the EU (12/2), the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to the EU (4/2) and a high-level Delegation from Kyrgyzstan, met with representatives IOM and International IDEA. He participated in an EP event on Turkey.

He held several meetings with counterparts in the commission and the EEAS, in particular, the Managing Director for multilateral affairs and HR, the Chair of the PSC, the Head of division on multilateral relations, the Head of Division on Central Asia, the Head of division on Turkey.

He maintained his high-level contacts with members of the Cabinets of various EU Commissioners.

The Office further assisted in the organisation of the following **meetings and events**, and in general, accompanied Secretariat colleagues to such meetings:

- Working group on the Framework Charter for the Protection of National Minorities.
- Head of PACE Secretariat Committee on Legal Affairs and HR: presentation in a EP Committee (on the PACE "Magnitsky report").
- DGI Secretariat for the "data protection week" (28/1).
- EP hearing on violence against woman, 6/2.
- 6<sup>th</sup> meeting EU Committee of the Regions - the Task force Ukraine, 13/2.
- Panel discussion and "death penalty and the use of EU funds", in the International press club, 5/2.
- EPC event on terrorism and terrorist content online, with Commissioner King, 5/2.
- EPC events on the link between migration and populism, 7/2.
- Eastern Partnership platform on good governance, with DGII, 19/2.
- Commission's high-level group on internet governance, 19/2.
- Committee of the Regions conference on "EU cities against radicalisation", with a Congress member, 26/2.
- Commission expert meeting on the right of the child;
- 7<sup>th</sup> world congress against death penalty, 27/2 - 1/3, with a video message from SG Jagland, and DGI and DPA participation.
- Visit by a delegation of Ukrainian HR activists.
- Presentation by CEPEJ of its charter on ethical use of AI in judicial systems in the EU Council working group on "e-justice" (1/3).
- Moderation of a panel in an event organised by the "Open Society Foundations" on the rule of law in Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine (1/3).
- CDPC Chair, meeting on the trafficking of cultural goods (11/3) and CDPC Bureau meeting (12/3).
- Participation in an EP event on evaluation of national Roma integration strategies (19/3).
- European Committee on Social Rights presented its annual conclusions (2018) (25/3);
- CoE SRSG on migration's representatives participated in an EIDHR forum on HR and migration and met with Commission Officials from DG NEAR and DG JUST (27/3).
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Around the 8 March, International **Women's Day**, the Office participated in various events: the launch of an OSCE report on violence against women and girls, a DG JUST special event, a panel of a EESC special event, and reported on an inter-parliamentary meeting on women power in politics organised by EP FEMM Committee.

On co-operation in the **legal** field, the Office met with the EU Council's Secretariat, and the Romanian Presidency. It represented the CoE in the Commission's High-Level Expert group on Artificial Intelligence (18-19/3) and met EEAS officials on EEAS' HR dialogues with external states.

In terms of **programmes**, the Office had and/or accompanied colleagues to meetings with various Commission DGs (HOME, JUST, EMPL, EAC) on existing and potential opportunities, as well as with SRSS in view of the finalisation of a cooperative Framework Agreement. The Office had contacts with DG NEAR in relation to the "Programme South" and to the PGG and participated in discussions on the programmes with Turkey. It also met with DG JUST representatives, notably on the justice reforms indicators for the Western Balkans, children rights, It participated in the Roma civil society platform. It continued contacts with the general Secretariat of the Commission on cooperation programmes under SRSS, as well as with DG

EAC on cultural heritage. It also had an introduction/discussion on the joint programmes with EEAS Officials.

The Office also hosted a CEPEJ Secretariat meeting with representatives from the Balkans and Commission officials (DG NEAR and JUST) on a new initiative on justice systems indicators in the framework of the Horizontal Facility II (27/3).

As to contacts with **States** representatives, the Office has had contacts with officials from Member States and Neighbouring States, such as, notably, Cyprus, Georgia, Russian Federation, Serbia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Jordan and Kuwait.

The Secretariat of the **Pompidou Group** (DGI) in the Office held several meetings and, as regards relations with the EU, it met bilaterally with two different members of the European Parliament, and with a Commission Official.

The Office also maintained contacts with Brussels based **think tanks** and foundations, such as the European Policy Centre (EPC), the Fredrich Ebert Stiftung, the Hanns Seidel Stiftung and others.

The Office further **reported** from:

- Debates and hearings in the European Parliament and its Committees (LIBE, AFET, DROI, TAX3).
- Events organised by think tanks and foundations, on matters such as: death penalty, migration, fight against terrorism, rule of law, enlargement, the situation in Western Balkans in particular in North Macedonia, Brexit, Islam, Ukraine, Nagorno-Karabakh, Russia and the priorities of the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the EU, post-summit briefing, reforms in Georgia, LGBTIs, gender equality in Georgia.

## **Media, visibility**

The Spokesperson/Media Officer coordinated communications work around presentations Brussels by CEPEJ (use of AI in justice), by the European Committee of Social Rights and by CPT/Department for the Execution of Judgments, around the Council of Europe's participation in the World Congress Against the Death Penalty in Brussels and around the March CM-DH meeting, the visit of the Secretary General and around the President of the Venice Commission's participation in the European Parliament's hearing in March.

He also maintained his regular contacts with Brussels-based media and carried out social media work on a wide range of issues, including the January PACE session, the annual report from the ECtHR, findings from the European Committee of Social Rights, several different monitoring reports (notably CPT, GRECO, GRETA, MONEYVAL, Venice Commission), reports from the Human Rights commissioner, various judgments and decisions from the ECtHR. He further communicated on newly adopted Recommendations and on SG's various statements. He continued to work on the on-going communications project to highlight the impact of the European Convention on Human Rights, delivered presentations on the work of the CoE and carried out preparatory work on the presentation of the 2018 SPACE report on prison statistics, Whilst in Strasbourg for the PACE session, the Spokesperson/Media Officer took part in coordination and planning meetings with colleagues from several different parts of the organisation as well as representatives of the Belgian national authorities. He also continued to work on the on-going communications project to highlight the impact of the ECHR.

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**Geneva - Council of Europe Office/Permanent Delegation to the United Nations  
Office and other international organisations in Geneva**

No Head of Office

## **Vienna - Council of Europe Office in charge of liaison with the OSCE, United Nations Office and other international organisations in Vienna**

### **Participation in OSCE Permanent Council Meetings**

- OSCE Permanent Council with the new Chairperson-in-Office, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia, H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, 10 January
- OSCE Permanent Council with the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, H.E. George Tsereteli, 17 January
- OSCE Permanent Council with the new OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, H.E. Ambassador Henrik Villadsen, 24 January
- OSCE Permanent Council with the Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, H.E. Amb. Jan Braathu, and commemoration of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day, 31 January
- OSCE Permanent Council with the Special Representative of the OSCE CiO in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact Group, Amb. Sajdik and the Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, Amb. Apakan, 1 February
- OSCE Permanent Council with the Chairpersons of the Economic and Environmental Committee and the Human Dimension Committee, 7 February
- OSCE Permanent Council with the Chief Observer of the OSCE Observer Mission at two Russian Checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian Border Amb. György Varga, 14 February
- OSCE Permanent Council with the Head of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro, Amb. Maryse Daviet, 28 February
- OSCE Permanent Council with Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, Director of OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), 7 March
- OSCE Permanent Council with Amb. Orizio, Head of the OSCE Mission to Serbia and Amb. Vuk Zugic, Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, 14 March
- OSCE Permanent Council on Decision on the establishment of the OSCE IT Infrastructure Upgrade Fund, 28 March

### **Participation in expert committees and conferences**

- HoO participation in the meeting and working lunch of OSCE Group of Friends of Mediation, with the expert contribution by Alexander Guessel (DPA), 14 January
- SOFJO Safety of Journalists Conference with OSCE RoFM Harlem Désir and CoE HR Commissioner Dunja Mijatovic on "Increasing Opportunities for Freedom of Expression and Media Plurality", 12 February
- Panel discussion on the EU and Western Balkans in the margins of EU/Western Balkans regional meeting, Europe House, Vienna, 14 February
- Joint Forum for Security Co-operation and OSCE Permanent Council with Mr. Bertie Ahern, former Taoiseach (Prime Minister) of Ireland, 20 February
- 18th Winter Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, 21-22 February
- UNODC Commission on Narcotic Drugs - Ministerial Segment with the participation of Denis Huber, Executive Secretary of the Pompidou Group and State Secretary Raquel Duarte (P), President of PG, 14-15 March
- UNODC 62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UNODC Commission on Narcotic Drugs with the active participation of members of the Pompidou Group Secretariat, 18-22 March
- OSCE Joint Meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation and the Permanent Council on Security Sector Governance and Reform (SSG/R), 20 March



**Bilateral dialogue**

- Participation at bilateral meeting of Portuguese Presidency of CoE Pompidou Group with Executive Director UNODC, Mr Yury Fedotov, 15 March

**Warsaw - Council of Europe Office in charge of liaison with international organisations or institutions in Warsaw, in particular with OSCE/ODIHR and the Community of Democracies**

**High-level visits/meetings**

21-23 March - Mr Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe visit to Warsaw on the occasion of the Warsaw Conference on the role and position of NGOs in the CoE (22.03)

22 March - Secretary General of the CoE meeting with Ms Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR)

**Activities of the Office**

**a) Enhancing the co-operation with OSCE ODIHR** – Apart from the high-level meeting between CoE SG and OSCE ODIHR Director intense contacts and consultations on lower level took place aiming at exploring possibilities of longer term cooperation between both Organizations. ODIHR First Deputy Director, Ms Katarzyna Gardapkhadze and Mr Matthias Jaeger, ODIHR Fundraising and Policy Adviser visited Strasbourg to discuss strengthening the cooperation between CoE and ODIHR in areas of addressing hate crime, racism and xenophobia; working with Roma and Travellers communities; migrant integration at the local level and improving the effectiveness of communication on human rights. Discussions in Strasbourg on migrant integration laid foundations for the joint CoE-ODIHR-UNHCR project currently under development by three Organizations.

On the margins of the ODIHR 4<sup>th</sup> Roundtable on the laws on the judiciary in Poland held in Warsaw with the participation of CoE representatives, thematic consultations on the cooperation in the area of rule of law took place. Ms Hanne Juncker, Head of Justice and Legal Co-operation Department, DG I and HoO discussed the perspectives for cooperation. CoE involvement in the ODIHR led process of an update the OSCE Kyiv Recommendations on judicial independence and accountability was also discussed.

**b) Continuation of the co-operation with the Community of Democracies** – The Office followed closely UK Chairmanship of the Community's Executive Committee, held under the priorities of the freedom of media as well as the transition of the EC Chairmanship to Poland at the end of the quarter.

**c) Ensuring the visibility of the Council of Europe** – Office was involved in the preparation to the Warsaw Conference on the role and position of NGOs in the CoE (22.03). The event, organized in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland and the University of Warsaw, was held in the official framework of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the CoE and ensured high CoE visibility among diplomatic and academic communities, both from Poland and abroad.

Apart from the events organised by ODIHR and CoD, the HoO regularly attended seminars and conferences on issues pertinent to CoE activities. These included i.a. panel discussion *Who can help us build the world? EU and the crisis of multilateralism* organized by European Council of Foreign Relations - Warsaw Office and Stefan Batory Foundation as well as the meeting on Moderating Online Content and Preserving Freedom of Expression organized by The German Marshall Fund of the United States – Warsaw Office.

## **B. FIELD AND PROGRAMME OFFICES**

**Introduction**

On the basis of Resolution [CM/Res\(2010\)5](#) Council of Europe offices in member States and non-member states

- represent the Secretary General vis-à-vis the national authorities of the host country;
- promote and support the policies and activities of national authorities, as well as those of the Council of Europe bodies, related to membership of the Council of Europe;
- provide advice, support and overall *in situ* co-ordination with national authorities in planning, negotiation and timely implementation of targeted Council of Europe co-operation activities, including Joint Programmes with the European Union and other donors;
- facilitate the identification of needs for capacity-building, in co-operation with national authorities;
- conduct fundraising activities for specific projects;
- co-ordinate activities in the country with other international organisations and institutions (EU, OSCE, UN), as well as other international and local partners active in the country;
- in close cooperation with the Directorate of Communication, conduct a proactive media policy, in order to raise the visibility of the Organisation, its values and activities among the general public.

The present document covers the reporting period October-December 2018. Following decision [CM/Del/Dec\(2013\)1175/1.6E](#) of 3 July 2013, activity reports will be published every three months, starting with July-September 2013.

**Baku****Situation of the Office**

Core staff - 4, Project staff - 5, Total staff - 9.

The Office implements 4 projects, 2 of which are jointly funded with the EU, along with one funded by the US Department of State and one funded 100% by the CoE.

**State of implementation of projects/programmes/Action Plans/co-operation documents**

- VC U.S.A. "Support to justice sector reform initiatives in Azerbaijan": Thirty-five advocates enhanced their capacity in submitting applications to the European Court as a result of the training seminar organised on 27 February in cooperation with the Bar Association and the Academy of Justice of Azerbaijan. Twenty-five prosecutors and investigators were trained on the right to liberty and security under the European Convention on Human Rights during a training seminar held on 6 March in Baku.
- AP "Gender equality and media freedom": About 50 journalists and 20 students of journalism faculties were trained on CoE standards on gender equality and the media in 3 consecutive training sessions on "Gender equality and media" organised in Baku on 23-25 January. More than 80 journalists and civil society representatives from the regions were trained on the new Code of Ethics for Azerbaijani journalists revised from a gender equality perspective in 4 information sessions organised in Ganja on 27-28 February and in Guba on 12-13 March. After an in-depth discussion by the Department of Journalism Theory and Practice, the curriculum on "Gender equality and media freedom" developed within the Project was approved by the Scientific Council of the Journalism Faculty and will be submitted to the body responsible for teaching materials at Baku State University.
- EU/CoE - PGG "Strengthening Anti-Money Laundering in Azerbaijan": In view of the second phase of the Project on "Strengthening Anti-Money Laundering and Asset Recovery in Azerbaijan", an inception mission was organised to hold consultation meetings with national authorities on 7 March. The goal was to discuss with stakeholders the modalities and timelines for the implementation of project activities.
- EU/CoE - PGG "Further Support to the Penitentiary Reform in Azerbaijan-2" (SPERA 2): On 6 March, the CoE conducted an inception mission to present SPERA 2 to the national authorities. This new project started on 1 February and aims at strengthening the protection of sentenced persons in Azerbaijan with a focus on healthcare services, prison management and reintegration of offenders in line with respective European standards and best practices. The representatives of the inception mission met with representatives of the Ministry of Justice, the Penitentiary Service, the National Mental Health Center, the Justice Academy, and the Maid Medical Department of the Ministry of Justice, to discuss the scope of the project and indicative action plan for its implementation. Following the inception mission, a project launching conference to approve the project work plan will be organised in May.

**Other relevant activities**

- 23 January: HoO attended a training session on Gender Equality in Media;
- 20 February: HoO attended Donor Coordination Core Group meeting;
- 22 February: HoO opened a round table on "Gender Equality and Media";
- 27 February: HoO opened a two-day information session on Gender equality and media in Ganja.

- 28 February: The final report of the EU/CoE joint project on "Civil Society dialogue in Azerbaijan" implemented between 2016-2018 was submitted to the EUD;
- 5 March: HoO attended an international conference on "Illegal economic and other activities in the occupied armed territories: obligations of third parties and their influence on conflict resolution";
- 6 March: HoO met with Deputy minister of Justice, Head of the Penitentiary Service Jeyhun Hasanov;
- 14-15 March: HoO attended the VI Baku Global Forum organised by Nizami International Forum.

## **Belgrade**

### **Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 6, Project staff – 23, Total – 29.

During the reporting period, the Office implemented 11 projects, of which 10 were jointly funded with the EU including 7 under the Horizontal Facility (HF) and one by the Human Rights Trust Fund (HRTF).

### **State of implementation of projects**

- EU/CoE - HF "Enhancing human rights protection for detained and sentenced persons in Serbia": Piloting of 2 finalised Offender Behaviour Programmes (OBPs) has been completed. The Mental Health Strategy and accompanying Action Plan completed and awaiting government approval. The work on development of two additional OBPs, a pilot pre-release course for prisoners serving 5+ years and training programme for National Employment Service counsellors working with ex-offenders are ongoing. The Medical Chamber and Chamber of Social workers accredited training on model individual treatment plans for psychiatric patients.
- EU/CoE - HF "SEMA": Judges, prosecutors, the State Agent before the ECtHR, NGOs, associations of parents of missing babies, and representatives of the Department for the execution of judgments of the ECtHR discussed the execution of the ECtHR judgment *Zorica Jovanovic v. Serbia*. Over 40 misdemeanour judges/assistants gained knowledge on fair trial standards, with a focus on well-reasoned judgments. Twenty-five deputy prosecutors/assistants were trained on International Co-operation in Criminal Matters via an online HELP course. Within the Regional Winter Academy of Human Rights, 48 law students were introduced to the ECHR and the ECtHR case-law on freedom of expression.
- EU/CoE - HF "Independent and impartial tribunals": Rules of Procedure of the Commissioner for Autonomy of the Prosecution were put up for adoption by the Prosecutorial Council, but further facilitation is required in order to reconcile positions of the MoJ and peer-elected members. The Action's Final Impact Report was produced, highlighting the need to continue and scale up training on undue pressure on the judiciary, and also to continue with support to the MoJ, and Judicial and Prosecutorial Councils by strengthening tools and mechanisms, and through sustained and coherent advocacy in relation to the legal framework. The Action ended on 28 February.
- EU/CoE - HF "Strengthen integrity and combat corruption in higher education": After initial research involving more than 2500 professors and students, academic integrity courses were finalised and presented to the wider public in February. The presentation was attended by 90 representatives from nearly all academic centres in Serbia, students, the Anti-corruption agency and the Ministry of Education. As a number of universities have already expressed interest in using the courses, including the University of Belgrade, the agreement with the Ministry of Education will be signed by end of April and the courses handed over to all the interested parties.
- EU/CoE - HF "Fostering a Democratic School Culture": The last 3 months of the project were marked by the evaluation process that showed a substantial positive change in the practices and approaches of schools. The final conference that gathered around 150 people, including key education policy makers in the country who spoke about the results, took place on 5 March. A publication on best practices was published and distributed while documentary films were finalised. Numerous events involving schools and local communities continued to ensure sustainability.

- EU/CoE - HF "Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in Serbia": On 29-30 January, 46 labour and market inspectors, representatives of police and NGOs Astra and Atina, were trained on anti-trafficking legal and policy frameworks in Serbia during a multi-disciplinary workshop. They learned about different forms of trafficking in human beings (THB), indicators on identification of THB victims as well as the National Referral System, etc. Also, on 7 March, 33 diplomatic and consular personnel and other relevant anti-trafficking actors advanced their understanding of the roles and responsibilities in identifying and assisting victims of trafficking.
- EU/CoE - HF "Strengthening the protection of national minorities": In March, the Guidelines for the appropriate representation of national minorities in educational content were finalised and the analysis of reports on the implementation of the Action Plan for the realisation of rights of national minorities with recommendations was presented. The project conducted a second opinion poll on the use of minority languages and impact of grants in Bosilegrad, Bujanovac, Medvedja, Sombor and Vranje. Five grants were successfully finalised on 15 March, with 5 roundtables held in above-mentioned municipalities on the "Official use of minority languages and scripts in LSGs".
- EU/CoE JP "JUFREX": Training on freedom of expression for lawyers from Belgrade and Novi Sad was organised on 25-26 January in Vrsac. Two publications were developed on the Dictionary of Media and Legal Terms (in Serbian) and Media regulatory authorities and protection of minors (regional/in English). The CoE Study on information disorder was translated into Serbian. Grant agreements with the Judicial Academy, Bar association and Press Council ended. Proposals for the next phase of the programme in Serbia, Montenegro and a regional component have been prepared.
- EU/CoE JP "ROMACTED: Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level": The Programme increased its capacities with new expertise in Roma inclusion policies, project development, accessing funds, development of Roma-responsible budgeting, housing and urban integration, civil registration and access to the justice system, inclusive and vocational education, employment and healthcare, etc. Six project proposals have been developed in cooperation with local self-governance and Community Action Groups. Short-term priorities in Roma communities were starting to be realised in cooperation with local institutions.
- VC HRTF "HELP in the Western Balkans": Four HELP online courses (on child-friendly justice, international cooperation in criminal matters, violence against women and domestic violence, property rights) were launched while 4 HELP online courses (on international cooperation in criminal matters, introduction to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), violence against women and domestic violence) were successfully completed in North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. The HELP course on Introduction to the ECHR was launched for law students of Belgrade University.
- EU/CoE JP "Human Resources Management in Local Self-Government - Phase 2" Officially started on 19 December 2018. A Partnership Agreement was signed between the CoE and the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM) on 20 February and will be implemented over the next 34 months (SCTM acts as a co-delegate, responsible for the direct implementation of a number of activities). The launching conference was held on 12 March and was organised by the CoE Project Team in cooperation with the SCTM. Representatives of central governmental institutions, donor and international organisations and around 150 LSG representatives took part.

#### Follow-up action

- Continue Horizontal Facility Phase 2 negotiations with the EU and Serbian authorities;
- Continue with Council of Europe 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary activities and visibility events.



Other relevant activities

- 6 February: Public symposium "Transgenerational knowledge transfer" was organised by the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC) at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade. HoO was a keynote speaker;
- 7 February: Congress of Local and Regional Authorities Monitoring Committee held its meeting in Belgrade;
- 6 March: Final Meeting of the Horizontal Facility Steering Committee took place in Belgrade, gathering all beneficiaries and partner institutions;
- 7 March: Gender conference "For a Cohesive Europe: Gender Equality and Women's Rights" was held in Belgrade, organised by the Romanian Presidency of the EU Council in collaboration with the Embassy of Finland and the Embassy of Croatia and in cooperation with the CoE Office in Belgrade and UN Women.

**CoE high level visits and other official delegations**

- 25 February-1 March: The first GREVIO monitoring mission was conducted in Serbia. During the visit to Belgrade and Novi Sad, the group of experts from GREVIO held meetings with representatives of the Serbian government, NGOs, law enforcement officials, judges, staff of social welfare centres and journalists;
- 18 to 22 March: Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention on the protection of National Minorities paid a visit to Serbia to evaluate progress made in the monitoring of the protection of national minorities.

## **Bucharest**

### **Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 0.5, Project staff – 30, Total – 30.5

C-PROC is responsible for the implementation of 5 cybercrime capacity-building projects with a combined budget of 26 million EUR. Three projects are jointly funded with the European Union (EU), one is funded by voluntary contributions and another one "End of Violence Against Children (EVAC)" by the United Kingdom.

### **State of implementation of projects**

- VC "Cybercrime@Octopus": The project supported the organisation of the Bureau of Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY) meetings and Protocol Drafting Group meetings to facilitate discussions on relevant trends in cybercrime and make progress on drafting the Additional Protocol to the Cybercrime Convention. The visibility of the role of the Budapest Convention was ensured by facilitating the participation of experts in the UN Commission for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice as well as in the UN Intergovernmental Expert Group on Cybercrime in Vienna and European Police Congress in Berlin, Germany. The project supported Guatemala and the Ivory Coast in their efforts to align their cybercrime legislation with the provisions of the Budapest Convention. The capabilities of several countries (Indonesia, Nigeria, Costa Rica and Ghana) were reinforced by supporting workshops and training activities on international cooperation on cybercrime and electronic evidence. Moreover, drafting of the new Cybersecurity Strategy in Georgia was supported.
- EU/CoE JP "iPROCEEDS": The project supported the assessment of the cybercrime legislative framework in Serbia in order to determine the level of its compliance with European standards and draw a comparison with the EU acquis and the Budapest Convention. The investigative capacities of the project countries were reinforced through the delivery of European Cybercrime Training and Education Group (ECTEG) specialised trainings at national and regional level. The guidelines and indicators for financial sector entities to prevent money laundering in the online environment were improved through a series of meetings of the working groups held in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. The project supported the strengthening of inter-agency and international cooperation in the search, seizure and confiscation of online crime proceeds by commencing the national delivery of the second cybercrime and financial investigation simulation exercise. Moreover, magistrates from Kosovo\* benefited from the second delivery of the introductory judicial training on cybercrime and online crime proceeds.
- EU/CoE JP "GLACY+": The project aims to support the strengthening of capacities from countries worldwide in the fight against cybercrime and in the proper use of electronic evidence. The project devoted the majority of its work to supporting countries in the implementation of international standards on cybercrime legislation, hence advisory missions on legislation were conducted in Guatemala, Kenya and The Gambia. Capacities of magistrates were reinforced through advanced judicial courses delivered in Indonesia, Nigeria, Costa Rica, Sri Lanka and Dominican Republic. Moreover, the integration and mainstreaming of training modules in the curricula of judicial training institutions was facilitated in Ghana. The promotion of the Budapest Convention was ensured by the participation of experts and/or staff in a number of conferences/events in Ghana (national conference on the technical implementation of the Budapest Convention), Italy (Lecture on the Budapest Convention within the Cybersecurity Master programme), Romania (participation in the Empact project from Europol) and at the UN intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Cybercrime in Vienna. Synergies with other projects funded by the EU were identified by participating in coordination meetings

with the EU and management units of organisations that are implementing other projects with a cybercrime component across the globe; this was the case with coordination meetings held in Brussels with projects such as OCWAR-C, Cyber4D and EIPacCto and with Europol project SIRIUS. A coordination meeting took place at Eurojust and on this occasion the draft outline has been agreed for a future joint activity to strengthen the capabilities of the project countries on international cooperation. Authorities from Morocco were advised in regard to the collection and monitoring of criminal justice statistics on cybercrime and electronic evidence. Finally, law enforcement capacities were reinforced by successful trainings delivered in Morocco, Cabo Verde, Columbia, and Hong Kong with the support of INTERPOL, as project partner.

- EU/CoE JP "CyberSouth". The project organised a number of activities, corresponding to the needs expressed by the beneficiary countries and aiming to reinforce trainings for cybercrime specialised units and to build institutions ownership' with regard to judicial training. The capabilities of the cybercrime units were reinforced by dedicated regional trainings on first responder course, live data forensic, malware analysis and undercover online investigation. Moroccan authorities were assisted in the integration of judicial training material into national curricula. This will continue with all project countries with the aim of having local training manuals on cybercrime and electronic evidence adapted to all countries. The benefits of the Budapest Convention and the progress of the project were promoted through a meeting organised in Bucharest with representatives of Embassies from project countries and other countries from Africa interested in the work of the CoE. CyberSouth countries were advised on judicial training strategies during a regional workshop held in Lebanon. The project supported the participation of project countries in the UN intergovernmental expert group in March 2019.
- VC (multi-lateral) "EndOCSEA@Europe": The First Steering Group meeting of the project took place on 4 March in Strasbourg, with representatives of 8 out of the 10 focus countries involved in the project. As a result, country representatives have agreed to a proposed workplan, with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Ukraine being selected as pilot countries. A baseline mapping of the 47 CoE member States' policies and legislative frameworks is under way, with an initial report covering the 10 focus countries of the project. As immediate follow-up action, a gap analysis in the 3 pilot countries will take place concerning capacities for law enforcement, judges and prosecutors to respond to online child sexual exploitation. The Launching Conference will take place on 16-17 May in Strasbourg, involving around 60 participants and experts from all project countries.

#### Follow up action

- Implementation of the project workplans as agreed upon for second quarter of 2019;
- Preparations for the launching of the new Cybercrime@EAST project for Eastern Partnership region.

#### Other relevant activities

- San Marino acceded to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime;
- As a major highlight, in order to progress on the negotiation for the Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention, an international conference was organised in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice of Romania under the umbrella of the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. This event also marked the 5th anniversary of the Cybercrime Programme Office of the Council of Europe (C-PROC) in Bucharest;
- C-PROC hosted visits by a delegation from the Ministry of Justice of Morocco and a delegation from the Anticorruption Department of Jordan.

**Chisinau****Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 5, Project staff – 12, Total staff – 17.

The Office implemented 5 projects, of which 2 are jointly funded with the EU and 3 are funded by VC/Donor.

**State of implementation of projects/programmes/Action Plans/co-operation documents**

- AP "Promoting a human rights compliant criminal justice system in the Republic of Moldova": Component 1 - 250 copies of the first issue of the "Bulletin of the Prosecution Service" came out in print. A needs assessment of the professional and operational capacities of the Office of the People's Advocate was presented to a professional audience and established a road map for further reforms of the institution. The HELP course on right to liberty and security was launched in cooperation with the National Institute of Justice. Over 50 investigative judges and representatives of the National Administration of Penitentiaries participated in a workshop on the implementation of new domestic remedy to challenge poor conditions of detention. The Head of the Torture Combatting Unit of the General Prosecutor's Office represented the country among European experts in the Committee of Ministers' thematic debate on effective investigations. Component 2 - Assistance was provided to the National Administration of Penitentiaries and the National Inspectorate of Probation to further develop the risk and needs assessment on pre-release and post-prison supervision; to elaborate a set of regulations on releasing seriously ill persons deprived of liberty from the execution of their punishment, on the provision of health care and circulation of medicines in prisons; to refine the curricula for the initial training of prison staff and for the training of probation councillors in drafting pre-sentence reports; and, finally, to develop recommendations on increasing the efficiency of the probation service and revising the status of probation employees. The CoE Handbook on Electronic Monitoring was translated and shared with the National Inspectorate of Probation.
- EU/CoE JP "Controlling Corruption through Law Enforcement and Prevention (CLEP)": The CLEP project increased the capacities of local level CSOs in drafting alternative reports to anti-corruption policy documents. Again, at local level, over 100 public officials representing all regions in the country were trained on how to identify and solve conflicts of interest. Substantial work was carried out in the field of international asset tracing and recovery as well as in asset management, where experts' advice and targeted capacity building were provided with an inter-agency approach. The project also equipped half of the active State-Owned Enterprises with tools to implement anti-corruption compliance. Lastly, in collaboration with the Financial Intelligence Unit, a manual on anti-money laundering for reporting and supervisory entities was officially presented.
- VC Switzerland "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova": Thirty-five teacher trainers of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of the Republic of Moldova have been trained on how to apply in practice the provisions of the new civic education curriculum (grades 5 and 10) for the second semester of 2018-2019. The new curriculum is largely based on the CoE Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE) and the CoE Framework of Competences for a Democratic Culture, and was developed with CoE support in 2018.
- VC (multi-lateral) "Protecting children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in the Republic of Moldova": The Project was officially launched, and the project's activities discussed and approved by the Steering Committee members. The HELP course on Child friendly justice

was translated, adapted by the Moldovan legal order and will be officially launched in April 2019. The Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on child-friendly justice were printed and a few copies disseminated to beneficiaries participating in the Steering Committee meeting. The "Start to talk" video on child sexual abuse in the field of sport was translated into Romanian and uploaded on the CoE's official website.

EU/CoE - PGG (Regional) "Strengthening access to justice through non-judiciary redress mechanisms for victims of discrimination, hate crime and hate speech in Eastern Partnership countries": An inception mission was organised on 28-29 March to meet the EU Delegation, project partners and beneficiaries in order to present the project and to ensure a common understanding by national partners of the project outcomes and to establish partnerships in light of the new activities. An international consultant started to work on the baseline study for assessing national non-discrimination mechanisms in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus.

### Other relevant activities

- 17 January: HoO participated in the EU, UN, OSCE, CoE Experts' meeting on human rights held at the Moldovan Ministry of Justice. The CoE contributed to the topics on media and human rights in the justice system (impunity of ill-treatment, pre-trial detention, right to fair trial);
- 29 March: A national contest for essays and drawings to mark the 70th anniversary entitled "Be tolerant and you will make a new friend" was launched in cooperation with the monthly youth newspaper "Florile Dalbe";
- Several discussions with the EU delegation in Chisinau, involving the CoE office in Chisinau, ODGP and relevant DGs in Strasbourg, were held on the two PGG projects for Moldova on CEPEJ and anti-discrimination, with a view to finalising project proposals;
- HoO held a series of meetings with national partners and embassies with a view to implementing the plan of activities dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe.

### **Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations**

- 29- 30 January: A pre-electoral PACE delegation visited Moldova to assess the election campaign and the preparations for the parliamentary elections to be held on 24 February and issued a statement on 31 January. An extended PACE delegation returned to Moldova on 22-25 February to observe parliamentary elections as part of the OSCE/ODIHR, PACE, EP joint election observation mission.

**Kyiv****Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 11, Project staff –35, Total staff - 46.

In the framework of the CoE Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2021, the Office implemented 14 projects, including 12 projects funded by voluntary contributions, one funded under the EU/CoE PGG and one project funded by the HRTF.

**State of implementation of projects/programmes**

- VC HRTF “Supporting Ukraine in execution of judgments of the ECtHR”: The Project continued to support the Ukrainian authorities in the effective execution of ECtHR judgments against Ukraine related to Article 6 of the ECHR with regard to the functioning of the judiciary. Further analysis of the group of cases related to guarantees of judicial independence (Volkov, Kulykov, Denisov) was carried out and the next steps identified for Ukraine. The Project continued public discussions on the root causes for the high level of non-execution of national judgments in Ukraine (Zhovner and Burmych judgments). Furthermore, the impact of the newly-adopted codes of judicial procedure on the length of judicial proceedings has been established and brought to the attention of key stakeholders.
- AP “Support to the implementation of the judicial reform in Ukraine”: A collection of materials of the ECtHR with regard to the overview of its case-law on Article 6 and of its judgments against other countries, so far unavailable in Ukrainian, was translated. The President of the new Supreme Court had the opportunity to have first-hand contact with the heads of key CoE entities in Strasbourg. Moreover, the Project continues monitoring the level of public trust in the Ukrainian justice system and the project’s sociological survey, which was delivered in February-March and confirms that the tendency towards a lack of trust has not changed significantly since 2017.
- VC Denmark “Continued Support to the Criminal Justice Reform in Ukraine”: Expert comments on the draft regulation on independence of prosecutors were transmitted to the Council of Prosecutors; 10 staff members of the communication platform Pravokator were trained on human rights issues in the criminal justice sector; 13 staff members of the Coordination Centre for Legal Aid Provision acquired training skills; the Qualification and Disciplinary Commission received conference equipment for online streaming of its meetings; Preliminary observations of the organisational assessment of the Prosecutor General’s Office were discussed with the Prosecutor General and GPO senior and middle management.
- AP “Strengthening democracy and building trust at local level in Ukraine”: In January 40 mayors and councillors at the round table on the Open Government Partnership (OGP) showcased successful practices and reaffirmed their commitment to develop and implement Ukraine’s National OGP Action Plans. Approaches for accelerating gender equality through OGP and gender-sensitive policymaking were promoted among 50 Ukrainian local authorities by their peers from Serbia and Spain in March. Consultation mechanisms between national associations and national authorities were enhanced through advocacy support provided by members of the Congress Group of Independent Experts on the European Charter of Local Self-Government ECLSG. IDPs’ voting rights in Ukraine and the need to pass a draft law to enable IDPs’ full participation in elections were addressed during a thematic conference in February, with the participation of Congress members from Italy and the Netherlands.
- AP “Promoting civil participation in democratic decision-making in Ukraine”: The first Steering Committee meeting in March officially launched the Project. A series of trainings in effective communication for citizens’ engagement was launched for staff of the Kyiv Center of Public Communications. Local short-terms consultants of the Project upgraded their knowledge

of gender mainstreaming in civil participation through T4T training. Upon the request of the Parliamentary Committee on local self-government, Project experts have started the preparation of an expert opinion on the draft law on amending legislation on forms of citizens' direct participation in the management of local affairs.

- AP "Supporting constitutional and legal reforms, constitutional justice and assisting the Parliament in conducting reforms aimed at enhancing its efficiency": Nearly 170 administrative judges from 30 Ukrainian administrative courts of appeal and district administrative courts strengthened their knowledge and skills in implementing electoral legislation and national court practice on election-related matters in light of the European electoral heritage and case-law of the ECtHR. During February-March, Project experts in cooperation with the Central Election Commission (CEC) developed 2 manuals for members of the district and precinct election commissions with legal advice on the decisions and actions of members of the election commissions, and 34,000 copies of the manuals were printed and sent to members of election commissions. Following the request of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine in November 2018, the Venice Commission adopted its opinion on the amicus curiae brief on separate appeals against rulings on preventive measures (deprivation of liberty) of first instance courts at the 118th Plenary Session in March.

- AP "Supporting the transparency, inclusiveness and integrity of electoral practice in Ukraine": Two interim reports on media coverage of Presidential elections were published and discussed with the expert community and the results widely shared via social media (more than 300,000 and 34,000 views respectively), and 62 alleged violations of Code of journalism ethics were addressed. One hundred and sixty-seven judges from 22 regions representing 30 administrative courts improved their skills on election dispute resolution in line with European electoral standards and ECHR case-law. Ten radio programmes on electoral processes and procedures were broadcast on UA: Ukrainian Radio (with daily audiences of 35,645). More than 100 first-time voters received information about electoral systems and procedures. Handbooks were developed, produced and disseminated among 199 district and 29,989 precinct election commissions.

- AP "Internal Displacement in Ukraine: Building Solutions": On 27 February in Kyiv, the Project in cooperation with a CoE Congress-led project contributed to the organisation of an international conference on IDPs' voting rights. In addition, the Project supported printing and further dissemination of 50,000 copies of flyers on IDPs voting rights before the Presidential elections. Best practices and key challenges for IDPs' integration as well as ways to engage IDPs in local decision-making processes were summed up at a thematic workshop in February in Kyiv. Furthermore, the Project supported the development, presentation in 3 cities and further dissemination of the free mobile application on "IDPRights", which contains step-by-step solution algorithms for IDP issues. A series of 3-day training courses entitled "Express-course on human rights" for students of displaced universities was delivered in cooperation with the NGO "Ukrainian Institute for Human Rights" in Severodonetsk and Kryvyi Rih. Finally, the Project provided 5 displaced institutions with IT equipment, information stands (IDPs help-desks), furniture and other equipment to make their facilities more operational and enable them to deliver trainings, consultations and services to internally displaced persons and representatives of host communities.

- AP "Strengthening freedom of media and establishing a public broadcasting system in Ukraine": Independent public monitoring<sup>[1]</sup> of media coverage of the presidential election campaigns was carried out by a coalition of CSOs and supported by the Project in synergy with the CoE's ongoing project on electoral practices. The 1st and 2nd interim reports on the

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<sup>[1]</sup> Monitoring is carried out by the coalition of Ukrainian NGOs consisting of "The Commission on Journalism Ethics", "Human Rights Platform", "Ukrainian Media and Communications Institute" and "StopFake" with the support of the Council of Europe Projects "Strengthening freedom of media, access to information and reinforcing the public broadcasting system in Ukraine" and "Supporting the transparency, inclusiveness and integrity of electoral practice in Ukraine" implemented within the framework of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2021.

findings of media monitoring for the period from 14 January-17 March 2019 were released to inform the public about the level of political pluralism in the Ukrainian media. The capacities of the National Council of Television and Radio Broadcasting of Ukraine on media monitoring during elections were strengthened during a seminar on CoE standards, and case-law of the ECtHR with regard to the role and responsibility of the media in ensuring information on electoral processes. The media's self-regulatory body, Commission on Journalism Ethics, issued 8 decisions regarding violations of the Code of Ethics by a Ukrainian Journalist due to a grant provided by 2 CoE projects. An expert report on the system of financing of the Ukrainian public service broadcaster UA:PBC in the light of CoE standards was produced at the request of the Parliamentary Committee on Freedom of Speech and Information Policy and presented in Strasbourg in January. An awareness campaign on Ukrainian Radio was carried out with branded transport in 3 cities of Ukraine, a promotional video and campaign on Public broadcasting with an animated video on the role, mission and structure of the Public broadcaster in Ukraine.

- AP "The Istanbul Convention: a tool to advance in fighting violence against women and domestic violence in Ukraine": Following the request of Project partners, the Istanbul Convention with Explanatory report was published to facilitate further training needs. A ToT to strengthen capacities of 20 legal professionals in charge of protecting victims was also prepared for delivery in April and a schedule for follow up cascade trainings agreed with Project partners.
- AP "Enhancing Implementation of the European Human Rights Standards": During the CM's debates in March, the First Deputy Director of the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) presented the first results of SBI's work on fostering the exchange of experience among representatives of participating States on the difficulties they face in the execution of the ECtHR's judgments. At the SBI's request, the Project provided a legal review of the SBI's internal instruction on cooperation mechanisms between SBI and other public institutions in the prevention and investigation of torture. Furthermore, the Ombudsperson's capacities to implement the National Prevention Mechanism were strengthened through the delivery of a practical seminar on European best practices and the provision of 5 methodological recommendations/guidelines that explain the specifics of the monitoring process in different places of deprivation of liberty. Finally, the Project launched the HELP online course on "Labour Rights in the Light of the ECHR" for 30 lawyers, jointly with the Ukrainian National Bar Association, as well as the course "Admissibility criteria" for 30 lawyers and judges, jointly with the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union.
- AP "Protection of national minorities, including Roma, and minority languages in Ukraine": The mapping of Roma communities was initiated in January in the Donetsk and Transcarpathia regions. In February, 36 regional representatives of the Ombudsperson office and Roma communities discussed how to improve the coordination mechanism at a regional level in order to protect the rights of the Roma population and improve access to services. Moreover, monitoring visits by the Ombudsperson's Office on Roma issues in Zaporizhzhya and Odesa regions were supported by the Project. Up to 40 participants of the "Local action for Roma safety – 2nd meeting of the Ukrainian Alliance of Cities and Regions for Roma Inclusion" addressed the issues of attacks against Roma in Ukraine in February in Lviv. Twelve video messages about the lives of Roma people were recorded for presentation in the Parliament in April. Furthermore, up to 35 participants in the Coordination meeting of regional health departments, doctors and Roma mediators discussed together for the first time the issue of identification of needs and problems of health professionals and Roma mediators in the context of medical reform. In addition, in February, stereotypes in public life and hate speech in electoral campaigns in 2019 addressed towards national minorities were discussed by 55 representatives of central and regional levels of governance, and the knowledge and skills of 38 representatives of national minority organisations from different regions on combating hate speech were strengthened. The findings of the CoE Report on executing structures and



coordination mechanisms for national minorities was presented and discussed by key stakeholders. The information campaign "We are different, but we are united" was launched.

### **Gender mainstreaming**

- The gender adviser continued to provide support to different projects to ensure gender mainstreaming, including in the planning of activities for 2019, as well as in the elaboration of the annual reports in 2018. In the framework of International Women's Day 2019, awareness-raising on gender stereotypes and their influence in everyday life was carried out with the staff of the office through a board game. New staff members had a gender chat with the gender adviser to understand the importance of gender equality and gender mainstreaming in their work, as well as to have information on the main documents and tools for gender mainstreaming. An introductory training was carried out for new staff members. The gender adviser also attended events held by several projects to talk about gender equality and gender mainstreaming in their respective fields. The gender adviser accompanied the project manager of the regional PGG project on Women's Access to Justice on her mission in Kyiv and subsequent meetings with different stakeholders.

### **Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations**

- 4-6 February: Verena Taylor, Director of ODGP
- 27 February: CLRA Vice-President Barbara TOCE (Italy, SOC) and Congress Rapporteur Jos WIENEN (Netherlands, EPP/CCE) took part in the conference on voting rights of IDPs in Kyiv;
- 4-7 March: PACE pre-electoral mission;
- 27-31 March: PACE electoral mission.

## **Pristina**

### **Situation of the Office**

Core staff - 5, Project staff - 17, Total - 22.

The Office implements 9 projects, of which 5 are jointly funded with the EU including 2 regional joint programmes, and 4 are funded by voluntary contributions (VC) from Norway, Switzerland, and by the CoE. It should be added that another regional joint project "iPROCEEDS" is also implemented in Kosovo\*, by the Cybercrime Programme Office of the Council of Europe (C-PROC) in Bucharest.

### **State of implementation of projects**

- EU/CoE JP "Project against Economic Crime in Kosovo\*" (PECK II): The project carried out a scoping mission on the regulatory framework in relation to beneficial ownership. It held a working group meeting on developing necessary sub-legal acts to implement the law on prevention of conflict of interest. It organised a workshop aimed at improving the methodologies and practices of AML/CFT supervision and a workshop to discuss the role and importance of dissemination of intelligence between FIU and its counterpart institutions. It presented the findings and recommendations on the Draft Law on International Targeted Financial Sanctions.
- EU/CoE - HF "Strengthening the Quality and Efficiency of Justice (KoSEJ)": The second CEPEJ assessment report of the judicial system in Kosovo\* was presented to the judicial authorities, and local and international stakeholders. The Ministry of Justice, who will take over future regular assessments, subsequently appointed 2 coordinators for that purpose. KoSEJ continues to support the Case Management Information System Project (CMIS) to ensure the reliability of statistics generated by this system. In this respect, CEPEJ experts expressed concerns over the proposed automatic assignment of cases to judges which still allows for manual and discretionary interventions.
- EU/CoE - HF "Enhancing human rights policing": The Action organised 15 cascade training sessions for police officers, covering 8 modules from the updated human rights training curricula of the Kosovo Police (KP), and 'training of trainers' for 16 trainers of the Police Inspectorate. In total, 709 police officers were trained during the period, including 7% from minorities. Overall, 35% of those trained as trainers by the Action are women (14% of the KP's workforce are women).
- VC Switzerland/Norway/AP "Strengthening the National Preventive Mechanism in Kosovo\* – SNPM": Theoretical and practical training, including visits to places of deprivation of liberty have continued (with a focus on immigration detention, and women and juveniles in detention) for staff of the NPM and regional Ombudsperson's offices and relevant NGOs. Specialised training for the 35 multidisciplinary staff of the Forensic Psychiatry Institute was carried out. An awareness-raising workshop on the NPM's mandate was held in Mitrovicë/Mitrovica South for police and prison officers, court representatives and NGOs from all municipalities covered by the Mitrovica/Mitrovicë North Basic Court.
- VC Norway/AP "Fostering rapprochement through education for democracy and language learning (FRED)": Online coaching and school visits have been provided to all pilot school teams. Forty-four school representatives fine-tuned their activities during a 4-day workshop, where the entire methodology was reviewed, and synergies were deepened with the Ministry of Education, the Language Commissioner and CSO representatives. The Project

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\*All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

held its second Steering Committee meeting during which progress was reviewed and the reference framework of competences for democratic culture was introduced. The baseline survey report was finalised, and policy recommendations will be added.

- VC Norway "Improving the Protection of European Human Rights Standards by the Constitutional Court": The project officially started in February, and the project team, including the Project Coordinator, held a series of meetings with relevant stakeholders to present the detailed vision of the project, which was officially launched on 21 March and focuses on the independence of judges/good administration of justice as well as on court relations with the media and communication strategies. Preparations were made for detailed workplans and the first steering committee meeting, and timelines for the short-term placement of Constitutional Court staff at the ECtHR were contemplated.
- VC Norway/AP "Reinforcing the fight against violence against women and domestic violence in Kosovo\*": The project coordinator carried out a visit to Pristina to meet with all relevant stakeholders and proceeded with the project's induction phase and conception of the workplans. Particular attention was paid to avoiding duplication and promoting coordination in this field, which is covered from different angles by a number of other partners present in Kosovo\*. Preparations have been made for the launching event in spring. Additional funding has been secured to ensure the full implementation of the project.
- EU/CoE regional JP "Reinforcing Judicial Expertise on Freedom of Expression and the Media in South-East Europe (JUFREX)": A judge from the Basic Court of Pristina and a judge from the Kosovo\* Court of Appeals took part as experts in the third regional master class for self-regulatory bodies in the Western Balkans and Turkey, which was held in Belgrade at the joint initiative of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Press Council and UNESCO. JUFREX is in the process of being phased out and all activities foreseen in the signed Grant Agreements have been implemented and the process of closing grants is underway. Preparations were made for the forthcoming Kosovo\*-specific media project under the Horizontal Facility phase II.
- EU/CoE regional JP "Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level (ROMACTED)": The ROMACTED board, bringing together members of the Institutional Working Groups and Community Action Groups, reviewed the progress of the project. The second cycle of Joint meetings between Community Action Groups and Institutional Working Groups contributed to reviving the implementation of the Local Action Plans on Roma integration focusing on the implementation of specific and common community short- and medium-term needs, which have been identified but not yet addressed. The possibility of publishing the community needs assessment and municipal/capacity needs assessment is under consideration.
- EU/CoE regional JP "Project on targeting crime proceeds on the Internet in South-eastern Europe and Turkey (iPROCEEDS)": Participants from various Kosovo\* institutions (judges, prosecutors, police, Financial Intelligence Unit, Academy of Justice) participated in a "ECTEG" (European Cybercrime Training and Education Group) course on network investigations organised with the Police Academy of Romania. A case simulation exercise on cybercrime and financial investigations for Albania and Kosovo\* was organised. An introductory training course on cybercrime, electronic evidence and online crime proceeds was held for Kosovo\* judges and prosecutors in Pristina. The project held its 7th Steering Committee.

#### Follow up action

- PECK II: Preparation for the Model Regulation to implement the law on prevention of conflict of interest, and a technical paper on beneficial ownership; preparatory work in consultation with relevant stakeholders on the third phase of the project (PECK III);

- HF Police Action: Preparation for the publication of leaflets for police officers on human rights policing, and distribution of 800 copies of two handbooks, in Albanian and Serbian ('ECHR and Policing'; 'A brief introduction to Investigative Interviewing-A Practitioner's Guide');
- FRED: Conference on language learning, including the presentation of the baseline study;
- KoSEJ: Presentations of court-coaching reports/recommendations to improve courts' efficiency;
- Meetings with EU Office on project proposals for HF II, IPA-funding (rule of law, education fields), and potential donors for funding projects.

#### Other relevant activities

- The Office together with relevant CoE project staff continued to take part in the Functional Review of the Rule of Law Sector;
- The Office provided substantial assistance including logistical support for the preparation and induction phases of two newly started projects (Violence against women; Constitutional Court), and a potential project related to anti-discrimination under HF II
- The Office took part in local and international events (conference, round tables, workshops, panels) promoting human rights and rule of law issues, media, anti-discrimination, efficiency of justice, minorities' rights.

## **Sarajevo**

### **Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 6, Project staff - 13, Total staff – 19.

The Office implements 5 projects, of which 3 projects are funded within the EU/CoE Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey, and 1 project is funded by VCs from the UK and US, and another is funded by Norway. In addition, the Office contributes to the implementation of 2 regional projects, Joint Programmes with the EU on freedom of expression and media, and respectively on Roma empowerment at local level.

### **State of implementation of projects / Action Plan**

- EU/CoE - HF "Enhancing human rights protection for detained and sentenced persons in BiH": In January, all 14 prison governors in BiH met to discuss improvements in the application of past HF training initiatives and to learn about the new CoE project on deradicalisation. Through peer training delivered in January, February and March, 115 court police officers improved their skills in line with the Guidelines for dealing with persons deprived of liberty in closed environment. In February, in an exchange of best practices with the staff of the Slovenian Prison Administration, 20 prison officers were trained on the Handbook for managing prisoners and enhancing human rights in closed environment. In March, 23 prison officers from 3 prisons learned harmonised procedures for managing prisons and improved their core and advanced competencies in areas such as searches, escorting, and working with intelligence in prison environments. In March, the working group tasked with introducing IT in prison system(s) in BiH met with the policy makers to discuss and sign off on the draft Technical Specification for the supply of computer equipment and software for the Integrated Information System for prisons in entity jurisdictions. In March, the Action's Steering Committee endorsed the project proceedings and monitored progress made with the Action's remaining activities.
- EU/CoE - HF "Strengthening the protection of national minorities in BiH": In February, the Minority Coordination Group (MCG) held its 4th meeting under the auspices of the Action. In a back-to-back activity, 15 members of the MCG were trained on gender equality and public advocacy. In February and March, 2 tailor-made TV shows targeting Italian and Slovenian national minorities in BiH were broadcast on State public broadcaster BHTV. The five local self-governments in BiH, grantees of the Action, organised in cooperation with local CSOs different well publicised activities on national minorities, including school competitions. The 3rd Action Steering Committee took place in January in Tuzla with 9 participants and discussed and endorsed past and future activities.
- EU/CoE - HF "Quality education in multi-ethnic societies": During the reporting period, the 5th Focus group with civil servants and politicians discussed the conclusions and policy recommendations of the assessment on "Ethnic segregation and its impact on the quality of education" and of the previous 4 focus groups with pupils, parents, teachers and school directors, and pedagogical institutes. Fifteen senior officials from BiH met with the CoE and EU experts to develop concrete recommendations and a roadmap for improving quality education in BiH. In March, 35 teachers, 5 school managers and 35 pupils took part in 2 CoE workshops on Competences for Democratic Culture.
- VC UK/US "Structured sentence management for violent and extremist prisoners in Bosnia and Herzegovina": In January, the project was officially launched with a kick-off event, and the 1st Steering Committee (SC) endorsed the 6-month work plan in line with the donors' requirements. In February, 25 representatives from the Ministries of Justice of FBiH and RS, prison units and law enforcement agencies exchanged practices and experiences to prepare a

training manual on the case management system (CMS) for violent and extremist (VE) prisoners. An assessment visit to evaluate human resources aspects, and allocation and training of staff assigned to deal with violent extremist prisoners was conducted in February. In March, a working group composed of representatives of Ministries of Justice of BiH, FBiH and RS and prison officials exchanged knowledge and practices gained in the process of the application of the CoE "Manual for assessment and rehabilitation of violent and extremist prisoners in BiH".

- VC Norway "Initiative for Legal Certainty and Efficient Judiciary in Bosnia and Herzegovina": The project started on the 1 January and in February the 1st Steering Committee was formed with representatives of the Supreme Court of the 2 Entities, the Appellate Court of Brcko District, the Constitutional Court of BiH, the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of BiH and other stakeholders. In February, the CoE in cooperation with the Judicial and Prosecutorial Training Centre of FBiH organised a training on legal reasoning and legal drafting taking into consideration the ECtHR's case-law and decisions of the CC BiH for judicial assistants. In March, the Human Rights Legal Clinic (Clinic) at Universities of Džemal Bijedić and Mostar (Law Faculties) was opened with the support of the CoE, and it will provide students with the necessary practical legal skills in the area of human rights.

#### Implementation in BiH of regional projects (see also under 'Belgrade Office')

- JP EU/CoE "Reinforcing Judicial Expertise on Freedom of Expression and the Media in South-East Europe" (JUFREX): In January, the final conference on the project's cooperation with BiH Association of Journalists gathered 74 participants to discuss improvements in the fields of safety and the economic position of journalists, and ethical reporting. In February, 14 lawyers (8 from FBiH and 6 from RS), and 7 judges and 1 prosecutor from RS were certified to deliver trainings on Article 10, following the completion of two ToT sessions organised in cooperation with the Bar Association of FBiH, and respectively CEST RS.
- JP EU/CoE "Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level" (ROMACTED): During the reporting period, all 10 programme beneficiaries' municipalities were visited by the Roma support organisation "Romalen" and selected facilitators. Eleven municipal task force meetings were conducted in 10 municipalities resulting in detailed plans for the development of programme implementation in 2019. Furthermore, a 1-day training was conducted for new ROMACTED facilitators on ROMACTED methodology and programme implementation. In the upcoming trimester, the new facilitators will mainly work directly with Roma community members on empowering them to exercise their rights and obligations in assessing public services in their respective municipalities. A ROMACTED team meeting was held in Brussels for all 7 countries, where future planning and the current situation in relation to project development were discussed.

#### Other relevant activities

- 22 January: HoO gave the introductory speech at the launching event of the project "Structured sentence management for violent and extremist prisoners in Bosnia and Herzegovina";
- 6 February: HoO gave the opening speech at the Kick-off Event of the Regional Project "Increased Education Opportunities for Roma Students and Roma Youth in Western Balkans and Turkey in BiH";
- 28 February: HoO gave an opening speech in the graduation ceremony of the fourteenth generation of law enforcement officers of the FBiH;
- 13 March: HoO gave the introductory speech at the Conference: "Impact of the EU Accession Process on Local Self-Government Units in Bosnia and Herzegovina";
- 14 March: HoO spoke at the Workshop on Protection of the Rights of the Transgender and Intersex People in Bosnia and Herzegovina, organised by SOGI CoE and MHRR BiH;

- 20 March: HoO gave the introductory speech at the UN Women conference presenting the key results of the UN Women projects in the area of preventing violence against women;
- 20 March: HoO attended COWEB Capitals Formation meeting with the Directors of Western Balkan Directorates, organised by the Delegation of the European Union to BiH & European Union Special Representative in BiH;
- 21 March: HoO attended Conference on the occasion of 10 years of adoption of the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination, organised by the OSCE and gave a speech during the introductory part of the conference;
- 22 March: DHoO gave the opening speech at the opening of Human Rights Legal Clinic in Mostar.

#### Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- 13 February: 3rd Horizontal Facility Beneficiary Steering Committee with the participation of Verena Taylor, Director of the Office of the Directorate General of Programmes;
- 19 -21 February: Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe monitoring visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## **Tbilisi**

### **Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 6, Project staff – 16, Total staff - 22.

The Office implemented 9 projects, of which 3 were funded by the EU/jointly funded with the EU and 6 were funded by VC/Donor.

### **State of implementation of projects / programmes**

- AP “Support to the Judicial Reform in Georgia”: Expertise on the Supreme Court judges’ selection/appointment criteria/procedure has contributed to the respective discussions on the legislative amendments currently being submitted to the Parliament. Twenty-eight judicial assistants received the most recent review of ECHR standards and case-law as part of the annual Winter School on Justice. Court Managers continued to share common challenges and best practices through the Project-inspired platform-Court Managers’ Forum. Judiciary communication staff were advised on ways to enhance transparency and public trust by providing 3-month social media monitoring reports and benefitted from a follow-up needs-based training. Georgian Bar Association staff have been equipped with effective monitoring and evaluation tools to better implement the Project-supported Strategy 2018-2021.
- EU/CoE – PGG “The Council of Europe Programme to support Georgia in view of the 2016 (parliamentary), 2017 (local) and 2018 (presidential) elections”: A CoE expert delivered training on report writing techniques to leading Georgian election monitoring organisations. Individual sessions aimed at analysing current monitoring reports and mechanisms on how to improve their quality in the future. The State Audit Office (SAO) staff and representatives of CSOs discussed monitoring results of the 2018 Presidential Election in Georgia. A conference on “Hate Speech during Election Campaign” was organised on 12 March together with the Georgian Young Lawyers Association (GYLA). The post-election conference “The 2018 Presidential Election: Lessons Learned and Steps Ahead” was jointly organised by the CoE and International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) on 22 March, with the participation of authorities and NGOs. The project further supported the development of the online electoral registration for the Election Administration of Georgia. A Participatory Gender Audit, aimed at ensuring gender mainstreaming in electoral processes, management arrangements and project activities for the Election Administration of Georgia, was launched.
- AP “Improving Mental Health Care of Persons Detained in Georgia”: A training-of-trainers in crises management in prisons was organised for medical and non-medical staff of the special penitentiary agency. Twenty participants attended a 6-day training course. As a follow up, they are asked to prepare the presentations for the third phase of the ToT to select trainers for future activities. The Public Defender’s office received support from CoE experts in developing a monitoring instrument on mental health care. A number of working groups and bilateral meetings were organised during January-March.
- AP “Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in Georgia”: The third HELP course on violence against women and domestic violence was launched. In total, 20 prosecutors and staff of the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs were enrolled and are expected to complete the course within 3 months. A round table meeting was organised for 29 legal professionals to discuss gaps and challenges, as well as promising practices in handling cases of violence against women and domestic violence in line with the Istanbul Convention (IC). Research on the implementation of the IC was launched in co-operation with the Public Defender’s Office.
- AP “Responding to child sexual exploitation and abuse in Georgia, phase I”: A round table on the effective implementation of the Lanzarote Convention in Georgia (“Challenges and



good practices in responding to child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse”) was held on 21-22 March in Tbilisi, with the participation of relevant authorities and professionals. The HELP distance learning course on child-friendly justice was finalised. Around 40 prosecutors and lawyers undertook a 3-month online course. Successful participants were awarded certificates.

- EU/CoE – PGG “Enhancing the systems of prevention and combatting corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing”: On 14-15 April, within the inception phase, the project organised consultation meetings with the national authorities in order to discuss the modalities of the project’s implementation.
- AP “Fight against discrimination, hate crimes and hate speech in Georgia”: On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the campaign “I choose Equality” was launched in Georgia. Various state and non-governmental institutions have pledged support to the campaign. Meetings were held with representatives of NGOs, local activists, MPs, the Ombudsman and Embassies to raise awareness on ECRI recommendations to Georgia. Meetings were also held with ethnic minorities to share information on the available redress mechanisms and identifying effective channels for communicating information concerning discrimination. Capacity-building component: 24 prosecutors holding managerial positions and heads of investigative units of the Ministry of Internal Affairs increased their knowledge on international and national standards of investigation and prosecution of hate crimes.
- AP “Strengthening Data Protection in Georgia”: The Handbook on European Data Protection Law (a 500-page publication) was translated into Georgian and submitted to the Office of the Personal Data Protection Inspector for proofreading. The translated text of the Guidelines on Safeguarding Privacy in the Media has been verified with the Office of the Personal Data Protection Inspector, and further edited prior to publication.
- JP EU/CoE “Supporting Freedom of Media and Internet in Georgia” (inception phase): Representatives of the Charter of Journalistic Ethics of Georgia and Media Literacy Department of the Georgian National Communications’ Commission took part in the international conference “Media Pluralism – how can we deliver” in Strasbourg, in order to meet and exchange views with representatives of national regulatory institutions from other countries as well as academia and civil society.

#### Other relevant activities

- HoO presented opening remarks at the “Conference on Hate Speech in Elections” (12 March), the round table “Towards more effective implementation of the Lanzarote Convention in Georgia” (21 March), the launching of the antidiscrimination awareness raising campaign (21 March), the General Assembly of the Council of Europe's Association for the preservation of Jewish Culture Heritage (28 March), and acted as a moderator at the “Post-election Conference - The 2018 Presidential Election: Lessons Learned and Steps Ahead” (21 March);
- HoO held introductory meetings with the First Deputy State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, the UNICEF Representative in Georgia and the new Chairperson of the Parliament Legal Issues Committee;
- HoO also attended the round-table discussion “Elections 2020: Conclusions and Recommendations from the Perspective of 2018 Elections,” the working group meeting on judicial reform (27 January), the presentation of the Strategy and 2019-2020 Action Plan for the Development of the Penitentiary and Crime Prevention Systems, the presentation “100 Days Since the Enactment of the Rules of Procedure Of the Parliament of Georgia,” the meeting of the Parliament Chairman with the diplomatic corps on the fourth wave of judicial reform;
- 26 February: National Consultations in View of Preparing the Council of Europe Action Plan for Georgia 2020-2023 took place in Tbilisi;
- In addition, the HoO took part in working meetings with EUD and US ambassadors on various topics related to reforms, meetings with the Chairperson of the Parliament Legal Issues

Committee, Chairman of the Parliament, NGO representatives, the Minister of Finance of Georgia, the Deputy Director of SDC Tbilisi, the Director of the High School of Justice, Deputy Chairman of the Parliament Giorgi Volski, the First Deputy Head of President's Administration, and attended the annual speech of the President of Georgia at the Parliament (6 March), as well as gatherings of the Ambassadorial Working Group.

## **Tirana**

### **Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 5, Project staff – 13, Total staff - 18.

The Office implements 9 projects, out of which 7 are co-funded by the EU, one by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) and one by the UK Embassy.

### **State of implementation of projects / programmes / Action Plans / co-operation documents**

- VC Switzerland "Strengthening the local government structures in Albania": The capacities of over 20 senior local administration officials were increased through the Leadership Academy Programme implemented by the Academy of Political Studies in cooperation with the Albanian School of Public Administration.
- EU/CoE – HF "Strengthening the Efficiency of Justice (SEJ II) in Albania": Specific recommendations are provided to the High Judicial Council on the implementation of the new scheme for the professional evaluation of magistrates, guidelines and related forms. The School of Magistrates' Curricula on Court Administration was further supported with 2 modules on "Public Relations" and "Operation Management" along with the Training Needs Assessment for continuous training in view of the newly enacted legislation in Albania. The Action provided specific recommendations tailored for different categories of judicial administration, including the methodology for future needs assessment activities.
- EU/CoE – HF "Economic Crime in Albania": The capacities of 50 law enforcement and criminal justice officials were enhanced on asset tracing for purposes of seizure and confiscation, the curriculum has been included in the initial and continuous training of the Academy of Security and a pool of national experts has been established in this field. The authorities received support and guidance for the establishment of the beneficial ownership register in Albania. The Central Election Commission (CEC) oversight, regulatory and methodological framework focusing on monitoring and auditing of political party finance was further improved along with the legislation "On Prevention of Money Laundering", "On Measures against Financing of Terrorism" and "On International Restrictive Measures".
- EU/CoE – HF "Fighting Bullying and extremism in the Education System in Albania": An impact assessment study carried out in 28 schools (21 of them pilot schools of the project) observed a reduced number of bullying cases in 66% of the schools, 85% of them believed that the project had raised awareness of bullying amongst students and school staff, 74% confirmed that project had raised the awareness of parents and 86% agreed that its policies should continue to be implemented after the end of the project.
- EU/CoE – HF "Supporting effective domestic remedies and facilitating the execution of judgments (D-REX)": Three regional trainings on the harmonised application of the Property Act (Shkodër, Vlore and Korce) reached out to 45 representatives of the State Advocate and 70 judges from first instance and appeal courts of Fier, Tirane and Durres were capacitated on protection of the right to property. About 13 participants from the State Advocate's Office and the Agency on Property Treatment benefited from a study visit to the International Court of Arbitration, French Association for Arbitration in Paris and to the Department for the Execution of Judgments of the ECtHR in Strasbourg.
- JP EU/CoE "Reinforcing Judicial Expertise on Freedom of Expression and the Media in South-East Europe (JUFREX)": The Complaints Board's staff of the Audio-visual Media Authority (AMA) were capacitated on handling public complaints. Technical expertise was provided on the proposed changes to the Audio-Visual Media law aiming to regulate online media outlets.

- VC UK "Support to the prison reform and fight against radicalization in prison": An Action Plan on prison reform, including the provision of healthcare in prisons, was prepared along and the strengthening of legislation related to the execution of criminal sanctions. Improvements were made in the organisational set-up and working methodology of the National Centre for Countering Violent Extremism.

Follow up action

- Follow up coordination/consultation meetings with EUD and domestic stakeholders to prepare the second phase of the HF.

**Yerevan****Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 6, Project staff –13, Total staff - 19.

The Office implements 5 projects, of which 2 projects are funded by the EU under the Partnership for Good Governance (PGG), 1 project is funded by the UK, 1 project funded by Switzerland and 1 project funded by Austria.

**State of implementation of projects/programmes/Action Plans/co-operation documents**

- EU/CoE – PGG “Supporting the criminal justice reform – tackling criminal aspects of the judicial reform and harmonising the application of European standards”: On 12-14 March a need-assessment mission was organised. The aim of the mission was to identify possible divergences and approaches regarding the uniform application of Articles 2, 3, 5 and 6 of the ECHR, to learn practices and challenges faced at the national level, as well as to determine the training needs of criminal law judges and judicial servants. The needs-assessment report with recommendations will be prepared to improve the uniform application of European standards in Armenia and to develop new courses for the curricula of criminal law judges and judicial servants in the Justice Academy. A 2-day seminar aimed at enhancing knowledge, and practical and legal drafting skills on Articles 2 and 3 of the ECHR was held for the staff of the Government Agent of Armenia before the ECtHR and Human Rights Defender. Lawyers from the ECtHR and the CoE Department for Execution of Judgments presented recent changes, substantive and procedural aspects of Articles 2 and 3 of the ECHR, as well as techniques for developing legal writing and action plans with regard to the execution of ECtHR judgments.
- EU/CoE – PGG “Support to the judicial reform – enhancing the independence and professionalism of the judiciary in Armenia”: During the reporting period, the Project obtained suggestions from national partners concerning the main short- and long-term priority areas of legal and judicial reform in Armenia to be assessed and analysed by the Project team for the drafting of the work plan. On 26 February, the Project organised a discussion on the role of the superior courts in cooperation with the Courts of Appeal. A round-table discussion was organised to mark the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Civil and Criminal Courts of Appeal of Armenia, which gathered judges, prominent scholars, legal practitioners and civil society representatives from Armenia and a representative from the Superior Courts Network at the European Court of Human Rights. During the event, the achievements and the challenges faced by the Civil and Criminal Courts of Appeal of Armenia during their first 20 years of work, as well as the legal and practical set-up hindering the more effective exercise of the functions of superior courts, in particular the Courts of Appeal in Armenia were discussed. In addition, the Criminal Court of Appeal expressed an interest in joining the Superior Courts Network. On 5 March, the Project was officially launched. All national partners and the donor welcomed the Project contribution to the field of Armenian judicial reform. On 23-24 March, the semi-final and final rounds of Arbitration Moot Court Competition were held in Yerevan. In total 9 teams (40 team members in total) from different universities in Yerevan participated in the Competition allowing them to acquire practical knowledge of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), develop rhetorical skills, and get advice from top professionals in the arbitration field. The competition was organised in cooperation with the Mediation and Arbitration Clinic of the American University of Armenia. The students were able to arbitrate a real case and these skills will be used in promoting ADR mechanisms in Armenia. The Project also conducted a follow-up revision of the draft ‘Methodology for evaluating the judge's activity, the procedure for collecting the data required for the assessment and the procedure

and for determining other details required for judges' performance assessment" and the draft "Indicative timeframes of the examination of the case for each type and complexity of a case" based on the comments of the Supreme Judicial Council. The revised versions of the documents will be sent to Supreme Judicial Council for further processing.

- VC Switzerland "Institutional Support to Communities Association of Armenia (CAA)": During the last months of the Project implementation of a round of final meetings of the CAA statutory bodies was held. A meeting of the Working Group of the Municipal Servants was organised on 26 February, a meeting of Municipal Lawyers was organised on 1-2 March and a meeting of local Councillors was organised on 15-16 March. The objective of the meetings was to revitalise the CAA's professional support groups to strengthen its policy advocacy work. A brochure on the CAA's history, activities and strategic objectives was printed as a tool to be used by the CAA for ensuring greater public outreach and visibility. Four Congress resolutions, recommendations and explanatory memorandums – on European Code of conduct for all persons involved in local and regional governance 433 (2018), on Conflict of interest at local and regional levels 434 (2018), on Transparency and open government 435 (2018) and on the Consultation of local authorities by higher levels of the government adopted in November 2018 – were published for dissemination among the local authorities of Armenia.

- VC UK "Strengthening the Application of European Human Rights standards in the armed forces in Armenia": During the reporting period the CoE organised a working visit of the delegation of the Human Rights Defender Office (HRDO) and a representative of the Office of the Government Agent (GA) before the European Court of Human rights (ECtHR) to the CoE HQ, Strasbourg (4-5 February 2019). The main objective of the 2-day study visit was to enhance the knowledge and capacities of the representatives of the HRDO and the GA Office to implement their mandates efficiently. A round table «State of execution of the judgments of the ECtHR against Armenia on the human rights violations in the army» was organised on 15 February. It was aimed at presenting and discussing the national action plan and relevant developments in respect of the execution of general measures of the ECtHR judgments in cases related to human rights violations in the army (Muradyan v. Armenia, Zalyan v. Armenia, and Matevosyan v. Armenia). On 22-24 February, the second phase of the cascade training on Human Rights for the Service persons was held. The participants acquired basic skills on how to train their successors and colleagues on the same topics and also enhance their own skills and knowledge on the practical aspects of prevention of human rights violations in the army. On 12-14 March, the Government Agent's visit to Strasbourg was organised. The aim of the visit was to 1) facilitate participation of the Armenian delegation in the thematic debate on the obligation to investigate violations of Articles 2 and 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights by law enforcement officials and 2) to enhance knowledge and capacities of the representatives of the GA Office to implement their mandates efficiently. This was achieved through exchange of experience and knowledge raising of the institutional, substantial and operational aspects of the work of relevant institutions of the CoE. A conference on "Human Rights and the Army" was held on 26 March. The conference brought together state officials and relevant national partners and stakeholders, civil society and academicians to discuss human rights related issues in the armed forces. Specificities of human rights standards in the armed forces and good practices in CoE member States for better application of human rights standards in the armed forces were discussed. The Conference was attended by Christophe Poirel, Director of Human Rights, DGI, of the CoE. An assessment of the draft legislation on disciplinary measures in the army and consultancy services to the Human Rights and Integrity Building Centre were delivered by a CoE national expert. A study visit to London, UK, was planned to take place in March. However, the visit was cancelled upon the UK Embassy's request to postpone the visit to a later date to allow time for development of a more substantive agenda for the visit in coordination with the UK Ministry of Defence.

- VC Austria "Democratic development, decentralisation and good governance in Armenia": The Project started on 7 January 2019. During the reporting period the Project

team developed project visibility materials with the Project logo such as banners, folders, notepads, and pens. The Project team presented the Project's aim and objectives to international stakeholders at a donor coordination meeting organised in January in cooperation with GIZ Armenia Office in order to avoid duplications and find potential synergies for the implementation of Project actions, as well as taking part in a number of bilateral meetings with the donor community and international organisations promoting local democracy in Armenia

#### Other relevant activities

- 25 January: HoO met with the Deputy Minister of Territorial Administration;
- 20 February: HoO met with the Ombudsman;
- 22 January: HoO chaired the presentation of the 2019-2022 Action Plan to the international community;
- 20 February: HoO participated in the First Regular Development Partners Coordination Forum Meeting;
- 20 February: HoO cochaired the Universal Human Rights Award;
- 28 February: HoO opened the roundtable discussion on the 20th anniversary of the Civil and Criminal Courts of Appeals;
- 5 March: HoO opened the launching of the Justice Reform Project;
- 18-19 March: needs-assessment mission of two PGG regional projects on anti-discrimination and Women's Access to Justice;
- 18 March: HoO participated in the meeting with the Deputy Minister of Justice, Vigen Kocharyan organised in the framework of the needs-assessment mission of two PGG regional projects on anti-discrimination and Women's Access to Justice;
- 25 March: HoO opened the Steering Committee Meeting of the project "Strengthening the Application of European Human Rights standards in the armed forces in Armenia";
- 26 March: HoO participated in the opening of the conference "Human Rights and the Army";
- 28 March: HoO opened the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Rights and ratification process of the CoE Convention Against Trafficking in Human organs;
- 28 March: HoO participated in the official inauguration of Europe Square dedicated to the 70th Anniversary of the Council of Europe;

#### Council of Europe high level visits

- 4-5 March: Director General of DG I, Christos Giakoumopoulos;
- 14-15 March: PACE monitoring mission;
- 25-26 March: Director of DG I, Christophe Poirel;
- 26-27 March: Official visit of the President of PACE, Liliane Maury Pasquier.

## **Rabat**

### **Situation of the Office:**

Core team: 2; Project staff: 3; Total: 5.

The Office chiefly co-ordinates the implementation in Morocco of the EU/CoE regional joint programme "Ensuring Sustainable Democratic Governance and Human Rights in the Southern Mediterranean" (South Programme 3) 2018 – 2020. It also provides ad hoc logistical support for the implementation in Morocco of the EU/CoE regional joint programme "CyberSouth – Co-operation in combating cybercrime in the southern neighbourhood" (2017-2020), the EU/CoE regional joint project "Global Action on Cybercrime Action Extended (GLACY+)" (2016-2021) and other projects run within the framework of the Neighbourhood Partnership with Morocco 2018-2021.

### **Implementation of the projects/programmes**

#### EU/CoE regional joint programme "Ensuring Sustainable Democratic Governance and Human Rights in the Southern Mediterranean"

- In partnership with the National Data Protection Authority (CNDP), the Council of Europe organised a conference marking World data protection day on 28 January 2019 on the theme of "Digital privacy: issues and perspectives" at the Faculty of Medicine in Fez. Another feature of the event was the signing of conventions between the CNDP and four universities in the Fez-Meknes region for the setting up of training on personal data protection.
- In connection with Safer Internet Day 2019 and in line with the goals of the "e-salama" project for the protection of children on the Internet, the Moroccan Centre for Polytechnic Research and Innovation (CMRPI) and its partners, with support from the Council of Europe, organised an interactive workshop with young people on 6 February 2019 and a conference-debate on 7 February 2019 with a view to setting up a national SID-Morocco committee, comprising representatives of institutions, universities, professional associations and civil society, to inventory, harmonise, capitalise on and share resources around the slogan: "Together for a better internet" in Morocco and all over the world.
- UNODC partnered the Council of Europe in organising the 1st practical workshop on the national referral mechanism for victims of trafficking in human beings on 11 and 12 February 2019.
- A meeting of the working group on integration of judicial training material was organised with the Higher Judicial Institute in Rabat from 18 to 22 February in the framework of co-operation on cybercrime in the Southern Neighbourhood Region, providing an opportunity to discuss specialised training needs and programmes in this area, update the cybercrime and electronic evidence training module and create basic and advanced training courses on cybercrime and electronic evidence for members of the judiciary.
- The 4th meeting of national coordinators of the UNIDEM project for the Southern Mediterranean was held on 5 March 2019 in Rabat, with the participation of several representatives of the authorities of southern Mediterranean countries (Algeria, Jordan, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia).
- The National Human Rights Council (CNDH) and the Council of Europe organised a national encounter on the theme "Underage marriage in Morocco: abolish the exception, restore the norm" on 22 March 2019 in Rabat to mark International Women's Day. Experts and stakeholders from institutions and associations participated in the event, held in order to report back on the outcomes of the national campaign against underage marriage launched



on 6 March 2019 by the CNDH through its 13 regional committees and marked by the organisation of more than 30 regional activities.

- The Citizenship School of Political Studies organised a seminar on 23 and 24 March to launch the training cycle for young Moroccan leaders.
- On 25 and 26 March the Council of Europe ran a Training of Trainers session under the HELP programme, in which representatives of the CNDH, the CNDP, the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Ministry of Justice and Moroccan law professionals took part.

#### Other programmes

- EU/CoE regional joint project "Global Action on Cybercrime Action Extended (GLACY+)": Under the GLACY+ project, the Council of Europe Office in Bucharest organised, from 4 to 6 February 2019, an advisory mission and workshop at the Higher Judicial Institute in Rabat on the gathering and supervision of criminal justice statistics on cybercrime and electronic evidence. The event was attended by representatives of the CNDP, the National Telecommunications Regulatory Agency (ANRT), the Al Maghrib central bank and the Ministry of Industry, Investment, Trade and the Digital Economy;
- Combating violence against women, domestic violence and violence against children in Morocco (2306): a breakfast-debate on the efforts of associations to combat gender-based violence, entitled "Law 103.13: achievements and shortcomings" was held on 14 March 2019 at the Norwegian Embassy, with the participation of several NGOs and members of the thematic working group on equality and parity of the House of Representatives.

#### Other relevant activities

- 11 and 12 January: The Head of Office participated in the International Colloquy on peace in North Africa organised by the Aman association for sustainable development in Fez during the celebration of the new Berber calendar year.

## **Tunis**

### **Situation of the Office**

Core staff - 2, Project staff - 6, Total – 8.

The Office currently implements country-related activities of two regional joint EU-CoE programmes: Ensuring sustainable democratic governance and human rights in the Southern Mediterranean ("South Programme III", 2018-2020) and the CyberSouth Programme 2017-2020. In January, it began to implement two CoE/EU joint programmes (JPs) "Improving the functioning, performance and access to justice in Tunisia - AP-JUST" and "Project to support independent bodies in Tunisia - PAII-T". Their implementation will cover the three years 2019-21.

### **State of implementation of programmes**

- JP EU/CoE "Improving the functioning, performance and access to justice in Tunisia - AP-JUST": Institutional support - on 18-19 March, representatives from the CEPEJ Secretariat and an expert met with key interlocutors from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), courts, legal profession associations and civil society to discuss their priorities and the relevance of CEPEJ expertise and tools. E-justice - Following consultations, CoE, EU and MoJ representatives decided to spread purchases over the three years of the project, better to meet the primary needs of the legal infrastructure and to encourage synergies with other PARJ/AP-JUST actions. Subject to confirmation by the MoJ, provision of computers for training centres based in regional courts to connect magistrates to the MoJ intranet and to facilitate training activities outside Tunis was identified as a priority, and preliminary discussions have also taken place regarding upcoming interventions to promote access to justice.
- JP EU/CoE "Project to support independent bodies in Tunisia - PAII-T": On 18-19 March, the Venice Commission (VC) secretariat conducted a preliminary mission to discuss priority intervention areas, as well as coordination initiatives, with the MoJ; the Ministry charged with relations with the Constitutional Bodies (CBs), Civil Society and Human rights (MinHR); several CBs and the Administrative Tribunal. In connection with the Tunisian authorities' request for a VC expertise on the draft Law on the Body on sustainable development and the rights of future generations, the secretariat also met with the relevant Parliamentary (ARP) Commission. Human trafficking body - In January, the Office in Tunis supported a series of events in the framework of Tunisia's Slavery Abolition Day including the final training of trainers (ToT) session on combatting trafficking in persons, an international conference on national referral mechanisms, a conference at the Faculty of judicial, political and social sciences and a raising awareness event. Anti-corruption body: On 30 January-1 February, Strasbourg-based colleagues held preparatory discussions with a range of key stakeholders with a view to fine-tuning future interventions in line with priority unaddressed needs.
- South Programme III: Violence against women: The Office was represented in various multi-sector and inter-institutional working groups, trainings and coordination events. On 19 March; a workshop on the role and challenges of the security sector in combatting violence against women (VAW) took place, in association with the multi-sector and inter-institutional working group of the region of Ben Arous. On 28-29 March, in cooperation with the Ministry of Women, family, children and elderly (MWFCE), together with UN agencies, the Office organised an international conference on challenges to and recommendations for implementation of VAW organic Law 2017-58.
- Child Protection: On 8 March, in the context of Tunisia's accession process to the Lanzarote Convention, there was a meeting of the Steering Committee of the project "Towards

a child-friendly justice for children victims of sexual violence”. The MWFCE was represented at the 23rd Meeting of Parties to the Lanzarote Convention on 5-7 March.

- Prevention of Torture: Training “formaCtion” for members and staff of the National Commission for the Prevention of Torture (INPT) continued, on the basis of on-site prison visits and consequent reporting, under the guidance of CoE experts. Under the joint authority of the INPT and the Ministry of Justice/Penitentiary Administration, the drafting group of the Manual on Tunisian Penitentiary Law and the Prisoners’ Guide met fortnightly, and on 29 March, a meeting with the international partners (DCAF, OMCT, APT, Dignity, UNHCR, ICTJ, ICRC, PNUD) took place to adopt a joint recommendation to the (ARP) on the selection of candidates for future membership of the INPT. (It should be noted that these activities now draw on resources of both SPII and PAII-T).
- HELP: Tunisian representatives attended a ToT session in Strasbourg, 25-26 March.
- CyberSouth: On 5-8 February, further training for some 25 Tunisian magistrates on cybercrime and digital evidence took place in partnership with the Institut Supérieur de la Magistrature. Representatives of the Tunisian authorities took part in the regional seminar on cyber-criminality held in Beirut, Lebanon on 23-25 January.

### **Council of Europe high-level visits and other official delegations**

- 24-26 January: The President of the Venice Commission visited Tunis.