

Directorate of External Relations (DER)

Overall mandate

To assist and to advise the Secretary General, as well as the Organisation's statutory organs, its other bodies and Secretariat's major administrative entities (MAEs), on specific political matters affecting Council of Europe institutional and political relations with other international organisations and institutions, in particular the EU, OSCE and UN, and relations with non-member States, including Observer States and states in the CoE neighbouring regions to promote co-operation and partnerships, avoid duplication, increase synergies and enhance external visibility.

To bear responsibility for the coherent implementation of Secretary General's policy towards international organisations and non member states. To co-ordinate the relevant activities of MAEs in terms of external representation of the Organisation.

Main objectives

- To develop and co-ordinate Council of Europe policy and action at the wider international level, in close co-operation with the European Union, the OSCE, the UN and other international organisations. In this context to promote inter-institutional relations with relevant European and international organisations;
- To promote dialogue and co-operation with non-member states with focus on countries in the neighbouring regions and the Observer States.

To meet these objectives, the DER

- maintains and develops political relations and fosters appropriate working contacts with the EU in order to contribute to coherence between the EU integration process and pan-European co-operation;
- acts as the CoE focal point for co-operation with the EU and its Director acts as "Senior Official" in accordance with the 1987 arrangements;
- intensifies co-operation with the OSCE to ensure effective working relations and co-operation, and generate coherence and complementarity of action and its Director acts as "Senior Official" for relations with the OSCE;
- maintains and develops contacts with other international organisations, in particular the UN family in order to ensure a coherent approach in the Council of Europe's relations with them;
- ensures political co-ordination of the Council of Europe's input in the various sub regional organisations, initiatives and mechanisms involving non-member states;
- develops and maintains contacts and ensures a coherent policy approach towards non-member States with focus on countries in the neighbouring regions;

- assists the representatives of Observer States in their relations with the Organisation;
- assumes the primary responsibility for the CoE Offices in charge of liaison with other international organisations or institutions (in Brussels, Geneva, Vienna and Warsaw).