

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

8 December 2017

Information Documents
ODGP/DER/Inf(2017)3

Quarterly report of Council of Europe Offices

July - September 2017

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 2017. 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

High-level visits

The Secretary General of the Congress, Mr Andreas Kiefer: meeting with Associations of Local and Regional Authorities (11 July).

SRSG on migration, Ambassador Tomas Boček: meeting with the EU (Commission, EEAS), IOM and civil society.

Chair of GREVIO and the Executive Secretar: meeting with INGOs, EU representatives (Secretariat EU Council and Commission) (27-28 September).

Other meetings involving the Office

Head of Office, Mr Zoltan Taubner, had regular informal meetings and exchanges with various EU institutions (Commission, EEAS, Council, European Parliament) on recent developments of common interest in relation with countries such as Russia, Turkey, Poland, the Eastern Partnership on matters such as migration, terrorism/radicalisation, cybercrime, discrimination. He met the Secretary General of EEAS, Ms Helga Schmid (5 September 2017). He also opened the stakeholder meeting on the roadmap of the Convention on manipulation of sports results (the "Macolin Convention"). The results of these contacts are reflected in the reports covering areas of CoE interest, like Turkey, Azerbaijan, Poland, the Eastern partnership, joint programme co-operation, accession to CoE conventions and other normative developments.

The Office represented the CoE in:

- Estonian EU Presidency rule of law seminar on media independence and pluralism (12 July);
- Commission consultation meeting with international organisations on migration policies (19 July);
- Think tank (EPC) round table presided by Mr Herman van Rompuy (President of the EPC and former President of the European Council) on migration.

The Chair of CODEXTER and its secretariat (DGI) addressed the EU Council working group (TWP) on terrorism.

The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea visited the Office on 25 August.

The Office reported on relevant meetings and events which it directly followed, such as events organised in the EU Council, in the European Parliament (AFET, DROI, AFCO and LIBE Committees) and in think tanks.

Since 1 September, the Office has been joined by a new Political Adviser seconded by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He reports on events organised in the EU institutions and think tanks/foundations and develops direct contacts with the diplomatic corps in Brussels and with civil society.

The Secretariat of the Pompidou Group in the Brussels Office pursues its work on "Precursors" (meeting on 23-24 November, Strasbourg), "Cybercrime" (meeting in spring 2018), Controlled Deliveries Handbook (to be finalised by the end of 2017) and reports on EU developments.

The Office:

- welcomed visitors from the "EU Visitors programme", EUVP, from Georgia;
- welcomed the international board of ELSA (European Law Student Association) (14 July);
- met the Secretary to the European Audiovisual Observatory for its annual Brussels Conference in September;
- welcomed the EPAS consultative Committee meeting in September;
- welcomed groups of visitors, including the ELSA members from Hungary.

Media/visibility

The Spokesperson/Media Officer maintained his regular contacts with Brussels-based journalists on a wide range of issues, including the CPT reports on Italy and Greece, the GRETA report on Ireland, the GREVIO reports on Austria and San Marino and the European Parliament debate on the EU's accession to the Istanbul Convention, as well as various judgments and decisions from the European Court of Human Rights. He also co-ordinated communications work around the quarterly CM-DH meeting on the execution of judgments, the European Audiovisual Observatory's annual Brussels Conference and the visit of the GREVIO Chair and Executive Secretary to Brussels, as well as working on the on-going DC project to highlight the positive impact of the European Convention on Human Rights and carrying out preparatory work relating to the European Day against the Death Penalty.

Statistics

Some 356 information messages and documents as well as seven weekly reports were prepared and sent to Strasbourg by the Information Officer. 44 notes for the file were sent from the Office in addition to the information messages sent by the Head of Office directly. Nine members of CoE staff visited the Office and another two staff members were also in Brussels during the period. The Office hosted 27 events and visits and welcomed 135 external visitors.

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

High-level meetings/contacts

On 27 September 2017, the newly-appointed Head of Office, Ambassador Dragana Filipović, handed over the letter of accreditation to Mr Michael Møller, the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva ("UNOG"). Director-General Møller highlighted the importance of active relations between UNOG and other international organisations aimed to finding better and efficient responses to global challenges. In this context, he appreciated the Council of Europe's contribution to the work of the Human Rights Council.

On 15 September 2017, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, acting as current Chair of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons ("ICAT"), informed that the Council of Europe had become an ICAT Partner. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights stated that "the Council of Europe's role in the fight against trafficking in persons has significantly contributed to advancing the global anti-trafficking agenda".

Activities of the Office

July

- Session of the Human Rights Committee on consideration of the fourth periodic report of Switzerland on its implementation of the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
- Session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on consideration of the seventh periodic reports of Italy and Romania.
- First thematic discussion of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on the Global Compact on Refugees.
- Session of the Committee against Torture on consideration of the second periodic report of Ireland.

August

- Session of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on consideration of the twenty third and twenty fourth periodic report of Russia Federation under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

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

Bilateral dialogue

- Meeting with Ms Marietta König, External Co-operation Officer of the OSCE/Office of the Secretary General (22 September).

Participation in OSCE Permanent Council meetings

- OSCE PC with report by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Ukraine, presentation of the Financial Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016 and the report of the External Auditor, as well as the Annual Report of the Audit Committee (6 July).
- OSCE PC with report by the Head of the OSCE Mission to Skopje, Ambassador Nina Suomalainen, report by the Head of the OSCE Programme Office in Astana, Ambassador Gyorgy Szabo, and annual report on Implementation of OSCE Recruitment Policies (13 July).
- OSCE PC with address by the incoming Chair of the OSCE, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, Mr Angelino Alfano, an update by the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact Group, Ambassador Martin Sajdik, and a report by the Chief Monitor of the OSCE SMM to Ukraine, Ambassador Ertugrul Apakan (20 July).
- OSCE PC with inauguration statement by SG Thomas Greminger (31 August).
- OSCE PC with the Special Representative of the OSCE CiO in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact Group, the Chief Monitor of the OSCE SMM to Ukraine and the Special Representative of the OSCE CiO on Gender Issues, Ambassador Melanne Vermeer (28 September).
- OSCE Special PC with Austrian CiO, Minister Sebastian Kurz, and report by the CiO Special Representative on Countering Radicalisation and Violent Extremism, Professor Peter Neumann (29 September).

Participation in expert committees and conferences

- OSCE Expert Meeting on "Strengthening resilience of local communities to the presence of migrants" (4 July).
- OSCE Human Dimension Committee Meeting on "Hate Crime: the role of civil society in combating hate crime" (7 July).
- OSCE Human Dimension Committee Side Event on OSCE/ODIHR's publication entitled "Understanding Anti-Semitic Hate Crime and Addressing the Security Needs of Jewish Communities - A Practical Guide" (7 July).

- UNODC Briefing by Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr Jeffrey Feltman (10 July).
- 2017 OSCE-wide Conference on Combating the Threat of Illicit Drugs and the Diversion of Chemical Precursors - Nexus between Illicit Drugs, Organized Crime and Terrorism (10-11 July).
- OSCE Human Dimension Committee Meeting (12 July).
- OSCE Friends of Mediation Meeting (19 July).
- OSCE Human Dimension Committee Meeting (19 July).
- UNODC Fifth Informal Thematic Session "Smuggling of migrants, trafficking in persons and contemporary forms of slavery, including appropriate identification, protection and assistance to migrants and trafficking victims" (4-5 September).
- Conference "Towards a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration: Perspectives from the Western Balkans and beyond" organised by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (21 September).
- Briefing on the 2017 OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting Modalities and Logistics (25 September).
- UNODC Fourth Intersessional Meeting of the 60th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) on the implementation of the UNGASS outcome document (26-28 September).

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

- 19 July - meeting with the First Deputy Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), Ms Katarzyna Gardaphadze.
- 12 September - meeting with the Director of ODIHR, Ms Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, in the margins of the 2017 HDIM.
- 18 - 19 September - visit of Mr Nils Engstad, President of the Consultative Council of European Judges on the occasion of the 2017 HDIM.
- 28 September - High level celebration of the centenary of reinstated judiciary in Poland.

Activities of the Office

Enhancing the co-operation with OSCE-ODIHR

The main event of the third quarter of 2017 was the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting (HDIM) organised by ODIHR in Warsaw. The conference took place between 11 and 22 September gathering the representatives of participating States, civil society and international organisations. The Office conducted regular consultations on the preparations to the Meeting and was involved in forming the CoE's contribution. The HoO led the CoE Delegation at the HDIM, during which several statements were presented. Additionally, the HoO attended several side events, including one on the prevention of violence against women, which enabled the presentation of the activities related to the Istanbul Convention and in the Meeting of Directors on human rights issues organised by the Polish MFA, which discussed the potential for co-operation between international organisations in the field of human rights.

Apart from the high-level meetings mentioned above, the HoO continued to maintain close working relations with ODIHR experts. These discussions included i.a. a meeting with Ms Christine Hirst, Deputy Head of the Democratization Department in ODIHR, responsible for migration and freedom of movement issues, ODIHR Migration Advisor, Mr Juris Gromovs, and ODIHR consultant, Ms Joanna Fomina, and with Ms Ajla van Heel, Adviser on Gender Equality in ODIHR on co-operation with the CoE and preparation of the International Forum on Women's Political Empowerment in Budapest. As a result of the Office's involvement, the CoE contributed to the Forum and the Chairperson of the Gender Equality Commission, Ms Eva Fehringer, delivered a presentation during its closing panel.

Continuation of the co-operation with the Community of Democracies

The Office followed closely the selection process of the new Secretary General of the CoD, Mr Thomas Garrett, as well as the preparations and the outcome of the Ninth Governing Council Ministerial Conference that took place in Washington DC (15 September).

The HoO held consultations with the representatives of the Permanent Secretariat of the CoD, Ms Patricia Galdamez, Civil Society Co-ordinator, and Mr Jason Worlledge, Planning Manager on the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda, including the CoE contribution and

the CoD report on the supplementary set of indicators for SDG16. The involvement of the CoD in the World Forum for Democracy 2017 was also discussed.

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 to September 2017. 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 - 6, Project staff - 9, Total staff - 15.
The new HoO joined the Office on 14 September.

The Office implements 5 EU/CoE joint projects, including three within the framework of the PGG and two joint projects, namely "Civil Society Dialogue" and "Further Support to the Penitentiary Reform" projects.

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

- EU/CoE - PGG "Application of the European Convention on Human Rights and the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights": Fifty-four advocates, 20 judges and 75 practising lawyers and human rights defenders were trained on the ECHR as a result of five cascade trainings organised in Baku, Ganja and Sumgayit. The "Guide on Article 6 (Right to a fair trial – criminal limb) of the ECHR", "Practical guide on admissibility criteria" and "Guide on Article 3 of Protocol 1 to the ECHR (Right to free elections)" produced by the CoE and the ECtHR have been translated into Azerbaijani and 3000 copies have been published.
- EU/CoE - PGG "Freedom of Expression and Media Freedom": In July, 30 journalists and bloggers were trained in Baku on CoE standards on human rights protection on the Internet. The curricula on "Journalism ethics" and "Media and Freedom of expression" were finalised, and a new course on "Media and freedom of expression" will be included in Baku State University's Master programme of journalism in February 2018. The distribution of the four textbooks on journalism is ongoing. An international expert reviewed two reports by a local expert on the compliance of Azerbaijani legislation on Access to information and Freedom of expression with CoE standards.
- EU/CoE – PGG "Strengthening capacities to Fight and Prevent Corruption in Azerbaijan": A Presentation on the Methodology for evaluating the implementation level of the National Action Plan on Promoting Open Government 2016-2018, including guidelines for evaluation and indicators, was organised. The project also held a Training-of-Trainers Course on Anti-Corruption in Public Service. In September, the project organised two Seminars on Criminal Liability of Legal Persons for trainee judges of the Academy of Justice.
- EU/CoE JP "Civil Society Dialogue": In July, the Steering Committee meeting took place in Strasbourg with representatives from all stakeholders. The main focus of the meeting was to highlight the achievements of the project, examine any challenges encountered and agree on the follow-up activities. In September, a working group was set up within the project to develop draft amendments to the laws on NGO registration and access to funding for non-profit organisations.
- EU/CoE JP "Further Support to the Penitentiary Reform in Azerbaijan": As a result of technical advice and coaching provided by CoE consultants, the Penitentiary Service developed a Programme to introduce the Personal Officer scheme in three pilot prisons. Fifty-one psychologists, psychiatrists and correctional staff of penitentiary establishments received training on the use of non-pharmacological methods. A CoE consultant visited the psychiatric ward of a prison hospital and provided counselling on the organisation of occupational activities for prisoners with mental health conditions.

Follow up action

- 1 August: DHoO met with Jeroen Willems, Head of Cooperation at the EUD, to discuss country-specific PGG projects planned for 2018;
- 20 September: A project proposal on democratic citizenship/human rights education was sent to USAID Azerbaijan from ODGP;
- 26 September: DHoO met with Farah Ajalova, National PGG Coordinator, to discuss the organisation of the Annual Coordination Platform Meeting and CoE Action Plan for Azerbaijan.

Other relevant activities

- 3 July: HoO participated in the Steering Committee meeting within the project "Civil Society Dialogue in Azerbaijan" in Strasbourg;
- The HoO met with Ms. Elena Ajmove Sessera, Head of ICRC Delegation in Azerbaijan (16/08); Mr. Ghulam Isaczi, UN Resident Coordinator in Azerbaijan (17/08);
- After his arrival in September, Zoltan Hernyes, HoO, met with Parvin Mirzazade, State Protocol Department of the MFA (20/09), the heads of the EU and UN representations as well as ambassadors of CoE Member States Russia, France and Turkey. He also met. Bakhtiyar Hajiyev and Samad Rahimli, human rights defender lawyers on 27/09;
- 28 September: DHoO participated in the local donor coordination meeting and, as a co-chair of the sub-group on democracy and governance, briefed partners on recent activities.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- 3-7 July: The Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities visited Azerbaijan;
- 13-17 September: Stefan Schennach and Cezar Florin Preda, co-rapporteurs for the monitoring of Azerbaijan by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), carried out a fact-finding visit to Azerbaijan.

Belgrade

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 6; Project staff – 22; Total staff – 28.

During the reporting period, the Office implemented 10 projects, of which 9 are EU/CoE joint projects (7 under the Horizontal Facility) and 1 funded by the Human Rights Trust Fund (HRTF).

State of implementation of projects

- EU/CoE – HF “Enhancing human rights protection for detained and sentenced persons in Serbia”: A round table and a 1st Working Group on Offender Behaviour Programmes were held on 10-11 July, with all 28 of Serbia’s correctional institutions represented. The Ministry of Health (MoH) has requested help with the development of risk assessment tools, training curricula and in-service training courses. Similarly, experts are being sought to advise on external police oversight mechanisms; MoH and Ministry of Social Affairs inspection mechanisms; rights of persons with mental disabilities in social welfare institutions; and the social re-integration of detained persons.
- EU/CoE – HF “Supporting Effective Remedies and Mutual Legal Assistance (SEMA)”: A conference for all 160 court presidents was held in August to assess the implementation of the law on trial within a reasonable time and efficiency of the courts. In July and September, two training workshops on the right to peaceful enjoyment of property and the double jeopardy principle were held for 78 judges. With the Action’s support, 3 senior judges presented experience and good practices in the work of the Serbian case law departments at the regional case law harmonisation conference in Athens organised by DGI. The Action held its 2nd Steering Committee in September.
- EU/CoE – HF “Strengthening legal guarantees for independent and impartial tribunals”: The 1st Steering Committee Meeting took place on 25 July with all the beneficiaries agreeing on the revised Work Plan allowing for the implementation of capacity-building activities for the High Judicial Council and State Prosecutorial Council to start. To that end, calls for both national and international experts have been launched. At the request of the Ministry of Justice, work on drafting the legislation has been put on hold.
- EU/CoE – HF “Strengthen integrity and combat corruption in higher education in Serbia”: The 1st meeting of the Joint Steering Committee for the two Actions (see also the one below) was held on 6 July in Belgrade. The Draft Baseline Assessment on Integrity in Higher Education in Serbia was presented to 100 key stakeholders at a round table the previous day, provoking lively debate, and considerable national and local media attention. The Draft Baseline Assessment is being revised by CoE experts and will be finalised in the first week of October.
- EU/CoE – HF “Fostering a Democratic School Culture”: National and international experts have been selected and two rounds of regional training of trainers for local coordinators were held in Belgrade and Podgorica. A planning meeting with 20 pilot schools, local experts and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development was held on 12 September in Belgrade when a final detailed action plan and reporting systems were presented and adopted. Inception visits and a first round of peer learning training sessions will now follow.
- EU/CoE – HF “Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (THB) in Serbia”: The Report on THB for the purpose of labour exploitation, including specific recommendations for trade unions, recruitment agencies and businesses in Serbia, has been published in Serbian. Following a call for applications, a pool of nine local THB experts was

set up. A public information leaflet on THB victims' rights, in particular access to compensation, has been published in Serbian. Preparation of multidisciplinary workshops on THB for the purpose of labour exploitation and a Round Table on victims' access to State compensation is underway.

- EU/CoE – HF "Strengthening the protection of national minorities": Activities took place on areas of education (meeting on the presentation of national minorities in curricula and textbooks) and the use of minority languages in courts and administration (reports under preparation).
- EU/CoE JP "Human Resources Management in Local Self-Government (LSG)": Municipal Support Packages (MSPs) continued, with 1146 participants taking part in some 60 workshops organised in pilot LSGs. Continuous support was provided to the Serbian Council for Professional Development within the process of Accreditation of Training Providers (3 working meetings were supported by the project). Three priority general training programmes were designed according to the Project's Training Needs Analysis. A Methodology and Action plan for the evaluation and quality control of 65 training programs has been developed.
- EU/CoE JP "JUFREX": Prepared two studies for the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media in Serbia (REM): on the independence and functioning of REM and a comparative study of co-regulation, the latter followed by training for REM employees. Two regional events were organised: a Regional Conference for media regulatory authorities on "Hate speech, distribution of foreign channels and election campaigns, European works" and the Regional summer school on CoE media standards for students of journalism and law. The regional publication "Media regulatory authorities and hate speech" has been published. In Montenegro, the Belgrade-based team organised 2 trainings for legal professionals on freedom of expression.
- VC HRTF "HELP in the Western Balkans and Turkey": The course on Child-Friendly Justice, a joint initiative with the DGI Children's Rights Division, was finalised. A number of HELP courses were completed, with an average pass-rate of 70%. HELP courses on Admissibility criteria in applications submitted to the ECtHR, Introduction to the ECHR, Hate crime and hate speech were launched in Montenegro, Serbia and "The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" reaching approximately 90 legal professionals.

Follow-up action

- Negotiations continue with the EUD for an IPA 2017-financed successor project to the on-going Joint EU/CoE Programme Human Resources Management in Local Self-Government (LSG);
- The Horizontal Facility Steering Board met on 13 July. Developments are awaited.
- ROMACTED will be implemented in Serbia shortly. An inception visit has taken place.

Other relevant activities

- A Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) review of the "Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey" was conducted in Serbia from 3 to 7 July;
- Belgrade Pride Week took place from 11 to 17 September, with the participation of HoO at the Pride Forum and Pride Parade;
- 26 September: The European Day of Languages was celebrated under the leadership of EUNIC (the consortium of Cultural Institutes present in Serbia), but with significant CoE BEG input, and with the HoO headlining.

CoE high level visits and other official delegations

- 21 July: A PACE fact-finding mission headed by Samad Seyidov, Azerbaijan (European Conservatives Group) to Belgrade, Bujanovac and Presevo took place;
- 25 September: Snežana Samardžić-Marković, Director General DGII – Democracy paid a visit to Serbia, meeting inter alia with PM Brnabić, Minister of Public Administration and Local Self-government Ružić, First Deputy PM and MFA Dacic and Commissioner for Protection of Equality Brankica Janković.

Bucharest

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 0.5, Project staff – 21, Total – 21.5

The Head of Operations started his assignment on 1 July.

Six projects with a combined budget of EUR 24.4 million were under implementation, of which five were EU/CoE Joint Projects and one was funded by voluntary contributions.

State of implementation of projects

- VC "Cybercrime@Octopus": Contributed to the functioning of the 24/7 Network of Contact Points by holding a meeting of the network at EUROPOL, The Hague, in cooperation with other projects. The meeting focused on the set up and responsibilities of contact points. Accession to the Budapest Convention was promoted through support of a conference in New Delhi, India, and participation in a cybersecurity forum organised by the Organisation of American States in Uruguay.
- EU/CoE - PGG: "Cybercrime@EAP II" (international cooperation): Supported the further development of the 24/7 contact point in Georgia in terms of its functions and responsibilities. State authorities were advised on the importance of this instrument for international cooperation. On the legislative side, the Law of Armenia on International Cooperation in Criminal Matters/Mutual Legal Assistance was assessed and debated in one activity conducted in Armenia. This project also contributed to the meeting of 24/7 contact points in The Hague.
- EU/CoE – PGG: "Cybercrime@EAP III" (public/private cooperation): Focused on reforms of criminal procedure law as a pre-condition for public/private and international cooperation. One workshop was held in Belarus in order to assess the regulations, operational environment of CERT/CSIRT as well as the legal framework. In order to enhance cooperation between law enforcement authorities and telecommunication and Internet providers, the conclusion of a memorandum of understanding was promoted as an important step towards cooperation in Ukraine. Similarly, legislation and safeguards regarding cooperation with service providers were addressed during an event organised in Moldova. The project supported a workshop of the Venice Commission to follow up on the opinion of the Venice Commission on Law 161.
- EU/CoE JP "iPROCEEDS": Under the project, seven criminal justice officials from South-eastern Europe benefited from participation in a high-level Information Security Event organised by Team Cymru (Underground Economy Conference 2017) in Barcelona, Spain. One workshop was organised in Podgorica, Montenegro, to present and debate new trends and typologies of online financial fraud and credit card fraud. Experts from "The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" participated in the replication at the national level of the "coordination and partnership cyber exercise" organised in Skopje. This project also contributed to the meeting of 24/7 contact points in The Hague.
- EU/CoE JP "GLACY+ project on Global Action on Cybercrime Extended": Continued to strengthen judicial training on cybercrime, electronic evidence, international cooperation and data protection through trainings and workshops in Mauritius, Tonga, Senegal, Morocco, Ghana, Nepal, Sri Lanka. In the training activities in Ghana and Tonga, ECTEG materials were promoted. An assessment mission on the current criminal justice capabilities related to cybercrime and electronic evidence was conducted in Sri Lanka. Under the objective related to the cybercrime and cyber security strategies, two advisory missions took place in Mauritius and Tonga to assess CERT capabilities, forensic labs and public-private cooperation. The cybercrime reporting systems and collection and monitoring of criminal justice statistics on

cybercrime and electronic evidence were debated and assessed during a workshop in Tonga. Cooperation among African countries in line with the Budapest Convention was supported through two regional Conferences organised in Mauritius (for 12 countries and support from International Association of Prosecutors (IAP-GPEN) and the Government of Mauritius) and Nigeria (for 15 countries and support of ECOWAS). This project also contributed to the meeting of 24/7 contact points in The Hague.

- EU/CoE JP "CyberSouth": This is a new EU/CoE joint project aimed at strengthening legislation and institutional capacities on cybercrime and electronic evidence in the Southern Neighbourhood region in line with human rights and the rule of safeguards. The project started on 1 July with a duration of three years. During this inception phase, efforts focused on an overview of possible synergies with ongoing projects in the MENA region. First contacts with project countries have been established and scoping missions and assessment visits are being planned for autumn 2017. These visits will serve to promote the benefits of the project and the ownership for processes of change that the project should lead to. The inception phase has been prolonged until end of February 2018 and the launching conference is planned for February 2018.

Follow up action

- Implementation of the project workplans as agreed upon for October to December 2017;
- Completion of annual report on C-PROC for submission to the Committee of Ministers.

Other relevant activities

- The USA made a voluntary contribution of US\$ 500,000 to the project Cybercrime@Octopus.

Chisinau**Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 5, Project staff – 18, Total staff – 23.
On 31 August, the Head of Office ended his tenure.

The Office implemented 6 projects, of which 5 are funded by the EU/jointly funded with the EU and 1 funded by VC/Donor (Denmark).

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

- EU/CoE - PGG "Strengthening institutional frameworks for local governance": Five grants on inter-municipal co-operation (IMC) were implemented in municipalities/joint municipal enterprises in Armenia, Georgia and Moldova. Several IMC scenarios for municipal solid waste management were presented on 21 September in Adjara/Georgia to autonomous and local government representatives. Two capacity-building trainings in ATU Gagauzia/Moldova were organised on 21-22 July to strengthen capacities in legal drafting and consolidate the dialogue between regional and central authorities. Implementation of local initiatives on ethics and transparency in the twelve municipalities from Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine was finalised on 31 August. A meeting was organised in Moldova on 27-28 September to share the experiences of local initiatives on ethical governance implemented by several municipalities with other Moldovan mayors.
- EU/CoE - PGG "Supporting national efforts for prevention and combating discrimination in Moldova": A communication company that will organise the non-discrimination awareness campaign was selected. An international consultant who will deliver a training course on the Revised European Social Charter for staff and members of the Equality Council and staff of the Ombudsperson Office was selected. The fact-finding mission for assessing domestic legislation with regard to social rights on conformity with the Revised European Social Charter is being organised.
- EU/CoE - PGG "Pre-electoral assistance to the Republic of Moldova": The Regional Study on "Women's Political Representation in Eastern European Countries" was published in Romanian and presented to MPs, political parties, NGOs and the media on 26 September during a public event co-organised with the Parliament, the CEC and the Platform for Gender Equality. A grant agreement was concluded with the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (CCET) for strengthening their research capacity. An international expert was contracted for the CCET to develop the first policy paper of the Centre and improve the staff's academic writing and research capacities.
- VC Denmark "Support to Criminal Justice Reforms in the Republic of Moldova": An extensive training of trainers (ToT course) was organised on 'Prevention and Combating Torture, Ill-treatment and Impunity' for the members of the National Preventive Mechanism and the staff of the Ombudsperson's office. As a result of the ToT, a training curriculum was developed and a pool of trainers was established, who will be involved in delivering training on relevant subjects. Furthermore, 22 judges, lawyers and prosecutors successfully completed the second phase of the HELP course on pre-trial investigation which was conducted in cooperation with the NIJ.
- EU/CoE JP "Promoting media freedom and pluralism in the Republic of Moldova": The project trained 20 journalists from the public broadcaster Teleradio-Moldova on how to make TV and radio documentaries about EU policies in a standardised fashion. Also, 5 TV and Radio programmes about EU policies and Moldova's integration process were redesigned in

line with international journalistic standards with the assistance of an international consultant.

- EU/CoE JP "Controlling Corruption through Law Enforcement and Prevention (CLEP)": In July, the project held introductory meetings with beneficiary institutions, during which the work plan was discussed. In addition, a workshop with all anti-corruption stakeholders was organised in September. On 29 September, the CoE and EU launched CLEP officially, in the presence of national institutions and development partners. The project also carried out a scoping mission on the Strategy on Anti-Money Laundering and Combating Financing of Terrorism, which resulted in a roadmap for the Financial Investigation Unit, and contributed to an assessment of the Justice Sector Reform Strategy, which will produce recommendations for the future strategy.

Other relevant activities

- 14 September: The Venice Commission's opinions on Laws 161 and 281 were presented by CoE experts to representatives of the Moldovan authorities;
- 19-22 September: A group of CoE experts conducted an assessment visit for the evaluation of the Justice Sector Reform Strategy 2011-2016, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Justice.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- 9-30 August: A delegation of the Congress, including Vice-President Gunn Marit Helgesen, visited Moldova to follow-up on the situation of Chisinau Mayor Dorin Chirtoaca, who is also Vice-President of the Chamber of Regions and currently under investigation and house arrest, and on the situation of local democracy in Moldova in general.

Kyiv**Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 12, Project staff – 40, Total staff – 52.

In the framework of the CoE Action Plan for Ukraine 2015-2017, the Office implements 19 projects, including 13 projects funded by voluntary contributions and 6 funded under the CoE/EU PGG.

State of implementation of projects/programmes

- EU/CoE – PGG “Support to the implementation of the judicial reform in Ukraine”: The Project supported the delivery of the Ukrainian Days in Strasbourg with the focus on judicial reform and the completion of the competition to the new Supreme Court. This resulted in more awareness of the Strasbourg-based Permanent Representations and the Council of Europe in the progress of Ukrainian judicial reform. Also, the project completed a first round of monitoring of the functioning of the Public Integrity Council and issued a series of recommendations on how to bring the work of this body closer to the standards of the Council of Europe. With the State Judicial Administration of Ukraine the project started a broad discussion on the optimisation of the structure and procedures of this body, which brought to the public attention the issue of the effectiveness of the work of judicial bodies in Ukraine.
- VC Denmark “Continued Support to the Criminal Justice Reform in Ukraine”: On 2-4 August, a needs assessment expert mission was conducted in relation to the newly established prosecutorial self-governance and support bodies: Council of Prosecutors (CP) and the Qualification and Disciplinary Commission of Prosecutors (QDCP). On 15 September, the main findings of CP and QDCP were presented at an expert discussion in order to define further actions. During 15 September-23 October, within the series of 31 one-day cascade trainings in different regions of Ukraine, more than 500 providers of primary legal aid gained knowledge of a number of criminal procedural issues reflected in the Handbook on Primary Legal Aid in Criminal Matters prepared under the Project, in order to ensure the best possible access to primary and secondary free legal aid. Also in September, 200 local and regional public prosecutors improved their knowledge on the application of the ECHR, its Art. 5 and 6, in relation to prosecutorial activity.
- VC UK “Consolidating Ukraine’s Justice Sector Reform”: The Project has successfully engaged two sets of international experts for both components of the Project’s Logical Framework: implementation of the Progress Review Methodology and conducting the National Bar Association needs assessment exercise. The latter was already launched on 11-13 September in Kyiv with the first results to be expected by the end of October.
- AP “Decentralisation and territorial consolidation in Ukraine”: The Project provided its legal support to the National Agency on Civil Service in order to harmonise the draft Concept of reforming the professional training system of civil servants and LSG with provisions of the European Charter of Local Self-Government. Also, 17 grants were provided to local NGOs by the Project aiming to support amalgamation and inter-municipal co-operation processes, as well as improving the quality of municipal services. Moreover, the Project contributed to raising awareness of achievements and challenges of the decentralisation and LSG reform at national and regional levels through providing support to various thematic events, media contests and public discussions, which involved the leadership of the country, and regional and local stakeholders.
- AP “Promoting Local Democracy in Ukraine”: Fifty local politicians from 13 large Ukrainian cities exchanged experiences with European counterparts on metropolitan

governance models and discussed key challenges, in particular the decentralisation of functions and powers between municipal and district councils, at the round table "Good Governance in Metropolitan Areas in Ukraine and in Europe" in May. During the first Forum for local democracy in Ukraine in June, mayors, local councillors and young leaders reaffirmed their commitment to enhance the quality of representative democracy with equal opportunities for women and men and participatory processes to increase trust in their communities. In addition, five Ukrainian local authorities were granted expert and financial support to implement local initiatives aimed at making their governance more transparent and accountable to citizens. Finally, the Congress has strengthened its ties with the Association of Ukrainian Cities (AUC), and mediated the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the AUC and national association of local authorities in Georgia (NALAG) and Moldova (CALM) for joint initiatives aimed at enhancing good governance in the region (within the "Partnership for Good Governance").

- AP "Assistance to the Ukrainian authorities in reforming electoral legislation and in conducting constitutional reforms": On 5-7 September the VC delegation held consultations with representatives of the national authorities, international organisation and civil society on the draft laws related to establishment of the Anti-Corruption Court in Ukraine. Following the request of the Ukrainian authorities, the VC is expected to adopt its opinion on this issue on 6 October at the 112th plenary session in Venice. Also, on 12-13 September, experts of the Venice Commission visited Ukraine with the aim to discuss provisions of the draft law on amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament with MPs, national experts and representatives of civil society.

- AP "Reform of the electoral practice in Ukraine": The Project carried out a survey on electoral violations (causes and motivation, directions of further support to enhance effectiveness of mechanisms of accountability) and prepared a report, which is expected to be publicly presented in October. In the framework of the Project, the NGO "Committee of Voters of Ukraine" received grant support for carrying out an awareness raising campaign in 202 newly amalgamated communities in view of the first local elections on 29 October 2017. Preparatory meetings were held with national stakeholders and international partners on upcoming joint events, i.e. an international conference dedicated to CEC 20th anniversary and the Ukrainian Women Congress.

- AP "Promoting civil participation in democratic decision-making in Ukraine": The project was launched on 1 August with a series of consultations and working meetings with the Kyiv public authorities and NGOs, featuring 45 NGOs representing different population groups in the capital. Participants discussed the concept of Public participation academy and NGO Platform (including an online platform), developed by the international consultant, and identified the needs, challenges and priority policy areas. Furthermore, the Project contributed to promoting and enhancing understanding of the CoE standards in civil participation in decision-making through the round table discussions which were organised by the Kyiv City State Administration and devoted to partnership modalities between public authorities and civil society.

- AP "Strengthening the Human Rights Protection of IDPs in Ukraine": In July the Project key stakeholders, in the framework of a study visit to the CoE headquarters, became acquainted with CoE standards on internal displacement, as well as on the content of the draft online course on internal displacement to be developed within HELP. On 14-18 August, up to 80 IDPs, civil servants, experts and representatives of civil society from 13 regions of Ukraine enhanced their capacities in establishing various cooperation mechanisms to protect IDP rights in the course of a Summer School, held jointly by the Project and the ToT Ministry. On 21 September, the Project, in partnership with the State Fund for Youth Housing Assistance, organised a high level round table on housing issues for IDPs. The joint efforts of different stakeholders resulted in the adoption by the Cabinet of Ministers of amendments to its regulation on government support for the housing of IDPs. Furthermore, amendments to

the Cabinet of Ministers' Regulations №505, 365, and 637 were adopted in September, significantly improving access for IDPs to social support. Moreover, in order to raise awareness about employment matters, the Project supported a job fair for more than 200 IDPs as well as a thematic round table in Kramatorsk and the Donetsk region jointly with the State Employment Service.

- AP "Strengthening freedom of media and establishing a public broadcasting system in Ukraine": Over 50 journalists strengthened their knowledge and skills on digital and physical safety while working in conflict zones in the course of different events organised by the Project during the reporting period. Furthermore, the Project contributed to the promotion of public broadcasting reform in the regions due to 4 visits of members of Supervisory & Management Boards of the Ukrainian Public Broadcaster (UA:PBC) to its 6 regional branches. The need for establishing an Information Commissioner in Ukraine was confirmed at the thematic round table in September. Two hundred and forty-seven law enforcement officers, judiciary, journalists and civil society activists from 4 regions of western Ukraine strengthened their skills in the application of the legislation on protection of the professional activity of journalists at a seminar, organised by the Project. International experts delivered lectures at the XIII International Summer Media School in Kyiv.
- AP "Combating violence against women and children in Ukraine": The project launched its implementation phase in July, the Project objectives and the work plan were approved at the Steering Committee. It also contributed to the development of the Ministry of Social Policy's long-term strategy for communication and awareness-raising measures through provision of a blueprint with recommendations to promote zero tolerance for VaW in Ukraine. In order to enable the increased quality of a child-friendly environment and a multi-agency response to child sexual abuse, a child rights impact assessment ("Barnahus mapping exercise") was launched in August. Furthermore, the Project contributed to strengthening the capacities of national police officers by providing tools to effectively investigate cases on VaW. The Project experts started developing guidelines for setting up and running shelters for women victims of domestic violence in line with the Istanbul Convention in the Ukrainian context. With the aim to promote ratification of the IC and further harmonisation of national VaW-related legislation, the Project contributed to advocacy activities for Ukrainian parliamentarians in September in Budapest.
- CoE/EU PGG "Strengthening the implementation of European HRs standards in Ukraine": The operational capacities of the Ombudsperson Office in the effective application of the NPM were strengthened through integration of the respective assessment methodology in the NPM practical activities. Two trainings on methodology application combined with the follow-up monitoring visits to places of detention were carried out in Kharkiv and Khmelnytsky for 42 monitors of the Ombudsperson Office and civil society. In addition, 57 representatives of education institutions and the state fiscal service in the same regions analysed shortcomings and obtained clear guidance on the application of the relevant legislation to prevent possible violations from the data protection perspective in the future. Furthermore, findings and recommendations of analytical research on gaps in the system of officials responsible for ensuring the protection of rights of persons detained by the police were presented and disseminated among key stakeholders. The research was prepared by the Project in cooperation with Ombudsperson Office, NGO "Expert Centre for Human Rights" and the HRs Directorate of the National Police of Ukraine. Finally, a ToT on HELP programme methodology took place in Odessa to create a pool of certified trainers representing the Ukrainian National ToT Bar Association in order to effectively integrate the HELP distance learning courses in the curriculum of the national training institutions to promote efficient implementation of the ECHR and ECtHR's case-law. In addition, the HELP distance learning course on "Pre-trial Investigation in the Light of the ECHR" was adopted into the Ukrainian legal order and piloted within a group of 18 judges and representatives of the National School of Judges.

- CoE/EU PGG "Further support for penitentiary reform in Ukraine": The Project management and its national experts, together with other international organisations took part in the drafting process of the penitentiary service strategy organised by the Justice Ministry in July. As a result, two major concepts of the prison reform promoted by the Project, such as "resocialisation of prisoners" and "dynamic security" now feature in the Passport of Reform. At the request of the Justice Ministry, CoE experts commented upon the revised Internal Prison Rules. A Catalogue of 12 Social and Life Skills Courses was presented to the Justice Ministry and the Deputy Minister's internal order decreed that the Bila Tserkva In-Service Training Centre develop a syllabus for teaching the Social Skills and methodology of its teaching to upgrade professional rehabilitation skills within the system. By September this syllabus had been developed and included in the programme for deputy governors on social and education work.
- CoE/EU PGG Project "Freedom of Media in Ukraine": the Project has been supporting the reform of communal print media and community media development. In particular, in July the Project has supported the Summer Media School and has conducted the Workshop for editors of communal print media «How to develop media: first steps after reform completion».
- EU/CoE JP "Promoting Human Rights Education and Democratic Citizenship": Project experts held consultations with representatives of the Education Ministry in order to promote the integration of citizenship competences into the content of secondary education standards and the curricula of New Ukrainian School. Furthermore, the Project, in close cooperation with the Ministry, developed a strategic document on EDC/HRE integration into the subject curricula and standards of the New Ukrainian School based on the main principles and values of the CoE Charter on EDC/HRE.

Other relevant activities

- Gender mainstreaming: Gender has been mainstreamed in upcoming activities of different projects. Some projects' activities have included awareness-raising sessions on gender equality and gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming has also been included in the planning of new projects. The Gender Adviser (GA) has actively participated in mainstreaming gender into different sections of the PMM IT and the design of the gender toolkit for cooperation at institutional level. Furthermore, GA provided inputs to the draft new Action Plan for Ukraine. GA also attended different events at national level to speak about gender issues enhancing the visibility of the CoE on gender issues.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- 3-6 July: Gudrun Mosler-Törnström, President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities;
- 30 August, 21-22 September: Regis Brillat, SASG to Ukraine;
- 5-6 September, 12-13 September: Venice Commission.

Pristina

Situation of the Office

Core staff - 6, Project staff - 12, Total - 18.

The Office implements 8 projects, of which 7 are jointly funded with the EU (2 of which are regional joint programmes) and one project is co-funded by a voluntary contribution from Switzerland and the CoE budget. Another project is also implemented in Kosovo*¹ by the Bucharest Office for Cybercrime: the EU/CoE regional joint project "*IPROCEEDS*".

State of implementation of projects

- EU/CoE JP "Project against Economic Crime in Kosovo*" (PECK II): PECK II provided a Legal Opinion on the partial review of the Work Regulation of the Anti-Corruption Agency (KAA) in relation to the prevention of corruption in public procurement. It provided training on prevention and detention of conflict of interest to KAA and other central beneficiary institutions. It supported the Customs and Financial Intelligence Unit with an awareness raising campaign and materials regarding monetary declaration. A number of visibility items were also produced and distributed to KAA and FIU. It also undertook revision of the Administrative Instruction on Politically Exposed Persons.
- EU/CoE – HF "Strengthening the Quality and Efficiency of Justice (KoSEJ)": The CEPEJ Handbook for conducting court users' satisfaction surveys was streamlined for Basic Courts. KoSEJ provided statistical templates for the future system to monitor court performance currently developed by the Case Management Information System (Norwegian-funded project CMIS). Thanks to the Action, Pristina Basic Court has been monitoring the length of proceedings, and Basic Courts have started using CEPEJ indicators in their regular reports, which are essential for the efficiency of justice. CEPEJ satisfaction surveys for court users have been developed and will be conducted in three Basic Courts.
- EU/CoE – HF "Strengthening integrity and combating corruption in higher education": Work on drafting codes of Ethics for academic staff, higher management of universities and students has started. All public universities' representatives (Rectors/vice rectors and presidents of steering boards) acknowledged the need for these documents and offered strong support and cooperation in this work. Representatives from MEST and municipal Education Directorates of the five regions took part in a regional Conference on Bullying and Extremism in Schools in Durrës (Albania) gathering some 150 participants from Albania, Montenegro, Serbia, Croatia and Kosovo*.
- EU/CoE – HF "Fostering a democratic school culture and diversity in schools": The training curriculum drafted by two international consultants was accredited by the Ministry of Education (MEST) and the consultants provided a training-of-trainers to ten local schools' coordinators who will be working with the 20 pilot schools throughout the 2017/18 school year. The conference on "Democratic learning community" was held in September and gathered over 250 participants, MEST representatives, municipal education directorates, and NGOs. Some 200 participants from the pilot schools attended the first two-day training following the conference.
- EU/CoE – HF "Enhancing the protection of human rights of prisoners": Draft rules and protocols on prison healthcare transfer were completed and endorsed by the Kosovo*

¹ *All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo

authorities. A training manual on mental health care of prisoners was developed and 30 prison healthcare staff have been trained. Final drafts of the Administrative Instructions respectively on prison staff recruitment and on disciplinary measures for inmates have been submitted to the authorities. Revision of the inmates rehabilitation programme is ongoing, as well as staff training modules on dynamic security.

- EU/CoE regional JP "Reinforcing Judicial Expertise on Freedom of Expression and the Media in South-East Europe (JUFREX)": JUFREX organised the regional conference for Media Regulatory Authorities in Durres, Albania and launched a publication on hate speech translated into relevant languages. Four representatives of the Kosovo* Independent Media Commission participated in this conference. The Summer School organised in Serbia gathered some 60 students of faculties of law and journalism, ten of which were from Pristina. Grants were signed with the Kosovo Justice Academy (KJA) and the Bar Association and implementation has started. JUFREX finalised the handbook material to be used during the cascade trainings.
- VC Switzerland/AP "Strengthening the National Preventive Mechanism in Kosovo* (SNPM)": The Project was officially launched during a workshop in July with all relevant stakeholders, followed by the first Project Steering Committee meeting. Two awareness-raising workshops on the role and mandate of the National Preventive Mechanism against Torture (NPM) were organized in Prizren, and Peja/Peć, with more than 50 participants from police, penitentiary, mental health and social care institutions and CSOs and NGOs. The needs assessment of NPM has been completed and subsequently internal regulations for NPM were developed. A 32-day training curriculum for NPM is being designed.
- EU/CoE regional JP "Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level" (ROMACTED)": Potential focal points identified in the municipalities.
- EU/CoE regional JP "Targeting crime proceeds on the Internet in South-eastern Europe and Turkey (iPROCEEDS)": iPROCEEDS organised a workshop on online financial fraud and credit card fraud gathered Representatives of the Cybercrime Units, Financial Investigation Units, Financial Intelligence Units, Prosecutor's Office, judiciary, as well as the private sector from Montenegro and Kosovo*.

Follow up action

- The proposed project on "Enhancing Human Rights Policing" was approved by the HF Steering Board for funding on the HF reserve. The Action is expected to start by the end of the year;
- JUFREX: The "fight against hate speech" publication has been disseminated to beneficiaries. The third regional conference for judiciary on Freedom of Expression and Internet is under preparation;
- SNPM: Training of NPM/OIK staff and NPM awareness-raising workshop to be held in Gjilan/Gnjilane;
- Further cooperation activities: consultation with relevant stakeholders and potential donors to support a project fostering rapprochement through education and based on the Overview of Cooperation Activities in Kosovo* is under way. Initial steps for further cooperation activities with the EU through further IPA and HF funding, focusing on the fight against economic crime/corruption, efficiency of justice, education are under way.

Other relevant activities

- The 4th Opinion of the Advisory Committee on the FCNM was transmitted to UNMIK, which forwarded it to the relevant authorities and stakeholders in Pristina. A response is expected by mid-November;

- The Office organised with the ECtHR a media workshop for judges and staff of the Kosovo* Constitutional Court, building on the 2014-16 Swiss funded project, and at the request of the CC;
- The country manager of the CEB Projects Department paid a two-day visit to assess the possibility of developing projects with the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, and UN Habitat;
- European Day of Languages: The Office provided the French Embassy with promotional material;
- The Office took part in local and international events on global human rights issues, media, anti-discrimination, etc., and continues to contribute to legal and technical review meetings and in donor and activities coordination mechanisms to promote CoE's work and avoid duplication of activities.

Sarajevo

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 6, Project staff – 8, Total staff – 14.

The Office directly implements 5 projects: two projects within the EU/CoE Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey, one funded by voluntary contribution of Norway, one funded by voluntary contribution of Liechtenstein and CoE ordinary budget and one funded by UK. In addition, the Office contributes to the implementation of one regional EU/CoE Joint Programme on media.

State of implementation of projects / the Action Plan

- EU/CoE – HF “Enhancing human rights protection for detained and sentenced persons in BiH”: Three key Action’s outputs were published and distributed across the law enforcement sector in BiH and prison system(s) in BiH in July and August: Guidelines for law enforcement officers for dealing with persons deprived of liberty in closed environment; Handbook on prisoner management and enhancing human rights in closed environment; and Protocols for providing health care and enhancing human rights in closed environment. Promotional material prominently featuring HF logo (T-shirts, mugs, table flags, memory sticks and power banks) were printed and distributed across the law enforcement sector in BiH and prison system(s) in BiH in August and September to additionally boost the visibility of the Action. In addition, the training cycle designed around these three outputs (Guidelines, Handbook and Protocols) was launched with initial sessions held on 4-5 July in Banja Luka (Handbook), 10-11 July (Protocols) and 14-15 September (Guidelines). This common training programme establishes grounds for application of a unique set of human rights standards and corresponding operational procedures across the law enforcement and prison system(s) in BiH, thereby closed environment in general. The project also enabled a newly designed and very specific scheme to measure the acquired knowledge.
- EU/CoE – HF “Strengthening the Human Rights Ombudsman to fight discrimination”: Within the framework of the action, a study visit of the staff of the Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Council of Europe and the European Court for Human Rights took place from 11-13 July. The HELP course on hate crime and hate speech for the lawyers of the Ombudsman institution was completed in August. A meeting of the WG for the development of the Anti-Discrimination Manual for Public institutions and NGOs was organised in September.
- VC Norway “Reinforcing the capacity of the judiciary to apply European human rights standards at the national level in BiH”: A summer school on the European Convention on Human Rights took place from 10-14 July in Trebinje. A round table on “Harmonisation of judicial practice in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Importance and short-term strategy” was held from 28-29 August in Foca-Tara. The presentation of the Consultants’ report – establishment of a position of a Jurisconsult (or a similar mechanism), within the judicial structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina, took place on 31 August in Sarajevo. The last Steering Committee Meeting of the project took place on 31 August in Sarajevo, by the end of which the project was closed.
- VC Liechtenstein “Strengthening Democratic Electoral Culture and the Role of Young Political Leaders”: The Third national seminar of the School of Political Studies of the CoE in Bosnia and Herzegovina: “Strengthening accountability, transparency and governance in Bosnia and Herzegovina”, was held in Neum from 8-11 September. The main objective of the seminar, organised in collaboration with OSCE mission to BiH, was to provide this year’s school generation with a quality education on democratic governance and rule of law. The

seminar served as a background to the overarching topic of the importance of raising awareness, especially of elected officials, about the strengthening of the accountability of democratic governance in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as an introduction to the various important issues such as corruption and conflict of interest, which were covered during the different sessions.

- VC UK "Supporting reintegration of violent and extremist prisoners in BiH": A WG meeting was held on drafting a pre-release programme (in September) that offers a set of interventions mainly aimed at providing violent extremist prisoners with alternatives to using violence in addressing their problems. Also, one consultation meeting on the pre-release programme was held (in July) with prison and police professionals. The participants emphasised the importance of coordinated work where timely sharing of information would lead to early detection and prevention of such problems at an early stage. One WG meeting was held on developing RNA protocol (in September) based on the general RNA model and will provide indicators for determining special radicalisation-related risks and the needs to be addressed with different intervention programmes.

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

- JP EU/CoE "Reinforcing Judicial Expertise on Freedom of Expression and the Media in South-East Europe" (JUFREX): There were two BiH specific activities under this regional project: Training of lawyers on Article 10 of the European Convention for Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1-2 July), and Training of judges from the RS on Article 10 (18-19 September).

Other relevant activities

- 3 July: HoO gave an introductory speech at the CoE Confidence Building Measures (CBM) Programme Signature ceremony in Banja Luka. Confidence Building Measures (CBM) is the Programme which aims to support reconciliation between neighbouring municipalities on each side of the entity line. The inter-municipal projects seek to address issues of common concern in areas of culture, education, heritage, and public safety;
- 11 July: DHoO attended the 22nd anniversary of the genocide in Srebrenica.
- 12 July: DHoO gave key note speech at the International Conference on the "Authenticity of National Minorities in BiH" held in Sarajevo;
- 20 July: HoO and DHoO attended Education Reform Coordination Group, organised by the Embassy of USA in BiH. Briefing from the Agency for Preschool, Elementary and Secondary Education on the upcoming PISA testing in BiH was given, followed by the session reserved for a strategy discussion on next steps;
- 1 August: HoO gave an introductory speech at the International cultural manifestation "Festival of Friendship", which took place in Gorazde, and which was sponsored by the Council of Europe, within the Confidence Building Measures (CBM) Programme;
- 30 August: HoO met with all three BiH Ombudspersons (Jasminka Dzumhur, Nives Jukic and Ljubinko Mitrovic) in a courtesy call meeting. Further cooperation was discussed;
- 27 September: HoO met with reisu-l-ulema of the Islamic Community in BiH Husein ef. Kavazovic, in a courtesy call meeting.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- 2-7 July: A delegation of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities carried out its 4th Monitoring visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- 5-6 September: A delegation of the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe organised a fact-finding visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Tbilisi

Situation of the Office

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

The Office implements 13 projects, of which 10 are funded by the EU/jointly funded with the EU and 3 funded by VC/Donors.

- EU/CoE – PGG “The Council of Europe Programme to support Georgia in view of the 2016 (parliamentary), 2017 (local) and 2018 (presidential) elections”: The seminar - “Culture of Choice-Culture of Elections” was organised, during which 50 participants discussed election related topics. The CoE and the Central Election Commission implemented 2 initiatives: “Support to the Future Electoral Development Schools in Georgia,” in which a 10-day course in 23 municipalities, including ethnic minority areas, involving 600 youth representatives was organised, and “Establishing online electoral registration at the Central Election Commission of Georgia,” consisting of the development and launching of the electronic registration system.
- EU/CoE – PGG “Promoting freedom, professionalism and pluralism of the media”: A series of trainings about duties and responsibilities of media outlets and the regulator during pre-election campaigns were held for the journalists of the regional and public service broadcaster. A study related to ensuring access to audio-visual media services for persons with visual and hearing disabilities was prepared for the Georgian National Communications Commission.
- EU/CoE – PGG “Protecting internet freedom through legislation and arrangements for multi-stakeholders dialogue”: The third annual National Internet Governance Forum was held. The meeting included the presentation of the draft code of conduct for internet service operators, and started preparatory discussions in view of the next Internet Governance Forum and EuroDIG 2018.
- EU/CoE – PGG “Application of the European Convention on Human Rights and harmonisation of national legislation and judicial practice in Georgia in line with European Standards in Georgia”: One hundred and seventy-one legal professionals enhanced their knowledge of the case-law of the ECtHR. Trainers were trained and a curriculum on Personal Data Protection was prepared for the Georgian Bar Association. Internal prosecutorial guidelines on Protection of Victims’ rights in criminal proceedings were reviewed by CoE experts. Forty-five staff members and MPs of Legal Issues and Human Rights and Civic Integration Committees of the parliament enhanced their knowledge on parliamentary supervision mechanisms over the execution of judgments of the ECtHR and the resolutions of the PACE.
- EU/CoE – PGG “Combating Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing”: The CoE provided the Georgian law enforcement agencies with a Technical Paper on “Investigating and prosecuting money laundering/financing of terrorism cases in Georgia”. Training on “Anti-money laundering/countering of financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) compliance for commercial banks” was organised for the staff of commercial banks, the National Bank of Georgia, and the Financial Monitoring Service of Georgia.
- AP “Strengthening Capacity of the High School of Justice”: A Training Needs Assessment for the development of the training module on Trafficking in Human Beings was organised. Two pilot trainings were delivered, one on Advanced Court Management for Court Managers, which was attended by 15 court managers, and the other on Management and Leadership for Judges, attended by 12 judges. The 3rd Steering Committee Meeting of the project was held. The Assessment of the Internship Programme for Judicial Candidates of the High School of Justice was presented.

- EU/CoE JP "Human Rights and Healthcare in Prisons and Other Closed Institutions in Georgia II": The Action Plan on healthcare quality control in prisons for 2018-2020 was developed. The Action Plan on crisis intervention in penitentiary system, aimed at handling prisoners with mental disorders, was developed. The second phase of the ToT for the initially selected psychiatric nurses was completed and future trainers were selected. The project continued capacity building activities for the benefit of the Ministry of Corrections.

- AP "Support to the Judicial Reform in Georgia": The project was officially launched on 20 July. It supported the publication of the best practice overview that resulted from the International Conference on Performance Evaluation, Mediation and Juvenile Justice. Expertise has been provided on the legal amendments on judicial appointments based on which the organic law on functioning of judiciary has been revised. Publication of the Legal Acts and Regulations on Lawyers' profession to continue supporting GBA internship programme has been made. A peer exchange was conducted between the High Council of Justice judge-member and the participants of the International Judicial Conference on "Modern Judiciary and Public Trust" in Zagreb, Croatia.

-

Other relevant activities

- HoO continued meetings on the constitutional amendments with the leadership of the Parliament, opposition representatives, and NGOs. He held introductory meetings with the new Secretary of the High Council of Justice, and with the Head of the Tbilisi Office of the Austrian Development Agency. He also had working meetings with the President of the Constitutional Court, The Public Defender of Georgia, the Chair of the Legal Affairs Committee of the Parliament, Ambassador Guenther Baechler (Special Representative of the OSCE CiO for the South Caucasus and co-Chair of the Geneva Discussions format), the EU Ambassador to Georgia and the EUD Head of Operations, the representative of ECMI in Georgia, the Deputy Minister of Justice, the representatives of UNDP and UN Women. He also met the Head of the OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission for the 21 October local elections, and the NDI pre-electoral mission;

- HoO co-chaired, alongside the Deputy Minister of Justice, the Thematic Coordination Group Meeting on Rule of Law and Justice, and delivered a speech at the 3rd Internet Governance Forum of Georgia.

Tirana

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 6, Project staff –14, Total staff - 20.

The Office implements eleven projects, out of which ten are co-funded by the EU and one by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC). With the exception of two regional projects, the projects implemented by the Office are administratively fully decentralised.

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

- VC Switzerland “Strengthening the local government structures in Albania”: A third and final phase of the project commenced on 1 August for 24 months. The project builds on the achievements of the second phase (2012-2017) and focuses on the modernisation of human resource management (HRM) procedures and practices, including capitalisation on inter-municipal co-operation (IMC) and co-operation of local elected representatives.
- EU/CoE JP “Enhancing the effectiveness of the Albanian system of human rights protection and anti-discrimination”: A comprehensive nation-wide survey regarding the level of public awareness on discrimination provided, for the first time, the decision makers and equality bodies with important quantitative and qualitative data on the subject matter. In addition, the existing non-judicial domestic remedy was strengthened by means of improving the CPD² electronic database and case-management system.
- EU/CoE – HF “Strengthening the Efficiency of Justice (SEJ II) in Albania”: Ten Pilot Courts commenced the proposed action plans according to the respective reports with the assistance and coaching of the project. Assessment reports on Media and Justice and on the Evaluation of Judges have been completed by the local consultants and 3 court presidents were trained in Norway on judicial time management and judicial statistics.
- EU/CoE – HF “Economic Crime in Albania”: About 30 supervisors from relevant domestic institutions were capacitated on the risk-based approach to supervision aligned with the ML/FT³ risks identified in the National Risk Assessment.
- EU/CoE – HF “Fighting Bullying and extremism in the Education System in Albania”: Over 210 teachers from 21 pilot schools were capacitated on the concepts, forms and consequences of bullying and extremism based on the Resource Pack and School Support Programme developed by the CoE’s international and national experts. They will further contribute as multipliers and agents of change in addressing bullying and extremism in their respective schools.
- EU/CoE – HF “Enhancing the Protection of Human Rights of Prisoners in Albania”: The capacities of 37 medical staff from 15 penitentiary institutions in Albania were enhanced on medical ethics and medical screening based on CoE and the Committee for Prevention of Torture Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) standards.
- EU/CoE – HF “Strengthening the Protection of National Minorities in Albania”: The Legal Affairs Committee of the Assembly approved in principle the draft framework law on minorities (prepared with CoE expertise), which will undergo further consultation with relevant stakeholders ahead of its adoption by the end of October 2017.

² Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination

³ Money Laundering/Financing of Terrorism

Follow up action

- A follow up report on the Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) evaluation, concerning Horizontal Facility (HF) Actions in Albania, provides specific recommendations which have to be addressed in the following weeks/months, in coordination with HQ;
- Following the HF Steering Board's allocation of 100,000 EUR to top up the ongoing Action on Anti-discrimination/SOGI, the plan of activities and the related budget have to be adjusted in coordination with domestic stakeholders and the EUD. A potential cost extension phase could be envisaged to meet the expected results;
- Follow-up discussions with the Swedish and UK Embassies in Tirana in view of materialising the proposed actions in the sector of human rights and fight against corruption, economic crime and organised crime;
- Follow-up discussions with the Albanian Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEFA) with regards to the new cooperation assistance framework. Preparation, in October 2017, of the final report of the Programmatic Cooperation Document (PCD) 2015-2017 and organisation, in the first week of November 2017, of the final steering committee meeting of the PCD in coordination with MEFA and HQs.

Yerevan**Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 6, Project staff –14, Total staff - 20.

The Office implements 7 projects, of which 3 projects are funded by the EU under the Partnership for Good Governance (PGG), 1 is funded partially by the UK and partially by the EU (PGG), and three are funded by Voluntary Contributions from Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. In addition, the Office is responsible for the financial management of two PGG regional projects.

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

- EU/CoE – PGG “Supporting the criminal justice reform and combating ill-treatment and impunity in Armenia”: In July, a 3-day ToT aimed at strengthening the capacity of the Justice Academy and improving the knowledge and skills of its trainers on HELP⁴ human rights training methodology was organised. In July - September, an evaluation of the human rights training courses in the Justice Academy confirmed a high participation rate, and the wide use of the training materials and handbooks by the trainees. In July, the working group on the draft Criminal Procedure Code convened for 5 days in order to bring it in line with the CoE expert’s opinion. In September, the CoE opinion on the draft Criminal Code was provided to the Minister of Justice along with the Expertise Report on the need to adapt the draft Criminal Code to the Medicrime Convention.
- EU/CoE – PGG “Strengthening integrity and combating corruption in higher education in Armenia”: Five pilot higher education institutions (HEIs) received expert guidance for developing a set of policies, including codes of ethics and for strengthening institutional frameworks for ensuring integrity and combating corruption. An online reporting platform enhancing transparency and accountability in governance of HEIs was developed, introduced to all state HEIs and subsequently representatives from 16 universities, the national accreditation body, the students association and civil society organisations were trained on the implementation of this tool. Four grantee organisations continue to implement projects and conduct research aimed at raising awareness for fighting corruption in HEIs.
- EU/CoE – PGG “Strengthening Health Care and Human Rights Protection in Prisons in Armenia”: The material conditions of prisons were upgraded with the installation, accompanied by a demonstration in eight prisons, of part of the medical equipment purchased within the framework of the contract for the provision of medical equipment to a total of eleven prisons in Armenia. With the agreement of all parties (supplier, Ministry of Justice and Council of Europe) the remaining equipment has been stored in the supplier’s warehouse and will be delivered to the Ministry of Justice at a later stage, pending the renovation of the prison health care units, but no later than two months after the expiry of the contract (15 September 2017).
- EU/CoE – PGG / VC UK “Support to the implementation of the judicial reform in Armenia (within PGG framework)”: A needs assessment for the judiciary reform, including access to justice, was completed and its results were translated into the project work plan. In July, the Court Users Satisfaction Survey was presented to the policy makers of Armenia and the donor community, and its findings were subsequently taken into consideration in the Government’s Strategic Programme for legal and judicial reform 2018-2022. The Association of Arbitrators of Armenia was established. The Project organised an exchange of best

⁴ European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) which is the Council of Europe’s platform gathering all capacity development resources for legal professionals.

practices on management rules and procedures between the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR) and the Self-governing Organisation of Mediators of Armenia and the results were further used by the latter for the development of its strategic and communication plan. Model ethics rules for mediators were also developed. The project working group finalised the revision of the draft Judicial Code and started drafting and revising the related laws deriving from the amended Judicial Code.

- VC Switzerland "Institutional Support to Communities Association of Armenia (CAA)": The CAA Republican Council (RC) convened in September to adopt a number of documents, developed with the support of the project, and positions on legal amendments. The CAA has taken a decision on forming 6 committees and restructuring its Secretariat, and adopted its Advocacy Strategy and a Call to Government to start a dialogue on developing an action plan for decentralisation. In August, the CAA has completed the implementation of a grant agreement provided by the project, which was used for the CAA's auditing, for developing a new logo and for preparing content for its newly developed website.

- VC UK "Strengthening the application of European human rights standards in the armed forces in Armenia": In July, a needs assessment report on prevention and an investigation of human rights violations in the army was conducted. With project support, a chapter on human rights will be integrated into the textbook on initial military preparation for schoolchildren of 11th-12th grades. In August, a compilation of the key Council of Europe instruments on Human Rights in the Armed Forces was published. In September, 24 representatives of the Ministry of Defence and Human Rights Defender's Office, including 6 women, were trained on the fundamentals of Human Rights in the Armed Forces. In September, the 3 needs assessment reports on the assessment of military legislation, on the assessment of human rights training in Armenia, and on prevention and effective investigation of human rights violations in the AF were completed.

- VC Sweden "Support to Consolidating Local Democracy in Armenia (follow up)": July marked the start of a follow-up project on supporting the consolidation of local democracy, aimed at improving the quality of local self-government through further decentralisation and the increased capacity of Armenian communities in line with CoE standards and tools. The project is in the process of developing a pool of local and international experts to support the Ministry of Territorial Administration (MTAD) in undertaking appropriate research, in developing and/or making necessary revisions and amendments to draft legislation, and in preparing policy papers in the field of local self-government.

Other relevant activities

- 4 July: DHoO attended the regional event on Reporting on Piloting of the Local Finance Benchmarking in Armenia (II phase);
- 12 July: HoO met with the Vasilis Maragos - Head of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus and Eastern Partnership Unit, European Commission
- 18 July : HoO met with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Garen Nazaryan;
- 21 September: HoO attended the ceremonies dedicated to the 26th anniversary of the independence of Armenia;
- 28 September: DHoO took part in the Freedom of Information Annual Award Ceremony organised by the Freedom of Information Center Armenia and handed out special awards for the most active journalist/media outlet;
- 29 September: DHoO co-chaired the Donor Coordination Meeting on Democratic Governance, together with the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Armenia and the Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP Armenia.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- 10-11 July: Venice Commission mission with a view to preparing the draft Opinion on the Draft Judicial Code of the Republic of Armenia.

Rabat**Situation of the office**

Core staff – 2, Project staff – 5, Total staff – 7.

The Office co-ordinates the implementation of the “Neighbourhood Partnership with Morocco 2015-2017” action plan and the EU/CoE joint programmes “Towards Strengthened Democratic Governance in the Southern Mediterranean” (South Programme 2), and “Improving the functioning of justice in Morocco using the tools of the CEPEJ” 2016-2017 along with a voluntary contribution from Norway.

State of implementation of the programmes

- Neighbourhood Partnership with Morocco 2015-2017: The bilateral programme steering committee comprising all the Moroccan and Council of Europe partners met at the headquarters of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation on 27 September. This was an opportunity to take stock of the partnership and present its highlights and the two sides’ expectations concerning the next partnership. The partnership for 2015-2017 was satisfactory overall.
- EU/CoE joint programme, “Improving the functioning of justice in Morocco using the tools of the CEPEJ”: A visit to assess the performance of the Court of Cassation took place on 6 and 7 July 2017. The delegation from the CEPEJ secretariat accompanied by seven experts, appointed for the purpose, held various meetings over two days with the court’s different departments. An initial draft of the evaluation report was to be submitted to the court in October. A visit by the team to support the revision of the organisation chart of the Ministry of Justice in Rabat took place on 11 and 12 July. Various European models were presented by the CEPEJ experts with a view to the drawing up by the ministry of a new decree laying down the new organisation chart of the ministry following the establishment of the High Council of the Judiciary (CSPJ). A Moroccan delegation attended the 12th plenary meeting of the CEPEJ Network of Pilot Courts in Kristiansand in Norway on 6 September. Lastly, a steering committee meeting involving the members of the CEPEJ secretariat, the CEPEJ’s Rabat team and the Ministry of Justice was held on 26 September in the presence of the EU delegation to take stock of the various activities carried out under the partnership and discuss its prospects.
- EU/CoE joint programme, “Towards Strengthened Democratic Governance in the Southern Mediterranean” (Prevention of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment): In July, CoE experts and members of the National Council for Human Rights (CNDH) took part in the third training module with a view to setting up a national preventive mechanism (NPM) in Morocco. This module included practical visits to places of deprivation of liberty.
- EU/CoE joint programme, “Towards Strengthened Democratic Governance in the Southern Mediterranean”: An advisory workshop on rationalisation of mutual assistance procedures concerning cybercrime and electronic evidence was held at the Higher Institute for the Judiciary from 25 to 27 September.
- EU/CoE joint programme, “Towards Strengthened Democratic Governance in the Southern Mediterranean”: In co-operation with the Ministry for Reform of the Administration and the Public Service of Morocco, the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) held a regional seminar for senior officials on the theme of “Preventing corruption and promoting integrity in the public service: shared experiences” at the Skhirat Congress Centre from 25 to 28 September.
- Combating violence against children: As part of the E-Salama programme for the protection of children on the Internet, a training course was held for members of the task

force to build their skills and also to work on measures to be taken in 2017, in particular concerning methodology and the resources for each measure. The training was also used to prepare for the study visit to be held from 23 to 27 October 2017. The E-Salama programme will be officially launched in Rabat on 13 October 2017.

- Combating violence against women: In co-operation with the Minister for the Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development, the Council of Europe Office in Rabat held a training workshop on media reporting of violence against women on 4 and 5 July, with the participation of the National Monitoring Centre on the Image of Women in the Media and the National Monitoring Centre on Violence against Women. The aims of the workshop for Moroccan journalists were to analyse the problems relating to media reporting of violence against women, raise awareness in the media of the issue of violence against women, study the issues relating to compatibility between freedom of expression and media reporting on violence against women, consider the role of the media and share best practices on effective strategies for combating violence against women.
- Freedom of expression and media freedom: Between July and September, meetings were held with the partners in the Ministry of Communication, the High Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HACA), UNESCO and CoE experts with a view to preparing the activities to be conducted after the summer break. In July, following the visit by Verena Taylor, Director, Office of the Directorate General of Programmes, meetings were held with the Chair of the HACA, Amina Lemrini, and the Secretary General of the Ministry of Culture and Communication, Mohamed Ghazali. The aim of these meetings was to take stock of the co-operation between our partners and the CoE and also to discuss co-operation priorities as from 2018. In September, representatives of the Ministry of Culture and Communication and the High Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HACA) attended the meetings of the MSI-NET and MSI-MED.

Tunis

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 2, Project staff – 5, Total – 7.

The Office implements country-related activities of 4 regional programmes, of which 1 is funded by the EU for the period 2015-2017 (Towards a strengthened democratic reform in the Southern Mediterranean ("South Programme II")), and 3 are funded by Norway (Schools of political studies; Combating violence against women; Promotion of freedom of expression, independence of the media and public access to information; local democracy).

State of implementation of programmes

- South Programme II "Justice": The second set of "2017 CEPEJ trainings" took place in Monastir on 4 and 5 July. They were organised by the CEPEJ, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice. The 3 capacity-building workshops were primarily intended for judges of the pilot courts of Gabes, Kairouan, Nabeul, Sidi Bouzid, Tunis and Zaghouan. On 11 July, the CEPEJ participated in an exchange workshop on pilot projects, organised by the Ministry of Justice, the UNDP and OHCHR. The objective of the workshop was to present various pilot projects currently implemented in Tunisia, with a view to defining the ones that could be implemented in the Medenine Governorate, under a new programme funded by the UNDP and OHCHR.
- South Programme II "Fight against corruption": A needs assessment mission and workshop on the planning of anti-corruption priorities in Tunisia took place in Tunis in early July. The purpose of the mission was to identify priority areas for possible future cooperation which will ensure the sustainability of actions pursued so far. The planning and sequencing of initiatives to implement the recommendations made in the assessment of Tunisia's anti-corruption legislative and institutional framework was the main objective of the workshop held on 11 July with all key stakeholders.
- South Programme II Human Rights: A 2-day training on the planning and methodology of visits to psychiatric hospitals was organised by the Council of Europe in early September for members of the National Prevention Mechanism in Tunisia (INPT). The training was part of the cooperation established with the INPT since the inception of its activities in 2016.
- VC Norway "Combating violence against women and girls": A training workshop was organised by the Council of Europe with the Tunisian League for Human Rights on 19-20 September in Sousse on the subject of combating violence against women. The workshop took place shortly after the adoption by the Tunisian Parliament of the long-awaited Law on the Elimination of Violence against Women, for which the Council of Europe has provided significant support to the Ministry of Women, Family and Children Affairs since 2013. Following similar training initiatives with government civil servants, the purpose of this activity was to train civil society organisations and media on the topic. The second day focused on the role of the media in combating violence against women and the image of women in the audiovisual sector.
- VC Norway "Media and Freedom of expression": The Council of Europe organised on 19 September, in partnership with the Tunisian National Union of Journalists (SNJT), a training course on the "media treatment of terrorism". This in-depth session, which was proposed to regional journalists, followed 2 awareness-raising and training sessions organised in May and November 2016. The training is part of the initiatives taken by the CoE in Tunisia to increase awareness among journalists of deontology in their news coverage, particularly relating to issues impacting human rights.
- VC Norway "Local democracy": The Council of Europe, the Ministry for Women, the Family and Children and the Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment organised an

international conference in Tunis on 26-27 September on the subject of "Women and local democracy". The conference, inaugurated by the Minister for Women, Family and Children, the Minister of Local Affairs and Environment, and the President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, brought together close to three hundred participants, including government officials from public institutions, local communities, parliamentarians, international experts, representatives of diplomatic missions and international organisations, the media, civil society activists and academia. As the first municipal elections are due to take place in March 2018 and as the Code of local authorities is currently under discussion in the Parliament, the conference was a timely opportunity to gather the main stakeholders around a key issue for the current decentralisation process.

Follow-up action

- 25 September: The Minister of foreign affairs issued letters requesting the invitation of Tunisia to the three Council of Europe's conventions (Medicrime, Budapest and fight against human trafficking) as well as to the Pompidou Group;
- Regarding the GRECO accession process, discussions were held with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and with the National Anti-Corruption Unit (INLUCC) to clarify the future steps in the accession request.

Other Relevant activities

- The Council of Europe Office participated in donor coordination meetings in the fields of elections and freedom of expression, and local elections;
- Following the EU decision to grant funding to the Council of Europe as part of its future programmes in the field of justice (PARJ III) and in the new support programme to civil society and independent institutions (PASC II), the HoO participated in two stakeholders workshops and presented the Council of Europe's past interventions in Tunisia as well as the intended priorities in the new programmes.

Council of Europe high-level visits and other official delegations

- September: The President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, Gudrun Mosler Törnström, the Vice-President, Xavier Cadoret, and the Director of the Congress, Jean-Philippe Bozouls paid an official visit to Tunis, in the framework of the Conference on Women and local democracy and of a seminar with Members of Parliament on the Code of Local Authorities. The visit provided the opportunity for meetings with the State Secretary of Foreign Affairs and several high-level personalities.