
**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND THE EUROPEAN UNION:
OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES (1 JANUARY-31 DECEMBER 2011)**

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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 2011 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 2011.

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 EU 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 of Europe as "the Europe-wide reference source for human rights", as referred to in the MoU, is also 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 some of 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. The Delegation of the European Union to the Council of Europe also regularly attends the CM's Human Rights meetings where the execution of the judgments of the ECtHR is discussed.

Modalities of co-operation were discussed during other meetings, in particular, those between the **Council of Europe and the Troika of the Article 36 Committee of the European Union** (Strasbourg, 14 June 2011; Brussels, 16 December 2011).

With regard to dialogue with the **Court of Justice of the European Union**, the **European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR)** hosted the annual meeting of the two Courts on 3 October 2011 at which the participants reviewed recent developments in their case-law on human rights, and discussed some of the practical aspects of EU accession.

Please note that the annual consultation meetings in Strasbourg on the progress made by candidate countries 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, the opinions of the Venice Commission 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 CoE and the European Union co-organised the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth meetings of the CDDH¹ Informal Working Group on EU Accession (CDDH-EU) to the European Convention on Human Rights in Strasbourg on 25-28 January, 15-18 March, 10-13 May and 20-24 June 2011 respectively. The European Commission was represented at the subsequent extraordinary meeting of the Steering Committee for Human Rights (12-14 October 2011) on **EU accession to the European Convention on Human Rights**.

On 11 November 2011, the Secretary General met the Vice-President of the European Commission, responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship to discuss EU accession to the European Convention of Human Rights (*see also part 8 on "Arrangements for co-operation and meetings and mechanisms for strengthening co-operation"*).

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

Both the CoE and the EU have increased their focus on **Roma** issues and this has led to an intensification of co-operation and contacts in 2011. The EU Council (EPSCO²) conclusions on an EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020 of 19 May 2011 invite the Commission and EU member States to draw on the experience of

¹ Steering Committee for Human Rights

² Employment and Social Affairs Committee

international organisations such as the CoE, and, in this context, refer to the Strasbourg Declaration on Roma, adopted by CoE member States at the High-level Meeting of 20 October 2010.

The Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for Roma Issues and his team have had frequent contacts with the Commission and the successive EU Council Presidencies in 2011. This included presentations on the implementation of the Strasbourg Declaration on Roma of 20 October 2010:

- to the Hungarian EU presidency in Budapest on 14 January 2011;
- at the 5th. EU Roma Platform meeting in Budapest on 7 April 2011;
- at the Conference on Democracy & Human Rights in Budapest on 28 June 2011;
- at the 6th EU Roma Platform under the Polish EU presidency in Brussels on 17 and 18 November 2011;
- at the Informal Contact Group of international institutions and organisations dealing with Roma issues (ICG), held under the Hungarian presidency of the European Union in Brussels on 18 February 2011; and
- at the Informal Contact Group of international institutions and organisations dealing with Roma issues (ICG), held under the Polish presidency of the European Union, in Brussels, on 18 November 2011.

In September 2011, the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion met with the Commissioner for Human Rights to discuss potential co-operation with the Council of Europe in the area of Roma inclusion.

The European Commission was represented at the 1st Meeting of the Ad hoc Committee of Experts on Roma Issues (CAHROM) in Strasbourg on 30 and 31 March 2011 and at the 2nd meeting on 22-25 November 2011 in Istanbul.

The European Commission was invited to the 'Summit of Mayors on Roma' organised by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe to present the EU financial support for Roma inclusion.

On 6 July 2011, the Council of Europe and the European Commission intensified their efforts to improve the situation of the Roma minority within European society by agreeing on joint action on the training of Roma Mediators (ROMED). This ROMED Programme has been implemented by a contribution agreement signed on 6 July 2011 and renewed on 22 March 2012, with a view to training 1,000 school, culture and health mediators over eighteen months.

Throughout 2011, representatives of the CoE SRSG Roma Support Team participated in country-by-country meetings organised by the Commission in the Western Balkans.

See also under "co-operation with the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights" below and part 7 on "social cohesion".

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 (DG JUST) actively participated with an observer status in the negotiations of the Convention on **Violence against Women and Domestic Violence**, which has been adopted in May 2011.

On 15 June 2011 in Strasbourg, Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly and the United Nations called on all 27 member States of the European Union – and the EU itself – to sign up to the new Council of Europe Convention on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

On 19 September, the CoE Secretariat took active part in a Conference on **Equality between Women and Men**, organised by the European Commission (DG Justice) in Brussels on 19-20 September 2011. The Deputy Secretary General addressed the introductory session and the Director of Justice and Human Dignity presented the CoE Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (*see also under part 8 on "arrangements for co-operation"*).

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)

On 24 June 2011, GRETA, together with its Secretariat, held an exchange of views with the EU **Anti-Trafficking** Co-ordinator on behalf of the European Commission. This was an opportunity to explore means of co-operation in the follow-up to GRETA's reports and to reiterate the importance of avoiding duplication in the field of monitoring.

GRETA members and staff of the Anti-Trafficking Secretariat participated in consultations, round tables and conferences organised by the European Commission and the EU agencies, such as the consultation on the new integrated strategy to combat trafficking in human beings organised by the European Commission and the periodically organised meetings of National Rapporteurs and Equivalent Mechanisms.

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

The good co-operation between the CoE and the EU in the field of **children's rights** was deepened even further in 2011. The Commission Communication on an EU Agenda for the Rights of the child³, adopted on 15 February 2011, made a specific reference to the Council of Europe's Guidelines on child-friendly justice. Promoting the use of the

³ COM(2011)60

Guidelines and taking them into account in future legal instruments in the field of civil and criminal justice is one of the 11 specific actions of the EU Agenda.

Further, GRETA was also represented at the stakeholders meeting concerning data collection related to the rights of the child organised by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency in Vienna on 22-23 February 2011.

Throughout the year, the European Commission (DG JUST), the FRA and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) contributed to the elaboration of the new Council of Europe Strategy on the Rights of the Child for the period 2012-2015⁴. Representatives of all these institutions welcomed the draft text at a high-level conference on children's rights on 20-21 November in Monaco.

To co-ordinate action with the European Commission, the CoE Secretariat held a meeting with representatives of DG JUST on 20 June and attended two meetings of the EC Steering Group "Rights of the Child" on 12 July and 21 October in Brussels. The SRSG/Director of the Brussels Office represented the Council of Europe at the 6th European Forum on the Rights of the Child on 23 November in Brussels.

Representatives of the European Commission (DG JUST and DG EAC) took part in the 5th meeting of the Ad hoc Advisory Group on **Child and Youth Participation** on 6 December in Brussels.

The co-operation with the EESC focused on the promotion of the CoE ONE in FIVE Campaign to stop **sexual violence against children**. The Secretariat participated in a meeting of the EESC Section for Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship on 31 January, a public hearing on prevention of child sexual abuse on 21 June and a press event on the same topic on 27 October. In the framework of the European Year of Volunteering, the EESC translated the campaign material "The Underwear Rule" into all EU languages.

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

On 4 July 2011, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UNESCO, OSCE/ODIHR, the European Commission, the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) and the Council of Europe signed a letter of co-operation with a view to establishing an International Contact Group on **citizenship and human rights education**.

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".

⁴ The Council of Europe Strategy on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 15 February 2012.

Other activities in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms

The European Union organised a meeting between the Department **of Local and Regional Democracy and Good Governance** and the Director of the Fundamental Rights Agency in Vienna on 19 July 2011 (*see also under "Co-operation with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights below*).

The European Day against the **Death Penalty**, co-organised by the European Union and the CoE, takes place every year on 10 October, coinciding with the World Day against the Death Penalty. The 5th European Day against the Death Penalty took place in 2011. On this occasion, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy made a joint declaration confirming both organisations' united opposition to the death penalty, and commitment to its worldwide abolition (*see also under point 12 on "visibility of the partnership"*).

Training sessions on the Council of Europe on Human Rights, the Rule of Law and Democracy were organised for staff of the European External Action Service (from Headquarters and EU Delegations) in Brussels on 23 June and 15 November 2011.

The European Commission has expressed support for the CoE's **Internet freedom** standards, adopted by the Committee of Ministers in September 2011. The Vice-President of the European Commission, responsible for Digital Agenda, referred to the Declaration on Internet Governance Principles in meetings of the OECD and of the UN-led Internet Governance Forum.

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 and the independent person appointed by the CoE has the right to vote when they are submitted for adoption to the Management Board.

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 14 June 2011 and the Chairperson of the Management Board and the Director of the Agency on 8 November 2011. On the occasion of this meeting, the FRA and the Council of Europe secretariat presented a joint report on co-operation during the period July 2010/June 2011.

FRA regularly provides data and information on racism, xenophobia and related intolerance to ECRI and ECRI reports make regular reference to FRA's work. ECRI, the FRA and the OSCE/ODIHR made a joint statement on the occasion of International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, on 21 March 2011.

An exchange of views was held between ECRI and the Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) on 23 June in Strasbourg.

The Special Representative of the Secretary General for **Roma** Issues and his team presented CoE Roma-related activities/policy in 2011 to the FRA Director, in Vienna on 17 January 2011.

The European Union organised a meeting between the Head of the Department of **Local and Regional Democracy and Good Governance** and the Director of the Fundamental Rights Agency in Vienna on 19 July 2011 (*see also under "Other activities in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms" above*).

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 (the 2011 visit took place in November) and have expressed their interest in assisting the Court where possible. The ECtHR co-operated with the EU's FRA to bring out in March 2011 the Handbook on European **Non-Discrimination** Law. The publication was launched at a seminar at the Court.

On 21-22 November 2011, the European Social Charter Secretariat was represented in a Conference on "Dignity and rights for **irregular migrants**", organised by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in Warsaw.

The CoE participated as an observer in the two meetings of the Management Board of the FRA in Vienna, in May and December 2011. On the occasion of the second meeting, the Director General of Human Rights and the Rule of Law had an exchange of views with the members of the Management Board on the reform of the Council of Europe and on CoE action priorities of action of interest to FRA.

The Secretariat of the Steering Committee on **bioethics** has been consulted by FRA Secretariat for the preparation of a document on involuntary placement and involuntary treatment of persons with mental disorders.

An exchange of views was held between ECRI and the Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) on 23 June in Strasbourg.

A number of other inter-secretariat meetings, both at high level and on a desk-to-desk basis have been organised throughout the year.

The Council of Europe Secretariat participated in FRA's data protection multistakeholders meeting (21 February 2011, Vienna).

The CoE and FRA are co-operating closely on **children's rights**, in particular the field of child-friendly justice. In its Annual Work Programme for 2012, FRA makes reference to taking into account the CoE Guidelines on child-friendly justice in its work in this area.

Two CoE experts and a representative of the Secretariat participated in the FRA Stakeholders Meeting "Applying FRA's indicators on the rights of the child: policy priorities for data collection" on 22-23 February in Vienna.

In the field of **disability**, there are regular exchanges between the Council of Europe and FRA, including mutual representation at relevant meetings in Strasbourg and Vienna. In particular, FRA was represented at the 5th meeting of the European Co-ordination Forum for the Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015 (CAHPAH), Strasbourg, 21-23 September 2011, and on 8-9 November 2011, the Co-Secretary to CAHPAH took part in the FRA Peer Review Meeting in Vienna on the 1st draft evidence-based report on the situation of persons with intellectual disabilities and mental health problems in 9 European countries (Bulgaria, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Romania, Sweden, and United Kingdom). In this context, it is recalled that CAHPAH contributed to the drafting of this report.

*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 Legal Service of the European Commission and the Council of the European Union regularly participated in the meetings of the Council of Europe Committee **of Legal Advisers on Public International Law** (CAHDI).

The main event of the **European Day of Civil Justice** (which has been taking place each year on 25 October, since 2003 co-organised by both institutions) took place at the District Court of Toulouse . This Day was celebrated through various events in some 15 member States.

The European Commission, the Council of the EU and the FRA participated regularly in the plenary and working group meetings of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) for strengthening the efficiency and quality of European justice

systems. The European Commission also attended the plenary meeting of the Lisbon Network (Network for the judicial training institutions of the Council of Europe Member States) on 17 February 2011.

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

A number of meetings were held at technical level, i.a. meetings between the Council of Europe and the **Troika of the Article 36 Committee** of the European Union in Strasbourg on 14 June and in Brussels on 16 December 2011.

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 Steering Committee on **bioethics** (CDBI), the European Committee for **Crime Problems** (CDPC), the Council for **Penological Co-operation** (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.

In the field of **procedural rights**, following the adoption of the Directive on the **right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings** in October 2010, and the resolution on the Directive on the **right to information in criminal proceedings** by the European Parliament on 13 December 2011, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union are currently examining a new draft Directive on the right of access to a lawyer. The Council of Europe Secretariat has had the opportunity to make both written and oral contributions at various stages during the drafting process of all three directives. The Council of Europe Secretariat also provided comments in the framework of the general consultation on the document "Strengthening mutual trust in the European judicial area - A Green Paper on the application of EU criminal justice legislation in the field of detention".

On 25 January 2011, the Council of Europe Secretariat participated in a Round Table on preparing a Green Paper on **detention issues** in the European Union, organised by the European Commission. A joint working group including representatives of the European Court of Human Rights, the CPT, the Commissioner for Human Rights and of the Directorate General of Human Rights and the Rule of Law prepared, in November 2011, a written opinion on the above Green Paper which was sent by the Deputy Secretary General to the Vice-President of the European Commission, responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship.

The informal **Mutual Information Mechanism** held its 1st meeting in Brussels on 8 September 2011

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)

A representative of the Secretariat participated in the EU Council's Working Group on **Terrorism** in Brussels on 25 May 2011.

The European Union is a signatory 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). Representatives of the European Commission (DG Internal Market and Services) and of the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU participated in the third Conference of the Parties to CETS No.198 which was organised in Strasbourg from 7 to 8 March 2011.

The European Commission (DG Taxation and Customs Union and DG Internal Market and Service) and the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union regularly attended, in their capacity as observers, the plenary meetings of the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of **Anti-Money Laundering Measures** and the Financing of **Terrorism** (MONEYVAL) in 2011 (35th Plenary Meeting, 11-14 April 2011; 36th Plenary Meeting, 26-30 September 2011; and 37th Plenary Meeting, 12-16 December 2011).

A representative of the **Secretariat contributed to the 4th Pan-European High-level Conference on Asset Recovery Offices (ARO)**, which was organised by the European Commission and the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union in Warsaw, from 24 to 25 October 2011.

With regard to **cybercrime**, the European Commission (DG Home) and the Council of Europe Secretariat consulted each other with a view to formulating common positions, such as at the UN Intergovernmental Expert Group on Cybercrime (Vienna, January 2011).

In April 2011, the Hungarian EU Presidency organised a ministerial conference on the Budapest Convention on **Cybercrime**. The Deputy Secretary General was one of the key speakers (*see also under part 8 on "arrangements for co-operation"*). The European Commission participated at Director level at this conference.

In May 2011, the new CyberCrime@EAP joint project on cybercrime was launched within the framework of the Eastern Partnership Facility. Implementation of the joint CyberCrime@IPA project was positively assessed by the EU monitors. In 2011, the EU furthermore decided to open up the Instrument for Stability for global funding for measures on cybercrime and cybersecurity.

On 14 June 2011, the Deputy Secretary General and the Commissioner responsible for Home Affairs sent a joint letter to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of those EU member States which had not yet ratified the Council of Europe Convention on **Cybercrime**, in view of the 10th anniversary of the Convention in November 2011 (*see also under section 8*).

The European Union participated in the 33rd meeting of the Monitoring Group of the **Anti-Doping** Convention, which took place in Strasbourg on 9 and 10 May 2011.

The European Commission participated in the 19th. Meeting of the Ad Hoc European Committee for the World Anti-Doping Agency (CAHAMA) which took place in Strasbourg on 10 May 2011.

The European Commission participated as an observer in the 32nd. and 33rd Standing Committees of the European Convention on **Spectator Violence** (T-RV) in Rome and Strasbourg on 22-23 June and 7-8 December respectively.

The European Union has been a Contracting Party to the Convention on the **Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats** (the Bern Convention) since 1982. Both organisations participated and contributed to the respective meetings they organised, thus ensuring co-ordination and avoiding duplication.

The CoE enjoys observer status with the EU Co-ordination Group for **Biodiversity** and **Nature** and is regularly invited to attend the EU Nature Directors' meetings. In 2011, the CoE also contributed to the work of the EU Working Group on Green Infrastructure, managed by DG Environment.

In addition, the EU financed a 3-year Council of Europe/European Union Joint Programme aimed at the promotion of biodiversity protection through the setting-up of the Emerald Network of Protected Areas in 7 ENPI East countries (2009-2011).

Finally, the CoE continued to hold its co-ordination meetings with the European Environment Agency and the European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity aiming at discussing harmonisation issues between the EU Natura 2000 Network and the Bern Convention Emerald Network.

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

In Brussels on 27 and 28 January 2011, the Secretary General and the Vice-President of the European Commission, responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship co-hosted the celebration of the 6th **Data Protection** Day through a joint Council of Europe and European Commission High-level Conference, which coincided with the 30th anniversary of the Council of Europe Convention 108 on the protection of personal data (*see also under section 8*).

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 27th T-PD plenary meeting in Strasbourg from 29 November to 2 December 2011, as well as meetings of the Bureau of the T-PD (22-24 March, 28-30 June and 10-12 October 2011).

The Secretariat of the Council of Europe participated in international conferences on data protection organised under the successive Hungarian and Polish Presidencies of the Council of the European Union (Budapest, 16-17 June 2011 and Warsaw, 21 September 2011).

The EU signed the European Convention on the **Legal Protection of Services based on, or consisting of, Conditional Access** (CETS N° 178) on 21 December 2011.

Training sessions on the Council of Europe on Human Rights, the Rule of Law and Democracy were organised for staff of the European External Action Service (from Headquarters and EU Delegations) in Brussels on 23 June and 15 November.

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)

Training sessions on the Council of Europe on Human Rights, the Rule of Law and Democracy were organised for staff of the European External Action Service (from Headquarters and EU Delegations) in Brussels on 23 June and 15 November.

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**. Individual schools have continued to develop contacts with Members of the European Commission, Members of the European Parliament, as well as with EU officials from both headquarters and European Union Delegations in the respective countries.

In December 2011 in Brussels, the Association of Schools of Political Studies organised a discussion with members of the Delegation of the European Parliament for Relations with South-East Europe.

The Chair of the Committee on Regional Development of the European Parliament participated in the 6th **Summer University for Democracy** (Strasbourg, 27-29 June 2011).

On 15 June 2011 in Strasbourg, Representatives of the Parliamentary Assembly and the United Nations called on all 27 member States of the European Union – and the EU itself – to sign up to the new Council of Europe Convention on **Violence against Women and Domestic Violence** (*see also under "fight against torture and ill treatment under Section 1*).

The Deputy Secretary General addressed the opening session of the EU Conference on **Equality between Women and Men** (Brussels, 19 September) (*see also under section 8*).

The European Commission (DG JUST) actively participated with an observer status in the negotiations of the Convention on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, which has been adopted in May 2011.

Venice Commission (cf. § 28 of the MoU)

In 2011, co-operation between the Venice Commission and the European Union intensified, notably the European Parliament sought input by the Venice Commission with regard to Hungary, Turkey and Arab countries. The Venice Commission maintained close co-operation with the European Commission, in particular, with respect to **constitutional issues** in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova and Ukraine and **judicial reforms** in Serbia and Turkey. Technical consultations with the European Commission were held on developments in the Balkans, Moldova, and Turkey, as well as in Central Asia and North Africa. The European Union repeatedly invited countries (candidate countries and potential candidates for EU accession) to follow Venice Commission recommendations.

The Secretary of the Venice Commission held consultations with EEAS colleagues on Central Asia and Tunisia in Brussels on 9 February 2011.

The Secretary and the President of the Venice Commission participated in the Turkey-EU Joint Parliamentary Committee meetings and discussed with the Committee the state of **legal and constitutional reform** in Turkey (21-22 February in Antakya and 29 November in Brussels, respectively) (*see also under part 8 on "arrangements for co-operation"*).

The Secretary of the Venice Commission made a presentation to the EU Working Party on the OSCE and the Council of Europe (COSCE) on activities of the Venice Commission in the Western Balkans, Central Asia and North Africa (20 May 2011, Brussels).

The Secretary also presented the Commission's then-forthcoming opinion on the new Hungarian **constitution** to the European Parliament Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (25 May 2011, Brussels).

The Commission was represented at a round table organised by the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats in the European Parliament on "**Elections and democratic transition** in Tunisia: A historic opportunity?" (Brussels, 21 September 2011).

The European Commission, represented by its Legal Service, as well as the President of the Committee for Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External affairs (CIVEX) of the Committee of Regions participated in all plenary sessions of the Venice Commission during 2011.

Throughout 2011, the Venice Commission continued to implement joint programmes with regard to the implementation of the new **Constitution** in Bolivia, the EU **Rule of Law** Initiative for Central Asia and on the **constitutional reform** in Kyrgyzstan. In addition, the Venice Commission continued to actively participate in the Joint Programme entitled "South Caucasus – Moldova – Support to free and fair **elections**", through activities in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova. Also, in 2011 the Venice Commission started implementing a part of the Eastern Partnership Programme, funded by the European Union, on the strengthening of **electoral administrations** of the six beneficiary countries - Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. In December 2011, a new Joint Programme for Kazakhstan was also launched.

See also under part 4 on "democratic stability" and part 11 on "Joint Programmes".

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

The European Union was invited to the meetings of the Steering Board of the Forum of the Future of Democracy.

The European Commission was represented at the 7th Forum for the Future of Democracy and Social Cohesion, which took place in Limassol on 13 and 14 of October 2011 on the theme "Interdependence of **Democracy and Social Cohesion: Strengthening representation and democratic participation through public dialogue and civic engagement**".

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

The European Union participated in the 17th. Session of the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for **Local and Regional Government**, Kyiv, 3-4 November 2011 (*see also under "Conferences of Specialised Ministers" un part 9 on "inter-institutional co-operation*).

The European Commission (DG REGIO) was represented at the meeting of the Committee of Experts on **Local and Regional Government** Institutions and Co-operation (LR-IC) on removing obstacles to **transfrontier co-operation**.

The European Union organised a meeting between the Department **of Local and Regional Democracy and Good Governance** and the Director of the Fundamental Rights Agency in Vienna on 19 July 2011

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 EEAS and the European Commission 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, the Director of External Relations and the Director of Political Advice and Co-operation of the Council of Europe for consultations on topics of mutual interest.

In 2011, the European Parliament sought input by the Venice Commission concerning Hungary, Turkey and Arab countries. The Venice Commission maintained close co-operation with the European Commission, in particular, with respect to constitutional issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova and Ukraine and judicial reforms in Serbia and Turkey. Technical consultations with the European Commission were held on the developments in the Balkans, Moldova, and Turkey, as well as in Central Asia and North Africa. The European Union repeatedly invited countries (candidate countries and potential candidates for EU accession) to follow Venice Commission recommendations (*see also under "Venice Commission" in part 3 on "democracy and good governance"*).

The annual **consultation meeting** with the Enlargement DG on **the candidate countries and potential candidates 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 16-17 May 2011.

In addition to this annual meeting, regular contacts have been taken to provide information on important developments in the follow-up given, notably by candidate countries and potential candidates, to the requirements of different CoE conventions in the area of human rights (notably the ECHR and the judgments of the ECtHR).

The annual **consultation meeting** with EEAS on the **countries of the EU's European Neighbourhood Policy** took place in Strasbourg on 12-13 December 2011 and, for the first time, covered countries which are neither EU nor CoE member States (i.e. **countries of the Southern Mediterranean**, which are part of the Council of Europe's policy towards its neighbouring regions).

Co-operation has also developed in the context of the **Eastern Partnership** (EaP) of the European Union with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, launched on 7 May 2009. Representatives of the CoE Secretariat participated in the meetings of Platform 1 "Democracy, Good Governance and Stability" on 6 May and 17 November 2011 and Platform 4 "Contacts between People" on 27 October 2011. The Council of Europe Secretariat regularly reports to EaP Platform 1 on the main results and achievements of the implementation of the CoE Eastern Partnership Facility (4M€) and co-chairs two experts panels on Corruption and Judiciary set up under Platform 1.

In the context of the 30 month €4 million EU **Eastern Partnership "facility"**, the Council of Europe and the European Union started to implement a series of projects to promote democracy, good governance and stability in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

Under the "Support to free and fair elections" part of the Programme, the Venice Commission organised two meetings with the Central Electoral Commissions of the beneficiary countries in Vienna (13 May 2011) and Chisinau (22-23 September 2011).

Ad hoc consultation meetings on regions of common interest were also held between the Directorate General of Democracy and Political Affairs/Directorate of External Relations 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.

Contacts and consultations with the European Union in the field were very close and regular. Heads of Council of Europe Offices 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).

Ad hoc consultation meetings were also held regularly between the Directorate of External Relations and EU officials with regard to countries of the **Council of Europe's neighbouring regions**.

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

On 26 September 2011, the Commissioner responsible for Education, Culture, Multilingualism, Sport, Media and Youth and the Secretary General signed a joint declaration to reaffirm their commitment to multilingualism, to mark the European Day of **Languages**, which celebrated its 10th anniversary. On the same day and to mark the 10th Anniversary of the European Day of Languages, the Council of Europe organised in Strasbourg an event on "**Sign languages: a unique contribution to our linguistic and cultural diversity**" with the participation of the Chairman of the European Parliament Disability Intergroup – and himself a sign language user – as well as several representatives of the European Union of the Deaf (EUD).

In the framework of the **Group of Eminent Persons**, the European Commissioner responsible for Home Affairs and the Director for the Western Balkans of the European Commission Directorate General for Enlargement participated in the hearing on "The role of institutions in shaping the way we live together in Europe's **culturally-diverse societies**" took place in Brussels on 17-18 March.

The "**Living Together - Combining diversity and freedom in 21st-century Europe**" report of the Group of Eminent Persons was presented to the EU Council's Working Group on the Council of Europe and the OSCE (COSCE) by a member of the Group in Brussels on 15 July 2011.

With a view to a follow-up to the Report of the Group of Eminent Persons, a meeting took place in Brussels on 10 November 2011 between the European Commissioner, responsible for Home Affairs and the Secretary General.

The European Commission participated in the plenary session of the Steering Committee for **Culture** (CDCULT) in Strasbourg on 3-4 May 2011.

The Council of Europe and the European Commission pursued their co-operation within the framework of several joint actions dealing with **intercultural dialogue and diversity management: Intercultural cities** - governance and policies in diverse communities (with DG EAC); Shaping perceptions and attitudes to realise the diversity advantage (SPARDA, funded by DG Home); and **Media against racism in sport** (MARS), with DG Justice. These programmes were/are to be presented at various events during the Polish and Danish EU Presidencies.

The EU and the CoE set up in June 2011 the European Academic Network on **Romani Studies** of which the general aim is to raise the visibility of existing research on Roma issues and to foster co-operation with policymakers.

Co-operation with the EU has taken place in the framework of the Joint Programme "European **Heritage Days**" since 1999.

The EC and the CoE continued to intensify their relations in the field of **cultural heritage** in Kosovo⁵ in Phase I of the Joint Programme "EU/CoE Support to the Promotion of Cultural Diversity in Kosovo" which started in 2009.

As a natural continuation of the "Ljubljana Process – funding **heritage rehabilitation** in South East Europe", the "Ljubljana Process II – rehabilitating our common heritage" project started in 2011 and will be implemented until the end of 2013. The EC (DG-ELARG) and the CoE are working closely together to provide financial and practical support to the Regional Co-operation Council's Task Force on Culture and Society for its implementation.

As part of the Kyiv Initiative Regional Programme, joint action with DG-EAC in favour of cultural heritage in the Caucasus and Black Sea regions included the preliminary phase of the "Pilot Project for the Rehabilitation of Cultural Heritage in Historic Towns" which started in 2009 and ended in the latter half of 2011.

The Joint Programme on **Cultural Routes** was signed on 11 August 2011 and launched on 2 November 2011. It will be concluded on 30 April 2013. The basis for the joint programme is to provide follow-up to the study on the impact of the Cultural Routes on the innovation and competitiveness of SMEs, which was presented on 28 June 2011 at the European Parliament in Brussels as the result of the previous joint programme.

⁵ All references to Kosovo, whether the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nation's Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

Mr Bernardino León, EU Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean region actively contributed to the North-South Centre's Lisbon Forum 2011 held on 3 – 4 November on the topic "The Arab Spring: a major step towards making universal human rights real" (*see also under part 9 on "inter-institutional co-operation"*).

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

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)

On 16 September 2011, the Deputy Secretary General and the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth discussed **sports and anti-doping issues** during the political Conference organised by the European Women and Sport network and the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) on Women and Sport in London (*see also under part 8 on "arrangements for co-operation" and part 9 on "inter-institutional co-operation"*). The Commissioner responsible for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth was one of the key speakers at this conference.

The recommendation on education for **global interdependence and solidarity** adopted by the Committee of Ministers in May 2011 benefited from the political support of the European Union and attracted considerable interest in Brussels. It was presented on 30 August 2011 at a public hearing on **development and education** at the European Parliament, following a joint initiative of the Committee on Development and the Sub-Committee on Human Rights. The event was attended by the European Commissioner, responsible for Development alongside MEPs and representatives of member States. The recommendation provides not only the first European legal standard in the matter but also a solid political basis for promoting global/development education throughout Europe and beyond.

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

In its conclusions on "**Language competences to enhance mobility**" (November 2011) the Council of the European Union explicitly referred to the importance of establishing links between the "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages" (CEFR) developed by the Council of Europe and the National and European Qualification Framework and to widening opportunities for the certification of language

competences acquired by pupils and students by the end of compulsory education and in higher education.

Close and regular co-operation was ensured towards the development of the European Indicator of Language Competence in the context of the "Principles for administrative co-operation concerning the use of the 'Common European Framework of Reference for Languages' (CEFR) signed by the Council of Europe and European Union.

On 4 July 2011, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UNESCO, OSCE/ODIHR, the European Commission, the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) and the Council of Europe signed a letter of co-operation with a view to establishing an International Contact Group on **citizenship and human rights education**. The Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation (ALECSO) joined this agreement in September 2011 and the Organization of American States (OAS) in February 2012. The mission of the Contact Group is to ensure close co-operation among regional and international initiatives in this field.

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

The **EU-CoE youth partnership** 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 **(1) knowledge-based policy making, (2) capacity-building in youth work** and **(3) promoting regional co-operation within Europe and its neighbouring regions**.

The **EU-CoE youth 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 (PMB), representing the two institutional partners. The PMB met on 12 April and 25 November 2011. As an effort to better reflect the balance between the two institutions, a decision was taken to move two Secretariat positions from Strasbourg to Brussels (now located within the CoE Office in Brussels). The main stakeholders in the youth field were represented in a consultative structure called the EU-CoE youth partnership Advisory Group, which met on 14 October 2011 in Brussels.

The North-South Centre of the Council of Europe organised a series of activities in the youth co-operation field, in the framework of the Joint Management Agreement EU/CoE, as well as the EU/CoE Partnership Agreement. The (12th) University on **Youth and Development** and the (3rd) African University on Youth and Development were organised in Spain and Cape Verde respectively, providing the possibility for training and political advocacy for youth leaders from Europe and Africa. An action plan for 2012-15 was set up in the follow-up to the second Euro-Africa Youth Summit.

The EU-CoE youth partnership organised a key Youth Policy Symposium for Eastern Europe & Caucasus in Odessa (14-15 July), which included the participation of the Head of the EU Delegation and the Ukrainian Youth Minister. The youth partnership also established the Pool of European Youth Researchers, which had its first annual meeting

on 7-8 February. Other activities organised in 2011 include a pilot seminar "**Youth policy** and realities, youth research and theoretical foundations of youth" in Budapest, 10-15 February and a research seminar "**Mobility of young people** - opportunities and obstacles for cross-border **volunteering** for young people, particularly with fewer opportunities" on 11-13 December in Strasbourg.

The second Expert Group meeting on the recognition of **non-formal learning** and youth work took place in Strasbourg on 8-9 September. A Symposium on the same topic took place on 14-16 November in Strasbourg.

The 7th meeting of national correspondents of the European Knowledge Centre for **Youth Policy** took place on 20-21 October in Brussels.

Child participation was 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 was devised (*see also under part 1 on "human rights and fundamental freedoms"*).

The CoE and the EU co-organised the high-level expert meeting "**tackling violence in schools**", which took place on 27 and 28 June 2011 in Oslo.

The Council of Europe and the European Commission participated in the second meeting of the International Task Force on the Education of **Roma** (ITFER) held in Paris on 23-24 June 2011.

At the invitation of the Greek Ministry of Education, the European Commission, together with the Council of Europe and OSCE-ODIHR, attended the first meeting of the Advisory Committee for the implementation of the Education Project for Roma Children, 2011-13, in Athens on 3-4 May 2011.

Most 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 "interinstitutional 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** 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 October 2011 (*see also part 4 on "democratic stability"*).

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

On 1 March in Brussels, the Secretary General and the President of the European Commission opened the Conference on "Shared social responsibility" (*see also under section 8 on "arrangements for co-operation"*). This represented the final conference of the partnership agreement 'A Europe of shared responsibility' signed between the Directorate General of Social Cohesion and DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion and implemented in 2010. As a follow up, another agreement, 'Human rights of people experiencing poverty', was signed covering the period from May 2010 to April 2012 and focusing on mobilising decision makers and stakeholders in European cities to adopt the Charter of Shared Social Responsibility which would trigger further action for guaranteeing the well-being for all in society.

The Secretary General met the Commissioner in charge of Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion to discuss topics related to social cohesion on 1 March 2011 in Brussels. Among them is how to facilitate youth transition to active life (*see also under section 8*). As a follow-up to this meeting, a partnership agreement between the Directorate General of Social Cohesion and DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion has been signed, covering the period 2011-2012. The project supported the creation of a peer to peer learning platform for young people to share the challenges they face in the transition to working life, to discuss new ways for creating jobs, participating in policy making and sharing common resources for creating better living conditions.

At a joint conference on "The Council of Europe's Social Charter 50 years on: What next?", held in Paris on 23 September 2011 as part of the official celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the European Social Charter, France, the EU and the CoE agreed on a joint initiative to strengthen **social rights**.

CoE activities on **Roma** issues serve the dual aim of promoting the social inclusion of Roma and the full respect of their human rights. Several Roma-related activities are *listed under "Protection of persons belonging to national minorities, fight against discrimination, racism, xenophobia and intolerance" under part 1 on "human rights and fundamental freedoms"*

In the **disability** field, Council of Europe Secretariat members actively participated in the following meetings or events organised by the European Commission:

- European Commission High-level Group on Disability meetings in Brussels, 31 March-1 April 2011 and 24-25 October 2011;
- European Conference "New Challenges in the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020", organised jointly by the European Commission and the Hungarian EU Presidency, Budapest, 20-21 April 2011;
- EU Work Forum on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Brussels, 26-27 October 2011;

- European Day of Persons with Disabilities on the theme of "Europe's way out of the crisis: the disability rights perspective", Brussels, 1-2 December 2011.

European Commission representatives took part in the following meetings and events organised by the Council of Europe on the basis of the CoE Disability Action Plan 2006-2015 (Rec(2006)5):

- 1st meeting of the Drafting Committee on protecting and promoting the rights of women and girls with disabilities (CAHPAH-WGD), Strasbourg, 11-12 April 2011; and
- European Conference "Implementation of the Council of Europe Action Plan to promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society 2006 – 2015", Odessa, 30-31 May 2011, organised by the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine in co-operation with the National Assembly of People with Disabilities in Ukraine and the Directorate General of Social Cohesion of the Council of Europe under the aegis of the Ukrainian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

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)

CoE/EU **High-level Political Dialogue** meetings took place in Brussels on 4 March 2011 and in Strasbourg on 5 July, with the participation of the Turkish and Ukrainian CM chairs respectively, the Secretary General and the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission.

Meetings were held between the **Secretary General** and the following EU personalities in 2011:

- President of the European Commission (Brussels, 28 February; Brussels, 1 March⁶);
- Vice-President of the European Commission/High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (Strasbourg, 19 January; Brussels, 4 March⁷; Strasbourg, 5 July⁸);

⁶ The Secretary General and the President of the European Commission opened the Conference on "Shared Social Responsibility"

⁷ In the context of the CoE/EU High-level Meeting, with the participation of the Turkish CM Chair [see also above].

⁸ In the context of the CoE/EU High-level Political Dialogue Meeting, with the participation of the Ukrainian CM Chair [see also above].

- Vice-President of the European Commission, responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship (Strasbourg, 27-28 January⁹; Brussels, 2 May and 11 November);
- Commissioner responsible for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth (Strasbourg, 6 July¹⁰);
- Commissioner responsible for Regional Policy (Strasbourg, 24 March);
- Commissioner responsible for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy (monthly meetings in the margins of the European Parliament sessions in Strasbourg);
- Commissioner responsible for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (Brussels, 1 March); and
- Commissioner responsible for Home Affairs (Brussels, 10 November).

To mark the European Day of Languages, which celebrated its 10th. anniversary, the Secretary General and the European Commissioner, responsible for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth signed a joint declaration to reaffirm their commitment to multilingualism on 26 September 2012.

The Secretary General participated in the 20th. anniversary celebrations of Poland's accession to the Council of Europe (Warsaw, 15 September 2011).

He also participated in a working visit to Luxembourg on 28 November 2011, where he met with the Prime Minister. Amongst the topics on the agenda was EU accession to the European Convention on Human Rights.

The Secretary General participated in a working meeting with the incoming Hungarian EU Presidency (Budapest, 14 January 2011).

A meeting between the Secretary General and the Director General of DG EAC¹¹ was organised in Strasbourg on 12 January 2011.

The **Deputy Secretary General** met the Commissioner responsible for Home Affairs (Budapest, 14 April)¹².

On 14 June 2011, the Deputy Secretary General and the Commissioner responsible for Home Affairs sent a joint letter to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of those EU member States which had not yet ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime, in view of the 10th anniversary of the Convention in November 2011.

⁹ The Secretary General and the Vice-President co-hosted, the celebration of the 6th. Data Protection Day through a joint CoE-EU conference, coinciding with the 30th. anniversary of Convention 108.

¹⁰ On the occasion of the signature of a new agreement providing for additional funding of 1M€ over a two-year period to the ROMED programme

¹¹ Education and Culture

¹² At the invitation of the Hungarian Presidency of the EU, the DSG attended, together with EU Commissioner for Home Affairs, the Ministerial Conference marking the 10th anniversary of the Budapest Cybercrime Convention

On 16 September 2011, the Deputy Secretary General and the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth discussed **sports and anti-doping issues** during the annual political conference organised by the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) on Women and Sport in London.

The Deputy Secretary General was one of the key speakers at the ministerial conference on the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, organised by the Hungarian EU Presidency in April 2011.

The Deputy Secretary General invited the Head of the Equal Opportunities Unit of the European Commission to present to the Board the new equal opportunities strategy of the European Commission (Strasbourg, 1 April 2011).

The Deputy Secretary General addressed the opening session of the EU Conference on Equality between Women and Men (Brussels, 19 September 2011)

The Head of the European Union Delegation to the Council of Europe represented the EU at the **Ministerial Session** in Istanbul on 11 May 2011. On this occasion, the Secretary General presented his report "Council of Europe: a strategy for values in action", which included a chapter on co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union.

The **Ministers Deputies** held an exchange of views with the Commissioner responsible for Enlargement and the European Neighbourhood Policy (Strasbourg, 6 July 2011).

The question of relations between the Council of Europe and the European Union, including in the framework of the CoE's policy towards its neighbouring regions, figured high on the agenda of meetings of the **Group of Rapporteurs of the Ministers' Deputies on External Relations (GR-EXT)**. In this context, an exchange of views took place with the with the Head of the Multilateral Relations Division of the European External Action Service (Strasbourg, 14 June 2011); with the independent person appointed by the Council of Europe to sit on the organs of the Fundamental Rights Agency (Strasbourg, 14 June 2011); and with the Director and Chair of the Management Board of the aforementioned Agency (Strasbourg, 8 November 2011).

The Secretary of the Venice Commission took part in a meeting of the EU Council Working Group on relations with the OSCE and the Council of Europe (**COSCE**) on activities of the Venice Commission in the Western Balkans, Central Asia and North Africa (20 May 2011, Brussels).

The report of the Group of Eminent Persons was presented by a member of the Group to COSCE in Brussels on 15 July 2011.

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

Parliamentary Assembly (cf. § 46 of the MoU)

President and the Bureau

Inter-institutional relations between the Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) and the European Parliament (EP) were further enhanced in 2011.

In January 2011, the Bureau of the Assembly agreed on the establishment of a Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe - European Parliament Joint Informal Body¹³ to co-ordinate information sharing in the context of the accession of the European Union to the European Convention on Human Rights. To this end, at its meeting on 10 March 2011, the Bureau formally established an ad hoc Committee to participate in this Joint Informal Body, to be co-chaired by the Chairpersons of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights and the Committee on Political Affairs respectively.

The Joint Informal Body held two meetings, on 14 March 2011 in Brussels and on 15 June 2011 in Paris. It came to an agreement regarding the participation of the EP in the election process of the judges to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).

The annual joint meeting with the Conference of Presidents of the European Parliament took place in Brussels on 22 September 2011, which served as an opportunity for dialogue between political group leaders of both institutions. In his introductory speech, PACE President welcomed the progress achieved with regard to the accession of the European Union to the European Convention on Human Rights, in particular, the agreement reached on the modalities of participation of EP representatives in PACE meetings when the Assembly elects judges to the ECtHR. He also stressed the challenges that the revolutionary changes in the Arab world presented, and informed the European Parliament about the success of the new PACE "Partner for Democracy" status. Among the issues mentioned by the European Parliament were the influence and role of media in our societies and the serious challenges which the European Union was facing today.

In the field of election observation, PACE continued its close relationship with the EP. This applied, for example, to the observation of the presidential elections in the Kyrgyz Republic (29 October 2011) and the elections to the National Constituent Assembly of Tunisia (23 October 2011).

¹³ The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and the European Parliament (EP) established this Joint Informal Body upon the initiative of the EP "in order to co-ordinate information sharing": see § 34 of EP Resolution of 19 May 2010 on the institutional aspects of the accession of the EU to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR) (2009/2241 (INI)).

Committees

At committee level, co-operation between PACE and EP mainly took the following forms:

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

In the framework of the preparation of the report on *The impact of the Lisbon Treaty on the Council of Europe*, the rapporteur of the Political Affairs Committee held seven high-level meetings with representatives of EU institutions in Strasbourg, Brussels and Luxembourg in 2011.

On 17 January 2011, at its meeting in Paris, the Monitoring Committee held a hearing on the current situation with regard to *The consequences of the war between Georgia and Russia* with the participation of the European Union Special Representative for the crisis in Georgia; the Head of the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia; the European Union Special representative for the South Caucasus and the former Head of the international fact-finding mission on the conflict in Georgia.

At its meeting during the PACE January part-session of 2011, the Monitoring Committee held an exchange of views with the participation of the Political Desk Officer for Serbia in the European Commission.

On 9 February 2011, the Rapporteur (in 2010) on *The handling of the H1N1 pandemic: more transparency needed*, participated in a hearing organised in Brussels by the EPP group of the European Parliament on the theme "H1N1 influenza pandemic: Which lessons to learn for better EU management and EU co-ordination with Member States?". His participation in this meeting had been preceded by a close co-operation with a Member of the European Parliament concerning this matter, who had herself participated in a hearing organised by the Parliamentary Assembly's Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee in 2010.

On 3 March 2011, two PACE members attended the 2011 meeting of the International Women's Day inter-parliamentary committee, organised by the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) of the European Parliament (Brussels).

On 15 March 2011 in Brussels, the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population held a hearing "Beyond Stockholm: implications for migrants and asylum seekers in Council of Europe Member States" with the participation of the Head of Asylum Unit, DG Home Affairs, European Commission; the Chairperson of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs of the European Parliament; the Rapporteur of the LIBE Committee of the European Parliament on Seasonal employment: conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals; the Head of the Immigration and Integration Unit, DG Home Affairs, European Commission; the Justice and Home Affairs

Counsellor, Hungarian Mission to the EU; the Executive Director of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and the Rapporteur of the LIBE Committee of the European Parliament on the Dublin Regulations.

On 25 March 2011, a PACE member met the EU Coordinator for Counter-terrorism in Brussels for an exchange of views in the context of his report on *Human Rights and the fight against terrorism*.

On 3 May 2011, the Chairperson and rapporteur of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population on *Asylum seekers and refugees: sharing responsibilities in Europe*, made a fact-finding visit to Brussels during which he met with a Director of the Council of the European Union; a member of the Cabinet of Commissioner responsible for Home Affairs and the Rapporteur of the LIBE Committee of the European Parliament.

On 12 May 2011, a Member of the European Parliament participated in the exchange of views on "Media policies and challenges of the Information Society" organised by the Parliamentary Assembly Committee on Culture, Science and Education (AS/Cult) during its meeting in Ljubljana.

In the context of the preparation of a report on *The Council of Europe and the Eastern Partnership of the European Union*, the Political Affairs Committee held a hearing on that issue, on 31 May 2011, with the Acting Head of Division for Eastern Partnership, regional co-operation and OSCE of the EU European External Action Service (EEAS), and the Director of Political Advice and Co-operation of the Council of Europe. On 14 December 2011, the Political Affairs Committee approved a report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution, which will be debated at the next meeting of the Standing Committee of the PACE on 9 March in Paris.

On 15 June 2011, a PACE member addressed the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) of the European Parliament in the context of a hearing on *Tackling gender-based violence - international perspectives* in Brussels.

On 23 June 2011, a joint hearing was organised by the Political Affairs Committee, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights and the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population on Council of Europe relations with the European Union with the participation of the Chair of the Informal Working Group on the Accession of the European Union to the European Convention of Human Rights (CDDH-UE) and the Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA).

On 7 July 2011, the rapporteur of the Political Affairs Committee on *The situation in Belarus*, participated in the meeting of the Parliamentary Troika on Belarus, which took place during the OSCE-PA annual session in Belgrade.

After the adoption by the Political Affairs Committee of a report on the *Request for Partner for Democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly submitted by the Palestinian National Council*, the Rapporteur held an exchange of views, in Brussels, in September 2011 with the Chairperson of the EP's delegation for the relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council. On 28 September 2011, this delegation, led by the

aforementioned Chairperson, held an exchange of views in the European Parliament in Strasbourg, with members of AS/Pol Secretariat, due to the unavailability of the rapporteur. On 6 October 2011, the aforementioned Chairperson attended the address to the Assembly of Mr Abbas, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, President of the Palestinian National Authority, and took part in the meeting of AS/Pol sub-committee on the Middle East.

On 20 October 2011, a PACE member addressed the EP's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE Committee) in the framework of a hearing on a Common European asylum system (CEAS).

In the framework of the follow-up to Resolution 1836 (2011) and Recommendation 1982 (2011) on *The impact of the Lisbon Treaty on the Council of Europe*, the rapporteur of the Political Affairs Committee was invited to take part in a hearing of the European Parliament on *The implementation of the EU Charter of fundamental rights two years after the Lisbon Treaty's entry into force*, on 10 November 2011, in Brussels.

On 21-22 November 2011, the Chairperson of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, participated as a keynote speaker in a Conference on "Dignity and rights for irregular migrants", organised by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) in Warsaw.

On 28 November 2011, the rapporteur of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population on *Lives lost in the Mediterranean Sea: who is responsible?* made a fact-finding visit to Brussels in the context of preparing her report, during which she met with the Rapporteur of the LIBE Committee on the Dublin Regulations, the Rapporteur of the LIBE Committee on the review of the European Neighbourhood Policy and a member of the Cabinet of the Commissioner responsible for Home Affairs. In the same context, the PACE rapporteur made a fact-finding visit to Malta on 15 December 2011, during which she met with the Executive Director of EASO (European Asylum Support Office).

On 29 November 2011, the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, meeting in Paris, held a hearing on *Lives lost in the Mediterranean Sea: who is responsible?* with the participation of, inter alia, the Head of Joint Operations, FRONTEX.

Informal contacts take place regularly at Secretariat level between Secretariat of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population and the Secretariat of the LIBE Committee of the EP.

Further to PACE Resolution 1812 (2011) and Recommendation 1971 (2011) on *The impact of the Eastern Partnership of the European Union on governance and economic development in eastern Europe*, proposals were made to develop co-operation between the PACE and the EP in the framework of the Eastern Partnership.

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

During 2011, the Commissioner pursued his regular meetings with members of the European Commission and representatives of the EU Council with duties related to human rights.

In March, the Commissioner met with the Vice-President of the European Commission/ High Representative of the Union for Foreign and Security Policy. They exchanged views on the human rights situation in Albania, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kosovo¹⁴, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

In March, the Commissioner met with the Vice-President of the European Commission, responsible for the Digital Agenda. They held an exchange of views on media freedom in general and also discussed issues relating to Hungary's recent media legislation.

In May, the Commissioner met with the Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, and discussed issues related to Roma, regulation of the media and access to complaints mechanisms. The need for co-ordination of complementary human rights competences among international organisations was highlighted in the talks.

In October, the Commissioner met with the Commissioner for Home Affairs. The Commissioners discussed the situation of asylum seekers and the EU asylum policy and freedom of movement and migration of Roma.

In October, the Commissioner held talks with the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. Discussions focused on the situation of Roma and EU funding for Roma inclusion.

Information on the results of the Commissioner's country monitoring was also exchanged with relevant Commission departments and the European External Action Service during the year.

The Commissioner had several meetings with representatives of the European Parliament. In March, he participated in a panel discussion organised by the President of the European Parliament's MEDIA intergroup. The discussion focused on the media freedom situation in the European Union.

In June, the Commissioner participated in an exchange of views with members of the Subcommittee on Human Rights of the European Parliament. He highlighted the human rights situation of Roma, the humanitarian crisis in the Southern Mediterranean, the social consequences of austerity budgets and the impact these measures had on the most vulnerable members of society, and freedom of the media.

¹⁴ 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.

In November, the Commissioner addressed a hearing on the implementation of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, organised by the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs.

Furthermore, in May, the Commissioner held discussions with the President of the European Economic and Social Committee, during which the impact of the economic crisis on the implementation of social and economic rights was raised.

The Commissioner maintained regular contacts in Strasbourg with the European Ombudsman.

The working relationship with the European Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) was pursued actively in 2011. In November, the Commissioner met with the Chairperson of the FRA Management Board, and the FRA Director. The discussions focused on the situation of Roma and the relationship between the FRA and the Council of Europe.

The Commissioner's Office co-operated with the FRA during the research for the Commissioner's report "Discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity in Europe", which was published in June 2011. The Director of the FRA participated as a speaker at the launch of the report. Relevant FRA publications and data from primary legal research were among the key resource documents and the Commissioner's Office benefitted from the technical expertise of the FRA throughout the research process. In September, a joint round table entitled "Rights to equality, life and security of the person: bridging the gap for transgender people" was organised in Vienna to raise awareness about the Commissioner's report and FRA research among transgender persons, national authorities and equality bodies.

The Commissioner's Office provided expertise at the stakeholder meetings of the FRA's joined-up governance project with a specific focus on the local level implementation of human rights.

In June, the Commissioner met with the Director of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). The discussions referred to non-discrimination in the labour market, equal pay, gender stereotypes and gender identity.

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

The CPT's co-operation with EU institutions continued to grow in intensity and fruitful links have been further developed with relevant officials.

In particular, on 25 January 2011, the CPT was represented at the high-level round table on detention in the EU organised by the European Commission.

In addition, on 24 and 25 February, bilateral FRONTEX / CPT meetings took place in Warsaw.

On 21 and 22 November, the CPT was represented at the Conference on "Dignity and rights of irregular migrants" organised by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in Warsaw.

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

In 2011, 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. A representative of the European Commission participated in the seminar organised by ECRI and the Turkish Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in Ankara in January. Furthermore, a representative of the European Commission took part in a meeting of ECRI's Working Group on discrimination in employment in Brussels on 6-7 October 2011.

The European Commission enjoys observer status with the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance.

FRA regularly provides data and information on racism, xenophobia and related intolerance to ECRI and ECRI reports make regular reference to FRA's work. ECRI, the FRA and the OSCE/ODIHR made a joint statement on the occasion of International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, on 21 March 2011.

An exchange of views was held between ECRI and the Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) on 23 June in Strasbourg.

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.*

Concrete prospects for formal participation of the European Union in the **Enlarged Agreement: Group of States against Corruption (GRECO)** as reflected in the Stockholm Programme paved the way for further informal consultations between GRECO and the European Commission in 2011 and led to the development of proposals for the possible format and modalities of future participation of the EU. The proposals were reflected in a European Commission report submitted to the European Council as one of four components of the Commission's "Anti-corruption package" adopted on 6 June 2011. Following the adoption of the anti-corruption package, the Commission is currently considering the most appropriate modality for formal reinforced co-operation with GRECO, in line with the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. In this connection, GRECO's President and representatives of the Secretariat met with the Cabinet of the Commissioner responsible for Home Affairs on the question of EU

participation in GRECO as well as GRECO's possible representation on the Commission's Group of Experts on Corruption.

GRECO also continued to provide input to consultation meetings with the European Union's External Action Service (EEAS) for the preparation of European Union progress reports on the implementation of European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plans. GRECO was represented at a number of events organised by the EU, including a workshop held by the European Commission (DG Enlargement) on Judicial reform in Montenegro (Danilovgrad, 20 January), consultations with the European Union's External Action Service on co-operation in Central Asia (Strasbourg, 17 March), a conference organised by OLAF and the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies of the University of London on EU Accession to the ECHR and GRECO (London, 16 May) as well as the Consultative Forum of Prosecutors General and Directors of Public Prosecutions of the member States of the European Union, arranged by Eurojust (The Hague, 23 June).

On 17 May 2011 in Brussels, the Executive Secretary of the **Pompidou Group** presented the Pompidou Group to the EU in the framework of the EU programme "people to people" in the Western Balkans.

On 16 November 2011, the Pompidou Group Secretariat organised a workshop on the neighbourhood policy for the South Mediterranean countries in Brussels, which brought together representatives of the Mediterranean Network (MedNET): Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia; and representatives of the European External Action Service, the European Commission (DG Home Affairs, DG Just, DEVCO, Taiex (Technical Assistance and Information Exchange) and the specialised agency in the drugs field, the European Monitoring Centre on Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA) .

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 (DG REGIO).

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.

An Enlarged Partial Agreement on **Cultural Routes** was established at the end of 2010. In the framework of the Partial Agreement, the "Council of Europe Cultural Route" certification is awarded by its Governing Board to cultural routes that satisfy the criteria outlined in the relevant CM Resolution.

The **European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA)** and the European Union continued to pursue co-operation in 2011.

Institutional co-operation between the **Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)** and the European Commission (Sport Unit) has been pursued in 2011. In practice, the Secretariat of the two organisations organised a co-ordination meeting in January and attended each other's meetings throughout the year, including within the framework of the Hungarian and Polish Presidencies of the European Union. This co-operation, both at secretariat and political level is taking place, also as a follow-up to the informal Ministerial Conference held in Baku in 2010 where the Ministers of the Council of Europe in charge of Sport adopted a Resolution on that matter.

The new Statutory Resolution of the **European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre)** adopted in May 2011 by the Committee of Ministers strengthened the relationship with the European Union, through the introduction of the EU Committee of Regions as a new stakeholder of the Centre (in addition to the European Parliament). 2011 was the third year of the implementation of the Joint Management Agreement between the North-South Centre and the European Commission, designed to promote global education in the new EU member states, as well as Euro-African youth co-operation. The implementation of the Euro-African dimension, integrated in 2009 into the EU-CoE youth partnership, also continued.

In November 2011 the North-South Centre signed with the Directorate General Development of the European Commission (DG DevCo) an Addendum to the Joint Management Agreement for Global Development Education and Raising Public Awareness (of global interdependence and solidarity) in Europe and Beyond that included additional activities to be developed in 2012.

The North-South Centre organised a series of activities in the youth co-operation field, in particular in the framework of the Joint Management Agreement EU/CoE, as well as in the framework of the EU/CoE Partnership Agreement.

The (12th) University on **Youth and Development** and the (3rd) African University on Youth and Development were organised in Spain and Cape Verde respectively, providing the possibility for training and political advocacy for youth leaders from Europe and Africa. An action plan for 2012-15 was set up in the follow-up to the second Euro-Africa Youth Summit.

Mr Bernardino León, EU Special Representative for the Southern Mediterranean region actively contributed to the North-South Centre's Lisbon Forum 2011 held on 3 – 4 November on the topic "The Arab Spring: a major step towards making universal human rights real".

The **European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML)** continued its ongoing co-operation with the European Commission and, in particular, with the Multilingualism Policy Unit. This included secretariat meetings, representation at ECML statutory meetings and major events, such as the Centre's *Empowering language professionals* conference in September 2011.

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the European Day of Languages, a Joint Declaration was issued by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth. The Declaration also made specific reference to the work of the ECML and the importance of developing further synergies with the Commission.

As a follow-up to a working meeting in Brussels with the representatives of the Directorate General for Education and Culture on the topic "Lifelong learning: horizontal policy issues and 2020 strategy" (Multilingualism policy), a co-operation action plan related to common priority areas is currently being developed. The ECML's 2012-2015 programme (which was adopted in September 2011) includes a number of themes relevant to the work of the European Commission where co-operation is envisaged, such as assessment, recognition of qualifications, benchmarking, use of European Language Portfolio and interpretation and translation in public services.

The Centre was also an initiator of the "Quality education in Romani for Europe" (QualiRom) project, receiving funding under the Key Actions 2 programme (2010-2013), and an associate partner in 5 other ongoing Commission-funded projects.

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

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

- 9th. Council of Europe Conference of **Health** Ministers, Lisbon, 29-30 September 2011; and
- 17th. Session of the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for **Local and Regional Government**, Kyiv, 3-4 November 2011

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

In line with the MoU, in 2011 the Congress continued its close co-operation with the Committee of the Regions of the EU (CoR).

On 12 January 2011, in Brussels, the Presidents held their 3rd annual bipartite meeting since the signature of the co-operation agreement.

After the bipartite meeting, on 7 February 2011, the Contact Group Congress/Committee of the Regions held its meeting in Paris. The Group discussed election monitoring missions, the Eastern Partnership and multilevel governance and carried forward the activity on rights and duties of local and regional elected representatives and the risks of corruption.

On 8 February 2011, a co-ordination meeting for the European Local Democracy Week (ELDW) was organised by the Congress on CoR premises in Brussels.

The Congress' Thematic Rapporteur on Roma/Travellers, addressed the seminar on "Cities and regions - joining forces for inclusion of Roma populations", organised by the Committee of the Regions on 31 May 2011 in Brussels.

The CoR was invited to the Congress observation missions of municipal elections in Albania, Bulgaria and Moldova. The CoR took part in the observation in Albania in May 2011 and in Moldova in June 2011. The missions allowed the two bodies to work in synergy to assess the situation of local and regional democracy in the field.

On 1 July 2011, the Secretaries General of the Congress and the CoR held a co-ordination meeting in Brussels.

On 8 September 2011, the Conference of Regional and Local Authorities for the Eastern Partnership (CORLEAP) was launched in Poznan by the Committee of the Regions. The Congress holds observer status with CORLEAP and was represented by two Congress members who took part as speakers in the inaugural session. Nine members of the Congress (from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine) were appointed members of CORLEAP. Four members of the CoR (from Denmark, Poland (2) and Sweden) are members of the Congress too.

The CoR Rapporteur on Roma, participated in the Summit of Mayors on Roma, organised by the Congress in Strasbourg on 22 September 2011 and spoke in the round table debate on "Roma Inclusion: What Obstacles?".

On 11 October, the President of the Congress took part in the ALDE Group meeting of the CoR.

A member of the Current Affairs Committee, represented the Congress at the 3rd annual dialogue with the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, organised by the Committee of the Regions in Brussels on 17 October 2011. She addressed the meeting on the subject of irregular migrants.

On 19 October 2011 the Minister-President of Flanders took part in the Round table on multi-level governance in Europe, held in the Chamber of Regions during the Congress session.

The Contact Group meeting took place on 29 November 2011 in Brussels. Fruitful synergies were also accomplished with regard to the respective initiatives on Roma: the Congress Summit of Mayors and the CoR report on the social and economic integration of the Roma in Europe. Co-operation was also very successful on the establishment of the Conference of Regional and Local Authorities for the Eastern Partnership (CORLEAP). The 13 Congress members, who are also members of CORLEAP, could play an important role within it and the Congress envisages to play a major role within CORLEAP.

On 29 November 2011 the Contact Group organised in Brussels a meeting of experts on ethics and counteracting corruption at local and regional level. Experts representing the Council of Europe Enlarged Agreement Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), the European Commission, the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Transparency International took part in the meeting.

On 1 December 2011, the Secretary General of the Congress addressed the CoR Commission for Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External affairs (CIVEX) with a contribution on election observation and on the co-operation between the Congress and the CoR.

On 13 December 2011, the Congress President addressed the Bureau of the Committee of the Regions in Brussels and presented the main results of the ongoing co-operation and the Congress activities for the coming years, as well as the possible room for improvement with regard to the co-operation between the CoR and the Congress.

The Congress Bureau regularly analyses and discusses the activities of the Committee of the Regions relevant for the Congress.

In addition to co-operation between the Congress and the CoR, on 24 March 2011, the Congress hosted the European Commissioner responsible for Regional Policy who took part in the Congress' 20th session and made a statement on the strengthening of the co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union.

Civil Society (cf. § 50 of the MoU)

In 2011, the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) of the Council of Europe actively contributed to the implementation of the MoU, focusing on human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy and good governance and democratic stability.

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 2011 a large number of meetings and contacts between senior officials of both organisations, as well as meetings with media representatives and NGOs. The Brussels Office regularly reported on important developments related to the European Union and advised on initiatives related to these. The Office is actively involved in facilitating project co-operation between the EU and the Council of Europe which, in 2011, reached a volume of over 103 M €.

In the context of the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, which significantly increased the powers of the European Parliament, since 2010, there has been a marked increase of the activities of the Brussels Office with respect to the latter. The Special Representative of the Secretary General and/or other colleagues regularly attended hearings on relevant topical issues.

The Liaison Office moved into new premises on 1 April 2011¹⁵ and was further reinforced during the course of the year totalling ten officials.

¹⁵ A number of awareness-raising events related to CoE activities were organised on the occasion of the inauguration of the new premises on 2-6 May 2011.

The **Delegation of the European Union to the Council of Europe** in Strasbourg has continued to play a key role in the promotion of co-operation between the two organisations. In particular, the Head and other members of the Delegation regularly participate in meetings of the Ministers' Deputies and its rapporteur groups.

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

55 Joint Programmes, most of them multi-annual, were active in 2011, with a cumulative budgetary envelope of € 103.7 million (€ 87.6 million in 2010). The European Union contributed € 91.6 million (88%), and the Council of Europe € 12.1 million (12 %). The annual budgetary envelope for 2011 (prorated) was € 29.4 million, to which the European Union contributed € 25.5 million (86.88%) and the Council of Europe € 3.9 million (13.12 %).

During 2011, **17 new Joint Programmes and Joint Actions were initiated**, with a cumulative budgetary envelope of € 32.7 million (2010: € 31.9 million). The European Union contributed € 29.2 million (89.25 %), and the Council of Europe € 3.5 million (10.75%).

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

Evaluation and Audit

In order to discuss follow-up and implementation of recommendations of the evaluation report concerning the Joint Programme 'Efficient Prison Management in Bosnia and Herzegovina', a presentation of the evaluation results was organised in Sarajevo on 13 May 2011 with the participation of State and entity Ministries of Justice, the EU Delegation, the Directorate General of Human Rights and the Rule of Law, as well as other stakeholders.

During the evaluation of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Ukraine 2008-2011 (AP) Ukraine Action Plan Phase I (Planning process), which was finalised in June 2011, the Directorate of Internal Oversight (DIO) collected information through interviews with the desk officer for Ukraine in Brussels and the EU Delegation in Kyiv on how the EU defines its strategic country planning documents and it assessed the level of co-operation between the EU and the CoE with regard to the planning process of the CoE Action Plan for Ukraine.

In 2011, DIO continued to serve as a contact point for the Evaluation of the European Union's co-operation channelled through the Council of Europe, which was launched last year by the European Commission. The scope of the evaluation covers the overall co-operation and partnership with the Council of Europe, including funds and joint programmes, for the period 2000-2010. In this context, on 17 February 2011, DIO invited the leader of the evaluation team to make a presentation to CoE staff on the evaluation process and methodology.

The Internal Audit regularly reviews Joint Programmes. In 2011, the following two Programmes were audited: "Strengthening Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina"; and "Human Rights of people experiencing poverty".

In co-operation with the Rapporteur Group on Programme, Budget and Administration (GR-PBA), DIO organised an awareness raising event on 6 June. High-level experts in the field of evaluation, including from the EU, participated in the panel discussion, which was also an occasion for the newly-appointed Director of DIO to present his vision on evaluation.

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**.

Regular **media events** were organised also in Brussels, involving CoE senior officials. Visibility of both the Council of Europe in Brussels and joint initiatives and events is assured by the work of a **Council of Europe press officer** who is assigned to the Liaison Office in Brussels.

The Council of Europe systematically targets **Brussels-based journalists** specialising in European affairs (*see also part 10 on "institutional presence"*).

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.

An agreement to formalise the EU/CoE visual identity was concluded between the CoE and the European Commission (DEVCO) in September 2011

13. Follow-up (cf. § 55 of the MoU)

Formal, high level follow-up to the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding as a whole has been undertaken on the occasion of exchanges of views of the **Ministers' Deputies** on co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union.

A chapter on co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union was included in the document "***The Council of Europe: a strategy for values in action – Activity report by the Secretary General***" which was submitted to the Ministers at the **121st Ministerial Session of the Committee of Ministers** held on 10-11 May 2011 in Istanbul. At the above-mentioned Ministerial Session, the Committee of Ministers took the following decision with regard to co-operation with the European Union : (The Committee of Ministers) "*welcomed the enhancement of co-operation between the Council of Europe and other international organisations, in particular of the partnership with the European Union..*".

In addition, a **Summary Report on Co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union** was submitted to the 1126th. meeting of the Ministers' Deputies on 16 November 2011, where the Deputies took the following decisions:

(The Deputies)

1. took note of the summary report on co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union which appears in document GR-EXT(2011)7 rev;

2. instructed their Rapporteur Group on External Relations (GR-EXT) to prepare a report on co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union enabling them to conduct a yearly review of this co-operation.