

EVALUATION OF STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT AND REPORTING IN THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE



June 2020

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Key personnel for the evaluation

Directorate of Internal Oversight

Colin Wall	Director of Internal Oversight
Aygen Becquart	Head of the Evaluation Division
Maria Goldman	Lead evaluator and report author
Cristina Matei	Evaluation assistant

External expertise

Dirk Blink	Independent evaluation consultant
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Quality assurance

Debbie Menezes	Independent evaluation consultant
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Executive summary

The present evaluation examined **strategies** – the processes of their formulation, their usage within the Council of Europe and their impact on organisational performance. It aimed at answering two questions.

- ▶ To what extent is the strategy formulation process conducted in an effective manner and to what extent does it result in high-quality documents?
- ▶ To what extent and under what conditions are strategies helpful in improving the work of the Organisation?

The evaluation used **mixed methods** for data collection and analysis involving the mapping of 41 Council of Europe strategies, 16 of which were assessed in detail by a strategy expert. This was followed by a survey (119 respondents) and semi-structured interviews with 39 staff, 6 chairs of Committee of Ministers' rapporteur groups and 2 chairs of inter-governmental committees. Staff members of other international organisations were also interviewed and a benchmarking study was conducted with the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

The evaluation concluded that the Council of Europe produces a variety of useful documents containing strategic elements. However, it does not currently have a single document which can be referred to as an overall strategic document for the Organisation. In addition, due to the absence of a defined **architecture** for strategic documents, an agreed **terminology** relating to strategic planning and a **single repository** for strategic documents, there is much confusion over the purpose, role and whereabouts of the available documents. Thus, the evaluation

concluded that the Organisation would greatly benefit from an organisational strategic framework, which would increase the relevance and coherence of the Organisation's work, improve its communication and visibility, guide its staff and enhance the quality and **impact** of its actions. It is therefore encouraging that the Committee of Ministers has decided that a four-year strategic framework is to be established for the Organisation.

When analysing specific documents, the evaluation found that strategic planning and reporting processes for thematic documents were often insufficiently standardised and suffered from a lack of guidance. This was not, however, the case for country action plans, which reflect a more institutionalised approach to strategic planning. The evaluation recommends enhancing the current processes through the adoption of **strategic planning procedures** which are aligned with the requirements for a strategic planning framework, for example, by developing **guidance** on specific strategy planning and reporting steps and **aligning strategic planning cycles**.

In terms of **quality**, most of the strategic documents produced by the Organisation have a clear rationale, are consistent with Council of Europe's overall strategic priorities, show links to the Organisation's specific comparative advantages, are underpinned by diagnostic work analysing lessons learnt from previous strategies, evaluations and international sectoral experience, and include prioritised, clear and realistic objectives. On the other hand, certain elements were found to be in need of further strengthening, such as an explicit **results framework** (cause-and-effect logic representing objectives and the means to achieve them), a clear time frame and implementation plan, provisions for monitoring and evaluation and an explicit identification of resources, incentives and support for implementation.

To bridge the gaps identified, the Organisation could consider producing **templates** for strategy formulation, including one for strategies and one for action plans and/or produce a **manual** on strategy preparation.

The evaluation further concluded that, overall, strategies produced **positive effects** on some elements of organisational performance, most of all on communication, visibility and legitimacy of the relevant sector of work, but also on the quality of the action taken, internal co-ordination and, especially in the case of country action plans, fundraising. There is potential for strengthening other areas, in particular, **accountability and learning**, by making monitoring and (self-) evaluation an integral part of a strategy's performance assessment.

The elements which were identified as most critical for the success of a strategy were **thematic expertise**, availability of **resources**, **awareness** of relevant stakeholders and their **support**, and a **lead entity** with thematic expertise in charge of the delivery of each item of the strategy.

The evaluation found that thematic expertise, awareness of relevant stakeholders and their support were reported as being present to a sufficient extent for most strategies currently in place. It is critical to

actively ensure that future strategic undertakings contain these elements. Therefore, attention must be paid to talent management when deciding who will be responsible for the preparation and implementation of a strategy and who can be expected to meet the multiple requirements of the task.

The availability of resources, including human resources, for strategy preparation and implementation was sometimes reported as being insufficient, particularly in the case of thematic documents. Thus, the evaluation recommends that **resources** be dedicated to strategy preparation prior to its launch and that a reference to the resources needed for its implementation is made in the strategy document. Furthermore, the **responsibility** for the preparation and implementation of each strategy should be clearly assigned to a lead entity and reflected in the annual objectives of relevant staff members.

Overall, the evaluation showed that the preparation of a strategy and its effectiveness is a highly **context-dependent** business, which needs to consider questions such as the feasibility of ensuring a common vision and commitment among stakeholders, the suitability of the organisational set-up for specific strategy initiatives, the availability of (human) resources, and the added value of the strategy.

List of abbreviations

CAHDPH	Ad hoc Committee of experts on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CAHENF	Ad hoc Committee for the Rights of the Child
CAHROM	Ad hoc Committee of Experts on Roma and Traveller Issues
CCJ	Advisory Council on Youth
CDCJ	European Committee on Legal Co-operation
CDCT	Council of Europe Committee on Counter-Terrorism
CDDG	European Committee on Democracy and Governance
CDMSI	Steering Committee on Media and Information Society
CDPC	European Committee on Crime Problems
Court	European Court of Human Rights
CM	Committee of Ministers
DG	Directorate General
DGI	Directorate General Human Rights and Rule of Law
DGII	Directorate General Democracy
DEVCO	European Commission Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development
DIO	Directorate of Internal Oversight
DPB	Directorate of Programme and Budget
EU	European Union
GEC	Gender Equality Commission
GR-C	Rapporteur group-- Education, Culture, Sport, Youth and Environment
GR-DEM	Rapporteur group – Democracy
GR-EXT	Rapporteur group – External Relations
GR-H	Rapporteur group – Human Rights

GR-J	Rapporteur group – Legal Co-operation
GR-PBA	Rapporteur group – Programme, Budget and Administration
GR-SOC	Rapporteur group – Social and Health Questions
INGOs	International non-governmental organisations
IT	Information technology
KPI	Key performance indicator
MAEs	Major administrative entities
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
NEAR	European Commission Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
ODGP	Office of the Director General of Programmes
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PACE	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
PECS	European Social Cohesion Platform
PMM	Project management methodology
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SECO	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (Switzerland)
SG	Secretary General of the Council of Europe
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Strategic management is one of the most important performance areas of an organisation. It relates to a “clear strategic direction geared to key functions, intended results and integration of relevant cross-cutting priorities”.¹

This evaluation assesses the processes of preparation and formulation of and reporting on Council of Europe strategies, including the factors that influence the quality of their development and uptake, and correlates the impact of these strategic planning processes with enhanced organisational performance. This is the first time that an evaluation of the overall process of strategy making within the Organisation has been undertaken.

The object of evaluation is **strategy** – to deepen understanding of the processes used in its formulation and the use of strategies within the Organisation – and how these approaches impact organisational performance.

What is a “strategy”? There are currently no formally agreed written definitions at the Council of Europe on what a strategy is, and the evaluation therefore uses dictionary definitions and those from the academic field as a starting point (see Appendix 1). The concept of strategy includes the following elements:

- ▶ a strategy is a plan;
- ▶ it is based on a long-term vision and helps to achieve a (long-term) goal;
- ▶ it is time-bound;
- ▶ it guides distribution of resources, skills and competencies;
- ▶ it aims to address stakeholders’ needs;
- ▶ it is based on an analysis of the relevant environment and aims to provide the Organisation with a competitive edge.

Other important aspects of a strategy² are:

- ▶ a strategy is developed in a participatory manner and is widely supported in the Organisation;
- ▶ it includes indicators to measure performance;
- ▶ there is a process for clarifying and revising the strategy;
- ▶ mechanisms are in place to enable lesson learning.

The above elements are considered as the defining characteristics of a strategy for this evaluation.

1.2. Purpose, objectives

The primary purpose of this evaluation is to support improvement in the processes for preparation of Council of Europe strategies and the mechanisms for reporting.

The objectives of the evaluation are to draw evidence-based conclusions about: i) how the processes of strategy preparation and reporting improve the Council of Europe’s work; and ii) whether and how strategies strengthen organisational performance.

The evaluation includes benchmarking information on strategy making and reporting in other international organisations in order to identify good practices. It also analyses the quality of strategic documents and makes recommendations for their improvement.

The target audience for this report is the executive and senior management and the governing body of the Council of Europe.

After finalisation of the evaluation report, the Secretariat will be requested to provide a management response to the evaluation and an action plan in which they specify whether or not they accept the recommendations and how they intend to implement them. The Directorate of Internal Oversight (DIO) will regularly request updates on implementation of the evaluation recommendations.

1. Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (2018): *MOPAN 3.0 – Methodology Manual*.

2. These are adapted from Lusthaus et al. (2002): *Organizational assessment: a framework for improving performance*, IDB/IDRC.

1.3. Scope

The Council of Europe did not have a single consolidated list of its strategies. The evaluation team therefore produced a non-exhaustive list of strategies and documents containing strategic aspects (Appendix 2) based on various information sources, such as a search of Council of Europe websites, scoping interviews and written requests to directors of major administrative entities (MAEs).

The evaluation was broad in that it looked at samples across all types of documents which have strategic aspects (for example, regional and country strategies and thematic action plans) to ensure that it was inclusive and that it covered a representative range of the different document types produced by the Council of Europe. These are referred to as “strategies” in this evaluation. In order to ensure the feasibility of data collection and analysis within the time available, the evaluation focused on strategies produced for the operational sector of the Council of Europe because it is the *raison d’être* of the Organisation and therefore a starting point for any organisation-wide strategic endeavours. The evaluation therefore did not focus on strategies produced for the support (non-operational) pillar of the Organisation.³

Furthermore, the evaluation selected the year 2014 as a cut-off date and assessed all known strategies which were active from 2014 onwards. This enabled an assessment of some strategies which have already come to an end as well as some which are still being implemented.

It is also important to note that while the evaluation examined the effectiveness of the strategies at the level of the Organisation, it did not look at their level of impact in member states. Such an assessment would require specific in-depth evaluations in each programmatic area, which DIO typically carries out in other parts of its work programme.

1.4. Evaluation questions

The evaluation focused on the criterion of effectiveness. The evaluation questions and sub-questions were formulated as follows.

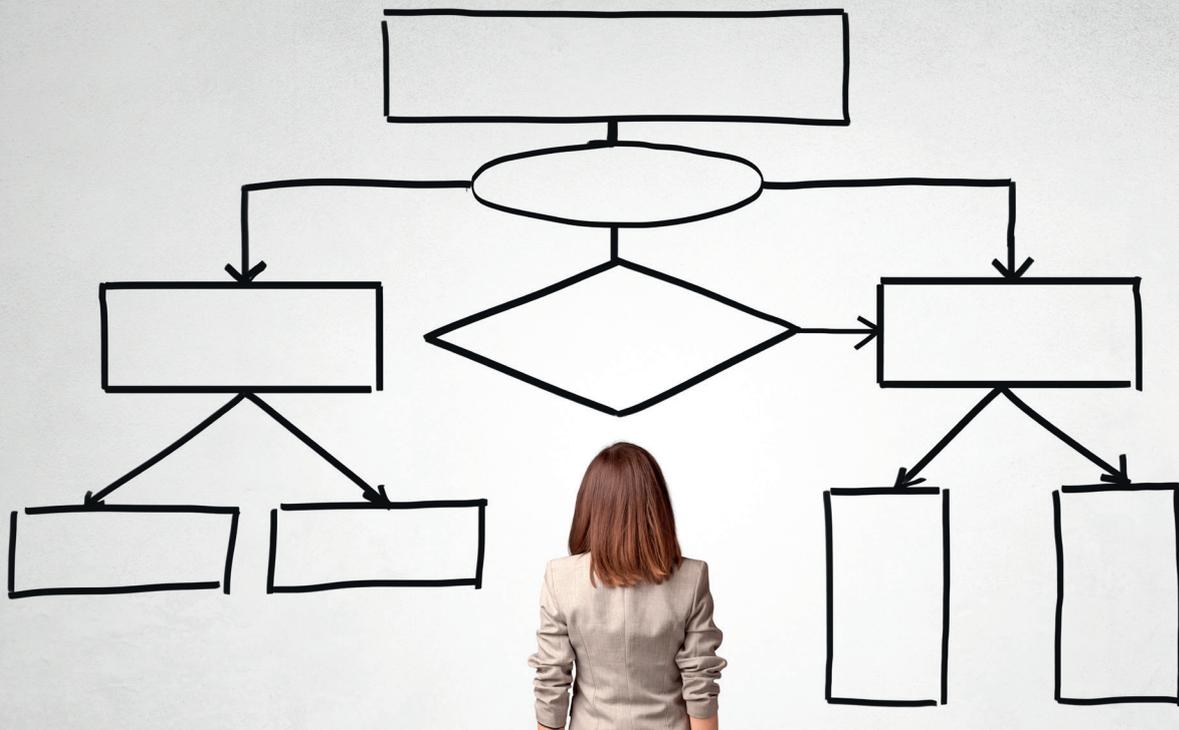
1. To what extent are the strategy formulation processes and resulting deliverables of appropriate

quality, to what extent do they conform with standards and to what extent are they useful?

- a. What are the typical processes for initiating and developing a strategy?
 - b. To what extent does internal capacity and expertise for strategy making and reporting exist?
 - c. What consultation and quality control mechanisms are in place (and which are most useful)?
 - d. How does the Council of Europe ensure monitoring and reporting of its strategies (process for review and revision, progress reporting)? To what extent are they consistently applied and effective?
 - e. To what extent are strategy documents produced by the Council of Europe of sufficiently high quality (see Appendix 3 for proposed quality criteria)?
2. To what extent and under what conditions are Council of Europe strategies effective in guiding the Organisation’s work?
- a. To what extent and under what conditions do strategies have an effect on the Council of Europe’s operations and practices (that is, their contribution to decision making on programming and resource allocation; improved communication, transparency and accountability; increased legitimacy of the sector; increased competence and motivation of staff; and improved internal co-ordination)? If not, why not?
 - b. To what extent and under what conditions have Council of Europe strategies contributed to improved organisational performance (for example, rapid reaction and adaptation, improved quality of action, partnerships, improved visibility, an increase in funding)?
 - c. What lessons can be drawn from current practices in the Council of Europe and in other international organisations to improve the quality and effectiveness of strategies (what factors influence the effectiveness of strategies)?

An evaluation matrix in Appendix 4 provides further details on the methodology used to answer the above questions.

3. Such as the [Administrative Reform of the Council of Europe – Measures foreseen for the 2018-2019 biennium](#); the [Reform framework in the current organisational context](#); the [Information Technology Strategic Action Plan \(2018-2022\)](#); the [CAHB Capital master plan](#), etc.



2. Methodology

In order to understand the chain of results from the inputs into strategy planning processes to the effects on organisational performance, the evaluation developed the theory of change in Appendix 5. It was designed based on the general literature and an understanding of how the strategy-making process works in the Council of Europe and was discussed and refined in consultation with the Organisation's staff during the inception phase.

The evaluation was conducted between April and December 2019 and managed by two evaluators from the DIO under the supervision of the Head of the Evaluation Division. An external consultant was engaged to conduct the parts of the data collection and analysis that required specific subject matter expertise (for a detailed presentation of the distribution of tasks, see Appendix 6).

The evaluation included three phases: inception, data collection and data analysis, and report preparation. The evaluation used a mixed methods approach for data collection and analysis⁴ and relied on the following processes:

- a. document review and mapping of available Council of Europe strategies (see the list of 41 document in Appendix 2);
- b. a staff survey with 119 respondents (see the questionnaire in Appendix 7);

- c. a review of documents with regard to their purpose, audience and function (41 documents) and an assessment by a strategy expert of a sample of Council of Europe strategies (16 documents) against various criteria (Appendix 2);
- d. semi-structured interviews with 39 staff, 6 chairs of Committee of Ministers' (CM) rapporteur groups and 2 chairs of intergovernmental committees of the Council of Europe and 11 staff members of other international organisations and strategy experts (Appendix 8);
- e. benchmarking of four comparator international organisations⁵ through a documentation review, followed by consultations with their staff.

A detailed description of the methodology used, including its limitations concerning the scope of the evaluation, the availability and reliability of data and potential bias, can be consulted in Appendix 9.

A meeting with heads of MAEs is expected to take place to discuss the evaluation findings and conclusions in the draft evaluation report.

An independent external consultant also provided feedback on the draft concept note and the draft final report, as well as advice throughout the evaluation exercise, in order to ensure quality.

4. Triangulation across different instruments was used to test, verify and validate the findings.

5. EU, OSCE, UNDP and UNESCO. The comparator organisations were chosen based on their similar size (OSCE, UNESCO), geographic scope (EU, OSCE) and similar mandate (UNDP, UNESCO).



3. Findings

3.1. Quality and usefulness of strategy formulation processes and resultant deliverables

This chapter discusses findings on the purposes of strategic documents, the conditions under which they were produced, the process of their formulation, the quality of the documents and monitoring and reporting arrangements.

3.1.1. Typology of strategic documents

Finding 1. The Council of Europe has many documents containing strategic elements.⁶ They differ in scope and level of detail, are produced in diverse ways and for diverse purposes.

Finding 2. The linkages between those documents are not evident and there is no single repository for strategy documents.

Finding 3. There is no consistent institutional terminology used for strategic planning.

Finding 4. Country action plans are consistently found to be a useful strategic planning tool.

The Council of Europe has several strategies and other documents containing strategic elements, such as thematic action plans, country action plans and various other documents (see Appendix 2 for a non-exhaustive list).

6. The Secretary General's biennial priorities document is a key concise, well-structured document with strategic elements, but without the key features of a strategy or action plan.

The documents referred to in this evaluation as strategic documents for the Organisation were produced in **diverse ways** and for **diverse purposes**. An indicative typology of the documents,⁸ which offers a short description of the document concerned, the audience to which it is addressed (Council of Europe hierarchy, member states,⁹ etc.) and its function (strategy, action plan, declaration, budget, etc.) was drawn up and the results are presented in Appendix 2.

The Organisation does not use **consistent, standardised terminology** for strategic planning, which results in an arbitrary and interchangeable use of the terms “strategy”, “action plan”, “strategic priorities”, etc.

Documents:

“There is [no] single document which indicates what the Council of Europe is about. [A] strategy [should] be to first decide what we need to do and then allocate resources to it. We do the opposite of strategy. We look at what we have and say: what can we do with it?”

“We have to use language consistently and to agree what to call what. We must establish a clear glossary; for example, within strategies you could have action plans.”

Staff members⁷

The reviewed documents included **16 thematic strategies and action plans** (including one combined strategy/action plan, see Appendix 2). The strategies **varied in scope and level of detail**, with some being mere outlines of a strategy and others more substantial. The action plans mainly concerned plans drawn up by the Council of Europe for implementation by entities in member states. Some of the newer strategies were found to present examples of best practice¹⁰ in strategy making (see Chapter 3.1.5). In contrast to this, other thematic documents were perceived as lacking crucial features of a strategic document and were referred to mostly as a compilation of Council of Europe activities already conducted in a specific area. Their reported purpose was to show Council of Europe involvement in modern challenges and promote visibility of this involvement.

The documents also included **country action plans**.¹¹ Overall, the country action plans were highly appreciated by all actors and considered to be **excellent tools for strategic purposes** due to their clear purpose and structure. Minor improvements were suggested by staff members interviewed, for example, that the input into country action plans should be first collected at directorate general (DG) level prior to the round table organised by the Office of the Director General of Programmes (ODGP) and then transferred to the ODGP.

The remaining documents, which were identified by staff as documents that provide strategic guidance for their work, consisted of policy papers, declarations, statements and budget documentation.

The **linkages** between the different documents were **not evident**, and neither could a clear connection be established between most documents and the Programme and Budget document of the Organisation. It should be also noted that there is **no single repository of strategic or quasi-strategic documents**, so that finding some of them required a certain level of familiarity with the Council of Europe’s institutional structure.

Regarding the purposes of a strategy, the evaluation found that the numerous documents containing strategic elements serve different purposes. The specific purposes were mostly in line with the effects that strategies are expected to have on organisational performance as proposed in the theory of change for this evaluation (see Appendix 5), although the interviews revealed that communication, visibility and legitimacy were seen as more important than other purposes.

7. The reported quotes are statements by one person. They are not always cited verbatim, but sometimes slightly reformulated for the sake of clarity, without changing the sense and meaning.

8. In some cases, “document” refers to a set of documents. Document 3 in Appendix 2 is a case in point. This concerned a page on the Council of Europe website with links to a large number of action plans, framework documents and reports. The action plans amongst these were considered during the initial triage for the review.

9. It should be noted that some of the documents were drawn up by the Council of Europe for implementation by third parties, including government bodies and agencies in its member states. The range of formats and detail of content suggests that the Council of Europe is more reticent in prescribing specific actions to member states than some of the comparator organisations, including the European Commission and UN agencies. Both EU and UN institutions appear to have a more standardised approach to strategy and action plan formulation.

10. “Best practice” is defined here not as a formal, theoretical ideal, but as a yardstick based on the strategy quality criteria used for this evaluation. The criteria were defined based on the feedback received during scoping interviews with Council of Europe staff, a review of academic literature on strategy and interviews with strategy experts. The relevant features of strategy documents are discussed in Chapter 3.1.5.

11. The Council of Europe has a number of country action plans and other documents relating to co-operation. The action plans were considered to be similar in nature; three action plans and one co-operation document were assessed through the survey/interviews and one action plan through the expert review (Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019-2022).

3.1.2. Typical processes for initiating and developing a strategy

Finding 5. The Council of Europe takes a flexible approach to strategy making whereby strategic documents are initiated and produced based on opportunity and/or need.

Finding 6. Country action plans are developed in a more standardised way than thematic documents.

As with the various purposes for which strategies are prepared and used, the **processes** for initiating a strategy and its formulation **vary greatly**. The variation concerns the length of time it takes for strategy preparation (between 3 and 12 months), the strategy time frame (3 to 6 years), the structure and format of documents and the extent of consultations.

The evaluation identified some triggers of strategies which are presented in Table 1, along with examples of documents to which they apply.

Strategic planning:

“Presently, the strategic planning happens in [a] haphazard and ad hoc manner – something is in today’s paper, so we have to react to it. Overall it is all very reactive and not pro-active.”

“A long-term strategy is [...] the glue that unites the system.”

Staff members

Table 1. Triggers for initiating a strategic document¹²

Selected examples of strategic documents (in alphabetical order)	Reasons for initiating a strategic document	Political/ societal developments and events (e.g. digital revolution, Arab Spring)	Political leadership (ministerial conference/ chairmanship)	Addressing transversal issues	Request/ Decision of statutory/ governing/ executive body	Requests from/ consultations with national authorities	Internal reflections/ response to review/ evaluation, etc.	Follow-up to and success of previous strategy
Action Plan on Building Inclusive Societies 2016-2019		v		v			v	
Thematic Action Plan on the Inclusion of Roma and Travellers 2016-2019		v	v	v				
Council of Europe Action Plan on Protecting Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe (2017-2019)		v		v				
Centre of Expertise Strategic Plan 2017-2022							v	
Council of Europe Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality					v			
Council of Europe Action Plan on Combating Transnational Organised Crime (2016-2020)					v			
Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2018-2022)					v	v		
Country action plans						v		
EDQM Mid-term Strategic Plan					v		v	v
Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023				v			v	v
Internet Governance – Council of Europe Strategy 2016-2019		v		v				
Neighbourhood cooperation priorities		v				v		
Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021)			v	v				v
The future of the Council of Europe youth policy: AGENDA 2020			v		v			

Table 1 shows that the Council of Europe takes a **flexible approach to strategy making** whereby strategic documents are initiated and produced based on considerations of feasibility, necessity to react to societal developments and/or existence of political momentum.

¹² The reasons listed in the table for each document were primarily those mentioned, although it cannot be excluded that other reasons may also have played a role in the document’s initiation.

Several methods of strategic planning were identified.

- ▶ The **country action plans** are developed under the leadership of the ODGP in co-operation with national authorities based on their needs or at their request, as well as a result of the work of the CM on the execution of judgments of the European Court for Human Rights (the Court) and the findings of monitoring mechanisms. In general, the country action plans are developed in a standardised way, including an intersecretariat consultative process, and follow a certain workflow (for a diagram of the preparation process see Appendix 10).
- ▶ Other examples of strategic documents are **thematic strategies** and **thematic action plans**. The process of their development is much more varied. Some strategies are developed by the entity responsible for the theme, with varying degrees of involvement by the relevant intergovernmental body, other entities within the Council of Europe, line ministries, civil society and experts. Other strategies are purely a product of an intellectual effort of the relevant secretariat with input from colleagues. Yet other documents are developed by an intersecretariat task force or a team assembled especially for this purpose (a diagram presenting how thematic strategies and documents have been prepared can be consulted in Appendix 10).

Operational strategies: It is possible and likely that other operational strategic planning activities are performed across the organisation. The evaluation team has, for example, identified such documents as the Mid-term Strategic Plan of the European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines & HealthCare (EDQM) and the Objectives of the Registry of the Court. In both cases it was reported that the effectiveness of those documents is the result of the fact that they were prepared in a highly inclusive and participatory manner. Among the positive effects mentioned were the higher motivation of staff, transparent decision making and ability to focus on priority topics.

When comparing the processes presented in the two diagrams in Appendix 10, the higher level of **standardisation** in the process of country action plan preparation becomes apparent as, in general, the same steps are followed for all action plans. The preparation processes of thematic documents are more varied. The reason for this variance could be that they are prepared by different entities for a variety of purposes and that they are often prepared in reaction to societal developments, sometimes in emergency-like contexts, which results in the omission of some of the steps due to a lack of time.

3.1.3. Input into strategy making

Finding 7. All strategic documents effectively use the outputs of the Council of Europe’s work as input into their documents.

Finding 8. Country action plans’ use of the Council of Europe’s outputs and evaluations and lessons learnt is better documented.

Input into thematic strategic documents originated from Council of Europe legal documents, case law of the Court, reports by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), the Human Rights Commissioner and the monitoring bodies, recommendations of the CM, decisions of statutory bodies, discussions by task forces responsible for the thematic sector and the strategies of other sectors. In a few cases, it was mentioned that strategies built upon implementation reports and (self-) evaluations relating to previous strategies, but it seems that this element could be strengthened.

In the case of **country action plans**, input is collected systematically through a review of relevant Council of Europe documents and those of international organisations and donors, consultations with the MAEs and large-scale thematic consultations with national authorities and other stakeholders. It was also reported that the results of internal and external evaluations and **lessons learnt** from previous action plans are systematically utilised during the preparation of new action plans.

Thematic input:

“We regularly attend symposia and conferences and we have mission reports in which we highlight the direction of future work. We also work with groups of experts and from their work we also identify areas of new needs.”

“The strategy can only be a success if there is ownership and for that it needs to respond to needs and be inspiring.”

Staff members

Feedback from experts also emphasised the importance of giving consideration to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), rights-based approaches and cross-cutting issues in the formulation of strategies.¹³

3.1.4. Consultation and quality control mechanisms

Finding 9. Consultations are considered to be a critical element of strategy preparation so as to ensure the quality of the document and the commitment and ownership of stakeholders.

Finding 10. The extent of consultations is considered to be sufficient, with some best practice examples involving external stakeholders.

Finding 11. Significantly more guidance and assistance from the support pillar were available for the development of country action plans than for thematic documents. The guidance was deemed useful.

Finding 12. There is a higher standardisation of working processes in the case of country action plans.

Interviewees and survey respondents reported that **consultations are a critical element** of strategy preparation (mentioned by 78% of survey respondents as being among the three most important factors). The evaluation analysed consultations disaggregated by stakeholder group (Figure 1). It was found that consultations take place with a wide range of stakeholders, but the extent of consultations varies greatly among strategic documents, which could be explained by the availability of time for strategy preparation, as well as differences in information, co-ordination and co-operation needs. For example, when looking at strategy documents separately, it can be found that overall consultation levels across stakeholders vary between 1.36 and 3.42.¹⁴ As consultations were considered crucial for ensuring the **quality** of the document as well as for **commitment** and **ownership**, interviewees noted the importance and usefulness of topic-specific **ministerial conferences** and of strengthening the **intergovernmental work** of the Organisation.

Consultation process:

“I think everyone who signed up to it [consultations] felt it was worthwhile. The process itself had intrinsic value, breaking down barriers between sectors, and every sector was involved.”

“We had trainers on strategy making and they facilitated the discussion. It was also a great team-building exercise.”

“For me, the most important thing about consultations is that [they] create ownership, people get involved, [and] then they feel committed to [taking action].”

“If people are serious about inclusion, it takes up to a year to produce a high-quality document.”

Staff members

Figure 1. Extent of consultations by stakeholder group in the course of strategy preparation (survey)



13. For example, the country action plans refer to their contribution to achieving the SDGs and mainstreaming gender.

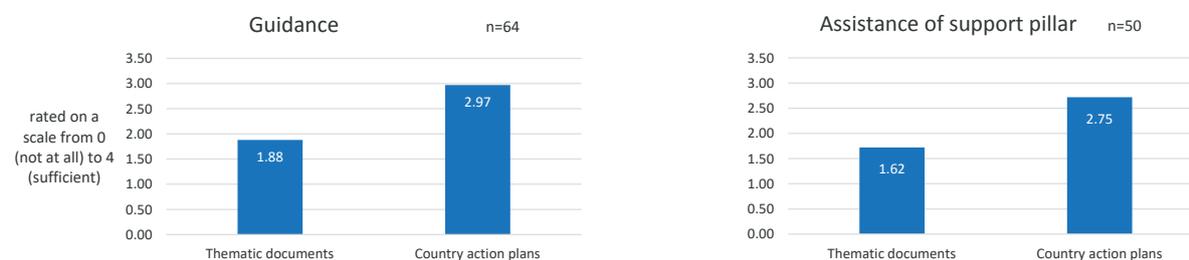
14. Reported for the Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021), which can serve as an example of best practice for the participatory and inclusive strategy preparation process.

As regards guidance, it seems that **standardised guidance**, such as a template or a checklist, was not available for preparation of strategies and thematic action plans. Some respondents mentioned that they used previous strategy documents as a basis for drafting follow-up versions, or existing strategic documents from other sectors as inspiration for drafting new strategies. In other cases, literature on strategic planning was explored to find appropriate terminology and ideas related to the process of strategy making (such as elaborating a risk table or developing a results framework). In a few cases a strategy expert was consulted during the process.

Significantly more standardised guidance was available in the case of country action plans (see Figure 2). References were made to the Project Management Methodology (PMM) Handbook, the PMM website¹⁵ and the PMM Information Technology (IT) tool, existing action plans, an action plan template developed by the ODGP, a work flow for comments and simple templates for presentation of project ideas by the MAEs. This **guidance** was found **useful** and appreciated by those involved in the preparation of country action plans.

Another large gap between thematic documents and country action plans can be seen in the perceived level of assistance provided by the support pillar, which is in line with the previous finding on the **lack of standardisation** in processes and could mean that thematic documents are less institutionalised as a working method. It also shows the importance of the role of the ODGP as a supporting entity and its success in guiding strategy preparation.

Figure 2. Perceived level of guidance and assistance from the support pillar (survey)



Therefore, in order to ensure the quality of strategic documents it seems advisable to provide guidance on their format and to establish an appropriate consultation process which provides internal and external input to the substance of the documents.

3.1.5. Quality of strategy documents

Finding 13. While strategic documents vary substantially in format, scope, rigour and level of detail, some documents have been found to be (near) best practice standard.

Finding 14. Main gaps identified concern lack of a rigorous results framework, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) arrangements, and appropriately detailed implementation planning and resource scheduling.

Finding 15. Comparator institutions' documents suffered, overall, from similar flaws but several best practice examples are available to provide inspiration.

A sample of strategic documents (16 documents)¹⁶ was reviewed by a strategy expert based on eight criteria. The assessment suggests that Council of Europe's strategies and action plans¹⁷ **vary substantially in format, scope, rigour and level of detail**. Of the sample, six of the strategies and action plans are of or near "best practice" standard,¹⁸ in particular, the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 and the Council of Europe Action Plan for

15. Accessible at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/project-management-methodology>.

16. In addition, four documents which were initially included in the review were not scored, either because the nature of the document was considered to be different from a strategy or because the document did not fulfil the minimum technical requirements for a strategic document (see Appendix 2).

17. For the purpose of this review, strategies and action plans are assessed on the basis of the same criteria. The Council of Europe uses the terms "strategy" and "action plan" interchangeably, there being no definition of either at institutional level. Ideally, a strategy and action plan should complement each other and be based on the same intervention logic, with the latter detailing one or more components of the former.

18. The scores obtained in the assessment do not indicate a comparative ranking of the documents other than with respect to their characteristics as a strategy/action plan. The documents differ too much in character, purpose and audience. A low score therefore does not imply that the document in question is of inferior quality. Specifically, it does not mean that the measures proposed in the document are not suitable, appropriate or technically opportune.

Armenia 2019-2022,¹⁹ due to their solid policy grounding, clear linkage with relevant strategies and relatively detailed indications of how the strategy or action plan will be implemented. The main **gaps** identified among all reviewed strategies lie in the lack of a rigorous results framework (logical framework and explicit theory of change), M&E arrangements, and appropriately detailed implementation planning and resources scheduling.

The evaluation team also analysed a random sample of strategic documents of other international organisations and identified several best practice examples which can serve as further inspiration for future strategy formulation, such as the European Commission strategic plans 2016-2020 of the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO) and the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), the UNDP National Action Plan on Persons with Disabilities (2016-2020) and the Swiss Cooperation Strategy Serbia (2018-21) of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs.²⁰

The best practice examples for each of the criteria used are shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Best practice examples of strategy documents by criterion

Criteria for assessment of the quality of strategic documents	Best practice examples (scored 6 out of 6) – Council of Europe	Average score (1-6) for all Council of Europe documents reviewed	Best practice examples – comparator organisations
Provides a clear rationale for a (new) strategy, shows the status of preceding strategies and linkage with other relevant Council of Europe/ comparator organisation strategies	1 3 4 5 7 8 11 12 15 16	5.3	All documents assessed
Is consistent with the Council of Europe's/ comparator organisation's overall strategic priorities and shows linkage to the organisation's specific comparative advantages	1 3 4 5 6 7 8 10 11 12 13 14 15 16	5.6	All documents assessed
Is underpinned by diagnostic work analysing lessons learnt from previous strategies, evaluations and international sectoral experience	4 5 7 8 10 11 15	4.4	All documents assessed
Includes prioritised, clear and realistic objectives	3 4 5 6 7 8 11 12	4.5	1 2 7 8 16 17 21 26 30
Presents an explicit results framework	6	2.5	1 2 7 8 16 17 21 26 30
Includes a clear time frame and implementation plan	11	2.4	2 6 7 8 12 16 30
Contains reference to and provisions for M&E	4	2.9	2 3 4 6 7 8 16 17 20 21 22 25 26 27 30
Explicitly identifies resources, incentives and support for implementation	4	2.0	2 4 6 16 21 30

- 1 Council of Europe Action Plan on Combating Transnational Organised Crime (2016-2020)
- 2 Centre of Expertise Strategic Plan 2017-2022
- 3 Council of Europe Action Plan on Protecting Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe (2017-2019)
- 4 Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019-2022
- 5 Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015
- 6 Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2018-2022)
- 7 Council of Europe Disability Strategy 2017-2023
- 8 Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023
- 9 Council of Europe Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality

- 10 Council of Europe Programme and Budget 2018-2019 – Priorities of the Secretary General
- 11 Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021)
- 12 Internet Governance – Council of Europe Strategy 2016-2019
- 13 New Strategy and Council of Europe Action Plan for Social Cohesion
- 14 The Action Plan of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe 2018-2021
- 15 Thematic Action Plan on the Inclusion of Roma and Travellers (2016-2019)
- 16 White Paper on transnational organised crime

19. Also included under near best practice examples are: the Action Plan to promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society: Improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in Europe 2006-2015, the Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2018-2022), the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021), and Internet Governance – Council of Europe Strategy 2016-2019.

20. The full list of reviewed documents is included in Appendix 11.

3.1.6. Monitoring of and reporting on strategies

Finding 15. Gaps identified in strategic documents have a negative effect on reporting, but examples of good practice are available.

Finding 16. While reporting is in place for all strategic documents, it is not standardised and differs much with regard to format, periodicity and target audience.

The above-mentioned lack of a results framework in several strategic documents leads to obvious difficulties with monitoring and reporting. In the quality assessment of the overall sample of strategies undertaken by the expert, the results framework received an average score of 2.5 on a scale of 1 to 6, which suggests that **significant improvements are necessary** in this domain. The Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2018-2022) (scoring a 6) was identified as a best practice example in this regard, with some other documents scoring 4 out of 6.²¹

In addition, not all strategic documents feature a reference to M&E (a 2.9 average score for this criterion across the sample), which can be one reason for the large variance in monitoring and reporting arrangements across the strategies in reality. The Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019-2022 was identified as a best practice example of including a **M&E framework** in a strategic document, with some other documents scoring 4 out of 6.²²

Reporting:

“My objective is to make the reporting meaningful. That is, to only collect the most important information and then to also use it. A well-designed external evaluation is also useful.”

Staff members

The variance in reporting concerns three aspects:

- ▶ the target audience;
- ▶ the reporting format; and
- ▶ the periodicity.

Regarding the **target audience**, it can be noted that reporting is generally to the management and governing body of the Organisation and to the intergovernmental committee, if relevant. Reporting to the CM occurs in different rapporteur groups, as illustrated in Appendix 11. The evaluation team could not always see the logic behind the distribution of strategies among rapporteur groups and interviewees could not provide an explanation for each specific case. External stakeholders, such as civil society, national human rights institutions, other international organisations, media, academia and donors are reported to at less frequent intervals but also in a more ad hoc manner, with some strategies being outstanding examples²³ of interaction and others largely ignoring target audiences.

The **reporting format** varies across the strategic documents, but most are reported on using the framework for progress reporting on the implementation of the Programme and Budget. In addition, annual reporting on strategy implementation to the CM was mentioned as part of the reporting on the terms of reference of intergovernmental committees,²⁴ which implies that progress on the strategy is discussed in the meetings of these committees on a regular basis. For the country action plans, at least annual reporting to the democracy rapporteur group (GR-DEM) and the CM has also been established. In some cases, it was mentioned that internal progress reports are prepared and discussed in an intersecretariat task force, management group

21. For example, the Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019-2022, the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023, the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) and Internet Governance – Council of Europe Strategy 2016-2019.

22. For example, the Council of Europe Action Plan on Combating Transnational Organised Crime (2016-2020), the Council of Europe Action Plan on Protecting Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe (2017-2019), the Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2018-2022), the New Strategy and the Council of Europe Action Plan for Social Cohesion and the White Paper on transnational organised crime.

23. For example, the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) and the country action plans (at steering committee level).

24. For example, in the case of the Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2018-2022).

or other working group dedicated to a specific topic.²⁵ In addition, it was mentioned that mid-term and final evaluations are envisioned for some strategies.²⁶

The purpose of the reporting was not always considered when reports were produced. For example, reports produced for the sake of informing the main stakeholders on progress should not feature the same level of detail as reports produced for the purpose of accountability, and documents produced for the purpose of communication should avoid being too technical. It is therefore worth looking into how different formats of reports could be established for the different purposes.

In terms of **reporting periodicity**, in most cases progress is reviewed and reported on at least annually, with some examples of more frequent reporting (biannually for a few strategies and thematic action plans²⁷ and quarterly for country action plans and the strategic recommendations of the European Congress on Global Education).

3.1.7. Organisational strategic planning

Finding 18. The Organisation could benefit from an overall strategic framework and has recently decided to establish one.

Finding 19. There are some obstacles to establishing an overall framework, such as the difficulty to agree on a common vision for the Organisation.

Finding 20. The four-year strategic framework to be established should comply with the quality criteria mentioned in this report and take inspiration from internal and external good practices in strategic planning.

While this evaluation was already underway, there were some developments in relation to an organisational strategic framework. In April 2019, the Secretary General (SG) proposed in his report for the Ministerial Session in Helsinki the adoption of a four-year strategic framework which would ensure that “political priorities would drive the budget, not the other way round”²⁸ (page 51). In November 2019, the CM adopted a decision²⁹ according to which a four-year strategic framework is to be established for the Organisation.

At present, the Council of Europe has no one document which can be referred to as an **overall strategic document**. From interviews with those involved in strategic planning in the Organisation, it can be deduced that there is no consensus on the overall vision of the Council of Europe, or rather that there are several visions.³⁰

There are diverse perspectives among permanent representatives as well as among staff on what the Organisation stands for, leading some to refer to its current state as an “identity crisis”. Some interviewees noted that there is an implicit vision, but others argued that it should be clearly stated and presented on the website, as is the case with many other international organisations. However, reaching a consensus on one of the proposed visions seems to be a difficult task, as all of them can clearly be identified in the Organisation’s statute.³¹ It was suggested by some interviewees that

Vision:

“Maybe a multitude of visions is not a weakness but a strength.”

“It would be great if consultations could be organised on the vision of the Council of Europe. But not the usual Christmas-tree kind of consultations where every sector tries to insert itself as a priority to ensure it does not disappear. That would just be a waste of effort and resources.”

Staff members

25. For example, in the case of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy (2018-2023) and EDQM Mid-term Strategic Plan.

26. For example, in the cases of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) and the Internet Governance – Council of Europe Strategy (2016-2019).

27. For example, the Internet Governance – Council of Europe Strategy 2016-2019, the Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2018-2022), the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) and the Action Plan on Building Inclusive Societies (2016-2019).

28. SG(2019)1. Accessible at: https://search.coe.int/cm/pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=090000168093af03.

29. CM/Del/Dec(2019)1361/11.1-Part1. Accessible at: https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=090000168098e0d6.

30. The views presented ranged from the Council of Europe being mainly a geopolitical organisation established for the purpose of peace and security, to it being a tool to support the Court, or to it being a pan-European dialogue platform for the purpose of promotion of unity and common values.

31. [Statute of the Council of Europe \(1949\)](#).

a summit – potentially even a strategy-setting summit – might help to create common ground in discussions about a vision.

The **lack of a common vision** leads to diverging views among chairs of rapporteur groups and staff members on the advantages and disadvantages of a strategic framework (Table 3).

Table 3. Advantages and challenges of an organisational strategic framework

Advantages	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Improved decision making on programming and resource allocation and improved quality of action (“walk the talk”) ▶ Improved understanding of the Council of Europe’s added value ▶ Increased legitimacy of work ▶ Improved communication with internal and external stakeholders about the work and increased visibility ▶ Improved internal co-ordination ▶ Increased consistency of actions (“less of a leaf in the wind”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Too diverse views on the mission and vision of the Organisation ▶ Presence of various independent bodies and mechanisms with a specific mandate, such as the Court, the Human Rights Commissioner, monitoring bodies, etc. ▶ Political sensitivity of some thematic areas ▶ Presence of conventions and other standards which provide a more solid and ambitious basis for action than a strategy ▶ Relatively limited flexibility and rapid reaction capacity

Several interviewees noted that “room for reflection and debate” must be put in place within the Organisation in order to be able to consider what purposes the overall strategy would serve (for example programming, management, communication, accountability, fundraising, etc.). Further, the process of development of such a document would have to be established, answering **pertinent questions**, such as the following.

- ▶ Who would draft the strategy?
- ▶ What level of detail it would go into?
- ▶ Who would be consulted?
- ▶ Who would approve or adopt it?
- ▶ Who would be expected to implement it?
- ▶ Who would follow and assess its implementation?
- ▶ How would the strategic framework be resourced?

The content and structure of the document should comply with the **quality criteria** outlined in Chapter 3.1.5, paying particular attention to the gaps identified, most notably a clear results framework and M&E arrangements (see Appendix 13 for a proposed template). In addition, the strategic framework should use high-quality measurement criteria and indicators and ensure their alignment with the Programme and Budget document in order to further strengthen the **results-based management** of the Organisation. Interviewees also mentioned additional features, saying that a strategy should:

- ▶ be flexible and adaptable;
- ▶ state responsibilities;
- ▶ be short and to the point;
- ▶ add to the feeling of belonging and be inspiring;
- ▶ be easy to understand like the slogan for the 70th anniversary.

It will also have to be decided which **entity/structure/body** would **oversee** and co-ordinate the strategy implementation process in a collegial manner. It was suggested that a “strategic board”, potentially consisting of the directors and directors general of the operational DGs should be set up for this function. It was also

Strategic framework:

“What is very clear is that the core mandate of the Organisation is human rights, democracy and [the] rule of law. But I am not aware of a strategy or a vision. We have the three core values, the mandate ... we also talk about the three pillars, but has the organisation been able to transform this mandate into a simple strategic vision?”

“The first step towards a strategy is to identify societal needs and then to identify what we can do about them with our tools. Artificial intelligence would be an example.”

“An organisational strategy could be very useful in guiding us when making important decisions, for example, what should be included in the terms of reference of intergovernmental committees.”

Chairs of rapporteur groups

“There is no overall strategy, no helicopter view. We really need to see where we have a unique place, but also to remain flexible to be able to identify a pressing need and address it.”

“My question is: how can something be referred to as “priority” and then its budget is cut? It does not make sense.”

Staff members

mentioned by numerous interviewees that such a board should have the functionality of a think tank and avoid a “silo mentality” and “protection of own turf”.

Several permanent representatives mentioned the useful meeting of the chairs of rapporteur groups under the French chairmanship and felt that such a platform could be used to discuss and monitor organisational strategy. One of the chairs suggested that PACE should give its opinion on the organisational strategy. The evaluator is of the opinion that as monitoring, reporting and evaluation are important elements of a strategy, the use of existing platforms such as presidents of monitoring bodies and chairs of intergovernmental committees for such purposes as monitoring and regular reporting could reinforce the organisational ownership of a four-year strategic framework.

3.1.8. Strategic planning framework in comparator organisations

Finding 21. Comparator institutions have been found to differ substantially in their approach to strategy making. Most of the institutions reviewed have a long-term strategy and their strategic documents are embedded into a strategic architecture.

In respect of the framework for Organisation-wide strategy making and reporting, documentation review and interviews with representatives of comparator institutions (benchmarking) showed that the strategy formulation processes at each of the **comparator institutions differ** considerably.

All organisations reviewed agree on the need for strategies and related action plans for carrying out their mandates. Their respective approaches to strategy making and reporting on strategy implementation differ a lot, however, with striking differences in the level of formality and in structuring of strategy formulation. The EU in particular uses a highly structured approach based on extensive comitology to enable member states’ involvement in overall, sectoral and thematic strategy formulation, both internal and external. In contrast, the UNDP has adopted a more “skeletal” approach to overall planning, embodied in its Strategic Plan 2018-2021, which sets out the “direction of travel” without detailing implementation strategy at operational level. These differences put many limits on what lessons can be drawn from current practices in international organisations to improve the quality, processes of strategy making and reporting as well as the effectiveness of strategies.

Some organisations (the EU, UNDP and UNESCO) have established a formal, structured process (see Appendix 14 for the architecture of strategic documents within the UN system), whereas other entities approach strategy formulation on a more flexible, “as-needed” basis. In the case of the OSCE, strategy formulation is approached flexibly, with strategic documents being produced if and when needed.

All the institutions canvassed appear to adhere to their respective approaches to strategy formulation, although the degree of compliance in practice could not be ascertained. The EU and the UNDP have **well-established routines** for strategy formulation, results-based management and performance-based budgeting. UNESCO has completed a formal, detailed restructuring of its strategic planning procedures which it began in 2015. The OSCE has adopted a portfolio-based, **flexible approach** to dealing with the strategic implications of the issues arising within its mandated sphere of operations.

The benchmarking exercise did not yield detailed information on the quality assurance methods employed by the various comparator organisations. The same applies to the reporting processes they employ, although the EU and the UN system – in addition to annual and quarterly progress reporting at central, programme and project level – rely on extensive M&E arrangements operated under the aegis of dedicated evaluation units, established at headquarters, which are, however, not necessarily referred to in the strategic documents.

There appears to be quite general agreement amongst experts and representatives of comparator institutions on the concept of **best practice in strategy formulation**, defined as having a clear foundation in policy and other relevant strategies, an explicit results framework, clear M&E arrangements³² and a clear time frame and implementation plan, as well as a budget, as mentioned in Chapter 3.1.5.

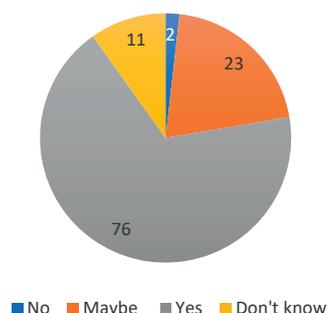
32. For instance, in the case of the EU, the evaluation methodology set out in evaluation guidelines, see https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/evaluation_guidelines/minisite/en-methodological-bases-and-approach; in the case of the UNDP, The Revised UNDP Evaluation Policy, UNDP, New York, July 2019; and for multilateral organisations generally, the MOPAN 3.0 Methodology Manual, Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (2018).

3.2. Effectiveness of Council of Europe thematic and country strategies in improving the Organisation's work

Finding 22. Interviewees perceive that strategies have an added value.

Figure 3. Is a strategy worth having based on a cost-benefit analysis? (n=112)

Worth preparing a strategy?



Overall, strategic documents were considered to be **useful tools** and 76 respondents to the survey (69%) indicated that, based on a cost-benefit analysis of their strategy, they would recommend colleagues to prepare one (Figure 3).

In addition, respondents reported a relatively **high implementation rate** of strategies (3.1 on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 4 (fully implemented/fully on track)).

3.2.1. Positive effects

Finding 23. While strategies are expected to primarily achieve better decision making and co-ordination, their main effects in practice lie in the areas of communication and visibility.

Finding 24. Strategies are reported to have immediate and mid-term positive effects, mainly on improved legitimacy of the sector of work, communication and visibility, establishment of new partnerships, decision making and quality of action, and accountability.

Finding 25. All effects are more significant in the case of thematic documents, except for improved decision making on resource allocation and improved interaction with donors.

The evaluation found that the strategic documents were usually expected to produce several **effects**. Those specifically mentioned by respondents were mostly in line with the effects that strategies are expected to have on organisational performance, as proposed in the theory of change for this evaluation (see Appendix 5).

When asked about the importance of the effects, stakeholders reported that theoretically they believe the most important effects of strategies to be in the areas of **decision making, quality of action and co-ordination**, with communication and visibility in fifth and sixth places.

It is interesting to observe, however, that the most significant perceived effects of actual strategies were primarily related to **legitimacy, communication and visibility**, followed by decision making and quality of action, as illustrated in Figure 6 below. This suggests that communication and visibility could be the main purposes for developing some or most strategies, while the purposes of management and accountability are at present not fully exploited.

Communication and visibility:

"We can refer to the strategy to describe where we want to go [and as] a communication tool, [an] information tool for internal advocacy in the Council of Europe."

"For each strategic document, there should be a public and an internal version – more general and user-friendly for the public and more detailed and management-oriented for us."

"Communication and visibility are very strong added values of having a strategy. The strategy is the document that you bring to every meeting – internally, externally to ministries. Our strategy was translated into national languages; some countries have modelled strategies [on] it. But strategy is also important for monitoring and accountability – we never forgot to do the things that were in it."

Staff members

Overall, the responses suggest that strategies are perceived to **significantly improve** important aspects of the Organisation's work. The effects that were mentioned most frequently were improved internal and external communication, increased legitimacy, improved co-ordination, improved decision making on programming and resource allocation, increased motivation of staff and improved understanding of the Council of Europe's comparative advantages. Some staff members also identified improved **accountability** as an effect. Another interesting point mentioned by some interviewees was that a strategy can be a tool for increasing **cost-efficiency** because it can help to identify areas where the Organisation can achieve most impact with comparatively little investment.

If effects are disaggregated by thematic documents versus country action plans, it can be observed that thematic documents are perceived to generally produce a somewhat higher level of immediate effects (except decision making on resource allocation and an increase in donor interest and funding), and a significantly higher level in the areas of transparency and accountability as well as internal co-ordination (Figure 4). This seems to confirm the finding that the country action plans are more institutionalised and therefore that their effects have become part of regular working processes and may be taken somewhat for granted. An additional explanation could be that the perceptions of country action plans include the perceptions of staff members who have not experienced the absence of those plans and who therefore cannot necessarily assess the difference between the situation "with" and "without an action plan". The difference in perceived effects on accountability, transparency and assessment of performance can be also explained by the fact that even before the existence of country action plans, many elements related to these effects were already in place as part of the PMM.

As regards the lower level of effects on interactions with donors that were perceived for thematic strategies, interviewees also confirmed that the Organisation has not managed to effectively use thematic documents as a fundraising tool (in those cases where this was intended). In this respect, interviewees explained that donors primarily allocate resources geographically and not thematically, so that it is difficult to mobilise resources for a European-wide strategy on a specific topic, and that thematic documents do not indicate the objectives, proposed actions and targets at country level (as is, for example, the case for the SDGs developed by the UN system). Nevertheless, it was discussed that donors would potentially feel more compelled to **support a thematic line of action** (in form of a non-earmarked voluntary contribution) if it were presented as part of a concise overall strategic document.³³

33. While the Programme and Budget of the Council of Europe is considered to be a high-quality budgetary tool, which serves the purposes of transparency and accountability, due to its format, its use to raise funds via voluntary contributions to the ordinary budget was questioned, and some felt it was even counterproductive in this respect.

Decision making:

"With a thematic strategy we have to do things to reach our objectives, not our hobbies. We have rejected a project proposed by donors because it ... worked less well with the thematic strategy."

"Things got done that would not have been done otherwise. The fact that something is a key part of strategy is important. The strategy helped to make it a focus and say that it is a priority. So, we allocated resources to it. Otherwise we might just have talked about it for years."

"Having a strategy helps to remain consistent in what we do and not to be dragged into a different direction by changing priorities."

Staff members

Comparative advantage:

"The point of a strategy is also to decide what we will not do. We cannot make any meaningful strategy without such painful decisions."

Staff members

Motivation of staff:

"We live in a constantly changing environment. The change motivates people to increase efficiency and the increased efficiency, in turn, motivates people to improve further."

"The staff is frustrated if they just get instructions without understanding the rationale. We need to make sure everyone's role is meaningful and for that we need to be as inclusive as possible, involve staff in discussions and value those contributions."

Staff members

Accountability:

"The strategy objectives become objectives for staff. At the end of the year I am appraised on them."

Staff members

Fundraising:

"The country action plan is useful as a fundraising tool. We share it with donors to show what we will do and to show our added value. The action plan works effectively for fundraising, while not having one is an obstacle."

"With a strategy, the sector looks more professional and has managed to attract voluntary contributions. The donors know what they get for their money."

Staff members

Partnerships:

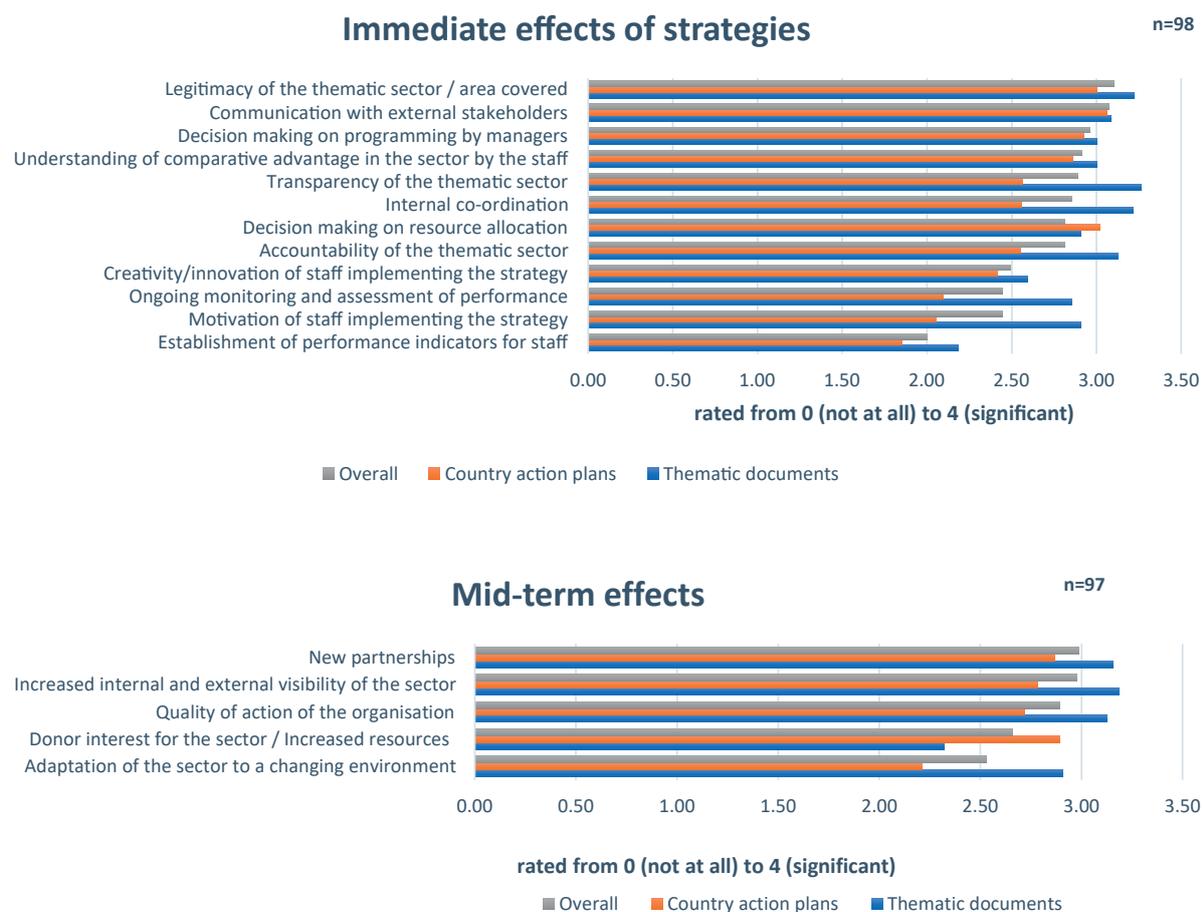
"Strategies need to be even stronger in stating responsibilities, also the responsibilities of member states."

Chair of Intergovernmental Committee

"A strategy is important [so as] to have a common vision, internal co-ordination and consistency. It is a bible for co-operation with all relevant actors."

Staff members

Figure 4. Perceived effects of a strategy on organisational performance (survey)



3.2.2. Negative effects

Finding 26. The main negative effects of strategies are the potential increased workload of staff and, to some extent, limited flexibility in decision making.

It was also suggested that strategies could have some **negative effects**. The extent to which the stakeholders perceived these effects is reflected in Figure 5. It shows that strategies are perceived to increase the **workload** for staff (this perception is true to a larger extent for thematic strategies than for country action plans). This could be explained by the fact that some strategies might add additional layers of monitoring and reporting. If this is the case, such negative effects could be mitigated by streamlining reporting requirements, procedures and format. It should also be borne in mind, however, that monitoring and reporting are essential and that resource requirements for implementing strategies need to take all aspects of strategy implementation into account. Another negative effect of strategies that is perceived to some extent is the relatively **limited flexibility in decision making**. Some interviewees mentioned that the strategy could potentially become a straitjacket harming negotiations and preventing advancement on

Potential negative effects:

“There are so many considerations. It does not make sense that every sector should have a strategy – in some areas we have stronger instruments, like conventions, so we know where we are going. In some cases, a strategy might even weaken a sector, where there is not enough common ground for an agreement. Further, on the one hand, a strategy makes sense to drive commitment to new areas of work, but on the other hand, some of the new areas are changing so fast that a strategy would be pure speculation.”

“I do not see any negative sides [to a strategy]. I think it is useful because it is a framework for debate. We [have] never said that this or that is not in a strategy, so we don’t do it. It has never been a constraint.”

Staff members

issues when a window of opportunity opens up. This is an inherent tension in strategic planning and should be mitigated by the development of strategy with some margin for adaptation and provision for revision, if necessary. Interviewees also mentioned that under certain conditions a strategy may be **counterproductive**, for example, in a context which changes very fast or where no sufficient information is available. Lastly, it has been also suggested that strategies would have less value for sectors where legally binding instruments are in place.

Figure 5. Perceived negative effects of a strategy on organisational performance



3.3. Factors influencing the effectiveness of strategies

Finding 27. Strategies which were reported to demonstrate a higher level of thematic expertise, availability of resources, awareness of relevant stakeholders and their support and to have a lead entity in charge were perceived as being more effective.

Finding 28. Thematic expertise was reported to be sufficient.

Finding 29. In the case of thematic documents, availability of resources was rated significantly lower for strategy preparation and even more so for strategy implementation.

Finding 30. Levels of support from stakeholders were reported to be sufficient. In the case of awareness, there is potential for improved outreach to external stakeholders, if relevant.

Based on preliminary interviews with stakeholders and a literature review, the theory of change for this evaluation identified specific elements of strategy preparation and implementation processes which are either necessary or at least good to have.³⁴ This chapter first analyses whether these elements are in place to a sufficient extent and then assesses whether they influence any of the effects and, if so, at what level. The factors expected to influence strategy effectiveness included:

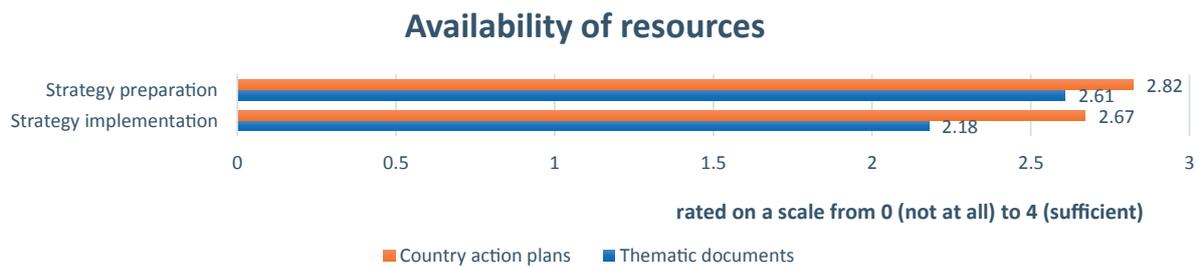
- ▶ thematic expertise;
- ▶ resources (working time, human resources, etc.);
- ▶ awareness of relevant stakeholders and their support.

³⁴ Among the potentially useful elements of strategy preparation were: sufficient resources (working time, human resources, etc.) allocated to strategy formulation and implementation; clearly defined responsibilities for strategy formulation and implementation; internal and external expertise on strategic planning; internal and external thematic expertise; awareness of the strategy among relevant stakeholders, support of relevant stakeholders and assistance of the support pillar (for example, communication, IT, procurement, human resources, internal oversight). Correlations between these factors and the effects of strategies were found for: thematic expertise; resources (working time, human resources, etc.), awareness of relevant stakeholders and their support. The report therefore further analyses to what extent these factors are present in strategy preparation and implementation processes and the effects to which they contribute.

Interviewees and survey respondents reported a **sufficient level of thematic expertise** overall (3.5 for country action plans and 3.2 for thematic documents on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 4 (sufficient)), which, in some cases, was supplemented with external thematic expertise.³⁵ The **availability of resources** for strategy preparation and implementation was rated lower, with somewhat higher levels of resources in the case of country action plans, as shown in Figure 6. This could be a reflection of the generally difficult budgetary situation of the Organisation during the period preceding this report.

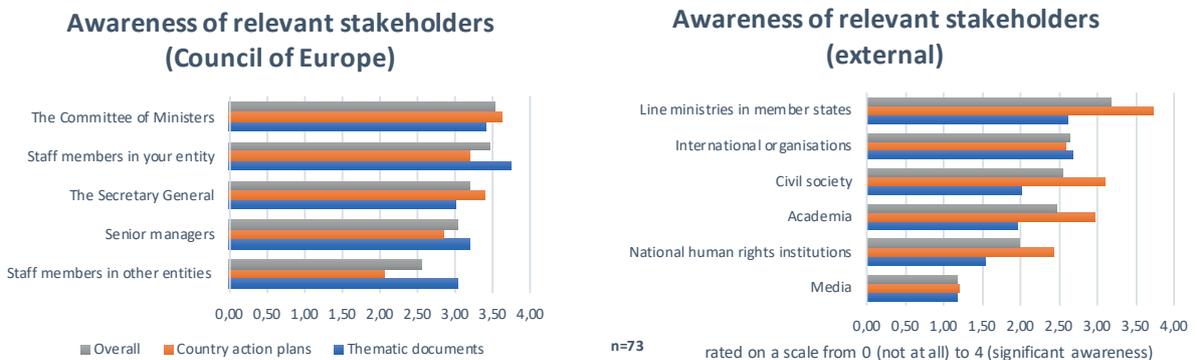
Strategy preparation:
 “Strategies do not write themselves – it is wise to allocate resources to this process.”
Strategy expert

Figure 6. Perceived availability of resources for strategy preparation and implementation



As regards **awareness** of relevant stakeholders, the evaluation found that the levels of awareness were perceived to be sufficient for most groups of stakeholders, with lower awareness levels for certain groups further removed from the implementation, such as media and national human rights institutions (Figure 7). While this makes sense as the Council of Europe is one of many organisations working on certain topics and cannot expect to be constantly on the radar of all stakeholders involved, some of the strategies can serve as **best practice examples in raising visibility** of the work among a wide variety of stakeholders.³⁶

Figure 7. Perceived awareness of stakeholders by stakeholder group



When asked about the perceived level of support from the CM, the SG, senior management and staff, respondents generally reported quite **high levels of support** (3.4 for country action plans and 3.2 for thematic documents on a scale from 0 (no support) to 4 (significant support)), with somewhat higher levels in the case of staff and senior management.

A multiple regression performed³⁷ on the influencing factors has shown that the four factors mentioned above are the main predictive factors of positive effects of strategies.

35. As, for example, in the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) and the Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2018-2022).

36. As has been reported in the case of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021).

37. All reported relationships were found to be significant at the 0.05 level. The corresponding effects (adjusted R²) were found to be between 0.24 and 0.5, which might be considered to be medium effect sizes for some contexts but are quite typical for social sciences. As social phenomena tend to be complex and multidimensional, it is very difficult to expect that a model can explain a larger amount of variation and therefore the evaluation team finds the model described to be a good fit. It is possible and likely that some factors explaining further variance were not included in the model.

Thematic expertise was shown to have a bearing on improved decision making, improved quality of action, improved adaptation to a changing environment and increased creativity and motivation of staff, while resources were shown to positively affect decision making on programming and resource allocation, internal co-ordination, transparency and accountability, and visibility. Resources were also shown to be the single factor that ensures that the implementation of the strategy remains on track. As additional resources are not always easy to come by, this shows that the most important factor in strategy effectiveness is thematic expertise. Thus, it is crucial to ensure that such expertise is in place internally and to potentially supplement it with external thematic expertise.

The **higher awareness** of relevant stakeholders during the preparation and implementation phases was found to positively influence the effectiveness of strategies in the areas of co-ordination, communication, quality of action and increased donor interest/funds.

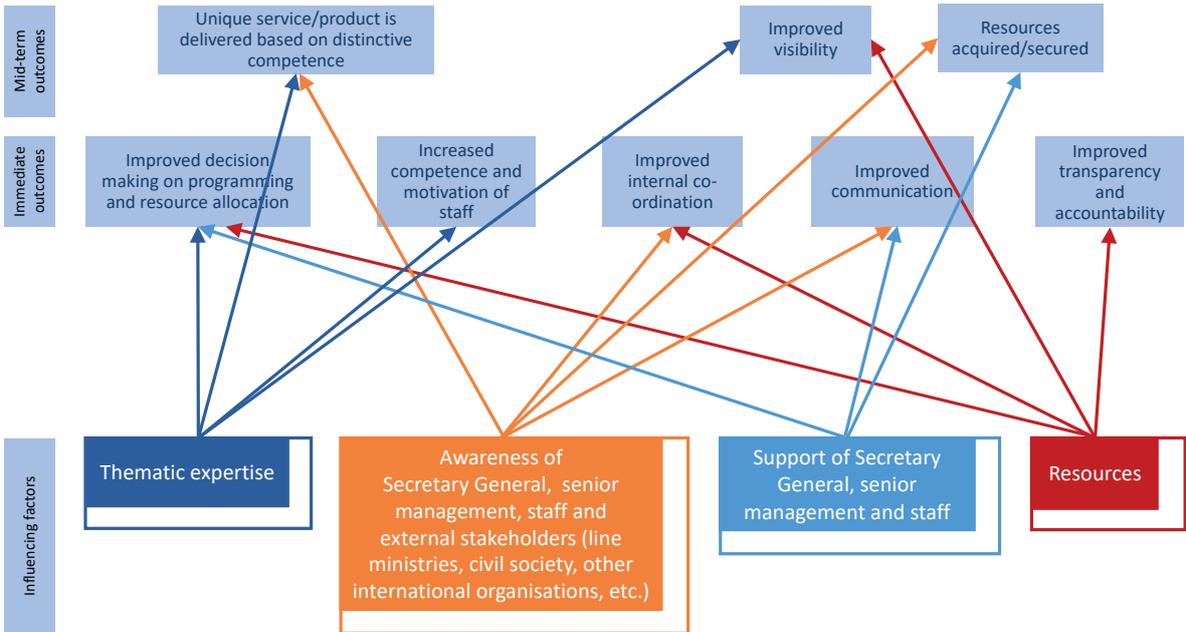
The notion of **support from stakeholders** as a critical factor for the success of a strategy could be confirmed in the case of three effects – the support positively influenced decision making, communication and donor interest/funds. The interviews also confirmed that the support of leadership was considered to be a determining factor in the achievements of a strategy and some interviewees said that all strategies should be adopted by the CM and become organisational strategies. This would guarantee the necessary level of support and legitimacy.

The interviews with stakeholders yielded information on one further success factor. It was mentioned that a **lead entity**³⁸ should be clearly identified (and that choice clearly communicated) for the preparation and implementation of a strategic document in order to avoid the situation of “orphaned documents” for which no one feels responsible and/or accountable.

The overall illustration of the relationships is shown in Figure 8.

These findings show that **talent management** is crucial in the strategy planning and implementation business and this has been also confirmed by numerous interviewees, who provided examples of the importance of a match between the skills, knowledge and experience of the staff working on the strategy and the requirements of such work. The person in charge must possess a wide range of competencies, including leadership and management skills, analytical thinking and interpersonal and communication skills, in order to be able to manage a team with a profound understanding of the thematic sector, but he or she should also be able to promote awareness and support for the strategy and ensure that its implementation is sufficiently resourced.

Figure 8. Factors influencing the effectiveness of strategies



38. Such as, for example, the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees for the Council of Europe Action Plan on Protecting Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe (2017-2019).

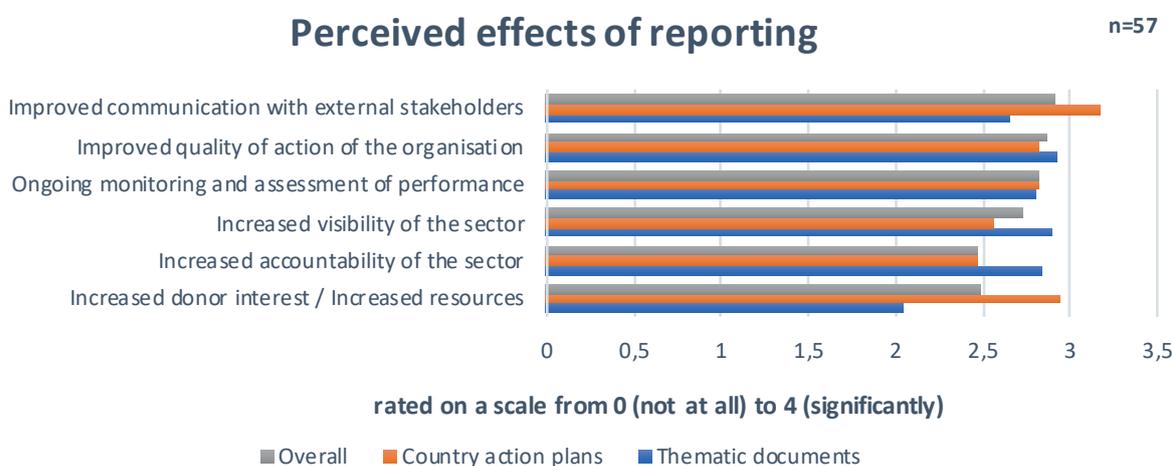
Effects of reporting

Finding 31. The main effects of reporting on strategies were improved communication and visibility, improved quality of action and, in the case of thematic documents, improved accountability, but also an increased workload of staff.

It has also been suggested that **reporting** may positively influence some aspects of the effectiveness of strategies. This evaluation confirmed that stakeholders perceived reporting to be associated with some effects, as illustrated in Figure 9.

The main perceived effects were improved quality of action, communication and visibility. When the difference between country action plans and thematic documents is further analysed, it can be observed that **communication**, and in particular interaction with donors, plays a much more important role in the case of country action plans than for thematic documents, while the opposite is reported when it comes to visibility. In addition, reporting seems to be the one element of strategy that strongly promotes accountability, while it can be again observed that the effect on **accountability** is perceived to be somewhat stronger in the case of thematic documents.

Figure 9. Perceived effects of reporting on organisational performance



In terms of negative effects, reporting was perceived to increase the **workload** of staff, significantly more so in the case of thematic documents than for country action plans (2.9 and 2.2, respectively, on a scale from 0 to 4). The reason for this, as mentioned in Chapter 3.1.6, could be that reporting for country action plans is more standardised and forms an integral part of the work process.

3.4. Lessons learnt from current practices in the Council of Europe and in other international organisations

Current practices of strategy development in the Council of Europe show several things.

- ▶ Strategy development is a **resource-intensive** process and availability of those resources should be an important consideration in deciding whether and when to initiate a strategy.
- ▶ Successful strategies share similar characteristics, in particular, a high level of **thematic expertise** as well as a high level of **leadership support**.
- ▶ In order not to suffer from negative effects strategies should remain sufficiently broad and **allow for adaptation** and adjustment. In highly volatile or fast-changing contexts, strategies may not make sense at all because the available information is insufficient.

Practices in other international organisations have also revealed valuable lessons.

- ▶ While documents of other international organisations often exhibit similar traits, it seems that most international organisations have a **stated overall vision** and that their strategic documents are developed within a certain **architecture**.

- ▶ Interviewees noted that they perceive that it is difficult to achieve a common vision for the Organisation because of the diversity of topics, the diverging views of member states on the prioritisation of these topics, the political sensitivity of some topics and other challenges. However, it seems that other organisations with comparably diverse thematic areas and diverse membership have managed to establish a common vision with the input and agreement of the member states of the Council of Europe, which have followed the rules of these different forums. Therefore, it may be worth reflecting on how a **consensus** can be reached more effectively.
- ▶ Organisations differ significantly in their approach to strategic planning and a single “right” approach does not seem to exist. The two dimensions which could potentially play a role in the difference in approach are, on the one hand, the Organisation’s self-understanding³⁹ as more of a development or more of a political organisation and, on the other hand, the decision whether to employ a **more flexible** or **more formal** approach to strategy making.

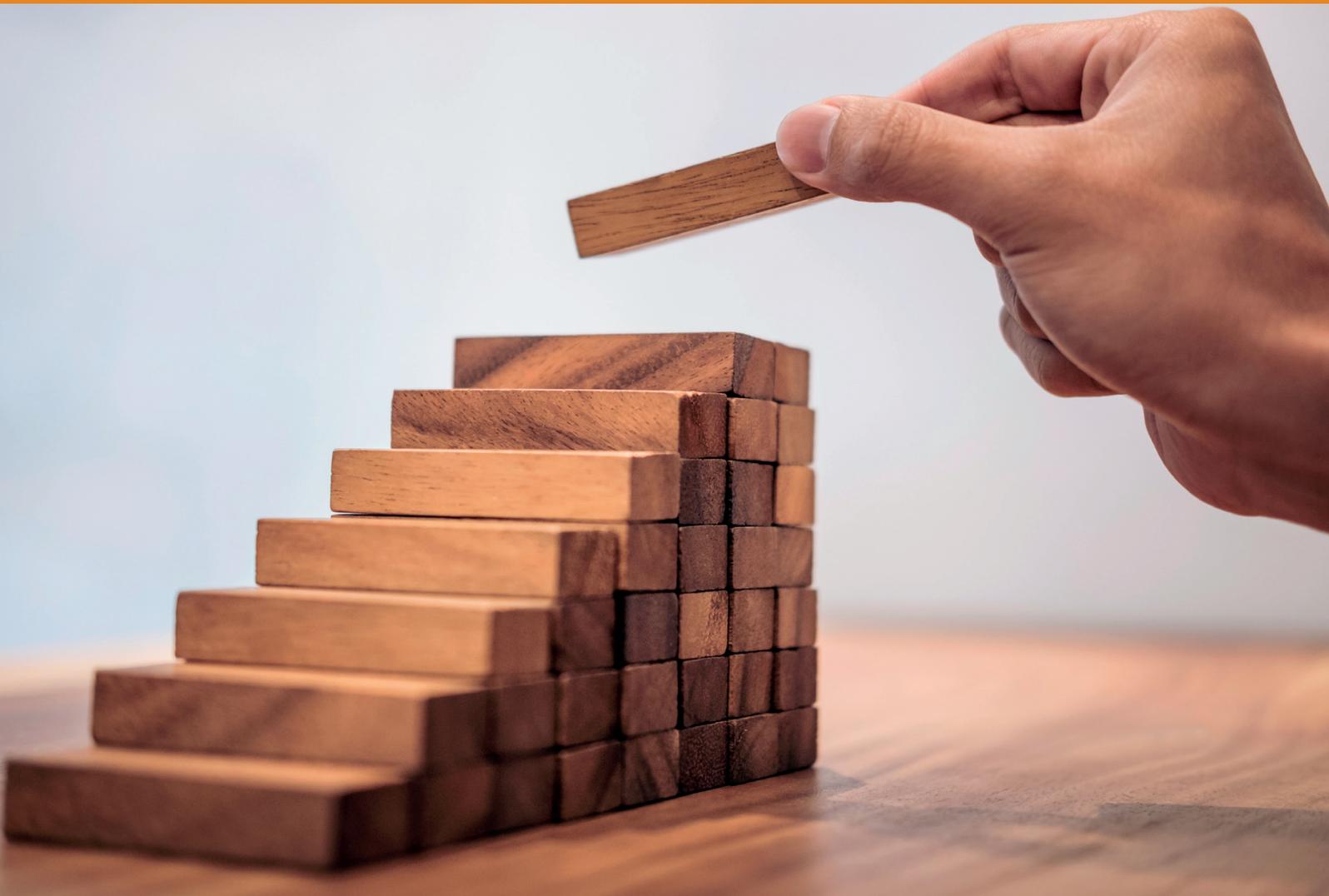
This evaluation has learnt some additional lessons concerning the four-year strategic framework for the Council of Europe mentioned in Chapter 3.1.7. While the strategic objectives of the Organisation and the relevant results framework should be established by the leadership in consultation with relevant stakeholders, some ideas have been put forward by interviewees on **how these objectives could be achieved**, including:

- ▶ further strengthening of the dynamic triangle⁴⁰ and the empowerment of the intergovernmental sector to provide input into strategic thinking within the Organisation;
- ▶ further improving co-ordination by continuing to use various forums set up for this purpose, such as regular meetings of the chairs of intergovernmental committees, presidents of monitoring bodies, or chairs of rapporteur groups;
- ▶ improving communication on and visibility of the Organisation’s work;
- ▶ ensuring open and efficient communication lines with all member states and among the independent bodies of the Organisation;
- ▶ using strategic thinking alongside strategic planning in order to ensure flexibility and rapid reaction capacity when needed;
- ▶ establishing a meaningful and efficient performance assessment and reporting framework.

These lessons confirm that the making of a strategy and its effectiveness is a highly context-dependent exercise, which needs to consider questions of feasibility, organisational set-up and culture, availability of (human) resources, and added value.

39. It should be noted that there is no hard and fast definition of “political organisation” and “development organisation” or of the difference between them. It is largely a matter of perception on the part of observers, while staff may have different perceptions of their organisation’s character. In addition, the classification is not absolute, since the organisations considered in the context of this report would find themselves somewhere in the middle of what should be seen as a continuum between a more political and a more development-oriented organisation.

40. “Standard setting, monitoring mechanisms and co-operation activities are often referred to as the Council of Europe’s dynamic triangle, which is part of the unique added value of the Organisation.” ODGP leaflet (2018) <https://rm.coe.int/16806afc3b>.



4. Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter provides answers to the questions raised by the evaluation (see Chapter 1.4), which are indicated at the end of each conclusion (for example, “EQ1”). In addition, this chapter includes recommendations (Figure 10) addressing specific improvements that should be sought to solve the issues raised in one or several of the conclusions.

Figure 10. Recommendations by strategic planning phase



4.1. Strategic planning framework

Conclusion 1. The Council of Europe does not currently have a single document which can be referred to as an overall strategic document for the Organisation. Based on comparisons made with some other organisations, and given the advantages of the strategic documents identified in this evaluation for the Organisation, it is advisable to have such a document. Therefore, it is encouraging that the CM has decided that a four-year strategic framework is to be established for the Organisation. (EQ1a, EQ2c)

Recommendation 1. When establishing a strategic framework, the leadership of the Organisation should identify relevant stakeholder groups at an early stage and engage them in consultations, where appropriate, so that the framework can reflect a common vision to the greatest extent possible. The framework should adhere to best practices in strategy making and the lessons learnt identified in this report. In addition, the leadership of the Organisation should establish clear processes for the implementation of the framework and the monitoring and reporting of progress towards its objectives. Finally, the Programme and Budget document of the Organisation and the thematic and geographic strategies and action plans should be informed by the Organisation's strategic framework. Where relevant, it needs to be reflected upon whether and when (that is, during the different phases of strategy development, reporting, monitoring and revision), existing platforms such as the meetings of the chairs of intergovernmental committees, presidents of monitoring bodies, chairs of rapporteur groups, PACE or other independent bodies of the Organisation could or should be involved.

Conclusion 2. The Council of Europe produces a variety of useful documents with strategic elements for different purposes. For an outsider, it may be difficult to find these documents and to understand their role and hierarchical position within the strategic planning universe. The interlinkages between the different documents are not always evident and neither is their connection to the Programme and Budget document of the Organisation. (EQ1a, EQ1e)

Conclusion 3. There is no single adopted institutional terminology for strategic planning, which results in an arbitrary and interchangeable use of the terms "strategy", "action plan", and "strategic priorities". (EQ1a, EQ1c)

Recommendation 2 (addresses conclusions 2 and 3). The Organisation should establish clear terminology to describe the various types of documents and create an online "one-stop shop" repository of public strategic documents, including a thematic search tool. In addition, relevant strategic

documents should be referred to in the Programme and Budget document.

4.2. Quality of strategy documents

Conclusion 4. Most of the strategic documents produced by the Organisation have a clear rationale, are consistent with Council of Europe's overall strategic priorities, show linkages to the Organisation's specific comparative advantages, are underpinned by diagnostic work which analyses lessons learnt from previous strategies, evaluations and international sectoral experience, and include prioritised, clear and realistic objectives. On the other hand, certain other elements need to be further strengthened, such as including an explicit results framework, a clear time frame and implementation plan, provisions for M&E and an explicit identification of resources, incentives and support for implementation. (EQ1e)

Recommendation 3. The Organisation should produce a manual/guidance on strategy preparation explaining the relevant processes and concepts and including standard templates – one for strategies and one for action plans (see suggested strategy and action plan templates in Appendix 13).

4.3. Strategy development and implementation processes

Conclusion 5. The processes of strategic planning for thematic documents are currently not sufficiently standardised. In addition, guidance was sometimes considered insufficient. (EQ1a)

Recommendation 4. Strategic planning procedures aligned with the requirements of a four-year strategic planning framework should be adopted, for example, through the harmonisation of planning and reporting cycles, where feasible.

Conclusion 6. The format of strategic documents is not always aligned with their purpose (or, rather, several purposes) and the information needs of their target audiences, for example, documents produced for the purpose of communication are too detailed and technical. Several documents or other products may be necessary depending on the target audience and purpose (for example: strategy, action plan, information flyer, internet website, video, etc.). (EQ1a, EQ2a)

Recommendation 5. Strategic documents should be aligned with the information needs of the target audience for which they are intended and accompanied by a communication strategy.

Conclusion 7. The assignment of a lead entity in charge, which has clearly stated responsibility and accountability for a strategy's implementation, is a critical factor of its success. (EQ2b)

Recommendation 6. Responsibility for the preparation and implementation of any strategy should be clearly assigned and communicated to relevant staff members and reflected in their annual objectives. This is also relevant for the four-year strategic framework of the Secretary General.

Conclusion 8. For the thematic strategies and action plans, an inclusive and participatory preparation process is considered to be of intrinsic value and extremely important for creating ownership and commitment. (EQ1c)

Conclusion 9. Strategy preparation and implementation require a wide range of skills and success is heavily dependent on competencies in management and communication as well as analytical and interpersonal skills. Therefore, it is critical to pay attention to talent management when deciding who will be responsible for the preparation and implementation of a strategy. (EQ1b)

Conclusion 10. The most important factor in strategy development and implementation that influences its effectiveness was shown to be the thematic expertise of staff involved. The presence of such expertise must be ensured and should be further complemented by external thematic expertise if necessary. (EQ1b)

Conclusion 11. In addition to thematic expertise, other factors influencing the effectiveness of strategies were resources, awareness of Council of Europe leadership, staff and external stakeholders, as well as support of Council of Europe leadership and staff. Therefore, it is important to build in mechanisms to create this awareness and support, for example, by involving the relevant actors in strategy preparation and awareness-raising activities with national authorities, human rights institutions, civil society and other international organisations at all stages of the implementation. For internal support, it is important that organisational strategies do not proliferate, otherwise they are likely to lose importance and create “strategy fatigue” among staff due to constant reporting requirements. (EQ2b)

Conclusion 12. While strategies have positive effects, it is not advisable to have high-profile organisational strategic documents for each sector due to the limited resources available. Therefore, the production of a strategy itself needs to be “strategic” in that the added value of a strategy needs to be weighed against the effort and investment necessary for its production and implementation. (EQ2b, EQ2c)

Recommendation 7 (addresses conclusions 10-12). Resources need to be dedicated to the preparation of a strategy prior to its launch. In addition, the impact on the resources needed for its implementation should be addressed in the strategy document.

Conclusion 13. Strategies were reported as having positive effects on different aspects of organisational performance, most of all on communication, visibility and legitimacy of the relevant sector of work, but also on the quality of action, internal co-ordination and, especially in the case of country action plans, fundraising. They had a somewhat lesser effect on monitoring and assessment of performance, and this effect was strongly influenced by the availability of resources, which shows that results-based management must be further prioritised. (EQ2a, EQ2b)

Recommendation 8. Monitoring and evaluation should be made an integral part of any strategy's performance assessment in order to strengthen accountability and learning.

4.4. Reporting process

Conclusion 14. With respect to strategies, reporting has positive effects on organisational performance and, in particular, on quality of action, communication and visibility. While reporting is in place to some extent for all strategic documents reviewed, its format, periodicity and target audiences vary substantially. (EQ1d)

Recommendation 9. Guidelines should be produced which harmonise reporting formats and periodicity (to the extent possible), taking into account the different target audiences and purposes of reporting.



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Appendices

Appendix 1. Definitions of strategy

Definition	Source
"A plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim."	Lexico: Oxford University Press and Dictionary.Com online dictionaries ⁴¹
"The way in which a business, government, or other organization carefully plans its actions over a period of time to improve its position and achieve what it wants."	Cambridge online dictionary ⁴²
"Strategy is the direction and scope of an organisation over the long term, which achieves advantage in a changing environment through its configuration of resources and competences with the aim of fulfilling stakeholder expectations."	Gerry Johnson and Kevan Scholes, authors of <i>Exploring Corporate Strategy</i> ⁴³
"Strategy is the creation of a unique and valuable position, involving a different set of activities." ⁴⁴	Michael Porter, a strategy expert and professor at Harvard Business School

41. Available at <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/strategy>, accessed on 23 March 2019.

42. Available at <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/strategy>, accessed on 23 March 2019.

43. Johnson, G., Scholes, K., and Whittington, R. (2008), *Exploring corporate strategy*, Harlow, England: Pearson Education Limited, p.3. ISBN: 978-0-273-71192-6.

44. Porter, M. (1996), "What is strategy?", *Harvard Business Review*, 74(6).

Appendix 2. Strategy documents in the Council of Europe – Document typology

(non-exhaustive list)

This appendix describes the nature of each of the (sets of) documents. Documents in blue rows were included in the evaluation against strategy criteria.

N°	Title [Date]	Sampled ⁴⁵	Scored ⁴⁶	Short description	Primary audience	Function
1	Council of Europe Action Plan on Combating Transnational Organised Crime (2016-2020) [2016]	Yes	Yes	Action plan with the character of a discussion paper, which highlights the obstacles to be overcome before it can be implemented i) Actions are not planned but suggested ii) No costing or timing of actions iii) No M&E arrangements specified	Council of Europe/member states hierarchy and stakeholders	Action plan (incomplete)
2	Action Plan on Building Inclusive Societies 2016-2019 [2016]	No	No	Action statement aiming to assist member states in managing diversity through policies fostering mutual understanding and respect, organised around activities in education, anti-discrimination and integration. No detailed time frame, procedures, results framework or funding base	Council of Europe and member state hierarchy and staff	Action plan (lacking key features)
3	Action plans, framework documents and reports – web page [current]	No	No	Web page with references to a wide range of Council of Europe documents including country action plans (refer to document 8)	Council of Europe member state authorities, Council of Europe management/staff and partner organisation stakeholders	Country actions plans (in some cases near best practice) (refer to document 8)
4	Centre of Expertise Strategic Plan 2017-2022 [2017]	Yes	Yes	An organisational development strategy for the centre itself, not for a Council of Europe programme or priority i) Actions are not costed or time-bound ii) No M&E arrangements specified iii) No results framework	Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform management/staff	Organisational development plan (incomplete). Not a Council of Europe sector or thematic action plan
5	Priorities of the Congress 2017-2020 [2017]	No	No	Policy statement by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe on its role regarding the promotion and defence of local and regional democracy. Contains strategic elements	Council of Europe/member states, local and regional authorities, national and European associations, hierarchy, staff and other stakeholders	Policy statement (no strategy or action plan)

45. Included in the list of 20 Council of Europe documents for detailed expert review against the quality criteria for strategies and action plans.

46. Scored on the quality criteria for strategies and action plans (some of the sampled documents could not be scored).

N°	Title [Date]	Sampled ⁴⁵	Scored ⁴⁶	Short description	Primary audience	Function
6	Priorities of the Congress 2013-2016 [2013]	No	No	As document 5	As document 5	As document 5
7	Council of Europe Action Plan on Protecting Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe (2017-2019) [2017]	Yes	Yes	Well-structured, concise action plan, but not comprehensive. Lacking an explicit link to relevant strategies (i.e. how individual actions relate to those strategies as well as the intervention logic underpinning them) i) No detailed timing for actions ii) No M&E arrangements, procedures and responsibilities specified iii) No results framework	Council of Europe/member states hierarchy, staff and other stakeholders	Action plan (incomplete)
8	Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019-2022 [2018]	Yes	Yes	Well-structured and comprehensive yet accessible action plan, lacking only a few features (detailed timing, funding base and SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound indicators))	Armenian authorities, Council of Europe management/staff and partner organisation stakeholders	Action plan (near best practice) NB: similar action plans exist for Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, etc. (see table below)
9	Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015 [2006]	Yes	Yes	Well-structured, extensive, diagnostics-based action plan setting out measures to be taken by member states. No indication of resources, detailed time line or logframe (logical framework)	Council of Europe and member states hierarchy/staff	Action plan (lacking key features)
10	Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2018-2022) [2018]	Yes	Yes	Output-oriented, well-structured strategy based on co-operation with a large number of international entities. No detailed timeline, funding base or M&E arrangements	Council of Europe, comparator organisation and member state entity hierarchy and staff	Strategy (lacking key features)
11	Council of Europe Disability Strategy 2017-2023 [2017]	Yes	Yes	Well-founded and well-structured strategy, with an implementation plan that offers little detail for its seven-year span and lacks a clear resource base, M&E arrangements and implementation procedures	Council of Europe and member state hierarchy/staff	Strategy (lacking several features)

N°	Title [Date]	Sampled ⁴⁵	Scored ⁴⁶	Short description	Primary audience	Function
12	Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 [2018]	Yes	Yes	Solidly-grounded, well-reasoned and clearly prioritised strategy, which is outcome oriented yet lacks a results framework/logframe, an implementation plan or a funding base	Council of Europe and member state policy makers and officials	Strategy (approaching best practice but lacking a few features)
13	Council of Europe Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality [2016]	Yes	Yes	Action Plan with clear, but unprioritised aims without indicators, with implementation depending on members states. No clear time line, resources schedule or detailed M&E arrangements	Council of Europe and member state hierarchy/staff	Action plan (incomplete to the extent of resembling a list of suggestions)
14	Council of Europe Policy towards neighbouring regions – web page [current]	No	No	Web page setting out policy on Council of Europe co-operation with neighbouring regions, including co-operation priorities with individual countries, and containing strategic elements	Council of Europe, member state and neighbouring country hierarchy, staff and other stakeholders	Policy information (no strategy or action plan) NB: the co-operation documents are listed in the table below
15	Council of Europe Programme and Budget 2018-2019 – Priorities of the Secretary General [2017]	Yes	Yes	Concise, well-structured companion document to the Programme and Budget 2018-2019, with strategic elements and highlighting budgetary issues, but without key features of a strategy or action plan (such as a time plan, detailed resources schedule, procedures and implementation responsibilities)	Council of Europe, member states, media and interested public	Programme and Budget presentation document; no strategy or action plan
16	Council of Europe Programme and Budget 2018-2019 [2017]	Yes	No	Well-structured annotated Programme and Budget, in line with best practice, containing strategic elements	Council of Europe, member states, media and the general public	Programme and Budget document (best practice). No strategy or action plan
17	Council of Europe Programme and Budget 2016-2017 [2015]	No	No	As document 16	As document 16	As document 16
18	Council of Europe Programme and Budget 2014-2015 [2013]	No	No	As document 16	As document 16	As document 16
19	Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2012-2015) [2011]	No	No	Predecessor of document 20	Council of Europe and member state policy makers and staff	As document 20

N°	Title [Date]	Sampled ⁴⁵	Scored ⁴⁶	Short description	Primary audience	Function
20	Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021) [2016]	Yes	Yes	Well-founded, clearly prioritised strategy, but without a fully-fledged logframe and performance indicators, and without a detailed schedule of implementation procedures and resources	Council of Europe and member state policy makers and staff	Strategy (lacking key features)
21	Education for a Global Citizenship – Strategic Recommendations of the 3rd European Congress on Global Education [2015]	No	No	Expert strategic recommendations (28 in total) on global education covering five interrelated areas as the result of a 2015 conference	Council of Europe and member state policy makers and staff	Conference outcome (no strategy or action plan)
22	European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st Century [2018]	No	No	Well-presented, 3-component strategy consisting of 32 recommendations to member states for each component; many detailed examples of action for each recommendation. Includes M&E arrangements, but no results framework (logframe) and funding base	Council of Europe and member state policy makers and staff	Strategy (lacking key elements)
23	European Ministerial Conferences of the Council of Europe – web page [current]	No	No	Agendas, proceedings, background papers and press releases on committee and other ministers' meetings on a wide range of subjects, often with strategic and action plan elements	Council of Europe and member state stakeholders, media and the general public	Meeting documentation (no strategies or action plans)
24	Expenditure of the Parliamentary Assembly for the biennium 2018-2019 – Resolution 2165 (2017)	No	No	Statement by the Parliamentary Assembly setting out its objectives and areas of particular attention for the biennium, including a staffing plan, an outline budget and a logframe with five expected results and accompanying indicators (without baselines/targets)	Council of Europe and member state policy makers and staff	Budget (no strategy or action plan)
25	Conferences on the Future of the European Convention on Human Rights – web page [current]	No	No	A variety of decisions and expert reports on the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights containing strategic considerations and suggestions for action	Council of Europe and member state policy makers and staff	Decisions and expert opinions (no strategies or action plans)
26	Internet Governance – Council of Europe Strategy 2012-2015 [2012]	No	No	Strategy outline, superseded by the strategy for 2016-2019 (see document 27)	Council of Europe and member state policy makers and staff	Strategy (lacking key features)

N°	Title [Date]	Sampled ⁴⁵	Scored ⁴⁶	Short description	Primary audience	Function
27	Internet Governance – Council of Europe Strategy 2016-2019 [2016]	Yes	Yes	Well-founded and well-structured strategy with clear objectives in response to member states' e-governance needs. Requires an accompanying action plan to operationalise the strategy and more detail on funding	Council of Europe and member state policy makers and staff	Strategy (lacking a few features)
28	New Strategy and Council Europe Action Plan for Social Cohesion [2010]	Yes	Yes	Outline of a combined strategy and action plan, with the character of a policy paper (as opposed to an operational strategy/action plan). Lacking prioritisation of objectives, a results framework, a clear time frame, implementation plan and funding base	Council of Europe and member state hierarchy and staff	Combined strategy/action plan (lacking key features)
29	Political declarations – web page [current]	No	No	Declarations on a wide range of subjects, with strategic elements		Declarations (no strategies or action plans)
30	Recommendation to member states on the Council of Europe Action Plan to promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society: improving the quality of life of people with disabilities in Europe 2006-2015 [2006]	No	No	Outline action plan centred on 15 action lines, each with objectives and broadly formulated actions suggested by member states	Council of Europe and member state hierarchy and staff	Action plan (lacking key features)
31	Roma Youth Action Plan (2016-2020) [undated]	Yes	No	Document for general information purposes, not an action plan	Apparently intended for awareness-raising, but framed in language that may not appeal to the general public	Brochure (not an action plan or strategy)
32	State of democracy, human rights and the rule of law (5th report) – Role of institutions – Threats to institutions [2018]	Yes	No	Highly readable document setting out the status of democracy in the Council of Europe area in five chapters looking "at the key building blocks of democratic security". It does not set out a strategy or a plan of action	Council of Europe and member state staff, media and the general public	General information document (not a strategy or action plan)
33	Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at Local Level (Extract from the Valencia Declaration) [2017]	No	No	Broad statement of principles and intent with regard to local good governance	Council of Europe and member state hierarchy and staff	Strategy (outline, lacking key features)

N°	Title [Date]	Sampled ⁴⁵	Scored ⁴⁶	Short description	Primary audience	Function
34	The Action Plan of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe 2018-2021 [2018]	Yes	Yes	Action plan structured around a results framework with indicators lacking baselines, milestones and targets. No clarity on member state needs, and without a detailed time plan or resources schedule	Committee of INGO stakeholder entities' hierarchy and staff	Action plan (lacking key features)
35	The fight against violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism – Action Plan [2015]	No	No	Outline plan of action, akin to a statement of intent	Council of Europe and member state hierarchy and staff	Action plan (outline, lacking operational features)
36	The future of the Council of Europe youth policy: AGENDA 2020 Declaration [2008]	Yes	No	Prioritised statement of intent by the Council of Ministers, setting out the general approach, methods and instruments for implementing those priorities	Council of Europe and member states, hierarchy and staff, media and the general public	Declaration (not a strategy or action plan)
37	Thematic Action Plan on the Inclusion of Roma and Travellers 2016-2019 [2016]	Yes	Yes	Action plan based on work by the Council of Europe and a number of international partners, with specific objectives framed as indicative measures. Partly detailed time frame, no details of a results framework and procedures, but including an indicative financing plan	Information document apparently intended for non-Council of Europe stakeholders, including the media	Action plan (lacking key features)
38	Warsaw Declaration [2005]	No	No	Statement of intent, accompanied by an outline action plan instructing the CM "to take steps to ensure that [it] is rapidly implemented by the various Council of Europe bodies, in conjunction where applicable with other European or international organisations"	Council of Europe, member state and selected international organisations' hierarchy and staff	Declaration (not a strategy or action plan)
39	White Paper on transnational organised crime [2014]	Yes	Yes	Paper calling for a strategy, with multiple references to Council of Europe decisions and policies. No clear time frame, results framework, implementation procedures or resources schedule	Council of Europe and member state hierarchy and staff	Policy exploration paper (no strategy or action plan)
40	White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue "Living Together as Equals in Dignity" [2008]	No	No	Paper seeking "to set a clear course for intercultural dialogue, but [not providing] a detailed road map"	Council of Europe and member state hierarchy and staff	As document 39. Policy exploration paper (no strategy or action plan)
41	White Paper on Prison Overcrowding [2016]	No	No	Paper aimed at "inciting member states to open a debate at national level regarding their penal system" (prison overcrowding and population inflation) and take decisions	Council of Europe and member state hierarchy and staff	As document 39. Policy exploration paper (no strategy or action plan)

No.	Title of country action plan / neighbourhood partnership
1	Programmatic Co-operation Document 2015-2017: Albania
2	Action Plan for Armenia 2019-2022
3	Action Plan for Armenia 2015-2018
4	Action Plan for Azerbaijan 2018-2021
5	Action Plan for Azerbaijan 2014-2016
6	Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021
7	Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2015-2017
8	Action Plan for Georgia 2020-2023
9	Action Plan for Georgia 2016-2019
10	Action Plan for the Republic of Moldova 2017-2020
11	Action Plan to support democratic reforms in the Republic of Moldova 2013-2016
12	Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2021
13	Action Plan for Ukraine 2015-2017
14	Action Plan for Belarus 2019-2021
15	Neighbourhood Partnership with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan 2015-2017
16	Neighbourhood Partnership with Morocco 2018-2021
17	Neighbourhood Partnership with Morocco 2015-2017
18	Neighbourhood Partnership with Tunisia 2018-2021
19	Neighbourhood Partnership with Tunisia 2015-2017
20	Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities for Kazakhstan 2019-2022
21	Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities for Kazakhstan 2014-2015: co-operation activities on Council of Europe's conventions in criminal matters
22	Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities for 2015-2017: Kyrgyz Republic
23	Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities with Palestine* (2016-2017)

* This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of Council of Europe member States on this issue.

Appendix 3. Quality criteria used to assess Council of Europe strategy documents

	Criteria	Treatment
A	Clear rationale for a (new) strategy, the status of preceding strategies and linkage with other relevant Council of Europe strategies	Retained unchanged; for the purpose of benchmarking, grouped with criteria B and E (clear foundation)
B	Consistent with the Organisation's overall strategic priorities and showing linkage to the Organisation's specific comparative advantages	Retained unchanged; grouped for benchmarking with criteria A and E (clear foundation)
C	Prioritised, clear and realistic objectives	Retained unchanged; grouped for benchmarking with criterion G (explicit results framework)
D	Responsive to member states' organisational needs	Criterion not assessable; although strategies/action plans often referred to member states' interests; an in-depth analysis of member states' policies and organisational arrangements would be required to assess compliance with this criterion
E	Underpinned by diagnostic work analysing lessons learnt from previous strategies, evaluations and international sectoral experience	Retained unchanged; grouped with criteria B and E (clear foundation)
F	Clear time frame and implementation plan	Added: "and implementation plan". See criterion G below
G	Explicit results framework	Amended by deleting: "and implementation plan" and joining this with criterion F; for the purpose of benchmarking grouped with criterion C (re. objectives)
H	Reference to and provisions for M&E	Retained unchanged
I	Essential procedures, guidelines and responsibilities	Criterion not differentiating; the strategies/action plans reviewed tend to rely on mandatory accountability/reporting processes set for relevant staff and committees
J	Explicitly identified resources, incentives and support for implementation	Retained unchanged
K	Mainstreams transversal (cross-cutting) issues	Criterion not differentiating; attention to cross-cutting issues is a policy matter; once adopted, strategies/action plans tend to reflect this
L	Combines and presents the above criteria in a logical and comprehensive, yet concise and accessible way	Criterion not very meaningful; the structure and content of strategies differs too much
M	Based on good practice standards among comparator organisations	Criterion not meaningful; no evidence available regarding the basis of strategies/action plans
N	Based on the guiding consideration that strategies are not only for the Organisation's internal use but should also attract the interest of media and the general public	Criterion not differentiating; strategies/action plans reviewed were for the use of stakeholders, not media or the general public

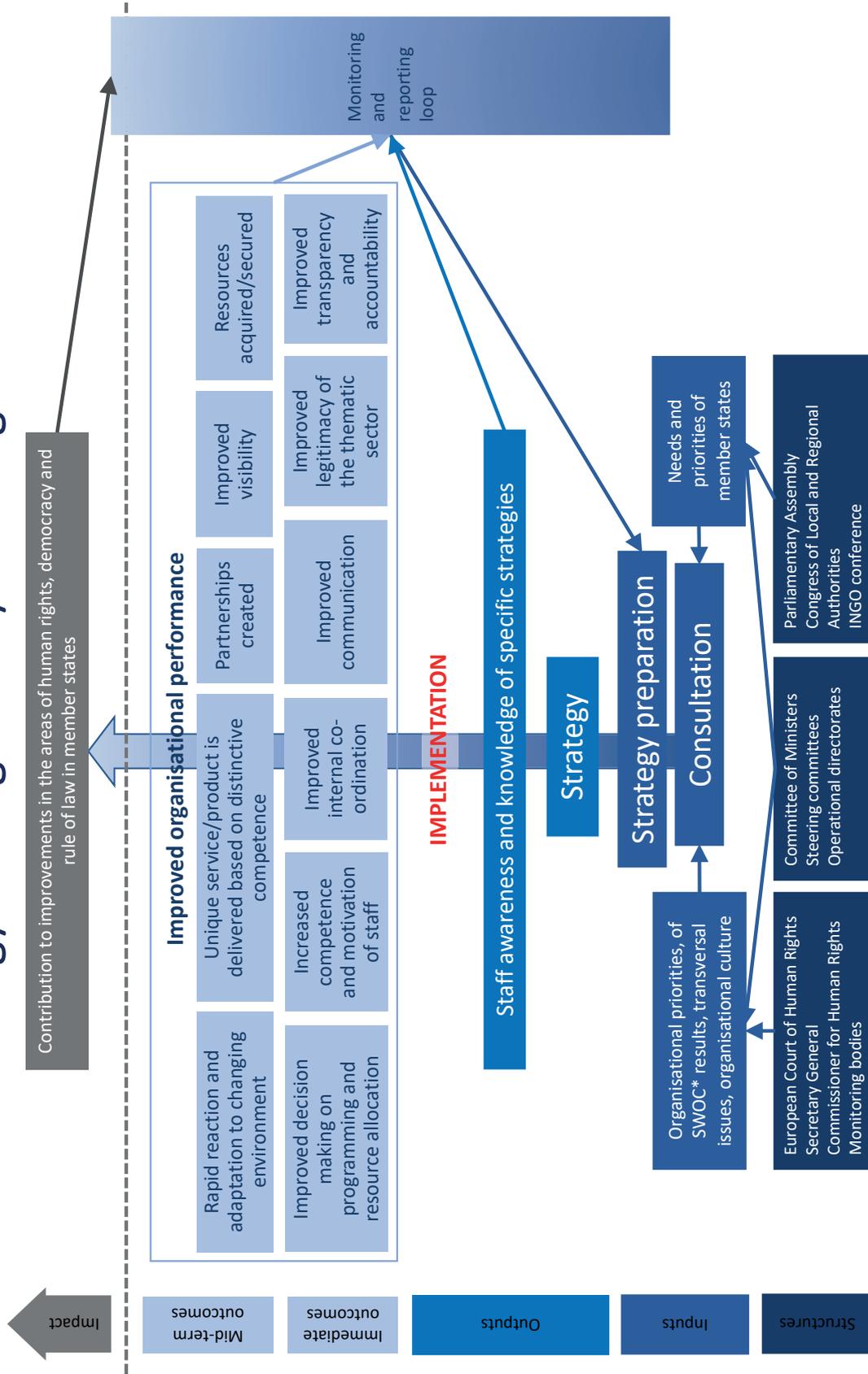
Appendix 4. Evaluation matrix

Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Data sources	Data analysis
Evaluation question – effectiveness:				
1. To what extent are the strategy formulation processes and resulting deliverables of appropriate quality and to what extent do they conform with standards?				
1a. What are the typical processes for initiating and developing a strategy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Process for strategy making and implementation is clear – Roles and responsibilities related to strategy development are clearly defined 	Document review	Council of Europe documents, general literature	Quantitative and qualitative data analysis
		Survey	Council of Europe Secretariat	Quantitative and qualitative data analysis
1b. To what extent does internal capacity and expertise for strategy making and reporting exist?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Staff have pre-existing expertise and/or feel confident about their skills related to strategy development or training is provided to staff involved in strategy making – Time is allotted and resources are available for the processes related to strategy preparation, monitoring and reporting – Strategy-related tasks are included in the objectives of the staff involved 	Survey	Council of Europe Secretariat	Quantitative and qualitative data analysis
1c. What consultation and quality control mechanisms are in place for strategy formulation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Effective system is in place for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – consultation with internal and external stakeholders – review and revision – finalisation and approval – quality control 	Survey	Council of Europe Secretariat	Quantitative and qualitative data analysis
1d. How does the Council of Europe ensure monitoring and reporting of its strategies? To what extent are they consistently applied and effective? Are there reflective learning mechanisms that enable adjustments to be made?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Effective system of review and revision is in place – Effective system for progress reporting is in place – Outputs and outcomes of results frameworks are monitored regularly 	Document review	Council of Europe documents	Quantitative and qualitative data analysis
		Survey	Council of Europe Secretariat	Quantitative and qualitative data analysis
1e. To what extent are strategy documents produced by the Council of Europe of sufficiently high quality?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Strategy includes elements mentioned in Appendix 3 	Document review	Council of Europe documents, general literature	Expert review

Evaluation question – effectiveness:				
2. To what extent and under what conditions are Council of Europe strategies effective in guiding the Organisation's work?				
2a. To what extent and under what conditions do strategies have an effect on the Council of Europe's operations and practices? If not, why not?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Relevant managers and staff are well aware of the strategy – Strategy is reflected in relevant programmatic documents – Includes examples of systematic contribution to decision making on programming – Includes examples of resource allocation based on strategy – Includes examples of use as guidance by the CM, the Council of Europe Secretariat, PACE, committee members 	Document review	Council of Europe documents	Quantitative and qualitative data analysis
		Interviews	Council of Europe Secretariat, chairs of rapporteur groups and steering committees	Quantitative and qualitative data analysis
		Survey	Council of Europe Secretariat	Quantitative and qualitative data analysis
2b. To what extent and under what conditions have Council of Europe strategies contributed to improved organisational performance? What lessons can be drawn from current practices in the Council of Europe?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Includes examples of rapid reaction and adaptation attributable to the existence of the strategy – Includes examples of high-quality service/ product attributable to the existence of the strategy – Includes examples of partnerships attributable to the existence of the strategy – Includes examples of the strategy being successfully used for fundraising – Includes examples of achievement of results attributable to the existence of the strategy 	Document review	Council of Europe documents	Quantitative and qualitative data analysis
		Interviews	Council of Europe Secretariat, chairs of rapporteur groups and steering committees	Quantitative and qualitative data analysis
		Survey	Council of Europe Secretariat	Quantitative and qualitative data analysis
2c. What lessons can be drawn from current practices in other international organisations to improve the quality and effectiveness of strategies?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Evidence of external good practices 	Document review	Documents of other international organisations, general literature	Benchmarking
		Interviews	Experts, staff of other international organisations	Benchmarking

Appendix 5. Theory of change

Strategy making: Theory of change



* Strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, challenges

Effects of strategies as identified by stakeholders

Theory of change – Expected effects of strategy

Short-term

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| • Management/planning | → | • Improved decision making on programming and resource allocation |
| • Internal and external communication | → | • Increased competence and motivation of staff |
| • Co-ordination | → | • Improved communication |
| • Agreement, commitment and ownership | → | • Improved internal co-ordination |
| • Reporting and accountability | → | • Improved legitimacy of the thematic sector |
| | | • Improved accountability and transparency |

Long-term

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| • Programming / long-term planning | → | • Rapid reaction and adaptation to changing environment |
| • Operationalisation of political declaration / will | → | • Unique service / product is delivered based on distinctive competence |
| • Reaction to crisis/event | → | • Partnerships created |
| • Internal and external visibility | → | • Improved visibility |
| • Fundraising | → | • Resources acquired/secured |

Appendix 6. Managerial arrangements

The evaluation was managed by two evaluators from the DIO under the supervision of the Head of the Evaluation Division. An external consultant was recruited with the following qualifications and distribution of tasks.

Qualifications of the external consultant

The external consultant(s) demonstrated the following competencies and expertise:

- ▶ thematic knowledge and experience in (evaluation of) interventions in the area of strategy development;
- ▶ knowledge of evaluation principles, methodology and best practices, including qualitative and quantitative methods;
- ▶ a proven record of at least 15 years experience in designing, managing and leading evaluations in the context of international co-operation.

Distribution of tasks

Task	DIO	External consultant	Both
Finalisation of the concept note	X		
Drafting of the terms of reference for recruitment of (an) external consultant(s)	X		
Recruitment and contracting of the consultant(s) and management of the contract(s)	X		
Partial data collection for the evaluation including use of methods listed in the methodology section and facilitation of data collection for the external consultant(s)			X
Data analysis (mapping, quantitative and qualitative data analysis)	X		
Data analysis (benchmarking, expert review)		X	
Submission of two draft working papers based on the terms of reference answering the relevant evaluation questions		X	
Commenting on the working papers produced by the consultant(s)	X		
Finalisation of working papers		X	
Collecting comments from stakeholders on the draft report	X		
Drafting of draft and final evaluation reports	X		

Appendix 7. Survey questions and semi-structured interview guide

Survey

<p>Strategy development and reporting on strategy implementation</p> <p>Instructions: Dear colleague,</p> <p>This survey is part of an Evaluation of strategy development and reporting in the Council of Europe conducted by the Directorate of Internal Oversight.</p> <p>The survey is addressed to Council of Europe staff. It aims to gather their views on the strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement of the Council of Europe's strategy making and reporting.</p> <p>The responses to the survey will be treated confidentially. In case of questions, please contact@coe.int. We thank you in advance for your input.</p> <p>DIO Evaluation Team</p>	<p>B. Strategy preparation</p> <p>3. Please, describe how the strategy came into existence? What triggered the process? What were the reasons for producing a strategy?</p> <p>4. To what extent was internal guidance on strategy formulation (such as templates, checklist, guide, written procedure) available?</p> <p>Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 Sufficiently Don't know</p> <p>Guidance</p> <p>If available, please mention the relevant documents/tools:</p> <p>5. Which types of Council of Europe key documents were used as thematic input into the strategy formulation?</p> <p>6. Which types of key documents external to the Organisation were used as input into the strategy formulation?</p> <p>7. Which strategic documents of the Council of Europe or other stakeholders or partners refer to the strategy in your sector (please provide examples, if any)?</p>																																																																																																																														
<p>A. General information</p> <p>* 1. Which strategy / strategic documents exist for your sector / department? (If your work is/was guided by several strategies, please, complete the survey documents for each strategy you are answering in respect of):</p> <p>* 2. Please, check all the way(s) in which you were involved in the strategy:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Main responsible person</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Preparation (including drafting, commenting, advising, finalising)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementation (including monitoring, review and revision)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Reporting (including preparing progress/ final evaluation reports, presenting to stakeholders)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify)</p>	<p>8. Participants in the strategy preparation and implementation:</p> <p>a. Who was responsible for developing the draft?</p> <p>b. Who was consulted?</p> <p>c. Who approved/ adopted/ took note of it? (please, provide reference to CM document, if relevant)?</p> <p>d. Who is expected to implement the strategy (for example, member States, Council of Europe, civil society, private sector, international organisations, etc.)?</p> <p>e. Which entities/ies are expected to monitor its implementation?</p>																																																																																																																														
<p>9. To what extent have the following stakeholders provided input in the process of strategy formulation (i.e. through drafting parts of it or commenting on the draft, etc.)?</p> <p>Not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 Extensively Don't know</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Staff of my entity/sector</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Staff of other entities</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Permanent representations</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Members of intergovernmental committee(s)</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Thematic consultant(s)</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Strategy consultant(s)</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Other international organisations</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Civil society representatives</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Other:</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> </table> <p>(please indicate stakeholder):</p>	Staff of my entity/sector	0	1	2	3	4	5	Staff of other entities	0	1	2	3	4	5	Permanent representations	0	1	2	3	4	5	Members of intergovernmental committee(s)	0	1	2	3	4	5	Thematic consultant(s)	0	1	2	3	4	5	Strategy consultant(s)	0	1	2	3	4	5	Other international organisations	0	1	2	3	4	5	Civil society representatives	0	1	2	3	4	5	Other:	0	1	2	3	4	5	<p>10. Please rate the extent to which the following elements were sufficiently present in the strategic planning process:</p> <p>not at all 0 1 2 3 4 5 sufficiently present don't know</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Resources (working time, human resources, etc.)</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Internal and external thematic expertise</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Internal or external expertise on strategic planning</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Clearly defined responsibilities for strategy formulation</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Awareness-raising activities on the strategy with relevant stakeholders</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Clearly defined responsibilities for strategy implementation</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Assistance of support pillar (e.g. communication, IT, procurement, human resources, internal oversight)</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Clear process for reviewing and revising the strategy</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> <tr><td>Other:</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr> </table> <p>(please, indicate):</p>	Resources (working time, human resources, etc.)	0	1	2	3	4	5	Internal and external thematic expertise	0	1	2	3	4	5	Internal or external expertise on strategic planning	0	1	2	3	4	5	Clearly defined responsibilities for strategy formulation	0	1	2	3	4	5	Awareness-raising activities on the strategy with relevant stakeholders	0	1	2	3	4	5	Clearly defined responsibilities for strategy implementation	0	1	2	3	4	5	Assistance of support pillar (e.g. communication, IT, procurement, human resources, internal oversight)	0	1	2	3	4	5	Clear process for reviewing and revising the strategy	0	1	2	3	4	5	Other:	0	1	2	3	4	5
Staff of my entity/sector	0	1	2	3	4	5																																																																																																																									
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11. In your view, which of the following **factors** play an important role in the strategy planning process for your sector / department:
 (Please, check the **three** most important factors):

- Consultations with relevant stakeholders
- Sufficient resources (working time, human resources, etc.) allocated to strategy formulation
- Clearly defined responsibilities for strategy formulation
- Internal expertise on strategic planning
- Internal thematic expertise
- External expertise on strategic planning
- External thematic expertise
- Awareness-raising activities on the strategy with relevant stakeholders
- Clearly defined responsibilities for strategy implementation
- Assistance of support pillar (e.g. communication, IT, procurement, human resources, internal oversight)
- Clear process for reviewing and revising the strategy
- Other:

12. What lessons did you learn from your experience with the strategy preparation? What has worked well and what would you have done differently?

C. Strategy implementation

13. In your opinion, to what extent are the following **aware** of the strategy:

	no awareness 0	1	2	3	significant awareness 4	don't know 5
The Committee of Ministers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Line ministries in member states	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
The Secretary General	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Senior managers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Staff members in your entity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Staff members in other entities concerned	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Civil society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
National human rights institutions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Academia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
International organisations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Other:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				

(please, indicate group):

14. In your opinion, to what extent is this strategy **supported** by (if rated 2 or above, please provide an **example of support in the next question**):

	no support 0	1	2	3	significant support 4	don't know 5
The Committee of Ministers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
The Secretary General	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Senior manager(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Staff members	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Other:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				

15. Please, provide an **example of support** by:

The Committee of Ministers	<input type="text"/>
The Secretary General	<input type="text"/>
Senior management	<input type="text"/>
Staff members	<input type="text"/>
Other:	<input type="text"/>

16. If the strategy is no longer active, to what extent do you consider it to have been **implemented**? In case the strategy is still on-going, to what extent do you consider its **implementation on track**?

	Not at all 0	1	2	3	Fully 4	Don't know
Implemented/On track	<input type="radio"/>					

17. Please, describe the three **main successes** in the implementation of the strategy:

-
-
-

18. Please, describe the three **main challenges** in the implementation of the strategy:

-
-
-

19. What % of activities foreseen by the strategy was **resourced**?

	No resources	1-20%	21-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-100%	Don't know
Resources	<input type="radio"/>						

20. Please rate the extent to which the following **elements** were sufficiently **present** in the strategy implementation:

	not at all	1	2	3	sufficiently present 4	don't know
Resources (working time, human resources, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Motivation of relevant staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Clearly defined responsibilities for strategy implementation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Awareness of relevant stakeholders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Strategy objectives translated into objectives of staff (e.g. as part of appraisal process)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Necessary assistance from the support pillar (e.g. communication, IT, procurement, human resources, internal oversight, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Clear process for reviewing and revising the strategy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				
Other:	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>				

(please indicate):

21. In your view, which of the following **factors** play the most important role in a successful strategy implementation:

(Please, check the **three** most important factors):

- Support of the Committee of Ministers
- Support of the Secretary General
- Support of committee members or other stakeholders in member states
- Support of senior management
- Motivation of relevant staff
- Sufficient resources (working time, human resources, etc.) allocated to strategy implementation
- Clearly defined responsibilities for strategy implementation
- Awareness of relevant stakeholders
- Strategy objectives translated into objectives of staff (e.g. as part of appraisal process)
- Assistance of the support pillar (e.g. communication, IT, procurement, human resources, internal oversight, etc.)
- Clear process for reviewing and revising the strategy
- Other:

D. Effects of strategy

22. To what extent have you observed the following **effects** as a result of having a strategy? (if rated 2 or above, please provide an **example in the next question**)

	not at all 0	1	2	3	significantly 4	Don't know
Improved decision making on programming by CoE managers	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved understanding of CoE's comparative advantage in the sector by CoE staff	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved decision making on resource allocation	<input type="radio"/>					
Production of tools/ guidelines/ instruments/ other guidance documents related to its implementation by CoE staff	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved communication with external stakeholders on the work of the sector covered by the strategy	<input type="radio"/>					
Limited flexibility in decision-making of CoE staff	<input type="radio"/>					
Increased creativity and innovation of CoE staff implementing the strategy	<input type="radio"/>					
Decreased creativity and innovation of CoE staff implementing the strategy	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved adaptation of the sector to a changing environment	<input type="radio"/>					
Decreased adaptability of the sector to changing environment	<input type="radio"/>					
Establishment of performance indicators for CoE staff	<input type="radio"/>					
Increased motivation of staff implementing the strategy	<input type="radio"/>					
Increased workload of staff implementing the strategy	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved internal co-ordination	<input type="radio"/>					
Increased legitimacy of the thematic sector / area covered	<input type="radio"/>					
Increased transparency of the thematic sector	<input type="radio"/>					

	not at all 0	1	2	3	significantly 4	Don't know
Increased accountability of the thematic sector	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved quality of action of the organisation	<input type="radio"/>					
New partnerships	<input type="radio"/>					
Increased internal and external visibility of the sector	<input type="radio"/>					
Increased donor interest for the sector / increase in resources for the thematic area covered	<input type="radio"/>					
Ongoing monitoring and assessment of performance	<input type="radio"/>					
Other:	<input type="radio"/>					

(please indicate effect):

23. Please, choose **2-3 most significant effects** of your strategy on performance of your sector/organisational performance and provide **concrete examples in the text box**:

- improved decision making on programming by CoE managers
- improved understanding of CoE's comparative advantage in the sector by CoE staff
- improved decision making on resource allocation
- production of tools/ guidelines/ instruments/ other guidance documents related to its implementation by CoE staff
- improved communication with external stakeholders on the work of the sector
- limited flexibility in decision-making of CoE management
- increased creativity and innovation of CoE staff implementing the strategy
- decreased creativity and innovation of CoE staff implementing the strategy
- improved adaptation of the sector to a changing environment
- decreased adaptability of the sector to changing environment

- establishment of performance indicators
- increased motivation of staff implementing the strategy
- increased workload of staff implementing the strategy
- improved internal co-ordination
- increased legitimacy of the thematic sector
- increased transparency of the thematic sector
- increased accountability of the thematic sector
- improved quality of action
- new partnerships
- increased internal and external visibility of the sector
- increased donor interest / increase in resources for the thematic area
- ongoing monitoring and assessment of performance
- other

24. Which of the following **effects** of having a strategy are in your view the most important for organisational performance?
(Please, select the **five** most important effects):

- Improved decision making on programming
- Improved decision making on resource allocation
- Production of tools/ guidelines/ instruments/ other guidance documents related to its implementation
- Improved communication with external stakeholders on the work of the sector covered by the strategy
- Increased creativity and innovation
- Improved adaptation to a changing environment
- Establishment of performance indicators
- Increased motivation of staff
- Improved internal co-ordination
- Increased the legitimacy of the thematic sector
- Increased transparency of the thematic sector
- Increased accountability in the organisation
- Improved quality of action of the organisation
- New partnerships
- Increased visibility of the sector
- Increased attractiveness of thematic sector for donors/ increase in resources for the thematic area covered
- Ongoing monitoring and assessment of performance
- Other:

25. Based on a cost-benefit analysis of your strategy, would you recommend your colleagues prepare a strategy?

No Maybe Yes
 Don't know

28. In your view, to what extent has the **reporting contributed** to the following effects (if rated 2 or above, please provide an **example in the next question**):

	not at all	1	2	3	significant 4	don't know
Improved communication with external stakeholders on the work of the sector covered by the strategy	<input type="radio"/>					
Limited flexibility in decision making of Council of Europe staff	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved adaptation of the sector to a changing environment	<input type="radio"/>					
Decreased adaptability of the sector to changing environment	<input type="radio"/>					
Ongoing monitoring and assessment of performance	<input type="radio"/>					
Increased workload of staff implementing the strategy	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved internal coordination	<input type="radio"/>					
Increased legitimacy of the thematic sector	<input type="radio"/>					
Increased transparency of the thematic sector	<input type="radio"/>					
Increased accountability of the thematic sector	<input type="radio"/>					
Improved quality of action of the organisation	<input type="radio"/>					
Increased visibility of the sector	<input type="radio"/>					
Increased donor interest for the sector / Increase in resources for the thematic area covered	<input type="radio"/>					
Other:	<input type="radio"/>					

(please, indicate effect):

E. Reporting on strategy

26. How is **progress** on the strategy implementation assessed?
(Please, provide links to progress, monitoring or evaluation reports, if any, or attach the documents)

27. To **whom** is progress on the implementation of strategy **reported**?

	at expiration	annually	bi-annually	quarterly	not at all	don't know
Senior management	<input type="radio"/>					
Private Office	<input type="radio"/>					
Steering committee	<input type="radio"/>					
Committee of Ministers	<input type="radio"/>					
Civil society	<input type="radio"/>					
National human rights institutions	<input type="radio"/>					
Academia	<input type="radio"/>					
International organisations	<input type="radio"/>					
Media	<input type="radio"/>					
Other:	<input type="radio"/>					

(please, indicate):

29. Please, provide **2-3 concrete examples** of most significant effects of reporting on strategy on organisational performance:

- Improved communication with external stakeholders on the work of the sector covered by the strategy
- Limited flexibility in decision making of Council of Europe management
- Improved adaptation of the sector to a changing environment
- Decreased adaptability to changing environment
- Ongoing monitoring and assessment of performance
- Increased workload of staff implementing the strategy
- Improved internal coordination
- Increased legitimacy of thematic sector
- Increased transparency of thematic sector
- Increased accountability of thematic sector
- Improved quality of action
- Increased visibility of the sector
- Increased donor interest for the sector / Increase in resources for the thematic area covered
- Other:

30. If the strategy was revised, please, describe the process of revision:

Other feedback

31. Would you like to give any other comments on strategy preparation, implementation or reporting?

**The Directorate of Internal Oversight
thanks you very much for participating in this survey!**

Semi-structured interview guide – examples

Interview guide Strategy development and reporting

Staff members

1. Could you please explain how you see the strategic framework of the Organisation and how the different elements of it are used? What strategies/strategic documents exist and are used in your sector of work?
2. Please describe how and why the strategy/ies came into existence? What triggered the process?
3. What lessons did you learn from your experience with the strategy preparation? What would you have done differently and what has worked well?
4. How did the implementation of the strategy go? What were the challenges? What was successful in your view? In general, what makes a strategy successful in your view?
5. Was/is it useful to have a strategy? In what way? Examples?
6. Do you have views on what could be improved in strategy development in the Council of Europe? Could the overall strategic planning and reporting framework be more effective? If so, how?
7. Could you recommend any documentation that we should read or persons who should be interviewed?

Chairs of rapporteur groups

1. To what extent are the vision, mission and overall strategy of the Council of Europe clear in your view?
2. What are your views on strategy development in the Organisation (for example, country action plans, thematic strategies)?
3. What are your views on reporting at strategic level, for example, for strategies discussed in your rapporteur group?
4. In your view, how should strategic planning be organised, for example, with regard to the four-year strategic framework discussed in Helsinki?
5. To what extent do you see a need to have a specialised unit tasked with strategic planning and co-ordination?

Appendix 8. List of interviews (in chronological order)

Table 1. Interviews with staff members

	Name	Function	Entity	Date
1	CHIAROMONTE Carlo	Head of Division, Secretary to the European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC), Head of Division, Secretary to the Committee of Experts on Terrorism (CODEXTER), Group of Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism (CETS No. 196)	DGI	17/06/2019
2	CANGEMI Daniele	Head of Department, Human Dignity and Gender Equality Department	DGII	17/06/2019
3	JUNCHER Hanne	Head of Department, Justice and Legal Co-operation Department	DGI	18/06/2019
4	GORSETH Hallvard	Head of Department, Anti-discrimination Department, Head of Department a.i., Roma and Travellers Team	DGII	19/06/2019
5	SIDEBOTTOM Alison	Director, Directorate of Programme and Budget	DPB	20/06/2019
6	DU-BERNARD ROCHY Catherine	Head of Division, Directorate of Programme and Budget	DPB	20/06/2019
7	GUIDIKOVA Irena	Head of Division, Inclusion and Anti-discrimination programmes	DGII	20/06/2019
8	PENNINCKX Patrick	Head of Department, Information Society Department	DGI	20/06/2019
9	MORALES-FERNANDEZ-SHAW Pilar	Head of Department, Programming Department	ODGP	20/06/2019
10	SIRTORI-MILNER Sonia	Head of Division, Good Governance	DGII	20/06/2019
11	TATARENKO Alina	Head of the Center of Expertise, Good Governance	DGII	20/06/2019
12	JENSDOTTIR Regina	Head of Division and Programme Co-ordinator, Children's Rights	DGII	24/06/2019
13	STOICA BECHT Livia	Children's Rights Policies and Co-operation	DGII	24/06/2019
14	HENNESSEY Mary Ann	Head of Division, Civil Society	DGII	25/06/2019
15	KLEIJSSSEN Johannes	Director, Information Society and Action against Crime Directorate	DGI	27/08/2019
16	BRILLAT Régis	Executive Secretary, Secretariat of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT), Special Advisor to the Secretary General for Ukraine	DGI	27/08/2019
17	LWOFF Laurence	Secretary of the Committee on Bioethics (DH-BIO), Bioethics	DGI	28/08/2019
18	VIELLE Cathie	Head of Department, European Pharmacopoeia Department (EPD)	DGII	29/08/2019
19	NIKOLTCHIEV Susanne	Executive Director, European Audiovisual Observatory	DGI	29/08/2019
20	GRANATA-MENGHINI Simona	Deputy Secretary, Secretariat of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Democracy through Law (Venice Commission)	DGI	04/09/2019
21	MANCINI Alessandro	Parliamentary Project Support Division	SecPA	04/09/2019
22	LUNGU Anna	Project Manager, Parliamentary Project Support Division	SecPA	04/09/2019
23	MEZEI Géza	Head of Division, Parliamentary Project Support Division	SecPA	04/09/2019

	Name	Function	Entity	Date
24	REMILI Mehdi	Human Dignity and Gender Equality Department	DGII	05/09/2019
25	TAYLOR Verena	Director, Office of the Directorate General of Programmes	ODGP	23/09/2019
26	FRIEDERICH François	Head of Division, Electoral Assistance Division	DGII	23/09/2019
27	HENDERSON Suzanne	Head of Division, Administration and Finance Division (AFD)	DGII	24/09/2019
28	LUCIANI Claudia	Director, Directorate of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance	DGII	24/09/2019
29	EVTUHOVICI Adrian	Head of Division a.i., World Forum for Democracy	DGII	25/09/2019
30	GRUDEN Matjaž	Director, Directorate of Democratic Participation	DGII	25/09/2019
31	LIDDELL Roderick	Registrar, Registry of the European Court of Human Rights	ECHR	26/09/2019
32	WISCHUF Michael	Deputy to the Registrar, Administration Department, Registry of the European Court of Human Rights	ECHR	26/09/2019
33	VON MARAVIC Agnes	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM)	DGII	26/09/2019
34	TERMACIC Tatiana	Head of Division, Co-ordination and International Co-operation Division	DGI	26/09/2019
35	SUNDBERG Fredrik	Head of Department a.i., Department for the Execution of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights	DGI	27/09/2019
36	BARR Matthew	Head of Division, Resource Mobilisation and Donor Relations Division	ODGP	02/10/2019
37	SCHOKKENBROEK Jeroen	Director, Directorate of Anti-discrimination	DGII	03/10/2019
38	QIRIAZI Villano	Special Co-ordinator (DGII)	DGII	04/10/2019
39	MARKOVIC Snežana	Director General, DG Democracy	DGII	04/10/2019

Table 2. Interviews with chairs of rapporteur groups and intergovernmental committees

	Name	Function	Entity	Date
1	ANDRE Peter	Chair, European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG)	CDDG	13/09/2019
2	HOVHANNISYAN Paruyr	Ambassador, Armenia Permanent Representative	GR-C	17/09/2019
3	RUFFER Emil	Ambassador, Czech Republic Permanent Representative	GR-J	17/09/2019
4	WALAAS Elisabeth	Ambassador, Norway Permanent Representative	GR-PBA	19/09/2019
5	HEYVAERT Gilles	Ambassador, Belgium Permanent Representative	GR-SOC	20/09/2019
6	RUSU Răzvan	Ambassador, Romania Permanent Representative	GR-DEM	24/09/2019
7	KOSTOPOULOU Maria-Andriani	Chair, Ad hoc Committee for the Rights of the Child (CAHENF)	CAHENF	24/09/2019
8	DE WIT Harry	Ambassador, Netherlands Permanent Representative	GR-H	25/09/2019

Table 3: Other interviews

	Name	Function	Entity	Date
1	ZOLLINGER Urs	Economist, Managing Partner	King Zollinger & Co, Zürich	21/08/2019
2	BECKER-THIERRY Sabine	Chief, Human Resources	UN University, Tokyo	22/08/2019
3	MADDOCK Nick	Formerly CTA Livelihoods	Independent Expert, Worthing (formerly Chief Technical Advisor, UNDP)	27/08/2019
4	DICKSON James	Expert on Strategy of International Organisations	Independent (formerly IAEA, UNODC), Oxford	05/09/2019
5	LORENZONI Marco	M&E Expert	Independent, Brussels	09/09/2019
6	VOYADZIS Claudine	Senior Evaluation Consultant	Independent (formerly Council of Europe Development Bank)	10/09/2019
7	RAWKINS Phillip	Planning and Programming Expert	Independent, Toronto	12/09/2019
8	MCCOY Jelena	Head of Programme Coordination	OSCE Presence in Albania	13/09/2019
9	MAJOROS Dora	Multiannual Financial Framework and Annual Management Cycle, Secretariat General	European Commission, Brussels	18/09/2019
10	D'CRUZ Joseph	Senior Advisor, Strategy and Planning, Executive Office of the Administrator	UNDP, New York	23/09/2019
11	WILSON Clarice	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Expert, Executive Office	UNDP, New York	24/09/2019

Appendix 9. Methodology

The evaluation included three phases: inception, data collection and data analysis, and report preparation. The senior management of the Organisation was consulted on the draft findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation to ensure their factual accuracy, relevance and feasibility.

An independent external evaluation expert also provided feedback on the draft concept note and the draft final report as well as advice, as necessary, throughout the evaluation exercise.

The evaluation used a mixed methods approach for data collection and analysis and relied on the following processes:

- a. a document review and mapping of available Council of Europe strategies (see the list of 41 documents in Appendix 2);
- b. a staff survey with 119 respondents (see Appendix 7 for a copy of the questionnaire);
- c. a review of documents with regard to their purpose, audience and function (41 documents) and an assessment of a sample of Council of Europe strategies against criteria (16 documents) by a strategy expert (Appendix 2);
- d. semi-structured interviews with 39 staff, 6 chairs of CM rapporteur groups and 2 chairs of intergovernmental committees of the Council of Europe and 11 staff members of other international organisations and strategy experts (Appendix 7);
- e. benchmarking of four comparator international organisations through a documentation review followed by consultations with their staff.

Details of the various stages of the process

Stage 1 – Mapping

The purpose of the mapping was to identify the strategic documents to be included within the scope of the evaluation. The evaluation team completed the mapping of strategic documents (Appendix 2) by collecting input from the heads of MAEs, a review of Council of Europe documentation and a few follow-up interviews with key stakeholders. The evaluation team enquired about any documents which were identified by staff as guiding their work, even if the documents were not called strategies and action plans. This list of documents with strategic elements served as a basis for the expert review and assessment of the documents against quality criteria (see below).

Stage 2 – Expert review

A strategy expert interviewed other experts in the same field to obtain their views on critical and important elements of strategic documents (Appendix 3). Based on the results, the strategy expert fine-tuned the 14 quality criteria proposed⁴⁷ in the terms of reference and formed 8 criteria found to be the most important. The expert then established a typology of the strategic documents produced by the Council of Europe (Appendix 2) and determined to what extent these can be considered strategies, that is, to what extent they have at least some of the features necessary for a strategic document. In total, 20 documents were then assessed in detail and rated against the quality criteria. The evaluation team identified strengths and weaknesses across the entire sample (Table 2). The same quality criteria were used for the benchmarking exercise (see below).

Stage 3 – Benchmarking

The use of benchmarking aimed at identifying good practices in strategy development as well as perceptions of factors which influence the effectiveness of strategies. The benchmarking was undertaken through a review of documentation and interviews with key informants from the selected organisations and strategic planning

47. The terms of reference proposed the following 14 criteria. Strategy: a) responds to an organisational need or need of member states; b) states a clear rationale for a (new) strategy, status of preceding strategies and linkages to other relevant strategies of the organisation; c) is underpinned by diagnostic work analysing lessons learnt from previous strategies / evaluations / sectoral international experience; d) is consistent with the overall strategic priorities of the CoE and shows linkage to specific comparative advantages of the organisation; e) is based on a coherent causal chain linking inputs and activities with expected outputs, outcomes and impact; f) has clear and realistic objectives, which are prioritised; g) has a clear timeframe; h) is accompanied by essential procedures, guidelines, and responsibilities; i) explicitly presents results framework including adequate and valid indicators and implementation plan; j) identifies explicit resources, budget sources, incentives and support for implementation; k) contains reference to and provisions for monitoring and reporting; l) mainstreams transversal issues.

experts (Appendix 8), as well as a review of general literature on strategy development. Comparator organisations were selected based on their similarities to the Council of Europe in terms of size, mandate and geographic focus⁴⁸ and included the EU, the OHCHR, the OSCE, UNESCO and the UNDP. The OHCHR was subsequently removed from some of the analyses as there was insufficient information available on the institution and no key informants could be identified.

Stage 4 – Quantitative and qualitative data collection

The evaluation was conducted based on the theory of change (Appendix 5). Processes and practices for the development, implementation and reporting of strategies were examined through a review of Council of Europe documentation, a survey among staff collecting quantitative and qualitative data and semi-structured interviews (Appendix 7) with selected staff members, chairs of rapporteur groups and chairs of intergovernmental committees (Appendix 8). The evaluation matrix in Appendix 4 provides further details about how these methods were used to answer the different evaluation questions.

The survey was offered in two formats: online and using a Word document. The survey consisted of several parts which represented the various stages of strategy making and staff were asked to complete the sections relevant for the processes in which they were involved. It was pre-tested by staff members to ensure clarity and to estimate the length of time needed for completion. Respondents to the survey were identified through e-mails to the persons responsible for the strategic documents listed in Appendix 2. Only a few people were identified for some of the strategic documents and for others a much larger number. This issue will be discussed further under the section on limitations (see below). In addition, not all of those contacted (240 surveys were sent out) wished to complete the survey because they felt that the documents and the processes related to their documents differed significantly and that the survey did not cover their specific working context. In such cases, the evaluation team suggested conducting interviews and 14 such interviews took place (6%), so that the overall response rate to the survey was calculated at 56%, after elimination of non-eligible responses.

Status of responses	No. of responses	%
Sent	240	100%
Responses received (survey)	152 ⁴⁹	63%
Eligible responses received (i.e. completed, strategy identified)	119	50%
Interviews requested	14	6%
Total responses (survey and interviews)	133	56%

In addition, the evaluation team collected qualitative data through semi-structured interviews in order to explain the patterns found in the quantitative data and to collect additional ideas and examples of the effectiveness (or the lack of it) of strategies and of influencing factors. Interviews were conducted with 25 staff members (in management positions and/or who were responsible for one or several strategic documents), 6 chairs of rapporteur groups of the CM, 2 chairs of intergovernmental committees and 11 representatives of international organisations and independent strategy experts.

⁴⁸ The comparator organisations were chosen based on their similar size (OSCE, UNESCO), geographic scope (EU, OSCE) and similar mandate (UNDP, UNESCO).

⁴⁹ 124 surveys filled out online and 28 using a Word document.

Stage 5 – Quantitative and qualitative data analysis

The evaluation questions were answered using the following methods.

1. To what extent are the strategy formulation processes and resulting deliverables of appropriate quality and to what extent do they conform with standards?	Source	Analysis	Chapter(s) in report
1a. What are the typical processes for initiating and developing a strategy?	Qualitative data from interviews Qualitative data from survey questions 3 and 5-8	Content analysis	3.1.1 3.1.2 3.1.3
1b. To what extent does internal capacity and expertise for strategy making and reporting exist?	Qualitative data from interviews Quantitative data from survey questions 10 and 20	Content analysis Descriptive statistics	3.3
1c. What consultation and quality control mechanisms are in place for strategy formulation?	Qualitative data from interviews Quantitative data from survey questions 4 and 9	Content analysis Descriptive statistics	3.1.4
1d. How does the Council of Europe ensure monitoring and reporting of its strategies? To what extent are they consistently applied and effective? Are there reflective learning mechanisms that enable adjustments to be made?	Qualitative data from interviews Qualitative data from survey questions 8e, 26-27 and 29-30 Quantitative data from survey Question 28	Content analysis Content analysis Descriptive statistics	3.1.6 3.3
1e. To what extent are strategy documents produced by the Council of Europe of sufficiently high quality?	Expert review of 16 strategy documents Benchmarking	Content analysis Descriptive statistics	3.1.5
2. To what extent and under what conditions are Council of Europe strategies effective in guiding the Organisation's work?	Source	Analysis	Chapter(s) in report
2a. To what extent and under what conditions do strategies have an effect on the Council of Europe's operations and practices? If not, why not?	Qualitative data from interviews Qualitative data from survey questions 12, 15, 17-18 and 23 Quantitative data from survey questions 10-11, 13-14, 16, 19-22, 24-25	Content analysis Content analysis Descriptive statistics Multiple regression analysis	3.2 3.3
2b. To what extent and under what conditions have Council of Europe strategies contributed to improved organisational performance?	Qualitative data from interviews Qualitative data from survey questions 12, 15, 17-18 and 23 Quantitative data from survey questions 10-11, 13-14, 16, 19-22, 24-25	Content analysis Content analysis Descriptive statistics Multiple regression analysis	3.2 3.3
2c. What lessons can be drawn from current practices in the Council of Europe and in other international organisations to improve the quality and effectiveness of strategies?	Qualitative data from interviews Benchmarking	Content analysis	3.4

The survey operationalised the effects of strategies in Question 22 of the survey, sometimes using several items to operationalise one effect.

The influencing factors were operationalised in questions 10-11, 13-14, 16, 19-21 and 24-25, which asked about the importance of certain conditions and their presence.

The multiple regression analyses performed to answer questions 2a and 2b used a significance level of $P < 0.05$. The effect sizes corresponding to the effects identified in Figure 8 are shown below. Different views exist as to the interpretation of the magnitude of these effect sizes (Chin 1998, Hair et al. 2013), but overall they can be considered to be moderate.

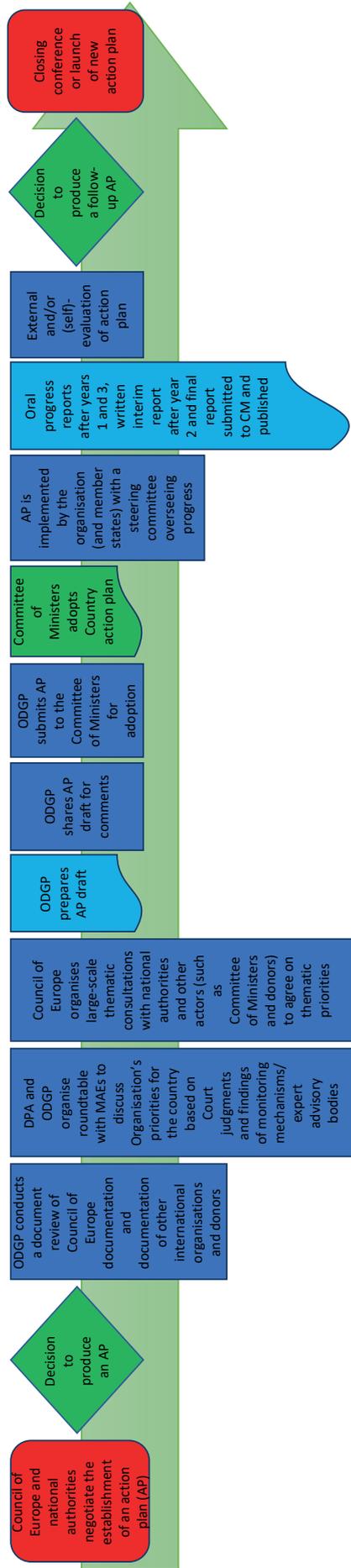
Effects	Influencing factors	Thematic expertise	Awareness of SG, senior management, staff and external actors	Support of SG, senior management and staff	Resources	R square (adjusted)
Unique service/product is delivered based on distinctive competence		significant	significant			0.38
Improved visibility		significant			significant	0.24
Resources acquired/secured			significant	significant		0.28
Improved decision making on programming and resource allocation		significant		significant	significant	0.51
Increased competence and motivation of staff		significant				0.39
Improved internal co-ordination			significant		significant	0.38
Improved communication			significant	significant	significant	0.44
Improved transparency and accountability					significant	0.26

Limitations

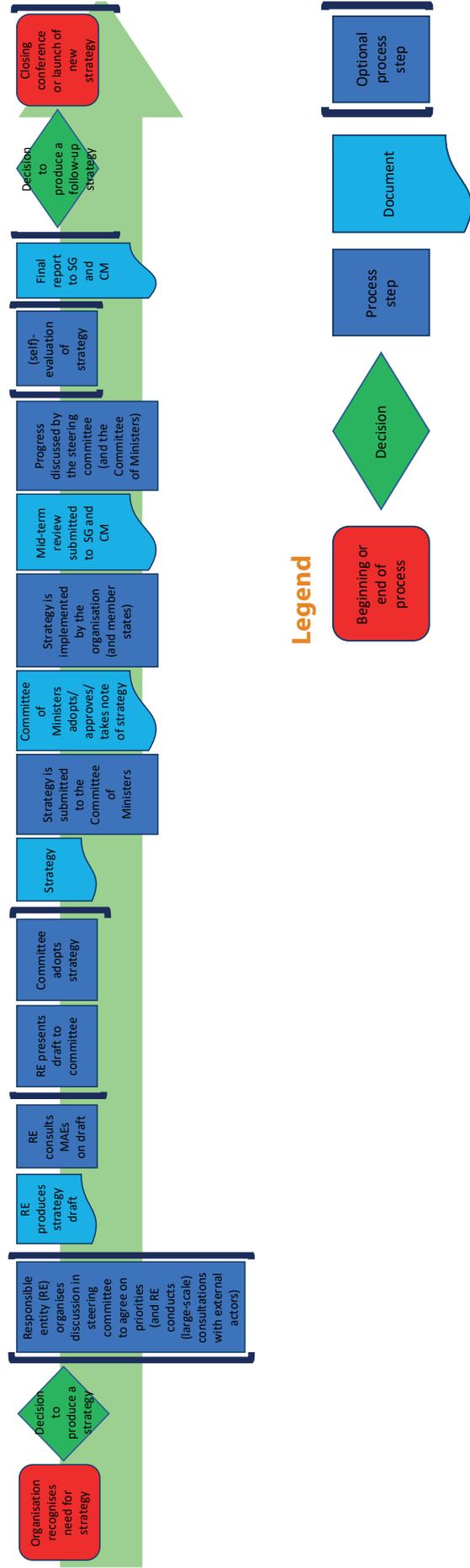
1. Scope of the evaluation. It was difficult to establish what documents to include in the evaluation, that is, what documents could be defined as “strategic” for the purpose of this exercise. During the inception stage, the evaluation team therefore asked key stakeholders what documents they considered as providing strategic guidance. Some stakeholders did not respond, while others were unsure what documents should be referred to as strategic documents, for example, whether to include operational strategies or other documents giving strategic direction but which were not necessarily conceived as a strategy. As a result, many documents were included in the list which do not actually seem to be strategies. This was adjusted during the expert review, where an expert categorised the documents based on their features and stated purpose. Some documents were thus excluded from the quality assessment, so that the results were based only on those documents which fulfil the minimum requirements for a strategy.
2. Availability of data. It was difficult to obtain access to some of the data for various reasons, such as the lack of recorded processes, turnover of key staff, or a lack of institutional memory concerning older strategic initiatives. The evaluation team mitigated this by focusing on newer strategic documents, as these are assumed to integrate the lessons learnt in previous exercises (for example, in the case of country actions plans). In addition, the evaluation team used different data collection methods and sources (desk research, surveys, interviews) to collect the necessary data.
3. Reliability of data. The *The number of responses* for various strategic documents in the survey varied in size, ranging from one or two responses per strategy to as many as 15 responses. Furthermore, as the evaluation team was asking for perceptions, in some cases the variation between answers was quite significant. The evaluation team mitigated this limitation by treating the data mainly in an aggregated manner, that is, analysing the processes, quality and effects of strategies in general, as opposed to treating each strategy as an individual case. In addition, the evaluation team collected information on some of the strategic documents that was missing from the survey by means of interviews.
4. Positive response bias. The process of self-reporting by participants through interviews and surveys may have affected the validity of the findings. However, given the sample size, the evaluation team feels that this bias did not significantly skew the results. The evaluation team also triangulated the findings through a mix of methods and diverse sources of information thus reducing the likelihood of bias affecting the results.

Appendix 10. Preparation process for strategies and action plans

Preparation of a country action plan



Preparation of a thematic strategy/action plan



Appendix 11. Examples of strategic documents showing corresponding intergovernmental structures and rapporteur groups (non-exhaustive list)

Strategic document	Intergovernmental structure	Rapporteur group
Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021		GR-DEM
Action Plan for Georgia 2020-2023		GR-DEM
Action Plan – The fight against violent extremism and radicalisation leading to terrorism (2015)	CDCT	GR-J
Action Plan on Protecting Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe (2017-2019)	CAHENF	GR-SOC
Action Plan on Combating Transnational Organised Crime (2016-2020)	CDPC	GR-J
Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2021		GR-DEM
Centre of Expertise Strategic Plan (2017-2022)	CDDG	GR-DEM
Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2018-2022)	CDCT	GR-J
Council of Europe Disability Strategy 2017-2023	CAHDPH (suspended)	GR-SOC
Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023	GEC	GR-H
Neighbourhood Partnership with Tunisia 2018-2021		GR-EXT
Council of Europe Programme and Budget 2018-2019		GR-PBA
Thematic Action Plan on the Inclusion of Roma and Travellers (2016-2019)	CAHROM	GR-SOC
Strategic Recommendations of the 3rd European Congress on Global Education (2015)		GR-C
Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021)	CAHENF	GR-SOC
Strategy for Innovation and Good Governance at Local Level (2008)	CDDG	GR-DEM
Council of Europe Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality (2015)	CDCJ	GR-J
The future of the Council of Europe youth policy: AGENDA 2020	CCJ	GR-C
Internet Governance – Council of Europe Strategy 2016-2019	CDMSI	GR-H
The Action Plan of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe 2018-2021		GR-DEM
EDQM Mid-term Strategic Plan		GR-SOC
State of democracy, human rights and the rule of law – Reports by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe 2014-2018		CM
Action Plan on Building Inclusive Societies (2016-2019)	Governmental Committee of the European Social Charter and the European Code of Social Security	GR-SOC
Roma Youth Action Plan 2016-2020	CAHROM	GR-SOC
New Strategy and Council Europe Action Plan for Social Cohesion (2010)	PECS	GR-SOC
Council of Europe Disability Action Plan (2006-2015)	CAHDPH (suspended)	GR-SOC

Appendix 12. Documents of comparator organisations and additional strategic documents reviewed

No.	Title, date, comparator entity
1	Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2015-2019 [April 2015] – EU
2	Annual Action Programme in favour of Palestine for 2018 [November 2018] – EU
3	Annual Action Programme 2014 in favour of the Republic of Armenia [October 2014] – EU
4	Cross-border Cooperation Action Programme Albania-Kosovo ⁵⁰ 2018-2020 [December 2018] – EU
5	EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy [June 2012] – EU
6	Indicative Strategy Paper for Albania 2014-2020 [August 2018] – EU
7	Strategic Plan 2016-2020 – DG DEVCO [May 2016] – EU
8	Strategic Plan 2016-2020 – DG NEAR [April 2016] – EU
9	Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality [December 2004] – OSCE
10	Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti within the OSCE Area [December 2003] – OSCE
11	Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings [July 2003] – OSCE
12	National Strategy for Improving Roma Living Conditions [September 2003] – OSCE
13	Digital Strategy – Future Forward [2019] – UNDP
14	Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2021 [2018] – UNDP
15	National Action Plan for Human Rights in Lebanon 2014-2019 [2013] – UNDP
16	National Action Plan on Persons with Disabilities 2016-2020 (Albania) [June 2016] – UNDP
17	Nepal Country Programme 2018-2022 [September 2017] – UNDP
18	UNDP Strategy on Civil Society and Civil Engagement [October 2012] – UNDP
19	UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021 [September 2017] – UNDP
20	UNDP Template for Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) [2010] – UNDP
21	United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Nepal 2018-2022 [2017] – United Nations Country Team
22	37 C/4 – Medium Term Strategy 2014-2021 [2014] – UNESCO
23	37 C/5 – Approved Programme and Budget 2014-2017 [2013] – UNESCO
24	Consultation of Member States and Associate Members ... on the preparation of the Draft Programme and Budget for 2018-2021 (39 C/5) [2016] – UNESCO
25	Operational Strategy on Youth 2014-2021 [2014] – UNESCO
26	Priority Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP II) 2014-2021 [2014] – UNESCO
27	Results-Based Programming, Budgeting, Management, Monitoring and Reporting (RBM) approach as applied at UNESCO – Guiding Principles [2019] – UNESCO (NB: guidelines; not a strategy/action plan)
28	Strategy on Human Rights [2006] – UNESCO
29	United Nations Human Rights Management Plan 2018-2021 [2018] – OHCHR
30	Swiss Cooperation Strategy Serbia 2018-2021 – SDC/SECO ⁵¹

50. This designation is without prejudice on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

51. Included in the sample at the suggestion of an expert interviewed for the assignment.

Appendix 13. Proposed strategy and action plan templates

PART ONE. STRATEGY

1. Introduction. The Council of Europe and <sector/thematic area>

<Text>.

1.1 Council of Europe strategic orientation

<Text>.

1.2 Strategic context

1.2.1 The need for the strategy

<Text>

1.2.2 Council of Europe legal instruments

<Text>.

1.2.3 Linkage to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

<Text>.

2. Goals and strategic objectives

2.1 Strategic objective 1: <Item>

<Text>.

2.2 Strategic objective 2: <Item>

<Text>.

3. Institutional setting and working methods

3.1 Strategy design

<Text>.

3.2 Institutional setting

<Text>.

3.3 Working methods

<Text>.

3.4 Partnerships

<Text>.

3.5 Communication and visibility

<Text>.

4. Monitoring and evaluation

4.1 Logical framework planning matrix

<Text>. [Logframe in Appendix 3].

4.2 M&E arrangements

<Steering Committee, progress reports, monitoring arrangements (internal), evaluation (internal or external)>.

5. Resources

5.1 Budget

<Text>.

5.2 Other resources

<Text>.

Appendix 1. Risk management

This section should detail the underlying assumptions and risks pertaining to the strategy or action plan.

Each of the risks should be accompanied by mitigating measures to be taken should the risk materialise.

The risk listed should be real risks subject to mitigation by strategy or action plan stakeholders, especially the lead stakeholders.⁵²

Appendix 2. Theory of change

Insert a schematic presentation of the theory of change pertaining to the strategy.

The theory of change is a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context.⁵³ The theory of change should summarise the way in which the resources (materials, staff time) and the outputs produced are used to achieve the desired strategic outcomes, as well as the purpose (specific objectives) and the overall goal of the strategy.

The logical framework planning matrix (logframe, next annex) should reflect the theory of change. Since logframes are often detailed for the sake of comprehensiveness, the theory of change should present the logic of the strategy in the form of a diagram accessible to a varied audience.

The following diagram is an example, but the literature provides many examples of similar diagrams.

Appendix 3. Logical framework planning matrix

Intervention logic	Description	Key performance indicators (KPI)				Sources of verification	Assumption/risks
		Definition	Baseline [figure, if available]	Milestones [figures, if available]	Target(s) [figure(s), if available]		
Overall goal							
Purpose (specific objectives)			Year:	<Year> <Year>	<Year>		
Outcomes (expected results)							

Outputs	Activities	Means (staff, materials, etc.)	Budget

Note 1. It is recommended to complete the upper part of the logframe for strategies and add the part dealing with outputs, activities, means and budget for action plan(s) added to or following the related strategy.

Note 2. Indicators (KPI) need to be “SMART”, i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound. This means that the definition of the indicators needs to include references to the current situation (baseline) and yearly milestones for achievement of the strategy, as well as a final target. The baseline, milestones and target should be quantified. Where quantification is not possible or necessary, the qualitative indicators should be framed such that the baseline situation, milestones and final target are clear and assessable, for those charged with progress reporting, monitoring and evaluation.

52. An oft-quoted assumption or risk is (the lack of) political will on the part of a government or other stakeholders. Listing that risk would be appropriate for a private sector entity faced with the negative consequence of the risk materialising, but not for a public entity, for which adoption of the strategy should imply the political will to implement.

53. From: www.theoryofchange.org.

PART TWO. ACTION PLAN

1. Context

1.1 <Country> <Sector> <Thematic> Background

<Text>.

1.2 Council of Europe strategy

1.2.1 Applicable Council of Europe <strategy or strategies>

<Summary>

<Strategic objectives, as per the strategy or strategies>

1.2.2 Stakeholder mapping

<Text>.

1.2.3 Priority areas for support

<Text> <Note: Reflecting relevant SG priorities>

1.2.4 Complementarity and other donors

<Text>

1.2.5 Risk & Assumptions

Risk	Risk level (H/M/L)	Mitigating measures
Assumptions		

2. Description of the action

2.1 Outcome (expected result) 1:

<Introductory text>.

As per relevant strategy or strategies

The following outputs will be delivered to achieve this outcome: <Output 1 (Section 3.1), Output n (Section 3.n), etc.>

2.2 Outcome (expected result) 2:

<Introductory text>.

As per relevant strategy or strategies

The following outputs will be delivered to achieve this outcome: <Output n (Section 3.n), Output 2 (Section 3.n), etc.>

3. Outputs and activities

3.1 Output <Summary title>

<Full description of outputs>.

The following activities will be implemented to deliver this output.

<Description of activities>

3.2 Output <Summary title>

<Full description of outputs>.

The following activities will be implemented to deliver this output.

<Description of activities>.

3.3 Output <Summary title>

<Full description of outputs>.

The following activities will be implemented to deliver this output.

<Description of activities>.

3.4 Communication and visibility

<Text>. [Note: If applicable, list any specific communication and visibility requirements to be observed by contractors and/or cooperation partners].

4. Implementation modalities

4.1 Logical framework planning matrix

The intervention logic of the action is set out in the <logframe in Appendix 1>. [Note: insert the logframe in Appendix 1].

4.2 Financing

The action is financed under <insert relevant budget document>.

4.3 Implementation period

The action will be implemented in the period <start date> - <end date>. [Note: If applicable, make a clear a distinction between, on the one hand, the technical implementation period and, on the other hand, the financial implementation period (including the time needed for financial closure and audit).

4.4 Contracting

The action will be implemented through a(n) <agreement> <contract> <memorandum of understanding>. [Note: in the case of an agreement or contract, specify the type of agreement (for instance a grant agreement) or contract.

In the case of a contract, specify the awarding regime applying to the contract (for instance: direct award, negotiated award, restricted tender, open tender, etc.).

4.5 M&E arrangements

<Steering committee, progress reports, monitoring arrangements (internal), evaluation (internal or external)>.

5. Resources

5.1 Budget

<Text>. <Budget table in Appendix 2>.

5.2 Other resources

<Text>. <Note: this section if applicable, for instance in case of specific human resources requirements.>

Appendix 1. Logical framework planning matrix

Intervention logic	Description	Key performance indicators (KPI)				Sources of verification	Assumption/risks
		Definition	Baseline [figure, if available]	Milestones [figures, if available]	Target(s) [figure(s), if available]		
Overall goal							
Purpose (specific objectives)			Year:	<Year> <Year>	<Year>		
Outcomes (expected results)							

Outputs	Activities	Means (staff, materials, etc.)	Budget

Note 1. The upper part of the logframe for strategies should come from the strategy underpinning the action plan; the lower part – dealing with outputs, activities, means and budget of action plan(s) – should be added during the preparation of the action plan. In case the action plan – which may be prepared later than the strategy – aims for different outcomes than set out in the strategy, the text of the action plan should: (i) clearly state that the action plan outcomes are different; and (ii) explain why that is the case.

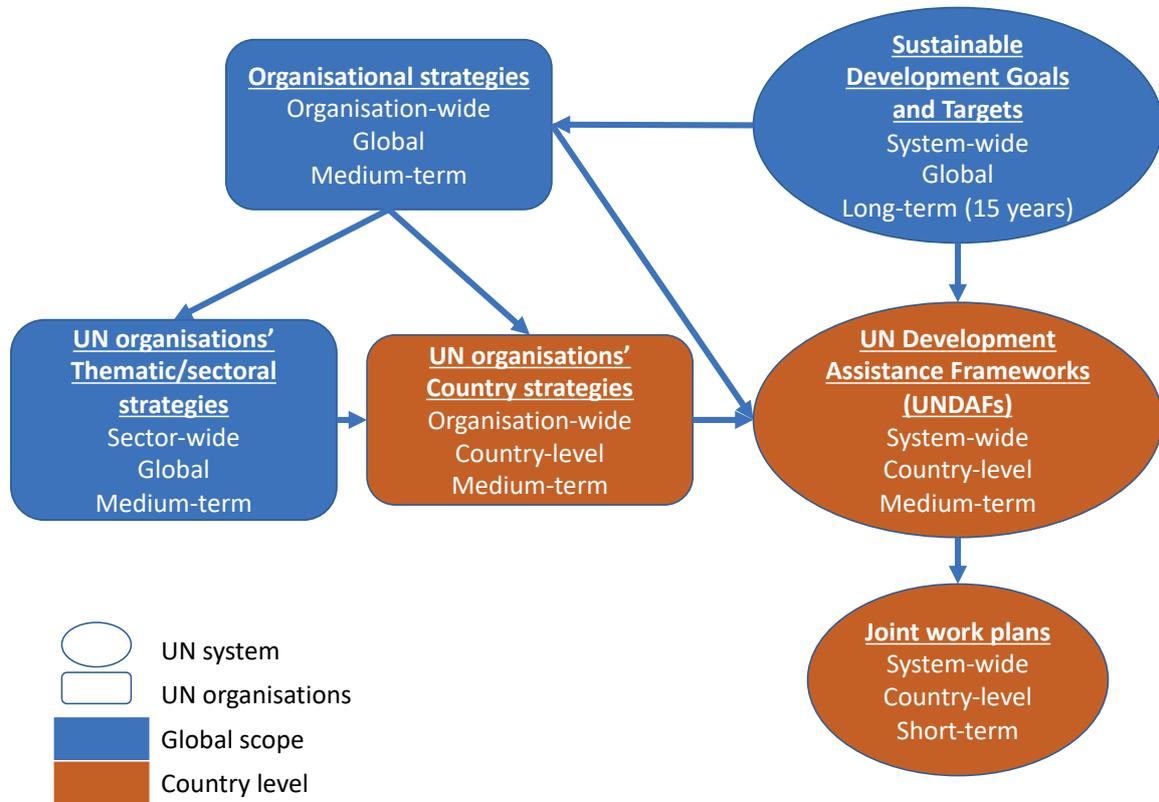
Note 2. The overall goal and purpose should be the same as those set out in the related strategy. If these should no longer apply, it would be necessary to draw up another strategy.

Note 3. Indicators (KPI) need to be “SMART”, i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound. This means that the definition of the indicators needs to include references to the current situation (baseline), yearly milestones for achievement of the strategy, as well as a final target. The baseline, milestones and target should be quantified. Where quantification is not possible or necessary, the qualitative indicators should be framed such that the baseline situation, milestones and final target are clear and assessable for those charged with progress reporting, monitoring and evaluation.

Appendix 2: Budget

<Insert budget table>

Appendix 14. Hierarchy of strategic documents in the UN system⁵⁴



54. The figure shown is based on research performed by the evaluation team and has not been confirmed with the staff of the UN. Furthermore, it is possible and likely that not all organisations within the UN system follow the same processes.

Strategic management is one of the most important performance areas of an organisation. This is the first time that an evaluation of the overall process of strategy making within the Council of Europe has been undertaken. This evaluation assesses the processes of preparation and formulation of, and reporting on, the Organisation's strategies, including the factors that influence how they contribute to enhanced organisational performance.

www.coe.int

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.