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Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Council of Europe and the European Union: Overview of activities (1 January-31 December 2010)

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Introductory remarks

This document has been structured according to the operational chapters of the MoU and broken down into subchapters, where appropriate.

The complex nature of activities has often made their classification difficult under the MoU structure. Where activities are relevant to more than one chapter of the MoU, cross-references to the other relevant chapters are provided.

Joint Programmes are referred to under the appropriate heading of the MoU and not under each thematic heading. Nevertheless, it should be noted that in a number of fields (in particular, youth and intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity), Joint Programmes constitute a substantial part of the activities. It is recalled that a separate document providing more detailed information on Joint Programmes implemented in 2010 will be published separately.

Similarly, activities carried out in the framework of Partial Agreements, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and the Commissioner for Human Rights are listed under "inter-institutional co-operation".

The activities included in this document cover the period 1 January – 31 December 2010.

1. Human rights and fundamental freedoms (cf. §§ 16-22 of the MoU)

Reference to Council of Europe human rights standards and mutual consultation (cf. §§ 16-19 of the MoU)

Council of Europe (CoE) human rights standards are increasingly reflected and referred to in draft legislation and reference to these standards is included in European Union (EU) strategy papers and progress reports in the framework of European Union Enlargement Process and the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plans.

It is important to recall that the **recognition by the European Union of the Council as a Europe-wide reference source for human rights is embodied at the highest level** in different provisions:

- Article 6(3) of the Treaty of the European Union recognises that “*Fundamental Rights, as guaranteed by the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and as they result from the constitutional traditions common to the Member States, shall constitute general principles of the Union's law*”.
- The Preamble of the European Union’s Charter of Fundamental Rights explicitly recognises that it reaffirms “*the rights as they result, in particular, from the constitutional traditions and international obligations common to the Member States, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Social Charters adopted by the Union and by the Council of Europe and the case-law of the Court of Justice of the European Union and the European Court of Human Rights*”.
- Finally, Article 52(3) of the aforementioned Charter lays down that “*(i)n so far as the Charter contains rights which correspond to rights guaranteed by the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the meaning and scope of those rights shall be the same as those laid down by the said Convention*”.

This reliance on CoE standards is also made visible **beyond the borders of Europe**, through the developing practice of referring to CoE human rights instruments in arrangements between the EU and its non-European partners (e.g. in relations with Morocco).

The **practice of consultations** has already been established in a number of areas where CoE monitoring mechanisms constitute a prime source of information or where the organisation can make other relevant contributions based on its standards.

Modalities of co-operation were discussed during other meetings, in particular, the **European Commission/Council of Europe Senior Officials’ Meeting** (Brussels, 8 December) and the meetings between the **Council of Europe and the Troika of the Article 36 Committee of the European Union** (Strasbourg, 21 June and Brussels, 6 December).

A delegation of the **Registry of the European Court of Human Rights** (EctHR) visited the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in Luxembourg on 26 October and met with several “*référéndaires*”, i.e. lawyers working in the chambers of ECJ judges. They also heard addresses by ECJ judges. The meeting was mainly devoted to discussing and comparing the procedure and working methods in both courts. This was a return visit, which followed a similar meeting in Strasbourg in 2009.

Please note that the annual consultation meetings in Strasbourg on the progress made by candidates and potential candidates for European Union accession in the implementation of relevant human rights’ standards, notably as evidenced through the different reports of the monitoring bodies and in the context of the Committee of Minister’s supervision of the execution of the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, are referred to under part 4 below on “democratic stability”.

See also part 8 concerning arrangements/meetings and mechanisms for strengthening co-operation.

Accession of the European Union to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (cf. § 20 of the MoU)

The Secretary General made the opening address at the seminar on “Fundamental Rights in the EU in view of the Accession of the Union to the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms”, organised by the Spanish Presidency of the European Union, in association with the Fundamental Rights Agency in Madrid on 2 February (see also below under “co-operation with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights”).

The Council of the European Union adopted a **negotiating mandate** for the EU's accession to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) on 4 June.

The Vice-President of the Commission, responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, addressed the Committee of Ministers on 7 July on the occasion of the launch of the negotiation process for EU accession; she stated that accession would “put in place the missing link in Europe's system of fundamental rights protection, guaranteeing coherence between the approaches of the Council of Europe and of the European Union”; the kick-off meeting was held on the same day.

The European Commission participated in four working meetings with the **CDDH¹ Informal Working Group** (CDDH-UE) on EU accession to the European Convention on Human Rights (Strasbourg, 6-7 July, 20-22 September, 19-22 October and Brussels, 6-8 December) with a view to the elaboration of the relevant legal instruments for the accession. Good progress was made on a number of issues, strengthening consensus on the general principles guiding the accession process.

The national conference, which took place on the occasion of the **60th anniversary of the ECHR**, on 6 October in Bucharest focused on the accession of the European Union to the ECHR and the entry into force of Protocol 14.

Protection of persons belonging to national minorities, fight against discrimination, racism, xenophobia and intolerance (cf. § 21 of the MoU)

In the framework of the “**Speak Out Against Discrimination Campaign**”, the CoE and the Fundamental Rights Agency organised a joint workshop aiming at sharing journalism training practices relating to intercultural and anti-discrimination issues in Budapest on 25 February (*see also below under “co-operation with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights”*).

A pilot encounter “Journalism Training, Discrimination & Diversity” was organised jointly from 30 August to 3 September at the University of Coimbra. This pilot encounter targeted trainers of European journalism training schools and organisations and aimed mainly at introducing and testing the training pack “Journalism Training, Discrimination & Diversity”. Several joint meetings were held bilaterally in order to finalise this training pack that will be published at the beginning of 2011.

The Vice-President of the Commission, responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship participated in the **High-level Meeting on Roma** in Strasbourg on 20 October (*see also under part 7 on “social cohesion”*).

The European Commission participated in the meetings of the **Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers** (MG-S-ROM) in Strasbourg on 25-26 March and Wroclaw on 18-21 October. The Coordinator of the CoE for Roma and Travellers participated at bilateral or international Roma-related coordination events/meetings (Informal Contact Group meetings under EU Council presidency in Brussels) in 2010 (*see also under part 7 on “social cohesion”*).

A Member of the European Parliament (MEP), contributed with a document on Roma participation to the meeting of the Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers (MG-S-ROM) in March 2010 and asked for the CoE's input on the report on Roma inclusion under preparation by the European Parliament with a view to developing an EU Roma inclusion strategy (*see also under part 7 on “social cohesion”*).

The Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for Roma issues and colleagues from the Directorate General of Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport participated in the meeting of the European Platform on Roma Inclusion in Brussels on 13 December, and the meeting on Monitoring and Evaluation of Roma Projects and Policies organised by the Directorate General for Regional Policy of the European Commission as part of the Pilot Project “Pan-European Coordination of Roma Integration Methods - Roma Inclusion” in Brussels on 30 November (*see also under part 7 on “social cohesion”*).

¹ Steering Committee for Human Rights

The SRSG for Roma issues held contact meetings in Brussels with several relevant Directorates-General of the Commission in December; he also met the European Parliament rapporteur on this issue (*see also under part 7 on "social cohesion"*).

The European Commission participated in the Symposium on the 40th Anniversary of Council of Europe activities and action concerning Roma and Travellers in Wroclaw on 18 October (*see also under part 7 on "social cohesion"*).

The European Commission participated in the meeting on a Cultural Roma Route in Woking on 17-19 June (*see also under part 7 on "social cohesion"*).

An **International Task Force on Education of Roma** (ITFER) has been established in 2010 and the representatives of the European Commission participated as a partner of DG Education in the 1st. meeting of ITFER in Strasbourg on 28-29 October. The CoE invited FRA to join ITFER as one of the international partners (*see also under part 6 on "education, youth and the promotion of human contacts" and part 7 on "social cohesion"*).

The European Commission participated in the Conference on the Integration of **National Minorities** in Europe in Skopje on 7-8 June, organised within the framework of the Chairmanship of "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" of the Committee of Ministers.

The Secretariat of the European Charter for **Regional or Minority Languages** has regularly attended the meetings of the European Parliament's Intergroup for traditional minorities, national communities and languages, taking place during each session of the European Parliament, and made presentations on its activities.

See under part 9 on "inter-institutional co-operation" for activities of relevance to ECRI.

Fight against torture and ill treatment (cf. § 21 of the MoU)

The European Commission participated in meetings of the **Ad Hoc Committee on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence** (CAHVIO) in Strasbourg on 22-24 February, 29 June-2 July, 27-30 September, 8-10 November and 13-17 December (*see also under point 3 on "democracy and good governance"*).

The CoE made a presentation of its action at an EU conference on domestic violence in Brussels on 25 October (*see also under point 3 on "democracy and good governance"*).

The CoE was represented by the Special Representative of the Secretary General/Director of the Council of Europe Liaison Office to the European Union at an EU conference on women and security in Brussels on 27 January (*see also under point 3 on "democracy and good governance"*).

Moreover, the CoE was represented at the Conference on violence against women in Brussels on 25-26 November, where the draft convention on preventing violence against women and men was presented (*see also under part 3 on "democracy and good governance"*).

See under part 9 on "inter-institutional co-operation" for activities of relevance to the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture.

Fight against trafficking in human beings (cf. § 21 of the MoU)

The new EU Directive "on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, and protecting victims, replacing Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA" was adopted at the end of 2010. The Preamble of the Directive (paragraph 4) includes the following reference to the CoE Convention: "*It should be noted that the Council of Europe Convention contains an evaluation mechanism, composed of the Group of experts on action against trafficking in human beings (GRETA) and the Committee of the Parties. Co-ordination between international organizations with competence with regard to action against trafficking in human beings should be supported in order to avoid duplication of efforts*".

The EU and EUROPOL participated in the 4th meeting of the Committee of the Parties of the CoE **Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings**, held in Strasbourg on 13 September.

The Anti-Trafficking Secretariat was invited to participate in the two meetings of the EU informal Network of National Rapporteurs on Trafficking in Human Beings and Equivalent Mechanisms, organised by the European Commission in Brussels on 2 June and 8 December.

The Anti-Trafficking Secretariat also participated in the expert consultation on the future EU strategy on fighting trafficking in human beings, organised by the European Commission in Brussels on 16 December.

GRETA members participated in two EU conferences on action against trafficking in human beings: the Belgian EU Presidency's conference "Towards a multidisciplinary approach in prevention of trafficking in human beings, prosecution of traffickers and protection of victims" (Brussels, 18-19 October); and the Fundamental Rights Agency conference on "Ensuring justice and protection for all children" (Brussels, 7-8 December) (*see also below under "co-operation with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights"*).

Protection of the rights of the child (cf. § 21 of the MoU)

The CoE programme "**Building a Europe for and with Children**" continued to support the process leading to the development of the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child. In particular, the CoE conducted an internal consultation and prepared written feedback on the "Consultation Document: European Commission's Communication on the Rights of the Child (2011-2014)". In this paper, reference was made to the most relevant CoE standards and tools in this field and a number of recommendations suggested ways of achieving more synergies between the two organisations with a view to building a pan-European space fit for children.

At the invitation of UNICEF and Save the Children, the CoE contributed to a training course on "Operationalising the Rights of the Child in EU External Action" for representatives of the European Commission, the Council of the European Union and EU member States in Brussels on 25-26 March.

The European Commission participated in the international conference on **violence against children** in Vienna on 20-21 May, as well as in the international launch of the CoE **campaign to stop sexual violence against children** in Rome on 29-30 November.

The CoE actively participated in the Fundamental Rights Agency Conference "Ensuring Justice and Protection for all Children" in Brussels on 7-8 December. This meeting was instrumental in promoting the newly-adopted CoE **guidelines on child-friendly justice**, as well as the CoE **Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse** (which entered into force on 1 July). The meeting also paved the way for the new stage of CoE/FRA co-operation on **children's rights indicators** (*see also below under "co-operation with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights"*).

The CoE also participated in:

- the hearing organised by the European Parliament (Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs) on combating sexual abuse, sexual exploitation of children and child pornography (28-29 September); and
- the Fundamental Rights Agency/Committee of the Regions Conference on the multi-level protection of fundamental rights, which focused on the rights of the child (13 November) (*see also below under "co-operation with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights"*).

The CoE participated in the 5th European Union Forum on the Rights of the Child in Brussels on 14 October as well as in the Fundamental Rights Agency Conference on "Ensuring justice and protection for all children" in Brussels on 7-8 December (*see also below under "co-operation with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights"*).

CoE Secretariat staff participated in a **training event** on children's rights for EU officials from the various institutions in Brussels on 25-26 March (*see also below under "other activities in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms"*).

Promotion of human rights education (cf. § 21 of the MoU)

See under “co-operation with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights” below and under part 6 on “education, youth and the promotion of human contacts”.

Freedom of expression and information (cf. § 21 of the MoU)

The European Commission was represented at meetings of the **Steering Committee on the Media and New Communication Services** (CDMC) in Strasbourg on 8-11 June and 16-19 November. The European Commission also took part in various meetings of subordinate bodies of the CDMC (such as the **Ad hoc Advisory Group on Public Service Media Governance, the Ad hoc Advisory Group on Cross Border Internet and the Committee of Experts on New Media**).

The European Commission participated in the 45th meeting of the **Standing Committee on Transfrontier Television** (T-TT) in Strasbourg on 1-2 July. The CoE Secretariat and the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Transfrontier Television participated in the 32nd and 33rd meetings of the European Commission’s Contact Committee on audiovisual media services, held on 16 June and 20 October in Brussels. Despite these and other bilateral meetings between representatives of the Secretariat and the relevant services of the European Commission, it was not possible to reactivate the revision process of the European Convention on Transfrontier Television.

The Secretary General and the European Commissioner for Internal Market and Services exchanged letters in connection with the issue of the European Commission being mandated to negotiate a convention on the protection of neighbouring rights of broadcasting organisations within a CoE framework.

The European Commission and the European Parliament took part in the Pan-European Dialogue on **Internet Governance** (EuroDIG) supported by the CoE, which took place in Madrid on 29-30 April. The CoE Secretariat attended a Commission-organised meeting of the High-level Group on Internet Governance (Madrid, 28 April).

In a declaration on the **Digital Agenda for Europe** adopted on 29 September, the Committee of Ministers welcomed the Granada EU Ministerial Declaration and the Digital Agenda for Europe emphasising the common objective of promoting the public service value of the Internet and encouraging co-operation between the two organisations in this respect.

Other activities in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms

EU representatives regularly follow the **Committee of Ministers meetings on the supervision of the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights**.

The European Commission participated in the meetings of the **Committee of Experts on the Reform of the Court** (DH-GDR) in Strasbourg on 24-26 March, 5-7 May and 15-17 September.

CoE Secretariat staff conducted sessions at a **training event** on human rights, organised by the Commission for EU officials from the various institutions in Brussels on 24 March. On 25-26 March, Secretariat staff also participated in a training event on children’s rights (*see also above under “protection of the rights of the child”*).

In addition, a specific training event on the CoE was organised in Brussels on 7 December with the participation of Council of Europe officials for EU staff, including from the future European External Action Service (EEAS).

The CoE Information Office in Moscow participated in the EU-sponsored conference “**Human Rights Defender, a Profession at Risk**” in Moscow on 23 March.

A number of activities in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms fit within the context of Joint Programmes between the Council of Europe and the European Commission. Please see under point 11 on “Joint Programmes”.

In addition, it should be noted that a number of activities in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms are to be found under point 9 below on “Inter-institutional co-operation”.

Co-operation with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) (cf. § 22 of the MoU)

Further to the entry into force of the co-operation agreement on 18 June 2008, an **independent person**, appointed by the CoE, as well as representatives of the Secretariat regularly participated in meetings of the Fundamental Rights Agency **Management Board**. The independent person participated in the meetings of the **Executive Board**. Contact persons appointed by the CoE Secretary General and FRA are dealing with matters relating to co-operation between the two. The CoE is regularly consulted during the elaboration of FRA’s annual work programme and annual reports.

The **Ministers Deputies’** Rapporteur Group on External Relations (GR-EXT) held an exchange of views with the independent person appointed by the CoE to sit on the organs of the Agency on 6 July and the Chairperson of the Management Board and the Director of the Agency on 2 November.

The **European Court of Human Rights** (EctHR) has developed good relations with FRA. The Director and Chair of FRA visit the President of the Court each year and have expressed their interest in assisting the Court where possible. The **European Court of Human Rights** and FRA have continued to work together on their first joint project, aimed at increasing awareness and the domestic implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights, EU law and other legal instruments in the field of **non-discrimination**. Work was completed on a **case-law handbook**, which analyses the key principles developed by the European Court of Human Rights and the Court of Justice of the European Union in this area. The handbook will be launched on 21 March 2011 and distributed to judges, prosecutors, lawyers and law enforcement officials, as well as published online. The Court and the Agency have also been working on the preparation of a second joint project, to be launched in 2012.

An agreement has been reached between FRA and the ECtHR to grant the latter access to both primary and secondary research the former has carried out on a variety of human rights subjects. To facilitate closer co-operation with FRA, a Liaison Officer has been appointed within the Court as a point of contact for communication.

In the framework of the **“Speak Out Against Discrimination Campaign”**, the CoE and FRA organised a joint workshop aiming at sharing journalism training practices relating to intercultural and anti-discrimination issues in Budapest on 25 February (*see also above under “protection of persons belonging to national minorities, fight against discrimination, racism, xenophobia and intolerance”*).

FRA participated in the international conference on **violence against children** in Vienna on 20-21 May, which was co-organised by the CoE and the Austrian Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth (*see also above under “protection of the rights of the child”*).

The CoE actively participated in the FRA Conference “Ensuring Justice and Protection for all Children” in Brussels on 7-8 December. This meeting was instrumental in promoting the newly-adopted CoE **guidelines on child-friendly justice**, as well as the CoE **Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse** (which entered into force on 1 July). The meeting also paved the way for the new stage of CoE/FRA co-operation on children’s rights indicators (*see also above under “protection of the rights of the child”*).

The CoE participated in the Fundamental Rights Agency/Committee of the Regions Conference on the multi-level protection of fundamental rights, which focused on the rights of the child (13 November) (*see also above under “protection of the rights of the child”*).

The CoE participated in FRA Conference on “Ensuring justice and protection for all children” in Brussels on 7-8 December (*see also above under “protection of the rights of the child”*).

The CoE participated in the Workshop on “**Human Rights-based Police Training: from Theory to Practice**” organised by FRA and the European Police College (CEPOL) in Vienna on 8-9 November.

The Secretary General made the opening address at the seminar on “Fundamental Rights in the EU in view of the Accession of the Union to the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms”, organised by the Spanish Presidency of the European Union, in association with FRA in Madrid on 2 February (*see also above under “Accession of the European Union to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms”*).

FRA participated in the 3rd meeting of the Committee of Experts on participation of **people with disabilities** in political and public life (CAHPAH-PPL) in Strasbourg on 26-28 May (*see also under part 7 on “social cohesion”*).

The European Co-ordination Forum for the Council of Europe **Disability Action Plan 2006-2015** (CAHPAH) and CAHPAH-PPL contributed to the FRA Report “The Right to Political Participation of Persons with Mental Health Problems and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities” (*see also under part 7 on “social cohesion”*).

The CoE participated in a panel at a conference organised by FRA and the Institute for Human Rights in Germany entitled “Bring Human Rights to Life! - 15 Years of **Human Rights Education** in Germany” in Berlin on 3 December (*see also under point 6 on “education, youth and the promotion of human contacts”*).

A reference to the “Council of Europe Charter on Human Rights Education” (Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 on the Council of Europe Charter on **Education for Democratic Citizenship** and Human Rights Education) is included in the Agency’s draft programme of activities for 2012.

FRA representatives participated in the meeting of the Committee of Experts on **Roma** and Travellers (MG-S-ROM), Strasbourg, 25-26 March. FRA contributed to the MG-S-ROM opinion on migration and freedom of movement of Roma in Europe. The CoE participated in an inter-agency meeting on Roma issues in Vienna on 11 November hosted by FRA, where it was proposed that the CoE contribute to the development of the questionnaire concerning the impact of the Roma anti-discrimination campaign (*see also under part 7 on “social cohesion”*).

FRA participated in the Symposium on the 40th Anniversary of Council of Europe activities and action concerning Roma and Travellers in Wroclaw on 18 October and in the Council of Europe High-level Meeting on Roma in Strasbourg on 20 October (*see also under part 7 on “social cohesion”*).

*With regard to co-operation between the **Commissioner for Human Rights** and FRA, see under part 9 on “inter-institutional co-operation” below.*

2. Rule of law, legal co-operation and addressing new challenges (cf. §§ 23-26 of the MoU)

Establishment of common standards thus promoting a Europe without dividing lines; legal co-operation with a view to ensuring coherence between EU law and the standards of Council of Europe conventions (cf. §§ 23-24 of the MoU)

The European Commission and the Council of the European Union contributed to the meetings of the **Council of Europe Committee of Legal Advisers on Public International Law (CAHDI)** (Strasbourg, 18-19 March and Tromsø, Norway 16 - 17 September).

The European Union, which signed the **Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism** (CETS No. 198) on 2 April 2009, continued to follow the work of the Conference of the Parties closely.

Regarding the **fight against terrorism**, the European Commission contributed to the 18th and 19th meetings of the Council of Europe **Committee of Experts on Terrorism (CODEXTER)**, which took place respectively in Strasbourg on 7-8 April and Istanbul on 15-16 December. The Council of the European Union contributed to the 19th meeting of CODEXTER, as well as to the international conference on "Prevention of Terrorism: Prevention Tools, Legal Instruments and their Implementation", held on 16-17 December in Istanbul. In the margins of this meeting, contacts were further developed with the Office of the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator. In 2010, the CoE contributed to a number of events organised by the European Commission, inter alia, those concerning victims of terrorism, implementation of the EU Revised Framework Decision on combating terrorism, on-line illegal content and radicalisation (*see also below under "co-operation in response to the challenges facing European society"*).

The Council of the European Union, the European Commission and the LIBE Commission of the European Parliament are regularly represented in the plenary and working group meetings of the **European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ)**.

The European Union Delegation in Belgrade participated in the expert assessment visit and kick-off event for the project "Support to the **Reform of the Judiciary** in Serbia in the light of CoE standards" in Belgrade on 8-9 February, as well as in the Conference on 30 September to present the CoE's expert report on the Serbian Judicial Reform Strategy.

In the context of the **European Day of Civil Justice** (which has been taking place each year on 25 October, since 2003), the European Commission and the CoE created in 2005 a European prize for innovative practice in **civil and criminal justice** organisation and procedure: the **Crystal Scales of Justice**. This year, the Prize has been awarded in Ljubljana on 25 October by a Jury of European legal professionals, in the presence of CoE and European Commission representatives.

On **data protection**, the European Commission followed, on a regular basis, the work of the Consultative Committee of the **Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data** (T-PD). The European Commission attended the 26th plenary T-PD plenary meeting in Strasbourg on 1-4 June. The Secretary General and Vice-President Reding agreed to celebrate jointly the 2011 Data Protection Day in Brussels, also marking the 30th anniversary of the Council of Europe's data protection Convention 108.

A meeting was held with the EU Data Protection Supervisor in Brussels on 11 October.

The Vice-President of the Commission responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship participated as a key note speaker, together with the Special Representative of the Secretary General/Director of the Liaison Office of the Council of Europe with the European Union, in an event co-organised by the CoE, the European Parliament, Microsoft and other data industry organisations and NGOs on the occasion of the **4th Data Protection Day** on 28 January in Brussels.

A joint meeting was organised by the Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs (DG-HL) of the CoE and the Data Protection Unit of the European Commission to discuss Convention 108 and review progress on 8 December.

The Council of Europe participated in the **Data Retention** Conference organised by the European Commission in Brussels on 3 December.

The European Commission also actively contributed to the work on the World **Anti-Doping Agency Privacy Standards**, in particular, by attending the meetings of the working group on ISPP (International Standard for the Protection and Personal Information) and on the monitoring of anti-doping Conventions. The European Commission participated in a meeting of the T-DO² monitoring group in Strasbourg on 3-4 May and 8-9 November.

The European Commission participated in the T-DO LI³ meeting in Paris on 15-16 April.

² T-DO = Monitoring Group of the Anti-Doping Convention

³ Advisory Group on Legal Issues

The European Commission, the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union and the Secretariat of the European Judicial Network participated in the 58th and 59th meetings of the **Committee on the Operation of European Conventions in the Penal Field (PC-OC)** in Strasbourg on 4-6 May and 2-5 November. CoE representatives were invited to take part in a meeting on "**Human rights, health and dignity in prisons: how can civil society contribute?**"(Brussels, 14 July), an expert meeting on **child-friendly justice** (Brussels, 15 July), two expert meetings to discuss the forthcoming implementation of EU framework decisions on probation measures and on transfer of prisoners (Rome, 30 September–1 October) and an expert meeting on a Green Paper on **Detention Issues** in Brussels on 18 October.

The Council of Europe participated in a Round Table Discussion on "**Juvenile Justice Reform Assessments in ENP Countries**", hosted by EuropeAid in Brussels on 24 June.

The CoE participated in a Commission expert meeting on aspects of **procedural rights** of a suspect in criminal proceedings in Brussels on 11-12 October.

The CoE participated in a Commission expert meeting on "rights and support of **victims of crime**" in Brussels on 18-19 February.

The EU, which enjoys observer status with several committees placed under the authority of the **European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ)**, regularly attended the meetings, in particular, of the **Working Party on the Committee of Experts on Family Law (CJ-FA)**, which is drafting a recommendation on the rights and legal status of children and parental responsibilities.

The European Commission was represented at the 4th Council of Europe Conference on **Nationality** (Strasbourg, 17 December) which debated "concepts of nationality in a globalised world".

Early consultations in the process of elaborating standards (cf. § 25 of the MoU)

A number of **meetings held at technical level**, i.a. meetings between the **Troika of the Article 36 Committee of the European Union and the Council of Europe** in Strasbourg on 21 June and Brussels on 6 December, provided opportunities for mutual consultation on the elaboration of standards.

The CoE was consulted at various stages in the elaboration of the EU directive on the **right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings**. The comments submitted were taken into consideration in the text adopted. It was also consulted in the final stage of the elaboration of the EU directive **on the right to information in criminal proceedings**.

The European Commission enjoys **observer status** with and is regularly invited to take part in meetings of **various CoE standard-setting bodies**, in particular, the **European Committee for Crime Problems (CDPC)**, the **Council for Penological Cooperation (PC-CP)**, the **Committee on the Operation of European Conventions in the Penal Field (PC-OC)** and the **Steering Committee on Media and New Communication Services (CDMC)**. This provides for consultation procedures and allows the EU to express its views.

See also relevant paragraphs under part 1 above on "human rights and fundamental freedoms".

Co-operation in response to the challenges facing European society (combating terrorism, organised crime, corruption, money laundering etc.) (cf. § 26 of the MoU)

The European Commission participated in meetings of the **Council of Europe Committee of Experts on Terrorism (CODEXTER)**, which were held in Strasbourg on 7-8 April and Istanbul on 15-16 December (see also above under "establishment of common standards thus promoting a Europe without dividing lines..").

The Council of Europe regularly participated in expert meetings in Brussels on Framework Decision 2008/919/ JHA amending Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA on combating terrorism. These meetings provided a forum for discussion between member States and the Commission on how the requirements set out in the Framework Decision might be met.

The European Commission and the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union closely followed all the reports of the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (**MONEYVAL**) and actively participated in the following MONEYVAL meetings:

- 32nd Plenary Meeting, Strasbourg, 15-18 March
- 33rd Plenary Meeting, Strasbourg, 27-29 September
- 34th Plenary Meeting, Strasbourg, 6-10 December

MONEYVAL evaluations specifically cover Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 26 October 2005 on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering and terrorist financing and Commission Directive 2006/70/EC of 1 August 2006, laying down implementing measures for Directive 2005/60/EC of the European Parliament and the Council as regards the definition of a “politically exposed person” and the technical criteria for simplified customer due diligence procedures and for exemption on grounds of a financial activity conducted on an occasional or very limited basis.

The CoE participated in the EU Informal Asset Recovery Platform meeting organised in Brussels from 25 to 26 March to present an overview of the replies given to the questionnaire on the enforcement of non-conviction based confiscation orders and the state of play with regard to the Council of Europe **Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism** (CETS No. 198). MONEYVAL Secretariat has been a regular participant of the Platform since November 2009.

The General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union participated in the second meeting of the Conference to the Parties to CETS no. 198, which was held in Strasbourg on 15-16 April.

The European Commission participated in the **Cybercrime** Convention Committee (T-CY) annual plenary meeting, as well as in its Bureau meetings in Paris on 24-25 June and 9 December.

The European Commission participated in the Octopus Interface Conference on Co-operation against Cybercrime in Strasbourg on 23-25 March.

The CoE participated in the Second Conference on Public Private Dialogue to Fight Illegal Online Activities in Brussels on 23 April.

The CoE participated in the conference “Taking on the Data Retention Directive” in Brussels on 3 December.

The EU contributed the largest share of external funding to projects related to **economic crime** involving several hundred activities.

The European Commission participated as an observer in the Standing Committee of the **European Convention on Spectator Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and, in particular, at Football Matches** (T-RV) in Belgrade on 27-28 May. The European Commission also participated in the T-RV Bureau meetings in Paris on 29-30 March and in Belgrade on 27-28 May. The CoE participated in the Pan-European Group of Football Safety and Security Experts, an EU Think Tank, which took place in Leuven on 27-28 April.

On 8 December, the Committee of Ministers adopted a convention which, for the first time, criminalises the counterfeiting and also manufacturing and supplying of medical products placed on the market without authorisation or without being in compliance with security requirements, the **MEDICRIME Convention (Council of Europe Convention on the counterfeiting of medical products and similar crimes involving threats to public health)**, which shall be open for signature by the European Union.

In the field of biological diversity, the European Union is contracting party to the **Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats** (the Bern Convention). The European Commission was represented at the following events:

- Joint EU/CoE Conference "Delivering biodiversity targets: 2010 and beyond - Protected Areas and Ecological Networks in Europe" in Madrid on 26-27 January;
- "Island Invasive Species: Eradication and Management" Conference in Auckland on 8-12 February;
- Second National Workshop of the joint CoE/EU Emerald Network Project in Ukraine, in Kyiv, on 10-11 February;
- European Biodiversity Day, in Strasbourg on 28 April;
- Second National Workshop of the joint CoE/EU Emerald Network Project in Belarus, in Minsk, on 4-5 May;
- Workshop on Large Carnivore in the Caucasus, in Tbilisi on 17-18 May;
- Second National Workshop of the joint CoE/EU Emerald Network Project in Azerbaijan, in Baku, on 19-20 May;
- Bern Convention Group of Experts on Climate Change and Biological Diversity in Reykjavik on 21-23 June;
- 2nd meeting of the Bern Convention Group of Experts on European Islands Biological Diversity on 26-29 July in Svalbard, Norway;
- 2nd Workshop on invasive alien plants in Mediterranean type regions of the world in Trabzon, Turkey on 2-6 August;
- Bern Convention Group of Experts on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks, in Strasbourg, on 14-15 September;
- Second National Workshop of the joint CoE/EU Emerald Network Project in Azerbaijan, in Baku, on 19-20 May;
- Bern Convention Select Group of Experts on Ruddy Duck Eradication in Madrid on 11 November;
- Select Group of Experts on Invasive Alien Species in Rome on 23 November; and
- 30th meeting of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention in Strasbourg on 6-9 December.

The CoE participated in the following EU activities:

- 7th, 8th and 9th meetings of the Co-ordination Group for Biodiversity and Nature in Brussels on 2 March, 22 June and 18 November respectively;
- "Green Infrastructure Implementation" Conference in Brussels on 19 November; and
- "Bird Conservation in the EU: planning for recovery action and sustainable use" conference in Brussels on 23-24 November.

Three coordination meetings with the European Environment Agency were organised in Paris, respectively on 18-19 March, 7-8 September and 22-23 November, in the framework of the setting-up of the **Emerald Network of Protected Areas**.

In 2010, the European Commission and the Council of Europe continued to implement a joint project to promote the protection of biodiversity by laying the scientific basis for the setting-up of the Emerald Network of Protected Areas in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

With regard to **bioethics**, close co-operation between the CoE and the EU has continued to develop. In addition to the mutual participation in steering committees, experts groups and conferences, consultations on specific aspects of bioethics took place regularly. The European Commission participated in plenary meetings of the **Steering Committee on Bioethics** (CDBI) in Strasbourg on 21-22 June and 30 November-3 December.

The European Commission participated in the Symposium on decision-making process regarding **medical treatment in end-of-life situations** in Strasbourg on 30 November to 1 December.

Other activities in the field of the rule of law and legal co-operation

In October, the Directorate of Internal Oversight was invited by the European Commission to share its **evaluation** experience as a part of a group of external experts in a workshop to discuss the future development of evaluation practices of DG Justice and Home Affairs, notably in relation to the mandate of the Stockholm Programme. Co-operation of the CoE and other organisations with the EU on sharing data and the setting-up of a common database of evaluations and evaluation-related studies were among the proposals.

A number of activities in fields of the rule of law, legal co-operation and addressing new challenges fit within the context of Joint Programmes between the Council of Europe and the European Commission. Please see also under part 11 on “Joint Programmes”.

In addition, it should be noted that a number of activities also falling within the context of the rule of law, legal co-operation and addressing new challenges are to be found under point 9 below on “Inter-institutional co-operation”.

3. Democracy and good governance (cf. §§ 27-29 of the MoU)

Promotion and strengthening of democracy and good governance; fostering of gender equality (cf. § 27 of the MoU)

The European Commission continued to support different activities of the **Network of Schools of Political Studies**. The Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the Council of Europe took part in the opening session of the 5th Summer University for Democracy (Strasbourg, 28 June). In addition, on a number of occasions, representatives of the European Union Delegations took part in national seminars organised by the **Schools of Political Studies**.

The CoE participated as an observer in the 36th meeting of the **EU Advisory Committee on equal opportunities for women and men** in Brussels on 30 April and, in particular, in the discussions regarding the preparation of an opinion on violence against women.

The European Commission participated in meetings of the **Ad Hoc Committee on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence** (CAHVIO) in Strasbourg on 22-24 February, 29 June-2 July, 27-30 September, 8-10 November and 13-17 December (*see also under point 1 on “human rights and fundamental freedoms”*).

The CoE made a presentation of its action at an EU conference on **domestic violence** in Brussels on 25 October (*see also under point 1 on “human rights and fundamental freedoms”*).

The CoE was represented at the Conference on violence against women in Brussels on 25-26 November, where the **draft convention on preventing violence against women and men** was presented (*see also under point 1 on “human rights and fundamental freedoms”*).

The CoE was represented by the Special Representative of the Secretary General/Director of the Council of Europe Liaison Office to the European Union at an EU conference on women and security in Brussels on 27 January (*see also under point 1 on “human rights and fundamental freedoms”*).

Venice Commission (cf. § 28 of the MoU)

The President of the Venice Commission took part in the High-level Meeting on the Western Balkans, organised by the Spanish EU Presidency, on 2 June. He made a presentation to the EU Working Party on the OSCE and the Council of Europe (COSCE) on 21 May.

The European Commission, represented by its Legal Service, participated in plenary meetings of the Venice Commission on 12-13 March, 4 June, 15-16 October and 17-18 December.

The Venice Commission maintained close co-operation with the European Union, in particular, with respect to constitutional issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova and Ukraine and judicial reforms in Serbia and Turkey. The European Union repeatedly invited countries to follow Venice Commission recommendations.

In addition, the Venice Commission continued to actively participate in the Joint Programme between the European Commission and the CoE entitled "South Caucasus – Moldova – Support to free and fair elections", through activities in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova.

Since March the Venice Commission has been running a project in Central Asia in the framework of the EU-Central Asia Rule of Law Initiative. The objective of the project is to assist the Central Asian countries to develop legislation and practices meeting international standards and to facilitate reforms of the judiciary and, to a certain extent, of the bodies of public administration. This project involves the five countries of the region (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan).

In Kyrgyzstan, the Venice Commission worked closely together with the Special Representative of the European Union for Central Asia in the period prior to the adoption of the new constitution by referendum and commenced implementation of a joint programme for the reform of the legislation after the constitutional referendum.

In 2010, the Venice Commission also continued co-operation with Bolivia on the implementation of the new constitution on the basis of a financial contribution from the European Commission. A delegation of the Venice Commission held talks with the Bolivian authorities in charge of drafting the legislation on the constitutional court, the judiciary and the electoral authority on 14-15 June in La Paz. Following the visit, the Venice Commission provided preliminary comments to the Bolivian authorities on the Law on the Constitutional Court and on the Law on Jurisdictional Competencies.

See also under point 8 on "Arrangements for co-operation and meetings and mechanisms for strengthening co-operation".

Forum for the Future of Democracy (cf. § 28 of the MoU)

The European Commission was invited to the meetings of the **Advisory Board** of the Forum for the Future of Democracy.

The Delegation of the European Commission in Armenia participated in the **6th Annual Session** of the Forum for the Future of Democracy in Yerevan on 19-21 October.

Regional and transfrontier co-operation (cf. § 29 of the MoU)

A number of activities in democracy and good governance fit within the context of Joint Programmes between the Council of Europe and the European Commission. Please see under point 11 below on "Joint Programmes". Please note also that the activities of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe are indicated under point 9 below on "inter-institutional co-operation".

4. Democratic stability (cf. §§ 30-32 of the MoU)

Throughout the period under review, **regular and close consultations** have taken place with both the European Commission and the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union on politically-relevant questions or whenever a specific matter or common interest justified an exchange of views. In particular, there have been regular visits by the Director General for Democracy and Political Affairs and the Director of Political Advice and Co-operation of the Council of Europe for consultations on topics of mutual interest.

The annual **consultation meeting** with the Enlargement DG on the **candidate and potential candidate countries for European Union accession** with a view to providing Council of Europe input to the Commission's progress reports on each country concerned took place in Strasbourg on 31 May-1 June.

The **Council of Europe/European Commission Senior Officials Meeting** (Brussels, 8 December) also provided an occasion for an exchange of view on these countries.

Ad hoc consultation meetings on regions of common interest were also held between the Directorate General of Democracy and Political Affairs and the relevant Commission Directorates, in order to ensure a regular and up-to-date exchange of information on key priorities and a shared assessment of current developments having an impact on the work of the two institutions.

Co-operation has also developed in the context of the **Eastern Partnership⁴ (EaP)** of the European Union with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, launched on 7 May 2009. Representatives of the Secretariat of the Council of Europe participated in the meetings in Brussels of Platform 1 on "Democracy, Good Governance and Stability" on 29 April, 14 September and 7 October and Platform 4 on "Contacts between People" on 27 May and 13 October, of which it is a permanent participant and chairs the two experts' panels on corruption and judiciary recently set up under Platform 1.

In 2010, the CoE and the EU worked on a financial "**Facility**" instrument in order to implement concrete activities based on the priorities established within Platform 1 of the EaP. The agreement on this Facility, of an amount of 4M Euros, was signed by the Secretary General and the Commissioner responsible for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy on 15 December. The implementation period of the Facility starts on 1 March and will last 30 months. Its main objective is to provide support to partner countries for their reform processes through a multilateral peer-review approach and an exchange of best practices and to bring them closer to CoE and EU standards in core areas covered by EaP Platform 1. The Facility will strengthen the follow-up to findings of CoE monitoring and advisory bodies in selected priority areas by providing the necessary resources to mobilise expertise and peer advice, as well as exchange of best practices among participants.

A CoE delegation participated in the 2010 IPA (**Instrument for Pre-accession**) Conference organised by the European Commission in Brussels on 6 December.

Contacts and consultations with the European Union in the field were very close and regular. Special Representatives of the Secretary General (SRSGs) participated fully in the international co-ordination mechanisms in the field and, in particular, had meetings with the Head of the EU Delegation and, where applicable, with the relevant European Union Special Representative (EUSR).

Furthermore, CoE **monitoring missions** to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as stocktaking missions to Moldova and the "Ago Group" (Armenia and Azerbaijan) had regular exchanges with representatives of partner organisations in the field.

In January 2010, a Joint Programme was signed to support the democracy and human rights in Moldova, following the April 2009 events. This programme was strongly called for by the EU as a tool to convey a joint political message to the Moldovan authorities in addition to the technical assistance it provides.

⁴ The Eastern Partnership is the Eastern dimension within the European Neighbourhood Policy (Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council – 3/12/2008 – SEC (2008) 2974).

The ongoing Joint Programme “European Forum Cyprus” was extended for a nine-month period and will end at the end of May 2011. Co-operation with the EU on this project, which aims at creating the preconditions for the implementation of a political solution to the Cyprus issue, continued to develop. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and its President, in particular, continued to provide its strong support for the project.

Contacts intensified towards the elaboration and signature of a regional Joint Programme in the field of the promotion and protection of minority rights in the Balkans, which will be finalised in 2011.

5. Intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity (cf. § 33-35 of the MoU)

On 7 July, the Commission published its report on the evaluation of the 2008 **year of intercultural dialogue**. This report contains numerous references to the Council of Europe.

Co-operation took place in the context of the Joint Programme “**Intercultural Cities** – governance and policies for diverse communities”, involving eleven pilot cities in the development of intercultural strategies across a range of policy domains: education, housing, urbanism, culture, health, etc.

Co-operation with the EU also took place in the framework of the Joint Programme “**European Heritage Days**”, European Heritage Days is a joint action of the CoE and the European Commission, which celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2010.

The European Commission (DG-ELARG) and the CoE continued to intensify their relations in the field of **cultural heritage** in Kosovo⁵ following the launch in October 2009 of the Joint Programme entitled “European Union and Council of Europe Support to the Promotion of Cultural Diversity in Kosovo”. In 2010, the European Commission asked the CoE to prepare a concept note, together with the beneficiaries, to request IPA 2011 funds for the continuation of the project from 2012 to 2014.

The “Integrated Rehabilitation Project Plan/Survey of the Architectural and Archaeological Heritage” (IRPP/SAAH), implemented jointly by the CoE and the European Commission (DG-EAC) in South-East Europe since 2003, as part of the “**Ljubljana Process – Funding heritage rehabilitation in South East Europe**” came to an end in 2010. As a continuation of this initiative, the “Ljubljana Process II: Rehabilitating our common heritage” project should start in early 2011 and be implemented until the end of 2013. The European Commission (DG-ELARG) and the CoE will work together to provide financial and practical support to the Regional Cooperation Council for its implementation.

There is also a joint action in favour of **cultural heritage** within the **Kyiv Initiative Regional Programme**. Following the success of the joint action on cultural heritage in South East Europe carried out since 2003, joint action with DG-EAC started in 2009 in the Caucasus and Black Sea regions. The preliminary phase of this Pilot Project for the Rehabilitation of Cultural Heritage in Historic Towns was completed in 2010.

The European Commission participated in the plenary session of the **Steering Committee for Culture** (CDCULT) in Strasbourg on 6-7 May.

The European Commission participated, as a partner, in the preparations and running of the 2010 **CultureWatchEurope** conference on “Culture and the Politics of Change”, Brussels, 3-4 September.

The European Commission participated in the “European **Cultural Routes** Meeting: Cultural Heritage/Cultural Routes/Cultural Tourism, Sustainable Balanced Cultural, Social and Economic Development through Networking and Best and Practical Operation” in Karpathas on 20-22 September.

The Vice-President of the European Commission, responsible for Industry and Entrepreneurship and the Commissioner responsible for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, together with the CoE Director General of Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport participated in the 2010 **European Tourism Day** event, entitled “The Role of European Heritage and Cultural Itineraries in the Renewed European Tourism Policy” in Brussels on 27 September.

⁵ All reference 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.

The CoE-EU partnership was presented live on Radio Suisse Romande's "La Strada" programme on the diversity of the CoE's 29 cultural routes, Bern, 23 July.

In the context of the Cultural Routes programme, a new Joint Action with the EU was launched, a study on the impact of "European Cultural Routes" on the innovation and competitiveness of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The European Parliament voted a preparatory action to support the development of cultural routes and tourism, which paved the way for a joint action with the European Commission in 2011.

The CoE's Cultural Routes were the focus of a joint event, "Europe on the move", of the CoE and the European Commission held on 27 September in Brussels.

Promotion of ideas and values fostering cultural diversity in relevant international fora (cf. § 35 of the MoU)

The Council of Europe attended, as an observer, the ordinary sessions of the conference of parties to the **UNESCO Convention on the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions** held at UNESCO Headquarters in 2010, preparing ground for further co-operation focusing on the use of the Cultural Policies Compendium. The Compendium is a permanently updated European cultural policy information and monitoring system, initiated by the Council of Europe in 1998, which is currently replicated in other World Regions ("World-CP" project).

It should be noted that a number of activities also falling within the context of intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity are to be found under point 9 on "inter-institutional co-operation". These activities are of relevance to the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre), an Enlarged Partial Agreement of the Council of Europe. In addition, a large number of activities in the intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity field fit within the context of Joint Programmes between the Council of Europe and the European Commission. Please see Joint Programmes under part 11 for further details.

6. Education, youth and the promotion of human contacts (cf. § 36-38 of the MoU)

Building a knowledge-based society and a democratic culture in Europe; support to the Bologna process (cf. § 36 of the MoU)

The CoE co-operated with the European Commission in the development of the Indicator of **language competence** EILC⁶. The indicator is being developed by the European Commission on the basis of CoE standards of language competence, the "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages". "Principles for administrative cooperation" concerning the use of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (which includes the standards) in relation to the indicator were agreed upon between the Directorate-General for Education and Culture of the European Commission and the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe.

The CoE is a member of the Expert Group for the project on **Education and Business Cooperation** conducted in 2010 by the European Training Foundation (ETF). The Council of Europe participated in the "Education and Business Cooperation in EU Neighbouring Countries" conference organised by the ETF in Turin on 29-30 March, as well as in the meeting of the Expert Group in Turin on 13 – 14 December .

Both the CoE and the European Commission continue to play active roles in the **Bologna Follow-Up Group** (BFUG) and **Board**. The BFUG met in Madrid on 17 – 18 February and in Alden-Biesen, Belgium on 24-25 August, while the Board met in Madrid on 28 January. In addition, both organisations play an active role in the Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Frameworks (which met in Brussels on 16 February and 11 June and in Strasbourg on 27 October) and the Bologna Working Group on Recognition (which met in Brussels on 16 February and 10 June and in Strasbourg on 25 October). The European Commission participated in the second meeting of national qualifications frameworks correspondents in Dublin on 16 April.

⁶ EILC = Erasmus Intensive Language Course

The CoE and the Commission also co-operate within the **European Qualifications Framework (EQF) Advisory Group** in supporting the implementation of the European Qualification Framework for lifelong learning. The sixth meeting of the EQF Advisory Group took place in Leuven on 11-12 October. The CoE participated in the working group on the relationship of sectorial qualifications with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) in Brussels on 21 January. The CoE and the European Commission co-organised a meeting of national representatives developing national qualifications frameworks in Strasbourg on 26 October.

The European Commission participated in the Bureau meeting of the **Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region** in Brussels on 1 December.

The CoE participated in the meeting of EU Directors General for Higher Education in Namur on 13-14 September.

Within the framework of the **ENIC Network** (National Information Centres on Academic Recognition and Mobility), established by the CoE and UNESCO, the Secretariat of the network is provided by the European Commission. The annual meeting of the network took place in Sèvres on 20-22 June, its bureau meeting in Rome and Brussels on 26 February and 29 November respectively and its working group on "recognition in a global context" in the Holy See on 25 February.

The CoE participated in a panel at a conference organised by the Fundamental Rights Agency and the Institute for Human Rights in Germany entitled 'Bring Human Rights to Life! - 15 Years of Human Rights Education in Germany' in Berlin on 3 December (*see also under "Cooperation with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights"*).

The CoE attended the 6th meeting of the Expert Group on Indicators on Education for Active Citizenship organised by the European Commission in Brussels on 25 October.

At the EU "People to People" conference entitled "Education in a Multicultural Society in Bosnia and Herzegovina" (May 2010, Sarajevo), the Secretariat was requested to present the CoE programme "Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education" to the participants, including the newly-adopted CoE **Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education**⁷ and all the materials produced.

The CoE Secretariat was invited to participate in discussions and a panel in the conference "Schools for Inclusive Education in the Western Balkans and Turkey" (October 2010, Sanliurfa, Turkey) sponsored by the European Training Foundation and the Turkish Ministry of National Education.

An International Task Force on Education of **Roma** (ITFER) has been established in 2010 and the representatives of the European Commission participated as a partner of DG Education in the 1st meeting of ITFER in Strasbourg on 28-29 October. The CoE invited FRA to join ITFER as one of the international partners (*see also under part 1 on "human rights and fundamental freedoms" and part 7 on "social cohesion"*).

Additional activities in field of education fit within the context of Joint Programmes between the Council of Europe and the European Commission. Please see under part 11 below on "Joint Programmes".

Please see also under part 9 below on "inter-institutional co-operation" with respect to the European Centre for Modern Languages (Enlarged partial agreement of the Council of Europe).

Co-operation in the youth field (cf. § 37 of the MoU)

The Joint Programme in the field of youth has been running since 1998 and can be considered a flagship project in co-operation between the two institutions, based on a 50%-50% partnership with shared human resources and infrastructure. The current **Framework Partnership Agreement** for the period 2010 – 2013 is focusing on knowledge-based policy making, as well as capacity-building in youth work and promoting regional co-operation within Europe and its neighbouring regions.

⁷ Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7 on the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education

The partnership activities in the field of youth were continuously implemented by a joint secretariat, located in the Directorate for Youth and Sport of the CoE and supervised by a Partnership Management Board, representing the two institutional partners. As a way of further reflecting the balance between the two institutions, a decision was taken to move two secretariat positions from Strasbourg to Brussels (to be located within the CoE Liaison Office to the EU). The main stakeholders in the youth field were represented in a consultative structure (Partnership Consultation Meeting), supporting the partnership's activities.

The EU-CoE youth partnership was closely associated with the preparation of the Belgian EU-Presidency event in Gent (conference on the History of Youth Work, 1st Youth Work Convention). It also conducted a number of activities in the field of training and policy development, in line with its approved Work Plan for 2010 (DG EAC).

Child participation is one of the three thematic pillars featuring in the 2009 - 2011 Stockholm Strategy for the programme "**Building a Europe for and with Children**". A roadmap for Council of Europe action on participation of children and young people under the age of 18 has been devised, and work has started accordingly (see also under part 1 on "*human rights and fundamental freedoms*").

In this context, a considerable number of activities in the youth sector fit within the framework of Joint Programmes between the Council of Europe and the European Commission. Please see under "Joint Programmes" in part 11.

It should be noted that a number of activities in the youth and sports sector can be found under "inter-institutional co-operation" in part 9. These activities are of relevance to the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS).

People-to-people contacts (cf. § 38 of the MoU)

Co-operation has also developed with respect to the countries participating in the **Eastern Partnership**⁸ of the European Union. A representative of the Secretariat of the Council of Europe participated in the meetings in Brussels of Platform 4 on Contacts between People on 27 May and 13 October (see also part 4 on "*democratic stability*").

7. Social Cohesion (see §§ 39-40 of the MoU)

The Secretariat of the **European Social Charter** participated in a training event for EU officials on economic, social and cultural rights in Brussels on 19 November.

The **European Committee for Social Rights** held an exchange of views with the President of the Court of Justice of the European Union at their 242nd session in Strasbourg on 15-19 March.

The European Commission was represented at the meeting of the **Committee of Experts on Social Security** (CS-SS), Strasbourg, on 1-3 June.

The **Mutual Information System on Social Protection** of the Council of Europe (MISSCEO) is the CoE counterpart of MISSOC (Mutual Information System on Social Protection in the member States of the European Union, the EEA and Switzerland), the network run by the European Commission. Both networks publish comparative tables on social protection systems in the countries in a complementary way. The CoE and the European Commission participated in each other's networks. The MISSCEO Network meeting was held in Strasbourg on 8-9 July. The Council of Europe was represented at the MISSOC Network meetings in Madrid on 20-21 May and Namur on 21-22 October.

A partnership agreement on "**Social Cohesion and Welfare for All**" was concluded in 2008 between the Directorate General of Social Cohesion of the CoE and DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the European Commission. It enabled the CoE to further explore some key aspects of the recent report of the High-level Task Force on Social Cohesion and to develop two projects in those fields: "**Intercultural competences in social services**" and "**Europe of social and shared responsibilities**". The same partners have also signed in 2010 a Joint Programme to address the question of **Human Rights of People suffering from Poverty**. The project also provides ground for co-operation with the European Social Charter and the European Court of Human Rights.

⁸ See footnote 5.

Three working groups have been organised involving the internal expertise of the Council of Europe, civil society organisations, researchers and representatives from the **European Committee for Social Cohesion** (CDCS). The European Commission participated in the plenary meeting of the CDCS in Strasbourg on 24-25 February.

The CoE participated in the “Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty through co-operation in education, training and work in EU Neighbouring countries” meeting organised by the European Parliament in Brussels on 2-3 December.

The European Commission participated in the 4th meeting of the European Co-ordination Forum for the **Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015** (CAHPAH) in Strasbourg on 27-29 September.

The European Commission participated in the Mid-Term Review Conference of the national implementation of the Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015 in Istanbul on 9-10 December, organised under the aegis of the Turkish Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers.

The Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) participated in the 3rd meeting of the Committee of Experts on **participation of people with disabilities in political and public life** (CAHPAH-PPL) in Strasbourg on 26-28 May. It presented its project in the field of electoral rights of persons with mental health problems (“see also under part 1 on “human rights and fundamental freedoms”).

The European Co-ordination Forum for the Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015 (CAHPAH) and CAHPAH-PPL contributed to the FRA Report “The Right to Political Participation of Persons with Mental Health Problems and Persons with Intellectual Disabilities” (see also under part 1 on “human rights and fundamental freedoms”).

The CoE participated in the meetings of the European Commission’s High-level Group on Disability, Brussels, 9 June and 12-13 October.

The CoE participated in the disability-related conferences of the Spanish and Belgian EU Presidencies: “Disability and Personal Autonomy through Education, Universal Accessibility and Employment”, Zaragoza, 20-21 May, and “The implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”, Brussels, 18-19 November, respectively.

The CoE participated in the EU Conference on the European Day of People with Disabilities, Brussels, 2-3 December.

The European Commission’s “European Disability Strategy 2010-2020: A Renewed Commitment to a Barrier-free Europe” makes explicit references to the CoE.

The Vice-President of the Commission, responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship participated in the **High-level Meeting on Roma** in Strasbourg on 20 October (see also under part 1 on human rights and fundamental freedoms).

The European Commission participated in the meetings of the **Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers** (MG-S-ROM) in Strasbourg on 25-26 March and Wroclaw on 18-21 October. The Coordinator of the CoE for Roma and Travellers participated at bilateral or international Roma-related coordination events/meetings (Informal Contact Group meetings under EU Council presidency in Brussels) in 2010 (see also under part 1 on human rights and fundamental freedoms).

A Member of the European Parliament (MEP) contributed with a document on Roma participation to the meeting of the Committee of Experts on Roma and Travellers (MG-S-ROM) in March 2010 and asked for the CoE’s input on the report on Roma inclusion under preparation by the European Parliament with a view to developing an EU Roma inclusion strategy (see also under part 1 on human rights and fundamental freedoms).

The Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for Roma issues and colleagues from the Directorate General of Education, Culture and Heritage, Youth and Sport participated in the meeting of the European Platform on Roma Inclusion in Brussels on 13 December, and the meeting on Monitoring and Evaluation of Roma Projects and Policies organised by the Directorate General for Regional Policy of the European Commission as part of the Pilot Project "Pan-European Coordination of Roma Integration Methods - Roma Inclusion" in Brussels on 30 November (*see also under part 1 on human rights and fundamental freedoms*).

The SRSG for Roma issues held contact meetings in Brussels with several relevant Directorates-General of the Commission in December. He also met the European Parliament Rapporteur on this issue (*see also under part 1 on human rights and fundamental freedoms*).

The European Commission participated in the Symposium on the 40th Anniversary of Council of Europe activities and action concerning Roma and Travellers in Wroclaw on 18 October (*see also under part 1 on human rights and fundamental freedoms*).

The European Commission participated in the meeting on a Cultural Roma Route in Woking on 17-19 June (*see also under part 1 on human rights and fundamental freedoms*).

An International Task Force on Education of Roma (ITFER) has been established in 2010 and the representatives of the European Commission participated as a partner of DG Education in the 1st meeting of ITFER in Strasbourg on 28-29 October. The CoE invited FRA to join ITFER as one of the international partners (*see also under part 1 on "human rights and fundamental freedoms" and part 6 on "education, youth and the promotion of human contacts"*).

In the **migration** field, the European Commission was represented at the 58th and 59th meetings of the Steering Committee of the **European Committee on Migration** (CDMG) in Strasbourg on 10-12 February and 15-16 November.

It should be noted that a number of activities also falling within the context of social cohesion are to be found under part 9 below on "inter-institutional co-operation" as these concern partial agreements. In addition, a number of activities in field of social cohesion fit within the context of Joint Programmes between the Council of Europe and the European Commission. Please see under part 11 below on "Joint Programmes".

8. Arrangements for co-operation (cf. §§ 41 - 43 of the MoU) and meetings and mechanisms for strengthening co-operation (cf. §§ 44- 45 of the MoU)

The **Secretary General** met the President of the European Council (Brussels, 2 March), the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission (Strasbourg, 15 June), the Vice-President of the Commission responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship (Brussels, 15-16 February; Strasbourg, 7 July and 20 October) and the Commissioner responsible for Home Affairs (Brussels, 15-16 February). As of June, the Secretary General and the Commissioner responsible for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy decided to meet regularly on the occasion of European Parliament plenary sessions in Strasbourg. Meetings were also held with the President of the European Parliament (Strasbourg, 25 November), other Members of the European Parliament (Brussels, 2 March), the Director of the Fundamental Rights Agency (Strasbourg, 17 March and 2 November) and the EU Special Representative for the Republic of Moldova (Strasbourg, 1 June).

The Secretary General met the Spanish Minister for Justice to discuss EU accession to the ECHR on the occasion of his participation in a seminar on "Fundamental Rights in the EU in view of the accession of the Union to the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms", organised by the Spanish Presidency, in co-operation with the Fundamental Rights Agency in Madrid on 2 February. The Secretary General also met the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, on behalf of the Belgian EU Presidency, in Brussels on 30 September.

The Secretary General participated in the EU-Balkans Ministerial Conference in Sarajevo on 2 June, which brought together Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the EU member States, representatives from the Russian Federation, Turkey and the United States, as well as several international organisations.

The **Deputy Secretary General** met the Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship (Strasbourg, 14 October), the Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy (Strasbourg, 22 September), the Commissioner for Home Affairs (Strasbourg, 20 October) and the Commissioner responsible for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth (Antwerp, 22 October; Strasbourg, 15 December). She also met Members of the European Parliament (Strasbourg, 21 January and 19 October).

The Deputy Secretary General also participated in the informal EU Conference of Sports Ministers in Antwerp on 21-22 October.

The following representatives of the Council of Europe took part in meetings of the Council Working Group (of the European Union) on relations with the OSCE and the Council of Europe (**COSCE**) in Brussels in 2010:

- the President and Secretary of the Venice Commission (20 May);
- the Director of Monitoring of the Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs (24 September);
- the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Organisational Development and Reform (10 December)

The Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship participated in the **Conference on the Future of the European Court of Human Rights** in Interlaken on 18-19 February 2010

The Special Representative of the Secretary General/Director of the Liaison Office with the European Union participated in the EU-Western Balkans Ministerial Forum on Justice and Home Affairs, organised by the Belgian EU Presidency in Brussels on 23-24 November.

As mentioned in part 1 above, meetings between the **Troika of the Article 36 Committee** of the European Union and the Council of Europe took place in Strasbourg on 21 June and Brussels on 6 December. An exchange of views was held on respective developments in the field of justice, human rights and the rule of law, where issues of co-operation in the criminal field were discussed in detail.

As also mentioned in part 1 above, the **Council of Europe/European Commission Senior Officials' Meeting** took place in Brussels on 8 December. This meeting represented an opportunity for officials from various Directorate Generals of both organisations to overview the co-operation and coordinate it for the future. It was preceded by the "scoreboard" meeting on Joint Programmes between the Council of Europe and the European Union on 7 December.

Regular Council of Europe-European Commission consultation meetings took place during the course of 2010 at senior and working level.

In addition, since the signing of the MoU, co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union has always been addressed during meetings between the Secretary General and/or the Deputy Secretary General with European Union officials **in the margins of international gatherings**, and with senior level officials from member states.

The **Ministers' Deputies** held an exchange of views with the Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship on 7 July. The **Chair of the Committee of Ministers** met the former in Brussels on 19 July and discussed various aspects of co-operation in the field of justice and human rights.

In addition, as mentioned in part 1 above, the **Rapporteur Group on External Relations of the Ministers' Deputies** held an exchange of views with the Chairperson of the Management Board and the Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights on 2 November.

9. Inter-institutional co-operation (cf. §§ 46 - 50 of the MoU)

Parliamentary Assembly (cf. § 46 of the MoU)

Inter-institutional relations between the Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) and the European Parliament (EP) were further strengthened in the spirit of the Juncker report. PACE President and bodies had regular contacts and meetings with high representatives and relevant bodies of the EP, as well as with representatives of the European Commission and the EU Presidency.

On 8 March, PACE President held talks with EP President in Strasbourg. Also on 8 March, he met the leaders of the EP political groups, as well as the European Commissioner for Enlargement and the European Neighbourhood Policy. Discussions focused on ways of strengthening co-operation between PACE and the EP, including the accession of the EU to the ECHR and the role of the two institutions in conflict prevention and resolution. The prospect of integrating Belarus more closely and the opening-up of PACE to non-member countries through the “partner for democracy” status were also discussed. PACE President also used the opportunity to hold a working lunch with former PACE members who are currently Members of the European Parliament (MEPs).

On 18 March, the EP held a hearing in Brussels on the "Institutional Aspects of the **Accession of the European Union to the ECHR**". PACE was represented by the 3rd Vice-Chairperson of its Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights (AS/Jur).

On 19 May, the EP adopted the resolution on the institutional aspects of the accession of the European Union to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (2009/2241(INI)).

On 2 September, a meeting was held in Brussels between PACE Presidential Committee and the Conference of Presidents of the EP, which focused on the future EU accession to the ECHR and its consequences for the roles of the EP and PACE in the process of electing judges to the European Court of Human Rights. Following these discussions, it was decided to ask PACE and EP Secretaries General to prepare a memorandum on the composition and terms of reference of the informal body referred to in the EP's Resolution of 19 May.

At its meeting on 8 October, PACE Bureau agreed on the principle of establishing an informal joint EP-PACE body to coordinate information sharing between them, focusing on issues relating to the EU's accession to the ECHR. The Bureau agreed on the composition and terms of reference of the PACE side of such a body, attaching particular importance to the arrangements for participation of EP representatives in the election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights.

On 13 October, PACE Secretary General sent a letter to the EP Secretary General informing him of the Bureau's decisions and suggesting a meeting to exchange views and take stock of progress on the EP side. A meeting was subsequently held on 20 October between PACE Director General and the EP Secretary General.

On 16 November, PACE President addressed a letter to the President of the EP on ways of advancing the work of the informal body established to coordinate information sharing between PACE and the EP, focusing on issues related to the accession of the EU to the European Convention of Human Rights. On 13 January 2011, the European Parliament Conference of Presidents agreed on the setting-up of the informal body. On the EP side, it will be composed of the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Constitutional Affairs Committee, the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Civil Liberties Committee, the Rapporteur of the “EU accession to the ECHR” report and of one representative each for the seven EP Political Groups.

In the field of **election observation**, PACE has enjoyed close working relations with the EP. This applied, for example, to the observation of the presidential elections in Ukraine (first round on 17 January and second round on 7 February). The EP, together with PACE, took part in the international election observation missions in Azerbaijan (7 November), and took part in the international election observation mission in Moldova (28 November).

Reports on election observations and other relevant research and information are regularly exchanged. On 23 September, PACE Secretariat was represented at the meeting of secretariats of international organisations active in the field of election observation in the OSCE area, organised by the Secretariat of the EP Election Co-ordination Group. The purpose of the meeting was to improve co-operation in the field of election observations. Further meetings are scheduled for 2011.

At **committee** level, co-operation between PACE and the EP generally takes the following forms:

- organisation of joint meetings and/or joint hearings on matters of common interest;
- regular contacts between the Chairpersons or Bureaux of corresponding committees;
- co-operation in the preparation of reports dealt with by corresponding committees (rapporteurs exchanging information and participating in meetings of the other committee, where appropriate);
- participation of members of a committee of one institution in events (colloquies etc.) or committee meetings of the other.

On 9 March in Strasbourg, the then-Chairperson of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education (AS/Cult), met the Chairperson of the EP's Committee on Culture and Education. One of the subjects discussed was the **Bologna Process**. The EP representative fully agreed that parliaments should be involved in the process.

PACE's Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee (AS/Soc) had several exchanges with a member of the EP Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety on the report on "**The handling of the H1N1 pandemic: more transparency needed**". The EP representative participated in a hearing of experts organised by AS/Soc on 29 March in Paris. At the latter's initiative, an EP written declaration signed by around 200 MEPs was presented in May officially calling for an EP inquiry committee into the handling of the H1N1 virus outbreak. As the request was turned down by the EP Conference of Presidents, several groups expressed their interest in drawing up their own report on the management of the H1N1 influenza pandemic. The EP representative invited the former PACE rapporteur to a hearing on this topic organised by the EP Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety to be held on 9 February 2011.

On 10 June, the EP's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs and the Committee on Women's rights and Gender Equality jointly organised a seminar on "**Combating and Preventing Trafficking in Human Beings**". The Chairperson of PACE's Sub-Committee on trafficking in human beings participated in the panels, presenting the work of the Assembly, as well as that of GRETA.

Between 7 and 11 June, the rapporteur of the Political Affairs Committee (AS/Pol) made a fact-finding visit to the EU institutions in Brussels with a view to preparing her report on "**The Impact of the Lisbon Treaty on the Council of Europe**". She met with MEPs, high-level representatives of the European Commission, as well as members of the Council of the European Union's secretariat.

On 14 July, a PACE member held an exchange of views with the EP Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality to discuss the promotion of the Council of Europe **Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings** (CETS No. 197), the work of the intergovernmental **Ad Hoc Committee on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence** (CAHVIO), and the issue of **access of women to high level/executive posts**. Bilateral meetings were held with the Chairperson of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality of the EP (FEMM), with the Chairperson of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE), with the Rapporteur on Equality between Women and Men in the European Union, and with the Co-Rapporteur on the draft directive on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and EPP Co-ordinator of the LIBE Committee. One of main concerns of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (AS/Ega) regarding trafficking and violence against women is that the CoE and the EU should work hand in hand to avoid duplication of efforts and the risk of conflicting standards. In this regard, it advocates EU accession to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and to the **future Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence**.

From 13 to 15 September, in response to an invitation from the EP President, addressed to PACE President and a member of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs (AS/Ena), took part in the 9th Conference of Parliamentarians from the Arctic Region.

On 16 and 17 September, at its meeting in Tbilisi, the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights (AS/Jur) held an exchange of views with the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Human Rights of the EP Foreign Affairs Committee. Issues of mutual interest were discussed, including the **death penalty** and "**human rights and business**", as well as the action that might be taken in response to the report adopted at the Assembly's June part-session on **legal remedies for human rights violations in the North-Caucasus region**.

On 18 November, AS/Pol held a hearing on the impact of the Lisbon Treaty on PACE and the EP. The Chairperson of the EP's Sub-Committee on Human Rights took part in the hearing. In general, AS/Pol has made it a priority to enhance dialogue and co-operation with the EP in the light of the opportunities offered by the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty.

On 24 November, a PACE representative took part in an informal meeting of the EP's "Friends of Council of Europe" in Strasbourg on "**violence against women**".

On 25-26 November, AS/Ena held a conference in Strasbourg on **nuclear energy**, a conference where counterparts from the respective EP committee, including the Chairperson of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy of the EP, took part either as speakers or chairpersons in various sessions.

On 30 November, representatives of AS/Pol and AS/Jur took part in a public hearing on **human rights in the Western Balkans** organised by the EP.

On 9 December, a PACE representative took part in the meeting of the parliamentary Troika on **Belarus**, which took place in Brussels, on the December presidential elections and met with the Chairman of the EP Delegation for relations with Belarus. They published a joint statement prior to the elections. Furthermore, AS/Pol invited the members of the Parliamentary Troika on Belarus, the Chairman of the EP Delegation for relations with Belarus and the Chairperson of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's Working Group on Belarus, together with PACE rapporteur on Belarus to an exchange of views, which took place on 24 January 2011.

The Secretaries General of PACE and the EP meet periodically to discuss matters of common interest.

PACE and EP Secretariats jointly manage the **European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation** (ECPRD).

A parliamentary component of the **Joint Council of Europe and European Commission Democracy Support Programme for the Republic of Moldova** has been prepared. The project is implemented in close co-operation with the EP Office for Promotion of Parliamentary Democracy (OPPD). A study visit was organised for the delegation from the Parliament of Moldova to the EP Office in Luxembourg on 21 and 22 June and a study visit, focusing on the work of the EP committees, was made to the EP Office in Brussels on 28 and 29 September.

Contact is maintained between PACE and EPTA (European Parliamentary Technology Assessment Network) at secretariat level. The Head of the Culture and Sustainable Development Department of PACE Secretariat participated in the Council meeting which took place on 2 November in Copenhagen.

Commissioner for Human Rights (cf. § 47 of the MoU)

During 2010, the Commissioner for Human Rights pursued his regular meetings with members of the European Commission with duties related to human rights. In March and June, he met the EU Commissioner for Home Affairs. They discussed the situation of **asylum seekers** and the EU asylum policy, with particular reference to **unaccompanied minors** and, more broadly, the implementation of the EU **Stockholm Programme** on freedom, security and justice. In April and September, the Commissioner for Human Rights had talks with the Vice-President of the European Commission, responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship. The discussions with the Vice-President focused on the situation of **Roma, children's rights** and **the protection of privacy in counter-terrorism measures**.

In April and December, the Commissioner for Human Rights met the EU Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy. The EU's **European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) and the Eastern Partnership (EaP)**, with particular reference to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Georgia and Turkey, were raised with the Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy. In December, the Commissioner for Human Rights held talks with the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. Discussions with the latter focused on the situation of **Roma** and the Commission's initiative "European Platform against **Poverty and Social Exclusion**". Information on the results of the Commissioner's country monitoring was also exchanged with relevant Commission services during the year.

The Commissioner held several meetings in 2010 with the Chair of the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights. Issues related to the protection of **human rights defenders** were a special focus of the talks. Following his visit to Kosovo⁹, the Commissioner received a group of MEPs in March to exchange views on **forced returns** to Kosovo¹⁰ and the **human rights of Roma** in Europe. In December, the Commissioner opened the exhibition "Andrei D. Sakharov: Alarm and Hope" in the EP in Strasbourg. The Commissioner maintained regular contacts in Strasbourg with the European Ombudsman.

The working relationship with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) was further developed in 2010. In November, the Commissioner met the Chairperson of the FRA Management Board and the FRA Director. The discussions focused on the situation of **Roma, migrants and asylum seekers**. The Commissioner's Office provided expertise for the FRA project on joined-up governance with a particular focus on **implementing human rights at the local level**. Information and data on the **human rights situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons (LGBT)** were exchanged frequently in the context of the Commissioner's Europe-wide study on **discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity**. The Commissioner's Office participated in the Fundamental Rights Conference on **children's rights** organised by FRA and the Belgian EU Presidency in December.

Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) (cf. § 47 of the MoU)

The CPT's cooperation with EU institutions continued to grow in intensity and fruitful links have been being developed with relevant officials.

In the context of the implementation of the **Stockholm Programme**, the CPT has been represented at meetings organised by the European Commission in preparation of the Green Paper on **detention issues** in the EU, due to be published in April 2011. Similarly, CPT has taken part in experts' meetings organised by the European Commission in relation to strengthening **procedural rights of suspected and accused persons in criminal proceedings**, most recently at a meeting organised on 11-12 October that addressed the key issue of access to a lawyer. Furthermore, in March, CPT's Executive Secretary took part in a **training programme on human rights monitoring** organised by the European Commission for its officials and, on this occasion, he also had meetings with representatives of several Commission departments.

On 23 June, CPT's President addressed the EP's Sub Committee on Human Rights, on the occasion of the International Day in support of **victims of torture**. CPT was also represented at the conference organised by FRONTEX on 25 May, on the occasion of the Agency's fifth anniversary, as well as at a two-day meeting (4-5 November) organised by FRA on the **fundamental rights of persons with intellectual disabilities or mental health problems**. There will be further contacts between CPT and FRONTEX representatives in early 2011, in order to discuss matters of mutual interest.

European Commission against Racism and Intolerance and the European Union (cf. § 47 of the MoU)

In 2010, the Secretariat of the **European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)** continued its working relations with the European Commission. ECRI's Secretariat and the relevant Secretariat of the European Commission kept each other informed of important developments in their work and exchanged information on subjects of common interest, such as legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination.

⁹ All reference 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 (1999) and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

¹⁰ *Idem*

The European Commission enjoys observer status with the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance and a representative attended two plenary meetings of ECRI in 2010 (51st and 52nd plenary meetings on 28-30 April and 22-25 June respectively).

ECRI participated in the 4th. Equality Summit on “Equality and Diversity in Employment” in Brussels on 15-16 November, organised by the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union with the support of the European Commission.

Partial Agreements (cf. § 48 of the MoU)

For information on co-operation with the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), see under part 3 on “democracy and good governance” above.

The pace of exchanges between the **Group of States against Corruption (GRECO)** and relevant EU bodies increased during 2010, in particular, as regards the follow-up to the Stockholm Programme in which the Council of the European Union invited the European Commission to develop a comprehensive anti-corruption policy in close co-operation with GRECO and to submit a report on the modalities for the Union to accede to GRECO. Following an informal meeting at the Directorate General Justice, Freedom and Security (JLS) of the European Commission in May, GRECO held detailed discussions with representatives of the Secretariats of the European Commission and the Council of the EU, where it stressed that accession of the EU to GRECO represented a unique opportunity both for the Union and GRECO to reinforce the coherence and, hence, the efficiency of action to fight corruption in Europe. These matters were pursued further at Bureau and secretariat level and resulted in a provisional common understanding of the key issues which need to be clarified in connection with EU participation in GRECO and GRECO’s contribution to the Commission’s own anti-corruption endeavours.

Moreover, GRECO continued to provide input to consultation meetings with the European Commission for the preparation of EU Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy progress review reports and was represented at a number of events organised by the EU, including a workshop on “Ethics in society at all levels: political, civil society, media and business”, organised within the framework of the European Commission Technical Assistance Information Exchange Instrument (TAIEX) in Budva, Montenegro, on 6-7 April and an international conference on “Corruption prevention in the midst of crisis?” organised by the *dbb akademie* in co-operation with the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) in Cologne on 22 - 23 November.

With respect to co-operation between the **Pompidou Group** and the European Union, in 2010, contacts have continued with the European Union Council’s Horizontal Drugs Group and the EMCDDA (European Monitoring Centre on Drugs and Drug Addictions) on the topic of the improvement of European Drug policies based on scientific evidence.

The **Council of Europe Development Bank** (CEB) is a co-signatory of the Neighbourhood Investment Facility (NIF) Framework Arrangement, which entered into force on 21 December 2009. The NIF aims to combine donations from the EU and donor countries (via the NIF Trust Fund) with loans from financial institutions, including the CEB, EIB and EBRD, for the benefit of countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy.

Since 2009, the CEB has been a full member of the JESSICA Steering Committee (Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas). The purpose of this initiative, launched by the European Commission in 2006, is to promote sustainable urban development and regeneration through financial engineering mechanisms using structural funds resources (REGIO).

The **European Centre for Modern Languages** (ECML) intensified efforts to establish a closer working relationship with the Multilingualism Policy Unit of the Commission in 2010. Representatives from the Policy Unit took part in the launch of the INGO Professional Network Forum, the 15th anniversary event of the ECML and the meeting of the Centre’s Governing Board. A meeting with the Director General, DG Education and Culture in December focused on developing possible further areas of co-operation and the Centre’s special support activity “Enhancing Romani language education in schools in Europe” received funding from the Commission under the Lifelong Learning Programme for its activities in 2011-2012.

Eurimages is essentially a co-production fund supporting European cinematographic works throughout its 34 member States. Synergies have continued to be exploited between Eurimages and MEDIA 2007 as regards distribution and exhibition in countries which do not have access to the EU support programmes.

The European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA) and the European Union pursued co-operation in 2010.

Further to the establishment of the **Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)** in May 2007 and taking account of the “White Paper on Sport” of the European Commission (July 2007), contacts between the Commission and the Council of Europe were intense and fruitful throughout 2010 in the light of the new EU competence on sport provided by the Lisbon Treaty. An exchange of views between the Council of Europe and the European Commission on future co-operation in sport took place in Brussels on 29 January.

During a meeting between the Deputy Secretary General and the Commissioner responsible for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth in Strasbourg on 15 December, the latter confirmed the Commission’s wish to seek EU accession to the anti-doping convention.

The European Commission took part in the meeting of the Governing board of the EPAS in Strasbourg on 4-5 May.

The European Commission took part in the meeting of the Ad hoc European Committee for the World Anti-Doping Agency (CAHAMA) in Strasbourg on 5 May, 9 September and 10 November. The Commission was also represented in the meetings of the Monitoring Group of the anti-doping convention on 3-4 May and 8-9 November as well as the Advisory Group meeting on Legal issues in Paris on 15-16 April.

An exchange of views between CAHAMA and the EU working group on anti-doping took place in Brussels on 13 January.

The Council of Europe participated in the EU Working Group on Anti-Doping in Brussels on 14 January and 27 May.

The Council of Europe participated in the EU Sports Directors meeting held in Barcelona on 25-26 February and in Genval, Belgium, on 16-17 September.

In addition, the Council of Europe attended the EU Conference of Ministers in charge of Sport held in Madrid on 20-21 April and in Antwerp on 21-22 October. The former was preceded by the EU Sport forum, held in Madrid on 19 April, where the Council of Europe was also represented.

In November 2008, the **North-South Centre (NSC)** signed a joint management agreement with the European Commission aimed at developing a comprehensive set of activities in the fields of global citizenship education and Euro-African youth co-operation. This project is being implemented over a three year period (2008-2011) and an agreement in principle has already been reached for its extension/renewal beyond 2011.

Since 2009, the North-South Centre has been entrusted with the implementation of the Euro-African dimension to the current EC/CoE youth partnership (co-financed by the European Commission and the NSC).

Conferences of Specialised Ministers (cf. § 48 of the MoU):

The European Commission participated in the following Conferences of Specialised Ministers:

- Informal Conference of Ministers responsible for **Sport** (Baku, 22 September);
- 15th session of the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for **Spatial/Regional Planning** (CEMAT) on “*Future Challenges: Sustainable Spatial Development of the European Continent in a Changing World*” and 40th Anniversary of the CEMAT in Moscow on 8-9 July; and
- Conference of Ministers responsible for **Gender Equality** in Baku on 24-25 May

The Presidency of the Council of the European Union was represented at the 30th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of **Justice** (Istanbul, 24-26 November).

Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress) (cf. § 49 of the MoU)

Co-operation between the Congress and the Committee of the Regions (CoR) is taking place within the framework of the revised co-operation agreement of November 2009.

The two bodies jointly organised activities and events, held consultations between CoR Commissions and Congress Committees, took part in each other's activities and exchanged information on issues of common interest. In 2010, co-operation was centred on **democracy and good governance, new challenges to the rule of law and fundamental freedoms**. They dealt with the following specific areas: **multilevel governance, promotion of fundamental rights, election monitoring, the fight against corruption at local and regional level and the European Neighbourhood Policy**.

The working relationships that the two bodies established in 2009 **on local and regional democracy in Mediterranean countries**, produced positive results: the Congress obtained Observer status within the CoR Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly (ARLEM), whose inaugural meeting took place in Barcelona on 21 January. Subsequently, the Congress also took part in ARLEM thematic Commission meetings in Brussels on 2 July.

The "Contact Group Congress/Committee of the Regions", that coordinates and implements co-operation between the two bodies, held its meeting on 6 May 2010.

On 7 May 2010, Congress and CoR co-organised an international conference on "**Fighting corruption at local and regional level**". Co-operation will be brought forward in 2011 via common initiatives on ethical behaviour and duties that may involve corruption risks.

The CoR was associated with the Congress in the **observation missions of municipal elections** in Georgia (26 May) and in Ukraine (31 October). These missions enabled the two bodies to work in synergy to assess the situation of local and regional democracy in the field and to coordinate their respective positions.

On 1 June, the President of the Congress' Monitoring Committee took part in the Vienna meeting (organised by FRA): "Connecting rights: a joined-up governance approach to human rights implementation".

On multilevel governance, the Congress adopted an opinion on the CoR White Paper on Multilevel Governance. In addition, the Secretary General of the Congress took part in the CoR Ateliers on Multilevel Governance in Brussels on 22 June.

The Congress was represented at the CoR consultative meeting on the Eastern Partnership in Brussels on 30 June and Congress and CoR rapporteurs on local and regional democracy in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and the Ukraine held a joint meeting in Brussels on 3 September. The rapporteurs exchanged views on the opinions prepared by the Commission for Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External Affairs of the Committee of the Regions (CIVEX), as well as on the Congress' activities in these countries.

The Congress took part in CoR Open Days by setting-up an information stand in October and was represented in the meeting of the Commission for Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External Affairs of the Committee of the Regions on 12 October.

Similarly, in October, a stand promoting the Congress' European Local Democracy Week (ELDW) was organised at the Committee of the Regions' Headquarters during the Covenant of Mayors. The ELDW was given visibility by the Committee of the Regions' communication channels.

On 27 October, during the 19th Plenary session, the President of the Committee of the Regions addressed a statement to the Congress on the co-operation between the two institutions.

On 11 November, an inter-secretariat meeting took place in Brussels for organising proposals of co-operation and joint actions for 2011.

Finally, the Secretary General of the Congress took part in the Annual Dialogue on Multilevel Protection of Fundamental Rights in Vienna on 26 November. A presentation was made on the Congress' contribution on strengthening the delivery of human rights at local and regional level.

Civil Society (cf. § 50 of the MoU)

The Council of Europe participated in the panel on the EU's relations with regional human rights mechanisms at the 12th NGO Forum on Human Rights, organised by the Belgian EU presidency in Brussels on 12-13 July.

Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs)

In 2010, the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) of the Council of Europe has actively contributed to the implementation of the MoU, focusing on human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and good governance and democratic stability.

A member of the Bureau of the Conference of INGOs participated in the 3rd. Fundamental Rights Platform meeting organised by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights on 15-16 April 2010 in Vienna.

The Conference of INGOs adopted in October 2009 the "Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-making Process". The guidelines for interaction between NGOs and authorities are of interest both at the level of member States and at the EU level.

The President of the Conference of INGOs participated in the conference on "A structured civil dialogue for a citizen-friendly European Union" on 22 March organised by the "European Civil society Organisations and Networks' Liaison Group" and the "Various Interests Group" of the European Economic and Social Committee.

The Conference of INGOs organised on 3 December a co-ordination meeting to develop strategic partnerships for the implementation of the Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-making Process in which a dozen NGOs promoting citizens / NGO participation in political decision-making processes participated.

On 28 April, the Conference of INGOs organised, in partnership with the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, the European Biodiversity Day, in which representatives of the European Commission and the European Environment Agency participated.

The Conference of INGOs follows closely the civil society dimension of the Eastern Partnership. Its Civil Society and Democracy Committee invited the Spokesperson of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum on 26 January and a member of the Steering Committee on 5 October.

10. Institutional presence (cf. § 51 of the MoU)

The **Council of Europe Liaison Office with the European Union** in Brussels has been actively involved in promoting the CoE's work vis-à-vis European Union institutions. In that perspective, it organised and/or facilitated in 2010 a large number of meetings and contacts between senior officials of both organisations, as well as meetings with media representatives. In addition, through bilateral contacts with senior officials of the European Union, the Brussels Office regularly reported on important developments related to the European Union and advised on initiatives related to these.

In the context of the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, which significantly increased the powers of the European Parliament, 2010 noted a marked increase of the activities of the Brussels Office with respect to the latter. In particular, the Brussels Office was present at all hearings of Commissioners designate of relevance to the CoE's fields of competence and the Special Representative of the Secretary General/Director of the Brussels Office and/or other colleagues regularly attended hearings on relevant topical issues.

The Liaison Office was further reinforced in 2010 with the appointment of a special adviser on Joint Programmes with the EU, a press officer and a youth sector research and policy officer.

The newly-created **Delegation of the European Union to the Council of Europe** in Strasbourg moved into its premises on 1 September and was subsequently reinforced with the appointment of three Deputies to the Head of Delegation. This will strongly contribute to the improvement of cooperation between the two organisations.

11. Joint Programmes (cf. § 52 of the MoU)

53 Joint Programmes, most of them multi-annual, were active in 2010, with a cumulative budgetary envelope of € 87.6 million (€ 80 million in 2009). The European Union contributed € 73.7 million (84%), and the Council of Europe € 13.9 million (16 %). The annual budgetary envelope for 2010 (prorated) was € 27.3 million, to which the European Union contributed € 22.8 million (84 %) and the Council of Europe € 4.5 million (16 %).

During 2010, **21 new Joint Programmes and Joint Actions were initiated**, with a cumulative budgetary envelope of € 31.9 million (2009: € 27.8 million). The European Union contributed € 27.5 million (86 %), and the Council of Europe € 4.4 million (14 %).

The **geographical focus** of Joint Programmes and Actions, in terms of budgetary envelope, remained Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus, followed by the countries of South-East Europe and Turkey. Most Joint Programmes were directed to **specific countries**, while a number of programmes were **regional or multilateral**.

In October, the European Commission launched the **Evaluation of the Commission's Co-operation with the Council of Europe**. The scope of the evaluation is to evaluate the overall EC co-operation and partnership with the CoE, including Joint Programmes, for the period 2000-2010. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess to what extent the Commission's interaction with the CoE system has been relevant, efficient, effective and visible in supporting a sustainable impact for the protection, promotion and dissemination of European values on the European continent and beyond. The Directorate of Internal Oversight is an interlocutor for the evaluators and seeks to facilitate the evaluation process.

Within the framework of enhancing understanding of EC practices on monitoring and evaluation, the Directorate of Internal Oversight invited an EC official to present the Results-Oriented Monitoring system to an audience of around 50 CoE project managers involved in EU/CoE Joint Programmes on 10 June.

12. Visibility of the Partnership (cf. §§ 53-54 of the MoU)

All high-level political contacts and many other joint events are the subject of **extensive media promotion**.

To mark the **European Day against the Death Penalty** on 10 October, the Secretary General and the Vice-President of the European Commission/High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy reaffirmed their opposition to the use of capital punishment in all circumstances, and their commitment to the abolition of the death penalty worldwide. In addition, an exhibition of posters from the competition "Death is not justice", held under the patronage of the Secretary General, was organised in Minsk. The exhibition was preceded by a press conference, where representatives from the CoE, EU and Belarus stated their commitment to the cause of abolition.

The **Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)** was also present in a number of CoE events throughout 2010, notably the high-level launch of the campaign against sexual abuse in November, held in Rome, and events organised within the framework of the anti-discrimination campaign. The CoE was also one of the main participants in FRA's 2010 Fundamental Rights Conference, in Brussels, on the theme of children's rights. The CoE provided several high-level speakers at the event, as well as an information stand.

The Council of Europe systematically targets **Brussels-based journalists** specialising in European affairs (see also part 10 on "institutional presence"). Regular **media events**, on issues such as the EU's forthcoming accession to the European Convention on Human Rights, were organised in Brussels and during the European Parliament' sessions in Strasbourg, involving CoE senior officials. Visibility of both the Council of Europe in Brussels and joint initiatives and events has also been raised by the work of a **Council of Europe press officer** appointed to the Liaison Office in Brussels in September 2010.

Care is taken to ensure that the **visual identity** of both organisations appear on all materials associated with Joint Programmes and other visibility measures are foreseen under Joint Programme contracts.

13. Follow-up (cf. § 55 of the MoU)

Formal, highest level follow-up to the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding as a whole has been undertaken within the framework of the **Senior Officials' Meeting** (Brussels, 8 December) and on the occasion of exchanges of views of the **Ministers' Deputies** on co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union.

A report on co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union was submitted to the Ministers at the **120th Ministerial Session of the Committee of Ministers** held on 11 May 2010 in Strasbourg (see CM(2010)52 final and addenda).

At the above-mentioned Ministerial Session, the Committee of Ministers took the following decisions with regard to relations between the Council of Europe and the European Union:

“Relations between the Council of Europe and the European Union

Decisions

The Committee of Ministers

1. welcomed the substantial progress in the co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union based on the Memorandum of Understanding, as reflected in the report prepared in accordance with the decisions adopted at their 119th Session (documents CM(2010)52 final, CM(2010)52 add final), and emphasised the importance of ongoing and forward looking co-operation. The Committee of Ministers will continue to give priority to the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding;

2. noted that the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights on 1 December 2009 has created new opportunities to enhance further the values-based partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Union, with a view to achieving a strong and coherent system of human rights protection in Europe; it welcomed the commitment of the European Union to accede to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), confirmed its own commitment to this process, facilitated by the entry into force on 1 June 2010 of Protocol No. 14 to the ECHR, and called for the early completion of negotiations and a rapid accession;

3. recalled that co-operation should also ensure coherence in the drafting of Council of Europe standards and European Union legislation, through consultations at an early stage; it called for stronger synergies between Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and the European Union, in particular in the context of the implementation of its Stockholm programme;

4. noted with satisfaction the co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union in the countries participating in the European Neighbourhood Policy, in particular those in its Eastern Partnership, or the Enlargement Process;

5. decided to explore, where appropriate and in close co-operation with the European Union, how the accession of the European Union to relevant Council of Europe conventions may be facilitated, and welcomed the further promotion of Council of Europe standards by the European Union in its relations with third countries;

6. welcomed the increase in the volume of Joint Programmes between the Council of Europe and the European Union, which are an efficient co-operation tool to support the reform agenda of the partner countries and thus to promote and protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe; noted that the current reform of the Council of Europe's external presence should have a positive impact on the design and implementation of Joint Programmes;

7. encouraged the further development of dialogue and co-operation between all relevant bodies of the two organisations, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding, in particular between the Commissioner for Human Rights and the European Union, in order to foster their strategic and complementary partnership;

8. encouraged the continuation of co-operation in the field of intercultural dialogue and social cohesion on the basis of the Memorandum of Understanding.”