

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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

**July – September 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 July-September 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 282 information messages and documents as well as 10 weekly reports were prepared and sent to Strasbourg by the Information Officer. 32 notes for the files were sent from the Office in addition to the information messages sent by the Head of Office directly.

15 members of Council of Europe staff visited the Office during the period, and 26 other CoE Secretariat members were in Brussels during the period. The Office hosted 30 events and visits and welcomed 137 external visitors.

CoE staff included notably:

- SG of the Congress Andreas Kiefer: annual meeting with SGs of European Association of local and regional collectivities.
- DG Christos Giakoumopoulos, DGI, meetings in the Commission, the EU Council Secretariat, the EEAS.
- Director Jörg Polakiewickz, Head of legal advice and treaty Office: meetings with the Finnish Presidency, the Commission and the Council legal Services.
- Director Jeroen Schokkenbroek, DGII, meeting organised on the match fixing "Macolin" Convention, by the EU Finnish Presidency.
- Director Verena Taylor, ODGP: addressed the Council WG on Justice affairs in external relations, "JAIEX", and co-Chaired the Steering Committee meeting on the South Programme III, and bilateral meetings.

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

The Head of Office, Zoltan Taubner, had regular informal contacts with his EU counterparts over summer and September, to update on the recent developments and on the upcoming change of leadership. He notably met the Chief of Cabinet of the new President of the European Parliament, Mr David Sassoli, as well as the new Chair of the Human Rights sub-Committee ("DROI") to the foreign Affairs Committee ("AFET"). He participated in the opening session of the Steering Committee meeting on the South Programme III and he welcomed the new Head of International IDEA's regional Office in Brussels.

Among the other priority files followed by the office: the EU Justice Ministers' decision to re-launch the discussions in the CoE on the EU's accession to the ECHR, equality and violence against women, work of the EU Special Representative for HR, culture related programmes.

The Office organised various visits of CoE Secretariat colleagues in Brussels:

- The Deputy Secretary of the Venice Commission, who presented the new Guidelines on Ombudsmen adopted by the Venice Commission, at an event organised in the Brussels Office.
- The Executive Secretary to the European Charter of regional and minority languages, for an event on the occasion of the European day of languages, in the Office.
- Colleagues from ODGP, in the margins of the Steering Committee meeting on the South Programme III and meetings with the Commission and with the EEAS.
- A colleague from DG II – education, for meetings in the Commission.

The Office participated in and reported from various meetings and events covering issues such as the situation in Russia, the situation of democracy and the rule of law in the EU, a programme of inter-parliamentary co-operation, "Inter Pares", run by International IDEA.

It also reported from more than 30 events and conferences on various issues of common interest.

The Office kept its regular contacts with the EU institutions, in particular:

- The **EU Finnish Presidency**: through meetings notably on developments regarding the RoL and HR, on the match fixing "Macolin" Convention, CoE participation in the "RoL" Conference in Helsinki, and the organisation of the Ministerial Conference on JHA with the Western Balkans (18 November).
- The **EEAS**, to prepare high level talks for the new SG in NY (meeting with HR/VP Borrell on 26 September) and meetings for the EEAS DSG, Mr Christian Leffler, in the margins of the 70<sup>th</sup> celebrations in Strasbourg on 1 October; updates on the situation in specific countries/regions; CoE participation in EU Council configurations, and consultations on the preparations of the EU's future multi-annual action plan on HR and of the EU's priorities for co-operation, 2020-2021, under preparation, as well as on human rights defenders.
- The **Commission**: contacts with President Juncker's Office on the CoE 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in Strasbourg on 1 October, and with specific DGs (JUST, NEAR, SRSS, REGIO) on various matters of co-operation, including, for instance, HR (EU celebrates the 10 years of the Lisbon treaty and the FR Charter), SOGI, gender equality, cultural routes, intercultural cities, and education.
- The **European Parliament**, through its President, its Cabinet, the chair of specific Committees and the Secretariat.

The Office followed in particular, over the month, the preparations for the hearings of the Commissioners-designate in the European Parliament's respective Committees (30 September – 8 October). It also reported on developments in the fields of the **rule of law**, around the publication of the Commission's Communication of 16 July and the subsequent debate in the General Affairs Council (GAC) of 16 September. In that meeting, Ministers discussed the RoL situation in Poland and in Hungary (Art 7 framework), the Commission's July RoL Communication, the BE/DE initiative on a RoL peer review, as well as the 2021-2027 Multi Annual Financial Framework, including the proposal for a "RoL conditionality regulation" in that framework. The Office participated in the Conference organised by the Finnish Presidency on the rule of law, 10-11 September.

The Office followed the discussions in various EP Committees and reported on the priorities presented by Finnish Presidency representatives. It also attended and reported from events and conferences organised by various Brussels based International Organisations and think tanks, on many matters of interest to the organisation such as, for instance, the situation in Turkey, the situation in Moldova, violence against women, LGBTIs, extremism and jihadism, and the anti-racism and diversity week.

In terms of **programmes**, the Office participated in DG NEAR meeting on communication in the PGG programme, as well as had contacts with NEAR on the South programme and with DEVCO as regards the Venice Commission's grant. Finally, it helped the Finnish Presidency to organise a presentation about EU/COE programmes in the EaP countries at a JAIEX meeting.

In terms of **programmes**, in addition to “programmes” aspects of many of the visits and meetings mentioned above, the Office helped organising and attended the South programme Steering Committee (cf above) as well as bilateral meetings with DG NEAR and DEVCO. It also followed the implementation of SRSS projects.

The Brussels based Secretariat of the **Pompidou Group** organised the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the International Liaison officers meeting on International Police co-operation (20 September), with participants from the European Commission and the World Customs organisation. It had a meeting with the European Business Aviation Association (EBAA) in Brussels in preparation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual meeting on General Aviation (Malta, 26 – 28 November 2019).

### **Media and visibility**

The Spokesperson/Media Officer co-ordinated **communications work** around the Brussels presentation of the Venice Principles on promoting and protecting ombudsmen, the Steering Committee meeting for the South Programme III, the joint workshop with the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity, the September meeting of the Committee of Ministers on the execution of ECHR judgments and the event in Turkey on individual applications to the Constitutional Court.

He also maintained his regular contacts with Brussels-based media and carried out **social media** work on issues including issues including the Secretary General’s statement on the dismissal of 3 Kurdish mayors in Istanbul, alerts to the CoE’s media freedom platform concerning Belgium and the UK, the GRECO report on Slovakia and various judgments and decisions from the ECtHR, the change of Secretary General, the anniversary of the entry into force of the ECHR, the entry into force of the Macolin Convention, the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ECRI, the World Day of Democracy, the MONEYVAL report on Malta, the GREVIO report on Finland, the GRETA report on Hungary, the FCNM report on the Netherlands and various judgments and decisions from the ECtHR.

He also carried out **preparatory work** on the autumn session of the Parliamentary Assembly, the European Day against the Death Penalty and the European Anti-trafficking Day as well as attending a one-day conference on public sector communication, meeting a number of journalists and other stakeholders in London and continuing to work on the on-going communications project highlighting the impact of the European Convention on Human Rights.

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

The Chargé d’Affaires *a.i.* of the Permanent Delegation to the United Nations Office and other International Organisations, Mr Jean Claus, represented the Council of Europe in parts of the 41<sup>st</sup> session (24 June-12 July 2019) and 42<sup>nd</sup> session (9-27 September 2019) of the Human Rights Council, thus also securing the visibility of the Organisation in Geneva. He was present *inter alia* when the Human Rights Council on 4 July 2019 considered and adopted relevant decisions by consensus on the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of three Council of Europe member States, i.e. Cyprus, North Macedonia and the Slovak Republic.

He also followed during the 41<sup>st</sup> session of the Human Rights Council the Interactive Dialogue on Venezuela, to which the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Michelle Bachelet, made a prominent contribution. At the 42<sup>nd</sup> session of the Human Rights Council, he was also present during the oral update of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, during which the latter declared that since she began her mandate a year ago, she had been facing difficult challenges, requiring to tackle not only traditional human rights issues, but also an array of new ones, such as the new digital landscape, privacy, or climate change and its impact on the rights of every single person. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights made three major points under the climate change issue: 1. Climate change undermines rights, development and peace; 2. Effective climate action requires broad and meaningful participation; 3. Those who defend the environment must be better protected.

During the 42<sup>nd</sup> session of the Human Rights Council, on 10 September 2019, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Senegal - the country currently holding the Chair of the Council – addressed the Council, *inter alia* calling for the reinforcement of the latter’s action, underlining existing threats to the universality of human rights and referring to dangers for human dignity such as hate speech, racism, xenophobia, absence of respect for migrants, climate change. He mentioned the “Dakar Retreat” which would take place in October 2019 in an informal setting around four major themes: environment, climate and human rights, mass migration and human rights, business and human rights, human rights in the digital era.

During the 42<sup>nd</sup> session of the Human Rights Council, on 23 September 2019, there was an interesting general debate on the UPR, during which numerous UN member States underlined the importance of the process and expressed the view that this instrument should be reinforced. Some NGOs, however, considered that there was a gap between on the one hand the acceptance of UPR recommendations by States and, on the other hand, their effective implementation. At the same debate, the representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) encouraged the use of UPR as a platform for the exchange of good practices. He further reiterated the willingness of UNHCR to help States resolve the issue of statelessness, in particular through the upcoming 70<sup>th</sup> annual session of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner, during which a High-Level Segment on statelessness will take place (Geneva, 7-11 October 2019) and the first Global Refugee Forum, to be held at Geneva on 17 and 18 December 2019. This Forum - at which the participation of the Secretary-General of the United Nations is foreseen – is presented as a unique opportunity for the international community to come together and lay the foundations for the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees over the longer term.

Furthermore, the Chargé d’Affaires *a.i.* facilitated the participation of Ms Louise Barton, Director of Human Resources of the Council of Europe and members of her team in the Workshop on Culture Evolution, organised in Geneva from 11 to 13 September 2019 by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

He also made preparations and had appropriate contacts in Geneva with a view to organising the participation of Mr Christophe Poirel, Director of Human Rights of the Council of Europe, to the 70<sup>th</sup> annual session of the Executive Committee of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' Programme (Geneva, 7-11 October 2019), at which Mr Poirel would lead the Council of Europe Delegation during the High-Level Segment on statelessness.



## **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 Special Representative of the OSCE CiO in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact Group, Amb. Martin Sajdik and the Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, Amb. Ertuğrul Apakan, 4 July
- OSCE Permanent Council with the Acting Foreign Minister of Albania, Gent Cakaj, and the Head of the OSCE Mission to Skopje, Amb. Clemens Koja 11 July
- OSCE Permanent Council with the Deputy Foreign Minister of Georgia, Lasha Darsalia, and Head of the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe, Amb. Valeriu Chiveri, 18 July
- OSCE Permanent Council, 25 July
- OSCE Permanent Council with the Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Amb. Jan Braathu, 05 September

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

- EU-UN Joint Conference Marking 40 years of Cooperation in Vienna, 2 July
- OSCE Informal Ministerial Gathering in the High Tatras, Slovakia, 8-9 July
- OSCE Human Dimension Committee and Second Supplementary Human Dimension Committee, 15-16 July
- Briefing for Delegations on the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Luxembourg (4-8 July), 17 July
- Special event marking the World Day against Trafficking in Persons, United Nations Office Vienna, 30 July
- CCPCJ/CND Special Event on the Occasion of the Visit of the President of the UNGA, Ambassador María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, 23 August
- UNODC 5th Intersessional Meeting of the 62nd Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, 23 September
- UNODC 1<sup>st</sup> Intersessional Meeting of the 28th Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, 27 September

### **Bilateral dialogue**

- Bilateral meeting with the Permanent Representative of the EU to the OSCE, Amb. Ioannis Vrailas, 17 July
- Handing over of the letter of accreditation to Ambassador Radomir Bohac, Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the OSCE and Chairman in Office of the Permanent Council of Europe, 18 July
- Meeting with the "Innovation in Politics Institute" (headquarters in Vienna), together with Patrick Penninckx, 26 July

**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**

15-19 July – visit of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities to Poland; meeting with ODIHR's experts.

4 September – meeting with the First Deputy Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), Ms Katarzyna Gardaphadze.

5-6 September – visit of the rapporteurs of the Monitoring Committee of PACE, Ms Azadeh Rojhan Gustafsson and Mr Pieter Omtzigt.

**Activities of the Office**

**Enhancing the cooperation with OSCE ODIHR** – The main event of the third quarter of 2019 was the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) organized by ODIHR in Warsaw between 16 and 27 September gathering more than 1,500 participants from across 57 countries of the OSCE, representing governments of the participating States, civil society, international organizations and academia. CoE contribution to HDIM was significant. Three representatives of CoE served as panelist/introducers during the working sessions. The HoO led the CoE Delegation to HDIM, during which written contributions were submitted to different working sessions and additional statements were delivered during eight sessions. Many delegations mentioned the CoE's activities in their interventions; references to ECRI, Venice Commission, Istanbul Convention and CoE Platform for the Protection of Journalism and Safety of Journalists were especially frequent. GRECO co-organized a side event (together with ODIHR and Transparency International) on the issue of the foreign funding of political parties. HoO represented the CoE during the Meeting of Directors on human rights issues organized by the Polish MFA, which discussed the potential of cooperation between international organizations in the field of youth participation in public and political life.

Apart from HDIM and high-level meetings mentioned above the HoO and CoE experts attended numerous meetings and consultations convened by ODIHR. These included i.a. (i) the joint UNHCR-CoE-ODIHR Workshop aimed at developing a project on Migrants and Refugees Integration Strategies on local level, with the participation of Ms Irena Guidikova, Head of Division for Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination Programmes, (ii) the 5th experts' Round-table on the laws on the judiciary in Poland, with the participation of Mr Artashes Melikyan, Head of the Secretariat of the CCJE and (iii) the ODIHR Workshop on Migrants Integration at a Local Level.

The HoO continued to maintain close working relations with ODIHR experts on a regular basis.

**Continuation of the cooperation with the CoD** – The Office followed closely the preparations to the CoD's Governing Council meeting convened on the margins of the General Debate of the 74th UNGA, the transfer of the CoD's Presidency from Poland to Romania, the presentation of the priorities of the Romanian presidency and the beginning of the admission of North Macedonia and Georgia to the CoD Governing Council. To this end the HoO maintained regular working contacts with staff of the Permanent Secretariat.

## **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 July-September 2019. 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 - 6, Total staff - 10.

The Office implemented 3 projects, all of them jointly funded with the EU, 2 of which were under PGG II.

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

- EU/CoE - PGG "Strengthening the efficiency and quality of the judicial system in Azerbaijan": The Project launching conference was held on 2 July. Up to 15 professionals from the Directorate General of Enforcement of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) participated in a 2-day round table on "European trends in the status of the profession of judicial officer". The draft Enforcement Code of Azerbaijan was reviewed by CEPEJ experts and comments were submitted to the MoJ. On 16-19 September, a group of representatives from the MoJ participated in a study visit to France and the Netherlands to study private enforcement systems in these countries in the context of future entrustment of the execution of decisions of courts and other bodies to private agencies in Azerbaijan within the implementation of the Presidential Decree of April 2019.
- EU/CoE - PGG "Strengthening Anti-Money Laundering in Azerbaijan": In view of the institutional change whereby the Financial Monitoring Service was moved under the auspices of the Ministry of Taxes, the planned project activities were postponed subject to further consultations during the transition period. At a recent meeting in September, the new FIU management reaffirmed the relevance of the project actions and committed to closely cooperating with the project to ensure their implementation. During this quarter, the Project started arrangements for the delivery of training on Mutual Legal Assistance in AML/CFT investigations for law enforcement and judiciary.
- EU/CoE JP "Further Support to the Penitentiary Reform in Azerbaijan-2" (SPERA 2): In July, the Office finalised the selection process of international consultants specialised in the area of prison management and the provision of health care (including mental health care) services for inmates. The Office will involve the selected consultants in project activities, as required. In the inception phase of the project, the Office initiated discussions on the importance of the adoption of the domestic Code of Ethics for prisons. In September, the Office translated the CM/REC(2012)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the European Code of Ethics for Prison Staff into the Azerbaijani language. The translated version of the document will be presented to the Penitentiary Service for further consultations and follow up on the adoption of the domestic Code of Ethics for prisons.

**Other relevant activities**

- 30 August: HoO visited the French-Azerbaijani University (UFAZ) to coordinate the preparations of the high-level round-table conference dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the CoE and the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers;
- 4 September: HoO met with Head of section of the International Relationship Department, Habib Mikayilli, and representatives of the Department of Public and Political Issues of the Presidential Administration, Gulsel Safarova, within the context of the civil society needs assessment mission;

- 11 September: The Office in cooperation with the French Embassy organised a high-level round-table conference, on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the CoE and the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, on the historic role of the CoE and the current and future challenges for the Organisation and its member States.

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

- 4-7 July: Stefan Schennach, Co-Rapporteur of the PACE Monitoring Committee;
- 8-12 July: Dunja Mijatović, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, carried out a monitoring visit;
- 4-8 September: Sunna Thorhildur Ævarsdóttir, PACE Special Rapporteur on Reported Cases of Political Prisoners in Azerbaijan, Chairperson of the PACE Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights;
- 11-13 September: Liliane Maury Pasquier, PACE President. he also participated in a high-level round-table conference on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the CoE;
- 11-12 September: Christos Giakoumopoulos, Director General of Human Rights and Rule of Law of the CoE, met with officials/authorities and participated in a high-level round-table conference on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the CoE.

## **Belgrade**

### **Situation of the Office**

Core staff - 5, Project staff – 22, Total – 27.

During the reporting period, the Office implemented 11 projects, of which 9 are jointly funded with the EU (8 under the Horizontal Facility) one through a voluntary contribution from Germany and one funded by the HRTF.

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

- EU/CoE - HF "Quality Education for All (Quality ED-Serbia)": The selection process of both international and national education experts was completed. A training session on the interconnectability of language learning and development of democratic competences in education was delivered to language teachers as part of the European Day of languages. Criteria for the selection of additional pilot schools was developed with the Ministry and a subsequent call was published and received expressions of interest from more than 110 schools. The project steering committee was formed, and the first meeting took place and approved the proposed 3-year project work-plan.
- EU/CoE HF "Enhancing human rights protection for detained and sentenced persons in Serbia-Phase II": The 1st SC was successfully completed. The MoJ WG commenced drafting a separate treatment programme on domestic violence for prisoners, to be added as a module to other developed Offender Behaviour Programmes (OBPs), underlining the effect of treatments. A new cycle of cascade trainings for police officers on the prevention of torture started. The core MoH WG attended the WHO Conference on "Promoting Human Rights and Recovery in Mental Health", in Trieste, discussing best practices on the phasing out of psychiatric hospitals and the enhancement of human rights, followed by the development of a Roadmap for developing the community mental health protection centres in Serbia in accordance with the new Mental Health Strategy.
- EU/CoE HF "Enhancing penitentiary capacities in addressing radicalisation in prisons in the Western Balkans": The country-specific Component 3 of this regional project has been introduced. The official project launch conference will take place on 22-23 October, in Sarajevo. A risk needs assessment mission will be carried out in Serbia in the second half of November by international and national experts. It will consist of an on-site visit to 2 detention facilities in Serbia and interviews with prison management, prison staff, national institutions, CSOs and international organisations present and active in the field of disengagement from violence, prevention and countering of terrorism in Serbia.
- EU/CoE HF "Strengthening the effective legal remedies to human rights violations": Ten students from the Law Faculty of University of Belgrade participated in the Summer Human Rights School in Trebinje, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The project took part in the annual HELP Network Conference on 4-5 July in Strasbourg. The First Steering Committee of the Action took place on 12 July in Belgrade.
- EU/CoE HF "Strengthening Independence and Accountability of the Judiciary": The Action held its 1st Steering Committee Meeting on 17 July which adopted the revised work plan. A major change is reflected in the request put forward by the Ministry of Justice to provide additional expertise to the Working Groups tasked with amending judicial legislation to accompany the constitutional provisions on the judiciary, which the SC decided to accept. In order to assess the political situation affecting the implementation, the project team held a number of meetings with several MPs and also representatives of the executive. Consultations were also held with the EUD and CSOs.

- EU/CoE HF “Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in Serbia”: Inception visit/meetings and fine-tuning of the action work plan in cooperation with all project partners (institutions and CSOs) for HF II took place in June 2019. Development of the final report for HF I and Inception Report for HF. The action Steering Committee was established and held its 1st meeting on 26 September, during which the work plan was adopted. National and international calls for tender for consultancy services were prepared.
- EU/CoE HF “Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media in Serbia, JUFREX 2”: Baseline study and evaluation methodology were developed during the inception phase to measure the impact of the project. A number of meetings were organised with the EUD, Judicial Academy, Bar Association, Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media, Faculty of Political Sciences and Ministry of Interior - key activities, timelines and expected results of the Action have been confirmed and fine-tuned.
- EU/CoE JP “ROMACTED: Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level”: The Project organised a Summer School for Roma Youth, on 19-22 September, in Novi Sad, European Youth Capital for 2019. A total of 27 young Roma men and women, from 11 respective municipalities that participate in the Programme increased their knowledge on how to play a more active role in their communities and youth activism in general. During August and September, the Programme opened a call to participating municipalities for the small grant scheme. All 11 municipalities submitted project proposals, with most of them including contributions from their own funds.
- EU/CoE JP “Human Resources Management in Local Self-Government” – phase 2: The First Steering Committee Meeting was held on 17 July. The Visibility Action Plan of the Programme was developed. A public call for consultancy services on MSP implementation and a public call for supporting LSGs in MSP implementation were launched (30 LSGs were selected while 20 from the previous programme phase were directly supported). Information day events were held in Nis Kragujevac, Novi Sad and Belgrade on 24–27 September with the purpose of promoting the Programme and motivating LSGs to apply for the Programme’s MSP support.
- VC “Strengthening the Judiciary Reform Process”: The project started on 1 September, with the aim to provide a response to the on-going judicial reform process by facilitating the implementation of recommendations resulting from CoE monitoring. The overall budget is EUR 210,000, funded through a VC from the German Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The project will last for 9 months, until 31 May 2020. In the first month of implementation, numerous local stakeholders including both government institutions and professional associations, were familiarised with the project activities, primarily the possibility to benefit from peer-to-peer exchanges with legal professionals from CoE member States.
- VC HRTF “HELP in the Western Balkans”: Three HELP online courses (on child-friendly justice, property rights, violence against women and domestic violence, property rights) were successfully completed in North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. HELP celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe on the occasion of the 2019 HELP Annual Network Conference (Strasbourg, 4-5 July), organised under the auspices of the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers.

#### Follow-up action

- Continue with Council of Europe 70th anniversary activities and visibility events;
- Project proposal following the assessment mission of the Economic Crime and Cooperation Division.



Other relevant activities

- 1-5 July: HoO opened the 2019 AER (Assembly of European Regions) Summer Academy entitled "Youth is Future, Youth is Europe" in Novi Sad, the European Youth Capital;
- 17 September: An anti-discrimination conference was held in Belgrade as part of the 70th anniversary activities organised jointly with the French Chairmanship of the CM and Commissioner for Protection of Equality;
- 26 September: The European Day of Languages was marked jointly with EUNIC (EU National Institutes for Culture) and the Yunus Emre Institute. The Office organised a workshop for language teachers on Language Learning and Democratic Citizenship, followed by a short course on Roma language and culture; the CoE stand was presented at the French Institute and a concert was organised featuring young artists singing in various languages.

## **Bucharest**

### **Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 0.5, Project staff – 29, Total – 29.5

During this period the office was responsible for the implementation of 6 cybercrime capacity-building projects with a combined budget of over 35 million EUR. Three projects are jointly funded with the European Union (EU), one is funded by voluntary contributions and another one by End Violence Against Children (EVAC) in the UK.

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

- VC “Cybercrime@Octopus”: Supported the organisation of the 21st Plenary Meeting of the Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY) and the 4th meeting of the Protocol Drafting Plenary focused on reviewing the work of the Protocol Drafting Group (PDG) and adopting further decisions in relation to the preparation of the 2nd Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention. Moreover, the organisation of the T-CY Bureau meeting and PDG 8 meeting were supported. Capacities to fight against cybercrime in the African region were enhanced, and the visibility of the Budapest Convention was ensured by supporting the organisation of the African Regional Workshop on Cybercrime, National Cyber Security and Internet Piracy in Nigeria. Updates on the CoE’s work on cybercrime, including the use of the Budapest Convention to investigate and prosecute aspects of election interference, were presented at the Forum on Internet Freedom in Africa (FIFAfrica 2019).
- EU/CoE JP “iPROCEEDS”: The project supported international networking for trainers on judicial training on cybercrime and electronic evidence aiming to increase the sharing of best practices and international cooperation by organising an international conference for magistrates trained by the CoE. It also supported the participation of one student in the summer examination session 2019 of the Master Programme in Forensic Computing and Cybercrime Investigation. More than 30 cybercrime investigators and prosecutors increased their skills and knowledge on matters related to cybercrime and other related topics through the Underground Economy Conference. The capacities of the project countries in relation to the investigation of sexual violence against children in the darknet were reinforced through an International Joint Conference between Eurojust and the CoE on darknet investigations. The undercover online investigative capacities of the project countries were strengthened through a regional training on Undercover Online Investigations.
- EU/CoE JP “GLACY+”: The project ensured the visibility of the Budapest Convention through several initiatives, including an advisory mission on legislation to El Salvador in the presence of representatives of National Parliaments and Senates in Central America and Caribbean Basin. Furthermore, cooperation was initiated with FOPREL (Forum of Presidents of the Legislative Powers of Central America and the Caribbean Basin), aiming to reach the Parliaments of the region and make them aware of international standards on cybercrime and electronic evidence and the process of accession to the Budapest Convention. One workshop was organised in this respect. The capacities of countries to investigate and prosecute cybercrime were reinforced by ensuring their participation in several international events (Freetool showcase workshop, 2019 Underground Economy Conference, Malware analysis training and African Regional Workshop on Cybercrime, National Cybersecurity and Internet Policy). The capabilities of Law Enforcement agencies from Nigeria, Cabo Verde and Tonga were reinforced through training activities and advisory missions. The strengthening of the capacities of judicial and prosecution authorities to prosecute and adjudicate cybercrime cases was supported by courses in Mauritius and Cabo Verde. Moreover, the integration of training modules into the curricula of judicial training institutions and the mainstreaming of MLA

procedures was facilitated in Costa Rica and Ghana. With the aim of strengthening the network of judicial trainers, an international meeting of national and international judicial trainers on cybercrime and electronic evidence, formed under CoE programmes, was held in Strasbourg. Training needs and new courses, certification programmes and the feasibility of an international network of judicial trainers were discussed. The visibility of the project and its achievements were ensured by participation in international conferences, such as the Cybersecurity Summer Boot-Camp 2019 in Spain and the Forum on Internet Freedom in Africa 2019 in Ethiopia.

- EU/CoE JP "CyberSouth": The achievements of the projects were assessed during the third Steering Committee meeting held in July, in Strasbourg. On this occasion, the work plan for the upcoming period was agreed with the project countries. Cooperation with Interpol was reinforced by contributing to the Interpol 12th Middle East and North Africa Working Group on Cybercrime for Heads of Units. The project is currently supporting Jordan in aligning its Electronic Crimes Law with international standards and held a third meeting with members of the Law Committee in September. The creation of a strategic approach for countries in respect to Law Enforcement training on cybercrime and electronic evidence was supported through the organisation of a regional workshop.

- EU/CoE JP "CyberEast": The project formally started on 20 June and held its launching conference in Brussels on 19-20 September, in close collaboration with the European Commission and EU agencies. The project is, at the moment and until the end of 2019, in the inception phase during which information about existing modalities and needs for training of Law Enforcement, prosecution and judiciary are analysed through a series of assessment visits to each Eastern Partnership country (5 out of 6 have already been completed in the reporting period). Continuing with the theme of international cooperation from the previous Cybercrime@EaP projects, the CyberEast project supported participation of project country teams in the Cybercrime Convention Committee sessions, as well as at an international conference on the Darknet and child abuse online organised by Eurojust. Continued action on public-private cooperation was reinforced by supporting the participation of project country teams in the Underground Economy Conference and input to 10th Internet Governance Forum of Ukraine on cyberviolence.

- VC (multi-lateral) "EndOCSEA@Europe": To facilitate the implementation of awareness activities on online child sexual exploitation at multiple levels, 4 grants were awarded in Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, and Ukraine. Two reports on the findings on the implementation and monitoring of the Lanzarote Convention and on multi-sectorial co-operation to prevent and combat Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse were published to highlight common challenges and strategic priorities for the project countries. Fact-finding visits took place in Armenia and Ukraine to discuss and refine the preliminary conclusions of a gap analysis of legislation, policies and practices to prevent and combat online child sexual exploitation and abuse in these countries.

### **Follow up action**

- Implementation of the project work plans as agreed upon for Q4 2019;
- Organisation of the Steering Committee meetings for Glacy+, CyberSouth and EndOCSEA projects;
- Preparation and organisation of the Octopus Conference.

### **Other relevant activities**

- Benin and Peru acceded to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime;
- The proposal for a new project as a follow up to IPROCEEDS was prepared and submitted to the European Commission for its final review and approval;

- A 3-year extension of the Glacy+ project has been approved by the European Commission and the Description of the Actions and budget are currently being drafted.

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

Core staff – 5, Project staff – 14, Total staff – 19.

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 - The preliminary results of the study on the application of pre-trial detention in Moldova were presented to and discussed with judges, prosecutors, attorneys-at-law, academicians and NGO representatives over the course of 5 panel events. The Programme organised the participation of relevant criminal justice stakeholders in the Annual HELP Conference in Strasbourg, France and the Annual Conference and General Meeting of the International Association of Prosecutors in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The Council for the Prevention of Torture Annual Report was published and presented under the auspices and with the financial support of the Programme. Component 2 - The Programme initiated the piloting of the risk and needs assessment tool on pre- and post-release from prisons, as well as the curriculum for probation councillors on drafting presentence reports. The final deliverables pertinent to the reorganisation of the probation system and healthcare in prisons were shared with the national authorities. Other activities aimed at reviewing the legal framework of the penitentiary system, developing its human resources strategy, and strengthening the capacities of the Prison Training Centre for delivering competency-based training.
- EU/CoE JP "Controlling Corruption through Law Enforcement and Prevention (CLEP)": With the formation of a new Government in mid-June 2019, project activities linked to announced reform areas were postponed until the end of July. When project operations restarted, CLEP carried out a summer school on assets recovery for judges and prosecutors, where the participants harmonised their knowledge on national practices and discussed international standards. Knowledge and hands-on capacities on the use of the IBM i2 visualisation software were increased thanks to a tailored one-week training for investigative units, which will be followed by another week on more advanced techniques. The project also worked on the finalisation of a study on legal and practical incentives for anti-corruption compliance in the private sector, the first on this subject in the Republic of Moldova.
- VC Switzerland "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova": Around 70 teacher trainers of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of the Republic of Moldova have been trained on the application in practice of the provisions of the first module of the teachers' handbook for the subject "Education for society" (grades V, VI, X and XI). The handbook has been developed by a group of international and national experts engaged by the CoE. These are the first ever teaching materials elaborated in the Republic of Moldova for the reconceptualised civic education subject "Education for Society".
- VC (multi-lateral) "Protecting children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in the Republic of Moldova": The challenges and needs of the child protection system were identified by the mapping/study on systemic issues affecting the child protection system's response to child sexual exploitation and abuse and the effective implementation of the Lanzarote Convention and recommendations drawn up in this respect. The follow-up activities and needs of the child protection system were identified and a new follow-up project registered in the PMM.

- EU/CoE - PGG "Strengthening the capacities of the justice sector actors to deliver justice in line with European standards, in particular to fight discrimination": In the framework of the Project, an international consultant was selected to assess the amendments to Law 121 and Law 298, this exercise is being carried out jointly with the regional PGG project on "Strengthening access to justice through non-judiciary redress mechanisms for victims of discrimination, hate crime and hate speech in Eastern Partnership countries". The project activities were presented and approved during the Steering Committee meeting of the project held on 25 September. A national consultant was selected to carry out a gender analysis of the justice sector PGG project.

#### Follow up action

- Following the discussion and possible adoption of the Opinion of the Venice Commission on the judicial reform (re-evaluation of judges of the Supreme Court of Justice) during a plenary session on 11 October, a request for support from the Ministry of Justice in the implementation of the recommendations is likely and will need to be followed up.

#### Other relevant activities

- With the election of a new Parliament and change of Government, in the course of July, the HoO held meetings and discussed cooperation activities with the new Speaker of Parliament, Minister of Justice, Minister of Education, Minister of Health, Labour and Social Protection;
- The first meeting of the Local Steering Committee of the EU/CoE Partnership for Good Governance (PGG) 2019-2021 took place on 25 September and PGG priorities along with ongoing and future cooperation activities were presented to national stakeholders, international partners and the media. Opening statements were made by the Head of the EU Delegation, the Head of CoE Programming Department and a representative of the MFAEI;
- A CBMs mission was organised on 4-5 September in Chisinau and Tiraspol to discuss possible actions in the field of education, human rights dialogue and drug prevention.

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

- 21-23 July: The 2 PACE co-rapporteurs on honouring of obligations and commitments by the Republic of Moldova paid a fact-finding visit to Moldova to update on the latest political developments concerning the functioning of democratic institutions after the February 2019 elections. The main focus of the visit was on the follow-up to the June 2019 constitutional and political crisis: measures taken and plans for future action by the government, especially in the field of justice and the fight against corruption; legislation and measures envisaged to depoliticise justice and other state administrations; and developments concerning the electoral framework. On 3 October, PACE adopted a Resolution on "The functioning of democratic institutions in the Republic of Moldova" based on the co-rapporteurs' monitoring report;
- 19-20 September: A delegation of the Venice Commission held meetings in Chisinau with Moldovan authorities and representatives of civil society with a view to preparing an opinion on the judicial reform (the re-evaluation of Supreme Court judges).

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

Core staff – 10, Project staff –34, Total staff - 44.

In the framework of the CoE Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2021, the Office implemented 18 projects, including 13 projects funded by voluntary contributions, one funded under the EU/CoE PGG, 3 funded under EU/CoE JPs 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 supported Ukrainian authorities with the preparation and presentation of the analysis of root causes of non-execution of national judgments in Ukraine, which was positively noted and welcomed by the Committee of Ministers at their meeting on 25 September. The Project also co-organised the Second Annual Forum on the execution of national judgments, where again representatives of all 3 branches of power actively participated and discussed key measures to be taken in the future to eliminate the problem of non-execution of judgments. Furthermore, the Project supported the work of the High Council of Justice (HCJ) on disciplinary proceedings against judges by providing the analysis of the HCJ disciplinary practice for 2018 and the first half of 2019, which contains comprehensive recommendations on improving the disciplinary practice and bringing it in line with CoE standards.
- AP “Support to the implementation of the judicial reform in Ukraine”: On 3 July, the Project carried out a fact-finding mission to Mariupol, Donetsk region with regard to access to and the functioning of justice in Donbass. Following this mission, on 6 September a thematic round-table discussion, with judges from the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, was organised to discuss the outcomes of the fact-finding mission and define the next steps to be implemented within the Project’s framework. In September, the Project launched an analysis of the draft law No 1008 that proposed a number of amendments to the draft law regarding the functioning of the Supreme Court, HCJ, and High Qualification Commission of Judges. Also, the analysis of the legal fees in relation to CoE standards has been launched.
- AP “Human Rights Compliant Criminal Justice System in Ukraine Project”: During the reporting period, the Project’s inception phase began. Meetings with the General Prosecutor and Head of Parliament’s Committee on Law Enforcement, as well as several ordinary meetings with national and international partners, were held and further areas for cooperation were discussed. A CoE consultant provided expertise within the mid-term evaluation of the Justice Sector Reform Strategy chapters covering prosecution and criminal justice areas. The expert assessment of the newly adopted law on immediate measures for the Public Prosecution Service reform is still in progress.
- AP “Decentralisation and local government reform in Ukraine”: The project issued 4 legal opinions on the relevant draft legislation on the governance system and administrative territorial reform in the capital city Kyiv, as well as the peer review report on democratic governance in metropolitan areas, focusing on the Kyiv region. The Project continued cooperation with the National Agency of Civil Service and national local government associations to implement the reform of the professional training system of local civil servants. In co-operation with the CoE Centre of Expertise for Good Governance, the leadership academy programme on cross-border cooperation for groups of mayors from Ukraine and Poland was delivered and its results presented at the EU International conference on cross-border cooperation on 20 September in Yanoshi, Ukraine. The Project contributed to raising awareness on the decentralisation reform and CoE standards and values through a series of

practical national and regional media contests, the annual Dytatko International Children's Media Festival and a number of video clips and films.

- AP "Strengthening democracy and building trust at local level in Ukraine": During the first meeting of the Community of practice on local democracy, members of the Association of Ukrainian Cities (AUC) exchanged best practices, with representatives of the Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe (NALAS) and Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments, on resource generation and communication to enhance advocacy and deliver high quality services to their member municipalities. The newly established community of practice will seek to strengthen the capacities and the institutional position of Ukrainian local authorities and their national associations and enable them to advocate local self-government reforms with a common voice. The discussions contributed to a reflexion on the development of the AUC midterm strategy, initiated by the AUC with the aim to strengthen and develop its institutional capacities based on the recommendations of the AUC baseline assessment and the first strategic planning workshop with the members of the Management Board organised in the framework of the XV Ukrainian Municipal Forum in Odessa in June. At the first working group meeting on the AUC midterm strategy, organised on 27 September in Kyiv, participants agreed on ensuring the inclusiveness of the process by further consulting with AUC members in the regions.
- AP "Promoting civil participation in democratic decision-making in Ukraine": The project provided expert and technical support in the development, implementation and enhancement of legal and practical frameworks for civil participation in 4 municipalities. The Academy of civil participation strengthened the capacities and expertise of regional NGOs from Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts in policy analysis and advocacy, the Kyiv NGO Platform and civil society organisations and local authorities of Zhytomyr city, in inclusive participatory policymaking. The Project launched the monitoring study on the progress of implementation of the National Strategy for Civil Society Development to provide further recommendations as to the promotion and creation of the enabling environment for civil society development in Ukraine.
- AP "Supporting constitutional and legal reforms, constitutional justice and assisting the Parliament in conducting reforms aimed at enhancing its efficiency": During the reporting period, the Project continued to improve electoral legislation on local elections in line with European standards through a working group at the Ministry of Regional Development. The Project facilitated the establishment of an expert group in the Parliament to prepare the methodology for "Rule of Law Checklist" implementation in the law-making process and legal practice. Following a request from the Profile Committee of the Parliament, Venice Commission experts have joined a working group on the improvement of the draft Electoral Code which was vetoed by President Zelensky and sent back to the Parliament. On 23 September, the Project, jointly with the USAID RADA Programme, the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) and the think tank Center for Political and Legal Reforms, delivered a Constitutional workshop aimed at discussing legislative initiatives in the context of constitutional procedure, including the execution of constitutional procedure, the international practice of a national veto, electronic petitions etc.
- AP "Supporting the transparency, inclusiveness and integrity of electoral practice in Ukraine": A Summer School on "First Steps in Politics" with 18 speakers was held for 40 students from 22 universities and 13 regions of Ukraine. Following an essay competition among the participants of the School, the authors of the 2 best essays will participate in the 2019 World Forum for Democracy. A concept paper for legislative amendments to ensure the principle of proportional representation of amalgamated territorial communities in oblast and rayon local councils was developed. The findings and recommendations on the results of the monitoring of media coverage of the 2019 Presidential and early Parliamentary elections were presented to the public and discussed with national stakeholders concerned.
- AP "Strengthening freedom of media, access to information and reinforcing public broadcasting system in Ukraine" (implemented in July-August) / EU/CoE JP "EU and CoE



working together to support freedom of media in Ukraine” (started on 1 September): The structure and the draft content of the course on safety of journalists were developed in cooperation with 3 academic institutions – the National Academy of Prosecutors, National School of Judges and National Academy of Internal Affairs. The handbook for journalists on verification of information and responsibility of editorial offices for disinformation was published in cooperation with the Ministry of Information Policy, CSO “Institute of Mass Information” and CSO “Human Rights Platform”. In cooperation with the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine, the Project organised the Fifth Annual Inter-University School on the right of access to public information in the digital age. The independent public monitoring of media coverage of the early parliamentary election campaign for the period 22 June-21 July was finalised, and the results, conclusions and recommendations of the monitoring were discussed with the key stakeholders at a round table. A handbook “Council of Europe standards on media and elections” and an analytical paper, with legislative gap analysis which identifies problematic areas in the regulation of media coverage of elections in Ukraine and proposes a new effective model of regulating political advertising during elections, were produced and presented.

- EU/CoE - PGG “Strengthening measures to counter money laundering and financing of terrorism in Ukraine”: The Project registration process with the Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Agriculture has been launched. The Project established contacts and built cooperation with key national partners and stakeholders, such as the Profile Committee of the Parliament, the Financial Monitoring agency, the Prosecutor General’s Office, the National School of Judges etc. Coordination with other donors in the sphere of anti-money laundering and financial terrorism was launched. The Project has initiated the preparation of an advisory note on the compatibility of illicit enrichment and civil confiscation with international standards, previous draft legislation, and the case-law of the ECtHR.

- AP “Internal displacement in Ukraine: building solutions”: In July, the Project organised a study visit for judges of the Supreme Court and management of the National School of Judges of Ukraine (NSJU) to Strasbourg with the aim of holding exchanges on CoE standards on internal displacement and ensuring its further application in national court practices and constitutional jurisprudence. As a follow-up, an expert meeting with a special focus on compensation for property damage in situations of armed conflict was organised for the Great Chamber of the Supreme Court to discuss newly adopted national legislation and to review national courts’ approach to compensation matters. In August, the Project jointly with the Ministry of IDPs held a Summer school on internal displacement, where school participants elaborated the key messages of national policies with the purpose of strengthening the HRs protection of IDPs in Ukraine. The key messages were transferred to the newly established Ministry of veterans, temporary occupied territories and IDPs. A series of launches of the HELP course on Internal Displacement were organised by the Project in cooperation with national training intuitions. Up to 200 legal professionals will benefit from the training course during the second half of 2019.

- AP “Promoting social human rights as a key factor of sustainable democracy in Ukraine”: High-level meetings, conducted within the inception phase period of the Project, provided the opportunity to bring the Project’s objectives to the attention of Ukrainian decision-makers. Extensive promotion of the European Social Charter through social media helped to engage at least 500 people in active discussions on social issues. The Project team’s participation in the Donbass Media Forum led to communication on social human rights with at least 15 international organisations and a decision to use the forum to follow up on social protection during the following year.

- AP “The Istanbul Convention: a tool to advance in fighting violence against women and domestic violence in Ukraine”: Through 3 cascade trainings, the Project strengthened the capacities of 88 attorneys to better protect victims of violence. Together with the National Academy of Prosecutors, the Project co-organised one round table on legislative innovations

on prevention and domestic violence counteraction. Comprehensive research on judicial protective orders and a risk assessment, for all key players, on violence against women and domestic violence, were launched by the Project. The Istanbul convention and explanatory report, the CoE Recommendation on Fighting Sexism, and Q&A about the Istanbul convention were disseminated as handouts among participants and shared among the Project partners.

- AP “Enhancing Implementation of the European Human Rights Standards”: Following a request by the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI), the Project provided second round comments on the draft Instruction on cooperation between SBI and other state authorities in the case of disclosure of ill-treatment. Unfortunately, the discussion on the draft Instruction on 7 August did not find a consensus on the suggested cooperation mechanisms among the agencies involved. The Project contributed to strengthening the SBI’s institutional capacities based on a training needs assessment which focused on a human rights component. In the light of this assessment, the Project, jointly with the National Academy of Prosecutors, organised an international conference on the professional training of judges, prosecutors and law-enforcement officers that became a platform for exchanging experience on efficient training models. The Project continued piloting 5 draft versions of the methodological recommendations/guidelines on the National Preventive Mechanism within 2 monitoring visits to the Cherkassy and Kherson regions. The final drafts of these recommendations have been agreed with the Ombudsperson’s Office for further printing. Promoting integration of the ECHR into Ukrainian legal practice, the Project jointly with the Ukrainian National Bar Association on 6 July launched the HELP online course on “Admissibility criteria” for a group of 28 lawyers.

- AP “Protection of national minorities, including Roma, and minority languages in Ukraine”: A contest for local governments, on the development of local communication strategies and consultation mechanisms with national minorities, was carried out by the Project. A working group to develop a brochure about national minorities and minority languages in Ukraine was set up on 25 September involving representatives of minority organisations. This brochure will inform the general public about 14 ethnic minority groups, their cultures, languages, traditions and identities covered by the ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) including Roma. In cooperation with the UN Women’s Project, the Project has carried out a gender responsive evaluation of the implementation of the Roma National Strategy, and also facilitated the activities of the Ministry of Social Policy to discuss social protection and health issues as part of the Roma National Strategy. On 13-14 September, a Roma Political School for 30 participants was launched in the Parliament. On 23 September, at the coordination meeting, held jointly with the State Migration Service and the UNHCR, the roadmap for documentation of the Roma population was discussed by 25 participants, and recommendations for improving procedures and legislation on passport registration were prepared and proposed to the State Migration Service.

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

- 1-4 July: Visit of the PACE pre-electoral mission.

## **Pristina**

### **Situation of the Office**

Core staff - 5, Project staff -15, Total - 20.

The Office implements 8 projects, out of which 5 are jointly funded with the EU including one regional Joint Programme, and 3 are funded by voluntary contributions (VC) from Norway, Switzerland, and also the CoE's ordinary budget. In addition, one regional EU/CoE Joint Programme is implemented in Kosovo\*, directly by the CoE Office in Bucharest (iPROCEEDS).

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

- EU/CoE - HF "Strengthening the Quality and Efficiency of Justice (KoSEJ II)": CEPEJ experts provided technical advice to the KJC-CMIS (Kosovo Judicial Council- Case Management Information System) team to integrate CEPEJ standards. Co-operation with the Kosovo Justice Academy was initiated by a training needs assessment. Two CEPEJ coordinators from the MoJ developed their capacities further on the CEPEJ methodology with the support of an expert to report on and analyse the data collected for 2018. In co-operation with EUD, the first Steering Committee took place with the presence of all the Action's beneficiaries and partners. A breakfast was organised back-to-back with civil society representatives, with the participation of the EUO, to discuss possible synergies.
- EU/CoE regional JP "Reinforcing Judicial Expertise on Freedom of Expression and the Media in South-East Europe (JUFREX2)": During the inception phase of the Action, a local short-term consultant was engaged to provide intellectual services to adapt the common methodology for Monitoring and Evaluation into the local context, as well as to prepare a baseline study and propose alternative indicators, in order to ensure measurability and correct figures for an appropriate evaluation of results. All beneficiaries of the project were kept informed about the second phase of the Action, thus ensuring the continuity of co-operation. The date of the first Steering Committee meeting of the Action was agreed on 24 October.
- EU/CoE - HF "Promotion of diversity and equality in Kosovo\*": The project has been working on fine-tuning the log-frame of the Action and completing the work plan/documentation, in view of finalising the inception by consulting all partners and calling the Steering Committee in October.
- EU/CoE JP "Project against Economic Crime in Kosovo\*(PECK II)": The PECK II Team organised and facilitated 2 working group meetings on drafting the Regulation on Beneficial Ownership. It finalised publications of the Toolkit on Managing Conflict of Interest in Public Service and Handbook on Protection of Whistleblowers, which were distributed to the Anti-Corruption Agency. It organised thematic meetings in the UK with authorities in the area of AML/CFT to address key topics and findings contained in the AML/CFT Assessment Reports. A no-cost project extension has been granted till the end of March 2020. An external evaluation of PECK I and II has been initiated ahead of PECK III.
- VC Norway/AP "Fostering rapprochement through education for democracy and language learning (FRED)": A 2-day workshop for an ethnically diverse group of 22 students and 11 teachers from the pilot schools was held in the European Youth Centre in Budapest on 5-6 August. The aim was to learn about conflict resolution, reconciliation, and learning and living together in a multi-ethnic society. A catalogue of success stories from the activities implemented by the 11 pilot schools was developed. The plan for launching pilot classes on

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\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

teaching minority/majority languages in 11 pilot schools was developed and introduced to municipal directorates for education and schools.

- VC Norway/AP "Reinforcing the fight against violence against women and domestic violence in Kosovo\*: The calls for tender for local and international consultants were successfully launched. The tender for local consultants was completed in July with 7 consultants selected through pooling. Whereas, the international consultants tender was launched through the Tenders Board and the process of evaluating bids/applications is currently underway. Also, a workshop with the media on the role of the media in raising awareness on violence against women and domestic violence was organised on 24 September, in co-operation with OSCE Mission in Kosovo\*.
- VC Norway "Improving the Protection of European Human Rights Standards by the Constitutional Court of Kosovo\* - IPEHRSCC": The Project facilitated the second thematic workshop with judges and legal advisors on the Admissibility Criteria to the Constitutional Court and subsequently started production of the related video guide targeting the general public. The placement programme with the European Court of Human Rights has been officially launched by assigning the first judge and legal advisor to its JurisConsult Unit for 1 and 2 months respectively. The Project conducted a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of the Constitutional Court as a key implementer of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). The translation of the HELP course "Property Rights and the ECHR" has been completed.
- EU/CoE regional JP "ROMACTED: Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level": Following training on the Project Cycle Management, the action has supported 8 beneficiary municipalities on the application process for CoE small community project grants. Ten community proposals were submitted to the CoE for financing and these will be co-financed by the beneficiary municipalities. Women's groups/meetings have been initiated in all beneficiaries with the purpose of creating agency for women's participation in the programme. Participation of the Community Action Group (CAG) members in the municipal budgetary public hearing was ensured in a few municipalities where concrete issues were presented.
- EU/CoE regional JP "Project on targeting crime proceeds on the Internet in South-eastern Europe and Turkey (iPROCEEDS)": Participants from various Kosovo\* institutions (prosecutors, police, ministry of justice) took part in a number of activities such as: the first meeting of the national judicial trainers on cybercrime and electronic evidence, the Underground Economy conference, a regional training on Undercover Online Investigations and an International Joint Conference Internet Investigations in cooperation with EUROJUST.

#### Follow up action

- PECK II: Distribution of publications to various institutions in public administration; information sessions with public officials on managing conflict of interest cases. Workshop on newly adopted Criminal Code in relation to corruption offences;
- FRED: Launch of community language classes;
- FRED: Workshop for 11 pilot school teams (2 teachers, 1 parent and 2 students) to inform them about the launching of language classes;
- FRED: Meeting with municipal education and school directors of pilot schools to present the action plan and benefits of language learning classes in schools;
- FRED: Kick-off of language classes;
- IPEHRSCC: Thematic workshop Methodology of the European Court of Human Rights, and Regional Conference - Freedom of Expression and Constitutional Justice (October/November 2019);

- Kick-off works for the national adaptation of the Human Rights Training for Legal Professionals (HELP) on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence with the Kosovo\* Academy of Justice;
- Translation into local languages (Albanian and Serbian) of the CoE publications on (i) Raising Awareness of Violence against Women - Article 13 of the Istanbul Convention; (ii) Encouraging the participation of the private sector and the media in the prevention of violence against women and domestic violence - Article 17 of the Istanbul Convention and (iii) Recommendation CM/Rec (2019) on preventing and combating sexism.

#### Other relevant activities

- The Office took part in local and international events (conferences, round tables, workshops, panels and anniversaries/ceremonies) promoting human rights and rule of law issues, media, anti-discrimination, efficiency of justice, minorities' rights; promotion of multilingualism and Language Rights, as well as the presentation of local policy documents;
- The Office continues to participate in donor activities coordination mechanisms with a view to promoting the CoE's work, ensuring efficiency of activities implementation and avoiding duplication. Close contacts have been maintained with the EUO and a meeting with the newly appointed political advisor of KFOR was organised.

## **Sarajevo**

### **Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 7, Project staff - 17, Total staff – 24.

The Office implements 9 projects, of which 5 projects are funded within the EU/CoE Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey, 1 VC project funded by UK and US, and 1 VC funded by Norway, 1 funded by SIDA and 1 other project funded by voluntary contributions to the CoE Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021. In addition, the Office contributes to the implementation of 1 regional project, CoE/ EU Joint Programme on Roma empowerment at local level.

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

- EU/CoE - HF "Enhancing human rights protection for detained and sentenced persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina": The implementation of the new HF2 Action on police and prisons in BiH started effectively during the reporting period. The Action's First Steering Committee (SC) was held on 10 July in Banja Luka, resulting with the appointment of members to the Action's various Working Groups, approval of the initial 6-month work plan, and approval of the SC working procedures. The first Train the Trainers session of the 4 planned sessions for law enforcement agencies was held in September in Trebinje. This programme will improve the capacity, knowledge and skills of 20 police officers from 10 police agencies in BiH to deliver human rights modules to their peers. In September, the Working Group tasked with introducing Information Technology in entities' prisons in BiH, including the Assistant Ministers of Justice (AMoJ), discussed the way forward in the phased procurement of hardware equipment and software development.
- EU/CoE - HF "Promotion of diversity and equality in Bosnia and Herzegovina": The Action completed its inception phase and consultations with various stakeholders resulted in the fine-tuning of further activities and the appointment of the Steering Committee members. In July, the Documentary "When we are fewer" produced under the HFI action dealing with national minorities, was selected to be screened during Sarajevo Film Festivals, one of the largest festivals in the region. On 18 August, the film was screened in the fully booked Cinema Hall in Sarajevo, in the presence of the HoO and Head of the EUD. Furthermore, after the projection, the audience actively participated in a flash mob and discussions on the state of national minorities in BiH.
- EU/CoE - HF "Quality education in multi-ethnic societies": In September, the first Advisory Board meeting of the Action gathered representatives of all beneficiary institutions: the Ministry of Civil Affairs, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, the Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska, the Ministry of Education and Science of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cantonal Ministries of Education, Department for Education of Brčko District, as well as representatives of the Agency for Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Education. The Advisory Committee discussed the activities, to be implemented during the 3-year period of the Action, aimed at fostering a quality education for all by promoting inclusion and solutions to address discrimination in the education system. The activities designed support the effective implementation of the Policy recommendations with a roadmap developed jointly and endorsed by relevant ministries at state level, entity-level ministries of education and 10 cantonal ministries of education in May 2019.
- EU/CoE - HF "Preventing and combating human trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina": In July-September, during its inception phase, the Action re-confirmed the relevance of the proposed activities with a large variety of stakeholders, including the EUD, decision-makers, officials, CSOs representatives and experts and completed necessary adjustments.

Furthermore, nomination letters and ToRs for the Steering Committee were sent to 8 ministries/institutions (SC members), and 2 CSOs (SC observers) in view of the first Steering Committee meeting and the launch event scheduled for 24 October. Preparatory activities for the adaptation and implementation of the CoE HELP online course on trafficking in human beings were also carried out.

- EU/CoE - HF "Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media in Bosnia and Herzegovina – JUFREX 2 (HFII)": In July-September, during the inception phase, the project team held meetings with all project beneficiaries, to discuss cooperation, grant agreements and to carry out financial reporting training. A needs assessment report and a baseline study for Bosnia and Herzegovina were produced and served as the basis for fine-tuning the project activities accordingly. The first Action Steering Committee was held on 26 September, in Sarajevo.
- VC Sweden "Human Rights Reporting and the role of media in BiH - media freedom legal framework analysis": At the request of the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, an expert analysis of media laws in Bosnia and Herzegovina was produced, translated and delivered to the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees for its comments and further use.
- VC UK/US "Structured sentence management for violent and extremist prisoners in Bosnia and Herzegovina": In July-September, a number of expected deliverables were advanced in respective working groups composed of representatives of the Ministries of Justice of BiH, FBiH and RS, and prison governors and relevant staff. An assessment of the legislative framework with recommendations for the further development of a Staff Management Strategy was conducted. The Manual on existing tools for risk and needs assessment and special treatment programmes for violent and extremist prisoners were reviewed. The first draft of the Training Manual for Case Management System (CMS) for violent and extremist prisoners and training modules addressing the needs of staff in dealing with violent and extremist prisoners (VEPs) were finalised. A consultation meeting for developing a Strategic Policy Document to facilitate the implementation of operational procedures in prisons for violent and extremist prisoners, their rehabilitation and multi-agency cooperation was held in September. Eleven representatives of the MoJ BiH, RS, and FBiH, including 4 prison governors, took part in a study programme in Denmark, visiting the closed state prison in Nyborg, the Danish National Center for Prevention of Extremism (NCPE), Copenhagen West Police and Copenhagen West Parole Office and the Training Center of the Prison and Probation Service (UCB Training Center). The knowledge gained will be used for improvement of the existing legislative and institutional capacities.
- VC Norway "Initiative for Legal Certainty and Efficient Judiciary in Bosnia and Herzegovina": In July, the project organised the second session of Training of Trainers (ToT) on human rights for 19 teaching staff from law faculties in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in Trebinje. The training introduced new interactive human rights teaching methodologies and gave the participants an opportunity to test their skills.
- VC "Reconciliation through cooperation between divided municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina": On 9 July, in Banja Luka, the CoE and 22 municipalities signed 11 grant agreements to support inter-municipal cooperation projects along the entity boundary in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These grants are part of the Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) Programme, which aims to support reconciliation between neighbouring municipalities on each side of the entity line. The contracts have been signed by the Mayors of the 11 municipalities participating in the project, and on behalf of the CoE, by the HoO. The Minister for Administration and Local Self-Government (Republika Srpska) Lejla Rešić, hosted and opened the ceremony in cooperation with the Head of the CoE CBM programme.

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

- JP EU/CoE ROMACTED "Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level": During the reporting period, all 10 beneficiary municipalities finalised and submitted their proposals for small grants initiatives (up to 10 000 EUR) to the CoE. Each municipality has identified, together with Roma communities, ideas that will be further implemented and funded from the municipal budgets. The implementation is foreseen for November 2019 and will actively include Roma communities as well as ROMACTED facilitators. Synergy with other projects of Care International, REF, OSCE, Caritas and Kali Sara will ensure no overlapping and help to achieve a greater impact in the field of Roma inclusion. Joint planning for the next trimester is being conducted together with the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, in order to empower municipalities to take further steps when it comes to budgeting Roma programmes.

#### Other relevant activities

- 1-2 July: HoO met with the representatives of the Working Party on the Western Balkans Region (COWEB);
- 11 July: HoO attended 24th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide;
- 12 July: HoO attended the final workshop of the project "Raising BiH Institutional Capacity to Prevent and Combat Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, "Data Collection on gender-based and domestic violence under the Article 11 of the Istanbul Convention", organised by the Office, and gave the introductory speech;
- 18 August: HoO attended the screening and participated in the debate related to the EU/CoE documentary "When we are fewer", which was screened during the Sarajevo Film Festival and gives an overview of the life of different national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It also closely follows the implementation of the joint EU and CoE Horizontal Facility Action "Strengthening protection of national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina";
- 30 August: DHoO attended the International day of the Disappeared, organised by the International Commission on Missing Persons in cooperation with the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- 6 September: HoO attended and gave an introductory speech at the presentation of the manual for police officers dealing with hate crimes against LGBT persons;
- 11 September: DHoO attended Transparency International presentation "Analysis of the legal and institutional framework and policies on corruption prevention in the health care";
- 19-22 September: HoO opened and moderated the 4th national seminar of the School of Political Studies that took place in Medjugorje;
- 26 September: HoO gave a speech during the introductory part of the first meeting of Steering Committee of the Action on "Freedom of the expressions and freedom of media in Bosnia and Herzegovina" (JUFREX 2), funded through HFII.



## **Tbilisi**

### **Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 6, Project staff – 17, Total staff - 23.

The Office implemented 8 projects.

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

- AP “Support to the Judicial Reform in Georgia”: The Independent Inspector’s Office benefited from the international experience-sharing workshop on modern means to address social media and judicial ethics. Expertise to revise the Code on Judicial Ethics has resulted in the establishment of a Working Group with a time-bound task allocation. The Rule on Case Management was substantially amended, following 4 working group meetings and discussions with regional courts. The High School of Justice is now equipped with a 5-year Strategy and Action Plan, addressing upcoming legislative and structural changes. All the Georgian Bar Association Trainers have advanced their skills in adult training methodology. Court managers and Judicial Assistants continued to benefit from the well-established platforms of Court Managers and the School of Justice.
- EU/CoE – PGG “The Council of Europe Programme to support Georgia in view of the 2016 (parliamentary), 2017 (local) and 2018 (presidential) elections”: The last phase of development of online electronic registration for election administration has been completed. Electoral stakeholders will have better access to electoral processes through simplified registration procedures. A comprehensive upgrade to existing software and websites of the State Audit Political Finance Monitoring Department was completed, and the general public will have better access to monitor legality and transparency of political finances. A study visit to Norway on Information Technology and Elections Management was organised for the Central Electoral Commission. A broad civic and voter education campaign, targeted at young people, was conducted in 25 municipalities and 2 Election Development Schools in Tbilisi, for a total of 589 young people. Research on electoral dispute resolution was conducted; findings and recommendations of the research will be presented to electoral stakeholders in October. Seventeen staff members of the State Audit Office were trained on social media marketing.
- AP “Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in Georgia”: Fifteen prosecutors and 5 inspectors of the Ministry of Internal Affairs received their certificates of completion of the HELP course on VAW/DV. The certificate award ceremony was followed by a final workshop to summarise the course achievements and lessons learnt. A second multidisciplinary meeting was organised for legal professionals, social workers and service providers from West Georgia to strengthen multi-sectorial co-operation on cases of VAW/DV. A round-table meeting was organised to launch the piloting of the CoE methodology and tools for mapping support services for victims of violence against women. Mapping methodology will help Georgian authorities to collect data on existing support services and to measure progress in the implementation of the standards of the Istanbul Convention.
- AP “Fight against discrimination, hate crimes and hate speech in Georgia”: In the framework of the French Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers, a movie screening on tolerance and equality issues was organised together with the French Embassy. The Courts improved forms for discrimination cases, enabling data collection in line with European standards and experts’ recommendations. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has prepared a first draft of the legislative package aimed at bringing criminal and administrative law in line with European standards and responding to current challenges. The third Steering Committee of the project reviewed the progress and approved the work plan for October 2019-March 2020. The project completed preparation of the online skills development HELP course on

Combating Hate Crime. A total of 75 legal professionals were trained. Subsequent curricula were developed based on the CoE human rights training methodology.

- AP "Strengthening Personal Data Protection in Georgia": The HELP course on Data Protection and Privacy Rights has been translated from English into Georgian. The text is now ready for proofreading and adaptation. The Handbook on European Data Protection Law (a 500-page publication) has been checked by the editor and is ready for publication.
- JP EU/CoE "Supporting Freedom of Media and Internet in Georgia": The annual conference of the Alliance of Independent Press Councils of Europe has been hosted in Tbilisi with the support of the CoE. High visibility and extensive press coverage were ensured. Georgian media representatives (around 70 persons) had a chance to participate in the debate around media transition along with press ombudsmen, journalists and experts from more than 20 countries. Negotiations on the creation of a national web platform for media literacy are underway with the beneficiary and the provider.
- EU/CoE – PGG "Enhancing the systems of prevention and combatting corruption, money laundering and terrorism financing": The development of a Training Curriculum and a Trainer's Manual on "Investigation, prosecution and adjudication of money laundering/financing of terrorism (ML/FT) cases" for the General Prosecutor's Office of Georgia has been finalised and awaits translation into Georgian. The development of a guide on "Anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) for the gambling sector" is underway and is to be completed in October.
- VC (multi-lateral) "Juvenile and adult detainees support" (JADES): The inception phase started on 1 July; all organisational issues, including tenders for international and consultants have been completed, visibility items printed, and the work plan prepared in agreement with partner organisations.

#### Other relevant activities

- HoO delivered opening remarks at the International Forum on Freedom of Expression and Judicial Ethics (5 July), the annual conference of the Alliance of Independent Press Councils of Europe, the screening of the movie session Le Brio organised together with the Embassy of France and the Tolerance and Diversity Institute, and the European Day of Languages, and presented awards to winners of the Summer School of Justice;
- HoO attended the 16th Batumi International Conference "A Partnership that Matters – 10 Years Beyond", a presentation of individual portfolios of the judicial candidates for the Supreme Court, and a Tbilisi School of Political Studies seminar;

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

- 17-18 September: PACE Co-rapporteurs visited Georgia for a fact-finding mission on honouring obligations and commitments by Georgia;
- 24 September: The Congress Vice-President and President of the Chamber of Local Authorities, and the Congress Secretary General participated in a joint event focusing on the promotion of local democracy in Georgia, jointly organised by the Congress and the National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia (NALAG) in Tbilisi;

**Tirana****Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 6, Project staff – 11, Total staff - 17.

The Office implements 8 projects, out of which 7 are co-funded by the EU, and one by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC).

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

- EU/CoE – HF “Strengthening the Efficiency of Justice (SEJ II) in Albania”: The High Judicial Council was further supported in drafting an Action Plan with concrete steps on a new judicial map in Albania, in compliance with the CEPEJ guidelines and methodology.
- EU/CoE – HF “Supporting effective domestic remedies and facilitating the execution of judgments (D-REX)”: The capacities of the State Advocate’s staff were supported in the practical implementation of the newly introduced legislative measures governing the execution of ECtHR judgments.
- EU/CoE regional JP “ROMACTED Programme”: Over 100 Roma and Egyptians were supported in enrolling in education institutions (pre-university and university). Seventy-one Roma families were assisted in applying for economic aid schemes and 44 Roma gained employment. Nine community activities provided support to kindergartens and 19 community action groups involved about 239 members of the community from 7 participating municipalities. Nine Institutional Working Groups focused on solving the housing situation of over 71 Roma families, while 3 Roma received wheelchairs and 5 Roma families received assistance in applying for social housing programmes.

**Follow up action**

- Follow up with the preparation and organisation of Steering Committee meetings of HF Actions in coordination with the EUD and relevant domestic stakeholders.

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

Core staff – 6, Project staff –15, Total staff - 21.

The Office implements 7 projects, of which 2 are national projects and 1 is a decentralised regional project funded by the EU under the Partnership for Good Governance (PGG), 1 project is funded by the United Kingdom, 1 project funded by Switzerland, 1 project funded by Austria and 1 project funded by Action Plan-level voluntary contributions.

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

- EU/CoE – PGG “Support to the judicial reform – enhancing the independence and professionalism of the judiciary in Armenia”: Component 1 - On 8-12 July, the Project organised an exploratory expert mission aimed at supporting the revision of the draft Strategy on the Legal and Judicial Reform of Armenia for 2019-2023 and the respective Action Plans (draft Strategy) as well as defining the exact scope of the revisions to be made in the Judicial Code and other related legal acts in the area of evaluation of judges and integrity checks. As a result, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) finalised the draft Strategy as well as the draft package of amendments to the Judicial Code and other relevant legal acts. Based on a request from the MoJ, the Project conducted an expert assessment of the draft Strategy and a joint assessment, together with the Venice Commission, of the Package of revisions to the Judicial Code and other related legal acts. The MoJ will revise the Strategy as well as the package of amendments to the Judicial Code based on the CoE’s recommendations and process them for adoption by the component authorities. In addition, to enhance the awareness of the public at large and professional groups on the draft Strategy, the Project organised a series of discussions in Yerevan and Marzes on 10, 11, 12 and 14 September. As a result, 182 participants namely judges, prosecutors, investigators, advocates, mediators, arbitrators, civil society representatives from Yerevan and Marzes, as well as representatives of integrational organisations, increased their knowledge during discussions on the specific provisions of the draft Strategy. During the reporting period the Project conducted its first Steering Committee meeting during which the activities for January-December 2020 were discussed and approved. Component 2 “Support to the judicial reform - supporting the criminal justice reform and harmonising the application of European standards in Armenia”: Two meetings of the working groups tasked to elaborate and finalise the draft Criminal Procedure and Criminal Codes of Armenia were organised in July-August. The meetings aimed at harmonising contradictory provisions of the codes to avoid omissions and gaps. Assessment of the concept of criminal liability of legal entities based on the best practices of the CoE member States, prepared by CoE, was discussed as well. On 24-25 August, a 2-day workshop on friendly settlements and unilateral declarations was organised for 21 participants from the staff of the Government Agent of Armenia before the ECtHR and other invitees. The analysis of the courts’ practice regarding friendly settlements and unilateral declarations and peculiarities of the reopening of the proceedings at national level after a friendly settlement and unilateral declaration were presented and discussed at the event. On 26-27, 30 September-1 October, 55 criminal law judges from different courts of Armenia acquired new skills and knowledge on specific aspects of Articles 3, 5 and 6 of the ECHR and on the reopening of criminal cases. The seminar aimed at enhancing the capacity of criminal law judges to apply European standards on criminal justice in a harmonised manner. The first Steering Committee meeting was held on 20 September with the aim to ensure successful planning, implementation and transparency of

the Project and the creation of synergies between the actors involved. Following constructive presentations and feedback of the partners, the work-plan for 2019-2020 was adopted.

- EU/CoE – PGG “Strengthening institutional capacities to fight and prevent corruption in Armenia”: A Technical Paper “Review of the anti-corruption strategy and Action plan of Armenia” was developed by the Project expert, who on 4-5 September met with the Acting Chairman of the CEHRO, the Deputy Minister of Justice Srбуhi Galyan, other representatives from the MoJ and members of the National Assembly to discuss the assets declaration system and to assess the legislative framework and templates for assets declaration in Armenia. The first Steering Committee Meeting of the project was held on 24 September. The adoption of the decisions by the Steering Committee as well as the frequency of the meetings were discussed. The ToR of the SC and the work plan were presented, discussed among the beneficiaries, and adopted. On the same day, the official launch of the project was organised. The EU Ambassador Andrea Wiktorin, the Deputy Minister of Justice and Head of Unit I, Economic Crime and Cooperation Division made opening speeches. They highlighted the close and effective co-operation of the Armenian Government with the EU and CoE, as well as the importance of capacity-building activities and expert opinions provided by the CoE.
- EU/CoE – PGG “Strengthening the profession of lawyer in line with European standards” (regional, decentralised project): Project implementation started on 1 July and the inception phase is currently ongoing. The Project Steering Committee is in the process of being formed. The Project Work Plan has been developed and is pending the approval of the LSC. Coordination meetings with national stakeholders are ongoing. A list of project contact persons in the participating countries is being identified and a framework for the required expertise has been developed and is subject to tendering procedures.
- VC Switzerland “Strengthening the Communities Association of Armenia and Transparent, Participatory Local Governance in Armenia”: Project implementation started on 15 July, while the official launch of the SDC funded Programme “Support to Local Self-Government in Armenia” was held on 26 September. During the inception period, the Project launched and conducted a tender procedure for the selection of local and international consultants. A series of meetings were held with the main partners of the Project (Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure, Ministry of Justice, the Armenian Secretariat of the Open Government Partnership) and beneficiary (CAA) in the course of July-September to agree on details of the activities expected to be implemented from October onwards.
- VC Austria “Democratic development, decentralisation and good governance in Armenia”: Within the legal and policy component, the Project initiated amendments to the RA Electoral Code, Law on Political Parties and Law on Local Self-Government with regard to the transition from a majoritarian electoral system to a proportional electoral system in local elections; as well as stakeholder mapping on the competences to be decentralised to amalgamated communities based on the draft Roadmap for decentralisation of competences. Within the financial component, the Project initiated a baseline assessment of standard expenditure needs of amalgamated communities, by calculating and comparing costs of municipal services for pilot consolidated communities per capita; a comprehensive strategy for fiscal decentralisation and financial equalisation in Armenia, along with recommendations on a package of corresponding legislative acts; as well as amendments to the Law on Financial Equalisation, by developing and testing a new model of calculating “the cost factor for the number of settlements included in the community.” To ensure smooth adaptation of the E-learning course on 12 Principles of Good Governance to the Armenian context based on open-source software, an implementation manual/adaptation roadmap was developed by an international consultant. As a follow-up, local experts started the adaptation of 12 modules to local circumstances. Additionally, a template/framework prepared by an international consultant was used by a local consultant to start developing a specific module on equal rights and the balanced participation of women and men in decision-making processes. Prior to the workshops to be held in the framework of the sub-granting component, awareness-raising

materials were developed with the aim of presenting the purpose of the CoE Inter-Municipal Cooperation toolkit, concept of the inter-municipal cooperation, as well as RA Legislation on inter-community unions. The workshops on inter-municipal cooperation, civil participation and Best Practice Programme will be organised at the beginning of the next quarter.

- VC UK "Human rights and women in the armed forces": Project implementation started on 1 June, and a trilateral meeting between the HoO, the UK Ambassador and the Minister of Defence took place on 18 July, which officially marked the start of the Project. The tender procedure for the selection of local and international consultants was held and a pool of experts was formed. During the reporting period, the Project held a series of meetings with its main partners and its first Steering Committee meeting during which the activities for June 2019-March 2020 were discussed and approved. An expert analysis of the legislation on gender equality and equal opportunities of men and women in the army was launched. A delegation of the Ministry of Defence and the Human Rights Defender's office of Armenia visited London, UK on 17-18 September to become acquainted with human rights protection mechanisms in the UK Ministry of Defence, as well as the human rights education and awareness-raising among British military servicepersons.
- AP "Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Armenia": Continuing the Path towards Ratification of the Istanbul Convention, funded by donors contributing to the Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019–2022 (currently Germany, Ireland, Liechtenstein and Norway). On 3 July, the Project was officially launched, and the Project Steering Committee met to finalise the Project Action Plan. Coordination meetings with the main Project partners, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, RA Police, Academy of Justice and Ministry of Education and Science, INL as well as UNFPA and UNDP were held. The public tender procedure for the selection of national consultants for the duration of the Project was launched. The Project contributed to the peer review on Police Reform in Armenia implemented by TAIEX (Technical Assistance and Information Exchange Instrument) experts.

#### Follow-up actions

- 2 July, 6 September: HoO met with the Head of Operations of the EUD to Armenia;
- 10 July, 2 August, 19 September: HoO met with the Deputy Minister of Justice;
- 11 July: HoO met with Chair of the Standing Committee on Protection of Human Rights and Public Affairs and Head of the Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs of the National Assembly of Armenia to discuss co-operation and ratification of Istanbul Convention;
- 1 August: HoO met with the Deputy Minister of Education;
- 12 September: HoO met with the Team Leader of GIZ Armenia.

#### Other relevant activities

- 3 July: HoO opened the launching of the Project on "Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in Armenia: continuing the path towards ratification of the Istanbul Convention";
- 3 July: HoO had a working meeting within the framework of the PGG regional project "Strengthening the access to justice through non-judicial redress mechanisms for victims of discrimination, hate crime and hate speech in Eastern Partnership countries" on the theme of disaggregated data collection on discrimination, hate crime and hate speech in Armenia;
- 8- 10 July: HoO participated in meetings with the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Justice, Deputy Minister of Justice, Ambassador of France, EU Delegation, Head of the Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs of the National Assembly of Armenia within the framework of the exploratory expert mission organised within the PGG Project - Component

1 "Support to the judicial reform – enhancing the independence and professionalism of the judiciary in Armenia";

- 15-19 July: Youth Advisory mission to Armenia;
- 18 July: HoO participated in a trilateral meeting with the Minister of defence and the Ambassador of the UK to mark the launch of the Project on human rights and women in the armed forces;
- 25 July: HoO congratulated the winners of the 70th year anniversary essay competition;
- 19-23 August: Training seminar for curriculum developers and representatives of the Armenian Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport on integration of the Council of Europe Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture into different school subjects and the assessment methodology;
- 15 September: HoO opened the discussion on "End Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse @Europe";
- 20 September: HoO participated in the 1st Steering Committee meeting of Component 1 and 2 of the PGG Project on Support to the judicial reform;
- 30 September: HoO participated in the meeting with the PGG national coordinator within the framework of the PGG II LSC.

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

- 16-17 September: Visit of the Venice Commission to discuss the amendments to the judicial code on integrity and disciplinary liability of judges.

**Rabat****Situation of the office**

Core staff - 2, Project staff - 4, Total staff - 6.

The Office mainly 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 – Cooperation on cybercrime in the Southern Neighbourhood Region" (2017-2020), for the EU/CoE regional joint project "Global Action on Cybercrime Action Extended (GLACY+)" (2016-2021), a project on combating discrimination in Morocco (VC Norway), a project to promote freedom of expression and media pluralism in Morocco, another in support of the protection of personal data in Morocco (VC Norway), and other projects implemented under the Neighbourhood Partnership with Morocco 2018-2021.

**State of implementation of programmes****EU/CoE Programme "Ensuring Sustainable Democratic Governance and Human Rights in the Southern Mediterranean"**

- As part of the South Neighbourhood SNAC 3 Anti-Corruption project, a presentation of the Criminal and Civil Conventions on Corruption was organised on 24 September in Rabat. This also provided the opportunity to present the evaluation and compliance mechanism of the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) to the Moroccan authorities.

**Other relevant activities**

- 4-5 July: The HoO participated in a workshop on the theme "Speech on migration: for evidence-based communication" organised by the Ministry responsible for Moroccan Residents Abroad and Migration Affairs in Skhirat.



## **Tunis**

### **Situation of the Office**

Core staff - 3, Project staff - 16, Total - 19

The Office implements country-related activities of 2 regional joint EU/CoE programmes: Ensuring sustainable democratic governance and human rights in the Southern Mediterranean ("South Programme III", 2018-20) and the CyberSouth Programme 2017-20; 2 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 (2019-21)" and a total of 6 projects funded from Voluntary Contributions from France, Liechtenstein, Malta, Monaco, Norway, Portugal and Spain.

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

Negotiations continue with both partners, notably the Delegation of the European Union in Tunisia (EUD), and beneficiaries on the adaptation of previously-agreed programme aims to the precise and evolving situation and needs in-country. A draft strategic work plan for the whole duration of PAII-T (2019-21) has been developed, as has a risk assessment matrix, covering also the AP-JUST. Pending agreement of this broader framework, non-controversial planned interventions and actions continue.

#### **"Improving the functioning, performance and access to justice in Tunisia - AP-JUST"**

- Coordination – Following the first Steering Committee meeting, the Office hosted a coordination meeting of technical and financial partners active in the field of justice sector reform in Tunisia.
- Institutional support – Further to the intervention proposals reviewed at the inaugural Steering Committee in June, the Senior Project Officer continued to streamline proposals in consultation with beneficiaries and to plan future activities accordingly. A seminar on electoral disputes, organised by the Venice Commission for the benefit of the Administrative Tribunal, scheduled to take place in September, was postponed due to the Presidential and legislative elections, and will now occur towards the end of November/early December.
- E-justice – Following the withdrawal of the originally-contracted supplier of computers to Ministry of Justice regional training centres and the Institut Supérieur de la Magistrature, an alternative service provider had to be sought. Partial delivery took place in September. At the request of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the EUD, CoE procurement processes were completed to enable the development of online platforms for consultation of judgements by lawyers and the Ministry of Finance, inter alia to improve efficiency in the payment of fines.
- Access to justice/Support to civil society – After consultations between the EUD and the MoJ, the CoE's assessment of the functioning of commercial jurisdiction was agreed as a basis for future work, along with feasibility studies and terms of reference related to supporting the indexing of the Cour de Cassation's case law, and to strengthening access to justice through CSOs and other non-state actors.

#### **"Project to support independent bodies in Tunisia - PAII-T"**

- Coordination – The Office organised a technical and financial partners' coordination meeting. At the request of the EUD, and in consultation with MAEs in Strasbourg and Tunisian stakeholders, the Office developed a strategic work plan, identifying cooperation areas and planned activities through till 2021.
- Cross-cutting support/legal basis – Further to the exchanges that took place with representatives from the independent bodies' technical committees, civil society, and the

Service for the relations with the independent bodies within the Presidential Administration, the Venice Commission Secretariat, in cooperation with Tunisian experts, began an analysis of the legal framework of the 8 independent bodies covered by the JP, including the framework law regulating the 5 Constitutional bodies. On 8 August, the HoO addressed a meeting convened to take this question forward, notably in the light of the opinions of Civil Society representatives.

- Human trafficking body – Support continued to the development of a National Referral Mechanism (NRM), in close cooperation with key stakeholders involved in the referral and protection of victims of human trafficking, including representatives from law enforcement agencies, relevant ministries, child protection officers, NGOs and international organisations.
- Anti-corruption body – The 2019-2021 work plan was finalised and validated by key stakeholders. Technical assistance for the establishment of a media centre for INLUCC and an online course on good governance and anti-corruption is ongoing.
- Anti-torture body - Under the responsibility of the national institution for the prevention of torture (INPT) and the General Directorate of Penitentiary Services within the MoJ, and with near-constant expert guidance from the CoE, drafting of the Tunisian Penitentiary Law Manual and the Prisoner's Guide neared completion.
- Data protection body – A pool of national and international experts was established, the latter specialised in legal and institutional reforms of data protection supervisory authorities, with a view to strengthening the capacity of the national body.
- Media body – In collaboration with the national body and the "Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie", local journalists were trained and advised on fact-checking and combatting fake news. The media monitoring unit of the national body was supported with a view to the electoral campaigns and Presidential elections taking place during the reporting period.
- Access to information body – Support continued for the establishment of a 'digital data centre', aimed at facilitating the investigation and networking among information officers. Technical support was provided in the finalisation of the national body's first Annual Report, to be shared with the government, the parliament and the public at large.
- HELP – the pool of Tunisian trainers continued to meet regularly to finalise and adapt to the Tunisian context the first 2 national HELP courses: Violence against women and Human trafficking. Both will be rolled out before the end of the year.

### South Programme III

- Violence against women – Practical and technical support continued to facilitate Tunisia's accession to the Istanbul Convention (see also below).
- Prevention of Torture – see above under PAII-T (It should be noted that these activities now draw on resources of both SPIII and PAII-T).

### CyberSouth

- 24-25 September: In Amman, Jordan, Tunisian representatives participated in a regional workshop on law enforcement (LE) and cybercrime training strategies, including use of electronic evidence, which brought together 35 participants from LE agencies of Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco and Jordan, as well as experts from Belgium, Romania, UK, Spain, Bitdefender company, CEPOL and INTERPOL.

### Follow up action

- The joint request of the Tunisian Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment and the National Federation of Tunisian Cities (FNVT) for Partner for local democracy status with the Congress will be on the agenda of the October Session of the Congress;

- Plans are well advanced for the accession of the Tunisian Republic to the Lanzarote Convention, and on 30 September, the Minister of Foreign Affairs addressed a letter to the Secretary General confirming the wish of the Tunisian Republic to become a party to the Istanbul Convention.

#### Other Relevant activities

- 30 July: On the occasion of the International Day against Trafficking, the HoO delivered a keynote Welcome Address at a Conference organised to promote institutional and international synergies locally, as well as broader public awareness of this key concern;
- 16-17 September: HoO also took part in the SPIII Steering Committee in Brussels;
- Child Protection – Technical assistance to the multi-sectoral steering committee was continued, which, under the aegis of the Ministry of Justice, meets regularly to oversee the implementation and monitoring of the delivery of child-friendly justice for child victims of sexual violence. On 27 September, together with the Ministry of Health, the project organised a workshop on victimology: “Children victims of sexual violence: an integrated approach”, which examined best practice and shared experiences from Europe in forensics and child psychiatry.