

Responses to the Questionnaire sent by the CCPE

1. An emergency situation was declared in the entire territory of the Republic of Armenia by the Government Decree of 16 March 2020. The emergency situation is still going on.

2. The following rights that have been affected by the declaration of emergency situation:

- The right of freedom of movement;
- The right to freedom of assembly;

3. The measures implied during the emergency situation are strictly necessary for the protection of public health. The scope of the restrictions may vary given the current situation.

4. Such cases have not been detected.

5. During the first days of the emergency situation the most part of the prosecutors worked remotely due to the fact that a lockdown was declared.

6. During the pandemic pre-trial detention of 20 detainees has been changed by the initiative of the prosecutors.

7. No intervention took place.

8. Crisis response teams have not been created. However, by the order of the General Prosecutor some prosecutors continued to work in a usual manner also during the autoisolation.

9. No, there have not been any guidelines.

10. Cooperation with other agencies continued in a usual manner.

11. No such investigations have been carried out.

12. Taking into account the overall situation created by COVID-19 the number of decisions not to prosecute for the crimes of less or medium gravity has increased.

13. During the emergency situation some criminal proceedings related to the situation created by COVID 19 have been initiated. For example, there was a case when a person disseminated information concerning patients who got infected by COVID-19 and which did not correspond to reality. Also there was a case when an official of the penitentiary institution refused to measure the heat and for that reason a quarrel began between him and the nurse and the official slapped the nurse.

The main impact the Covid-19 pandemic has on the work of the investigative bodies is that almost no investigative activities, which requires participation of persons, for example interrogation of witnesses, are conducted resulted from the spread of pandemic. Also it should be noted that the pandemic had an impact on the time limits of forensic examinations given the fact that the staff of forensic institutions are working remotely and forensic examinations which requires participation of persons are almost not conducted. Based on the abovementioned it should be highlighted that the process of collecting evidence slowed down.

Regarding the cases which have already been sent to court it should be noted that although the trial proceedings go on, in some cases the persons who are in pre-trial detention are

not transferred to courts from detention facilities aimed at ensuring the health of those persons and excluding the possibility of the penetration of the pandemic into detention facilities.

14. There are not any new or extended functions of the prosecution service resulting from the emergency situation.

15. In our opinion the main challenge for the prosecution service is the reasonable time of the investigations given the fact that the restrictions have their impact in the process of collecting evidence.

17-18. The emergency situation also had its impact on the process of training of the prosecutors. The trainings are now organised through webinars.