

Neighbourhood Partnership with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan 2015-2017

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Cover and layout: Documents and publications
production Department (SPDP),
Council of Europe

Photos: Council of Europe

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Printed at the Council of Europe

Introduction

Council of Europe policy towards neighbouring regions

At its 121st Session on 11 May 2011 in Istanbul, the Committee of Ministers endorsed the proposals made by the Secretary General regarding a Council of Europe (CoE) policy towards its immediate neighbourhood aimed at promoting dialogue and co-operation with the countries and regions in the vicinity of Europe which express the will to co-operate with the CoE on the basis of the common values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The Committee of Ministers further invited the Secretary General to draw up Action Plans for the implementation of this policy.

The CoE policy towards neighbouring regions, which is demand-driven and country-specific, is designed for partners in North Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia, and pursues the following three objectives:

- ▶ to facilitate democratic political transition in the countries concerned;
- ▶ to help promote good governance through the protection of human rights and the rule of law; and
- ▶ to reinforce and enlarge CoE regional action in combating transborder and global threats.

The policy has been implemented in close partnership with the European Union (EU), on the basis of the modalities endorsed by the CoE Committee of Ministers, in particular its two key components:

- ▶ the *Neighbourhood Co-operation Dialogue*, carried out at political level; and
- ▶ the *Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities (NCP)*, setting out specific co-operation activities to be carried out in the fields of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

The document “Neighbourhood Partnership with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan 2015-2017” was endorsed by the Committee of Ministers of the CoE on 4 February 2015. The Neighbourhood Partnership document is therefore divided into two parts:

PART I – Enhanced Political Dialogue

PART II – Co-operation.

The first part on Enhanced Political Dialogue offers wide opportunities for dialogue between the CoE and the Jordanian authorities, ranging from High-level strategic dialogue with the Secretary General of the CoE and the Committee of Ministers, on topics on the bilateral agenda and political issues of common

interest to more technical consultations relevant to the implementation of the Neighbourhood Partnership.

The second part focuses specifically on co-operation priorities identified during discussions between the CoE and the Jordanian national authorities concerned.

Co-operation objectives

The main objective of the co-operation between Jordan and the CoE, in line with the CoE’s policy towards its immediate neighbourhood, is to assist Jordan in the process of democratic changes underway by helping the country to tackle challenges related to human rights, the rule of law and democracy and in particular:

- ▶ to consolidate the achievements of the co-operation implemented since 2012 through the “Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan 2012-2014” and to initiate new areas of co-operation in line with national reform priorities, based on the demand-driven approach, in fields of expertise of the CoE;
- ▶ to facilitate the creation of a common legal space between Europe and Jordan, by encouraging Jordan to request accession to key CoE conventions open to non member States in conformity with the procedures described in the relevant conventions and by promoting the legal harmonisation of Jordan’s legislation with European and other international standards;
- ▶ to provide support to the development and to the effective implementation of new legislation in accordance with European and other international standards, according to needs;
- ▶ to provide support to the setting-up and to the effective functioning of human rights institutions and new governance structures;
- ▶ to consolidate Jordan’s presence in CoE’s instances (Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE (PACE)) and to encourage its participation in other CoE structures as relevant.

The present framework of co-operation is a flexible, dynamic strategic tool setting out priorities for co-operation between Jordan and the CoE for the period 2015-2017. The main areas of co-operation presented have been identified on the basis of high-level consultations as well as of detailed technical consultations between the Jordanian authorities concerned and the CoE.

Consultations have also been carried out with other international organisations- the European Union (EU) in particular, as the main partner of the CoE's action in Jordan - and with bilateral actors, so as to ensure a coordinated approach. Hence, the priority areas of co operation aim to foster synergies between all the relevant actors, in order to avoid duplication.

The implementation of activities foreseen in the Neighbourhood Partnership document has already started, in particular in the framework of the EU-CoE joint programme "Towards strengthened democratic governance in the Southern Mediterranean" (South Programme II, 2015-2017) and the EU-CoE joint programme "Support to the Jordanian authorities in improving the quality and efficiency of the Jordanian justice system".

The Council of Europe and Jordan

The relationship between Jordan and the CoE has been enhanced in the context of the implementation

of the Neighbourhood Policy established by the CoE in 2011, making Jordan a privileged partner in the region.

Further to the fruitful Neighbourhood Co-operation Dialogue between CoE and Jordanian authorities and the successful implementation of the Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities for Jordan in 2012-2014, the Committee of Ministers considered it necessary to give a new momentum to the relationship with this country, which shares with the CoE the values of human rights, rule of law and democracy, through a Neighbourhood Partnership combining and strengthening the two pillars of the policy – political dialogue and co-operation – along the lines fixed in Istanbul in 2011. The Neighbourhood Partnership is therefore offering a framework for an "Enhanced Political Dialogue" the intensity of which could reflect the quality of the co-operation between Jordan and the CoE.

Jordan, which has always expressed an interest in consolidating dialogue and co-operation with the CoE institutions, welcomed the Committee of Ministers' initiative to open up promising prospects for the enrichment of this mutually-beneficial bilateral partnership.



Co-operation priorities

Human rights

Fight against violence against women

Jordan participated in the activities to present CoE conventions (Regional seminar on accession procedures to CoE conventions, Strasbourg, 1 July 2013 and Seminar on CoE conventions, Amman, 3 April 2014), including the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention).

Overall objective	To combat violence against women by adapting the legislative framework and by strengthening awareness-raising on European standards, as well as by strengthening prevention
Expected results for 2015-2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relevant national authorities of Jordan, members of parliament and civil society have a good understanding of European standards to combat and prevent violence against women and domestic violence; 2. Legal framework regarding violence against women is reviewed in accordance with European and other international standards in this field.
Partners	<i>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriate Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Jordanian National Commission for Women, Parliament, civil society.</i>

Promotion of children rights and fight against violence against children

The CoE conventions in this field were presented in detail during the seminars on conventions. Jordan is particularly interested in the protection of children rights, as a Contracting Party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Overall objective	To strengthen children rights and their protection against all forms of violence by adapting the legislative framework and by strengthening awareness-raising on European standards
Expected results for 2015-2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relevant national authorities of Jordan, members of parliament and civil society have a good understanding of European standards in the field of children rights and in particular on the protection of children from violence in particular sexual violence; 2. The legal framework regarding children's rights and in particular the protection of children against violence – including sexual violence is reviewed and brought into line with European standards; 3. An inter-ministerial working group to work out a needs assessment and to prepare an action plan for a strategic and integrated approach regarding children rights and children protection against violence – including sexual violence is set-up with the support of the CoE.
Partners	<i>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriate Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Parliament, civil society, Higher Council for Youth, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Planning and International Co operation.</i>

Fight against trafficking in human beings

The CoE convention in this field was presented in detail during seminars on conventions.

In recent years, Jordan has put in place a legislative and institutional framework, by adopting several measures and laws: a law on Anti-Human Trafficking, an Anti-Human Trafficking National Committee chaired by the Ministry of Justice and the National Strategy to combat trafficking in human beings. The first report by the Anti Human Trafficking National Committee 2009-2013 was published in order to raise awareness of all the relevant stakeholders and citizens on this issue. In view of its expertise, the CoE could assist Jordan in its efforts to combat this global phenomenon strengthening the capacities of the instances involved in combating trafficking and their staff's ability to identify and take care of victims.

Overall objective	To strengthen national capacities to fight against trafficking in human beings in line with European standards
Expected results for 2015-2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Heighten awareness among professionals (both institutional and those in civil society) involved in the fight against human trafficking, especially by means of a seminar featuring a presentation of the CoE's instruments in this field;2. The capacities of the different institutional and other operators are reinforced by means of training;3. A work programme is drawn up with the Jordanian authorities on the basis of a needs assessment of the country's situation in relation to trafficking in human beings.
Partners	<i>Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior – Public Security Directorate, Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Social Development, judges, prosecutors, lawyers, consular officials, civil society.</i>

Rule of law

Independence and efficiency of justice



Since the beginning of the co-operation, the CEPEJ has prepared an assessment of the functioning of the Jordanian judicial system, based on a questionnaire completed by the Jordanian Ministry of Justice, several experts visits and a meeting which enabled the finalisation of the first evaluation of the Jordanian judicial system, containing specific recommendations of concrete co-operation by the CEPEJ. This report was welcomed by the judicial authorities and the three pilot courts identified as part of this project (Amman First Instance Court, Madaba First Instance Court, Sahab Magistrate Court). Representative of these courts, as well as of the Ministry of Justice participate on a regular basis in CEPEJ meetings.

Overall objective	To strengthen the independence, efficiency and quality of the judicial system, by improving court performance and by supporting judicial reforms and the review of the legal framework, based on European standards
Expected results for 2015-2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The efficiency of the judiciary is improved through the implementation of CEPEJ recommendations on court performance and the development within all courts of a system of statistical data as a management tool for the internal use of the courts; 2. Timeframes of proceedings in pilot courts is improved in particular through a larger use of the CEPEJ tools; 3. The awareness is raised among court staff on court management, namely by the development of a court management culture at court level, in particular through training of judges, prosecutors and court staff, based on CEPEJ Saturn Centre methodology and tools; 4. The particularities and difficulties of the notification and enforcement systems in Jordan are analysed through an overall evaluation of the notification and the enforcement systems; 5. Jordan participates on a regular basis in CEPEJ and other related meetings (SATURN, etc.) and requests to become an observer with CEPEJ.
Partners	<i>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriate Affairs, Ministry of Justice, representatives of courts and justice professionals, civil society.</i>



Support the constitutional reform, the drafting of new legislation and the setting-up and effective functioning of new governance instances

The Venice Commission supported the establishment of the Constitutional Court even before its effective creation, by co-organising a Round Table on the introduction of a Constitutional Court with the Parliament of Jordan. This first event was at the origin of a constructive dialogue that resulted in specific component on constitutional justice in the project "Support to the Jordanian authorities in improving the quality and efficiency of the Jordanian justice system" which started in July 2013. The Venice Commission's support has proven to be essential to ensure the functioning of this governance instance in accordance with European and other international standards. It can be highlighted that thanks to the support of the Venice Commission, the Constitutional Court joined the World Conference on Constitutional Justice on 10 October 2013 and will participate at its 3rd Congress in autumn 2014 in Seoul. The Constitutional Court also belongs to the network established between constitutional courts and the Venice Commission: Joint Council on Constitutional Justice.

Beyond the support which has been provided to the Constitutional Court, and which should be pursued, the Venice Commission's support has been requested by the Independent Electoral Commission regarding the reform of electoral legislation and practice, and the Venice Commission could also potentially assist Jordan in other areas under its expertise, in particular the reform of the human rights protection mechanisms (notably, through co-operation with the Ombudsman institution of Jordan).



Overall objective	To strengthen Venice Commission's co-operation with the Constitutional Court and to develop Venice Commission's co-operation with Jordan in other areas (electoral legislation, Ombudsman institution)
Expected results for 2015-2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Venice Commission provides support in drafting of relevant legislation, creation of new democratic governance instances, etc. (in co-operation with other CoE instances as appropriate); 2. The Venice Commission provides support in the field of electoral legislation and practice, in particular regarding capacity-building to electoral commissions at different levels; 3. Jordan participates actively in the Venice Commission's networks (i.e. Joint Council on Constitutional Justice); 4. Co-operation between the Venice Commission and the ombudsman institution is developed; 5. Assistance in creating a regional conference of electoral management bodies.
Partners	<i>Constitutional Court, Independent Electoral Commission, Ombudsman, Ministry of Justice, Parliament.</i>

Creation of a common legal space

Jordan took part in the Seminar on procedures to accede to CoE conventions open to non member States. Following the interest shown by Jordan subsequently on a number of CoE conventions, a Seminar on conventions to combat corruption, organised crime and terrorism, as well as on conventions to combat violence against women and against children took place. It should be noted that legal instruments in these fields of work are included in the EU-Jordan ENP Action Plan, therefore clearly falling also within the priorities identified between the EU and Jordan. Other CoE conventions, such as the Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention) or the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT Convention) could be of interest for Jordan in the coming years in the light of the reform agenda. Likewise, the CoE Convention on the Counterfeiting of Medical Products and Similar Crimes Involving Threats to Public Health could be of interest to the Jordanian authorities.

Overall objective	To promote Jordan's progressive harmonisation of legislation with European standards and to facilitate Jordan's accession to CoE conventions open to non-member States
Expected results for 2015-2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relevant national authorities of Jordan, members of parliament and civil society have a good understanding of European and other international standards in key areas related to Jordan's reform agenda, which could lead to Jordan's requests to accede to CoE conventions; 2. A number of Jordan's new laws are drafted following advice provided by the CoE in line with European and other international standards; 3. Jordan requests to be invited to accede to CoE conventions in key areas.
Partners	<i>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriate Affairs, Ministry of Justice, other line Ministries, Parliament, civil society.</i>

Fight against corruption and money laundering



A CoE scoping mission took place in Amman in October 2014 to assess needs concerning anti-corruption and good governance and to devise possible areas for intervention for technical assistance and a work plan for the years to come.

Overall objective	To promote good governance and prevention of corruption and economic crime (and money laundering) in line with European and other international standards
Expected results for 2015-2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The capacities for a better international and regional (MENA) co operation of concerning anti-corruption and money laundering are increased; 2. Institutional Building Capacities and Legislation Framework reforms are in line with European standards; 3. The capacities of Judiciary and Law Enforcement through specialised training on economic crime related offences are strengthened; 4. Information dissemination and the role of civil society (youth and women) in the prevention and fight against corruption are enhanced.
Partners	<i>Anti-Corruption Commission and other anti-corruption and governance authorities, Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Terrorism Financing Unit (AMLU) Royal Committee for Enhancing National Integrity, Ministry of Justice, Higher Judicial Council, Audit Bureau, Parliament, regional partners – Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network (ACINET).</i>

Fight against cybercrime

The CoE Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest convention) was presented in detail during seminars on conventions held. In view of its expertise, the CoE is ready to assist Jordan in its efforts to combat this global phenomenon by assessing the current national legal framework in order to bring national legislation closer into line with standards of the Convention on Cybercrime.

Overall objective	To strengthen national capacities to prevent and fight against cybercrime by reconsidering the existing legislative framework and by strengthening awareness raising on international standards
Expected results for 2015-2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessments of the relevant legal framework will be carried out in order to bring national legislation closer into line with standards of the Convention on Cybercrime; 2. Jordan makes progress in the fight against cybercrime through international police and legal co-operation; 3. Relevant national authorities of Jordan, members of parliament and civil society have a good understanding of standards of the Convention on Cybercrime, which could lead to Jordan's requests to accede to this CoE convention.
Partners	<i>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriate Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Information and Communications Technology, Judicial Institute of Jordan, Parliament, civil society.</i>

Democracy

Interparliamentary co-operation

Jordanian authorities have been attending PACE sessions in Strasbourg. The granting of the Pfd Status to the Parliament by PACE is expected in the first half of 2015.

In the framework of the request for Partnership for Democracy (PfD) status, the dialogue with Jordanian authorities and in particular with the Jordanian Parliament has been further developed over the last year. Jordan has also participated on a regular basis in regional activities organised by the CoE as part of its co operation with the neighbourhood, PACE events aiming at promoting a better understanding of the PfD Status among countries of the region.

Overall objective	To enhance co-operation between the Parliament of Jordan and the PACE
Expected results for 2015-2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Co-operation between the Jordanian Parliament and the PACE is strengthened; representatives of the Jordanian Parliament participate actively in PACE plenary sessions and committees, as well as in specialised conferences and seminars; 2. Members of the Jordanian Parliament have a good understanding of the key CoE standards on the rule of law, in areas such as an efficient and independent judiciary, the fight against corruption, freedom of expression/media regulation, anti-discrimination, protection of minorities and vulnerable groups in society and strengthening democracy and its institutions. Similarly, they have a good understanding of some CoE conventions in the field of human rights (in particular the ECHR, as well as those in the field of violence against women and related to children's rights and the fight against and prevention of torture); 3. Subject to the granting of the PfD Status to the Jordanian Parliament, Jordan makes substantial progress in fulfilling all the major requirements set in the PfD Status Resolution.
Partners	<i>Parliament, Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Expatriate Affairs, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Political and Parliamentary Affairs.</i>

Training in human rights, rule of law and democracy

In 2014, the CoE organised a first pilot session of training to human rights, rule of law and democracy: "Venice Academy". The training aimed to deepen knowledge of young professionals –representatives from various Ministries, governmental instances, parliaments, local and regional authorities as well as from civil society – from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia in the field of human rights, rule of law and democracy. It was agreed that other countries and in particular Jordan will be associated to this project and will be invited to the next session of the training in 2015. The "Venice Academy" is organised jointly with the Inter-University Centre for Human Rights (EIUC) and the Venice International University (VIU) thanks to the financial support from the EU (South Programme) and from Norway (regional programme on fight against violence against women and children). Such capacity building activities can be replicated for the region in the future.

Representatives from Jordanian civil society participated in the regional Seminar organised under the leadership of the Tunisian School of Political Studies in 2013 in Hammamet (Tunisia).

Overall objective	To allow target publics (young professionals, civil society leaders) to deepen and/or acquire their knowledge in the fields of human rights, rule of law and good governance and to allow Jordanian diplomats and officials to acquire a good understanding of the CoE's work, programmes, conventions and policies
Expected results for 2015-2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Young professionals from Jordan are trained and able to use the knowledge acquired in the framework of co-operation programmes with the CoE; 2. Trained professionals are able to function as multipliers and disseminate the knowledge further; 3. To conduct a number of training and orientation courses for Jordanian diplomats and officials on the CoE's work, programmes, conventions and policies; 4. Representatives from civil society in Jordan establish contacts, exchange good practices with representatives of civil society of other countries in the region and increase their competencies thanks to activities organised by a regional School of Political Studies.
Partners	<i>Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriate Affairs, Ministry of Justice, other line ministries, Parliament, civil society.</i>

Implementation and evaluation

A large variety of CoE tools will be employed to ensure successful co-operation according to needs, in particular:

- ▶ CoE Conventions open to non-member States and more generally CoE standards in priority areas;
- ▶ the long-standing expertise of several CoE instances (such as intergovernmental bodies, the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE (PACE), the Venice Commission, Pompidou Group, the North-South Centre);
- ▶ the methodologies developed within the CoE to regularly assess and respond to “shared” challenges (such as the Council of Europe’s Group of States against corruption (GRECO), the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ)).

The working methods designed to make the CoE’s expertise available to Jordan include in particular:

- ▶ support for assessing the existing legal and institutional framework in selected areas and identifying needs and follow-up action;
- ▶ assistance with the drawing-up of new legislative texts, the revision of existing legislation, the setting-up of human rights institutions and new governance structures, based on European and other international standards, networks of CoE’s experts in key priority areas, CoE standards and reference documents;
- ▶ transferring knowledge and skills on specific subjects with a view to enhancing national capacities including specialised training for Jordanian experts;
- ▶ facilitating the exchange of experience and good practices between Europe and partner countries of the Southern Mediterranean benefiting from CoE co-operation projects, as well as between the countries of the region, and creating relevant formal and informal networks.

Whenever appropriate, relevant Jordanian experts will be closely involved in particular in the preparation of assessments, including through peer reviews. This will also ensure that the project-oriented co operation proposed is adapted to the needs of the partner country.

All the actions which will be implemented as part of this document will strive to ensure sustainability. In this regard, particular attention will be paid to pilot projects which can subsequently be rolled out, to

the training of trainers, to the creation of professional networks of CoE experts and Jordanian beneficiaries and to the development of professional and institutional capacities.

Particular attention will also be paid to cross-cutting issues, in particular gender mainstreaming. For this purpose, specific Guidelines will ensure that gender mainstreaming is appropriately taken into consideration both in the planning and in the implementation of activities. The implementation of the activities corresponding to the co-operation priorities should also facilitate the involvement of civil society where appropriate. It will also aim at a decentralised implementation of the activities, so as to target a larger number of Jordanian regions in the co operation activities, whenever feasible. This will also contribute to an increased visibility and ownership of the co-operation activities by national authorities.

Monitoring implementation

Responsibility for monitoring implementation of the Neighbourhood Partnership with Jordan will lie, at the CoE level, with the Committee of Ministers of the CoE and in particular its Rapporteur Group on External Relations (GR-EXT). The Secretariat will regularly keep the latter up to date with the progress made in the programmes and projects. To this end, the Office of the Directorate General of Programmes will draft a mid-term follow-up report and a final evaluation report, taking due account of the joint assessment carried out by Jordan and the CoE within the framework of the Steering Committee.

Moreover, a bilateral steering committee comprising the co operation contact points in Jordan and the CoE will be set up as part of the effort to strengthen the political dialogue with Jordan to ensure the follow-up of the implementation of the Jordan-CoE partnership. Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Neighbourhood Partnership with Jordan will be carried out jointly by the CoE and the Jordanian authorities and will comply with the requirements and conditions laid down by the various donors.

In order to optimise its efforts and implement co-ordination activities with national and international partners active in the field, the CoE is currently looking into possibilities to have an operational presence in Amman as from 2015. In this respect discussions have been initiated with Jordanian authorities concerning a Memorandum of Understanding.



Partners

The partnership between the CoE and the EU, which remains to be a key partner, is pursued in the Southern Mediterranean region, in particular in the framework of the new EU-CoE joint programme “Towards strengthened democratic governance in the Southern Mediterranean” (South II Programme, 2015-2017).

The priorities referred to in this paper will also be implemented through voluntary contributions from other national and international partners and donors. Further information on the projects described are available at the Office of the Directorate General of Programmes of the CoE.

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