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Final Evaluation of the European Union/Council of Europe Partnership for Good Governance Programme Phase II (PGG II)

Final Report

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full term
ACA	Anti-corruption Agency (Georgia)
AML/CFT	Anti-Money Laundering/ Countering the Financing of Terrorism
APA	Annual Plan of Action
BO	Beneficial ownership
CEPEJ	European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice
CM	Committee of Ministers
CoC	Code of Conduct
CSB	Civil Service Bureau (Georgia)
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DG I	Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law – Council of Europe
DG II	Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity
DG NEAR	Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations - European Union
DPC	Directorate of Programme Co-ordination (former Office of the Directorate General of Programmes – ODGP)
EaP	Eastern Partnership
EC	European Commission
EC	Council on Preventing and Eliminating Discrimination and Ensuring Equality (Equality Council, Republic of Moldova)
ECRI	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance – Council of Europe
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
ECHR	European Convention of Human Rights
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
FIU	Financial Intelligence Unit
FMS	Financial Monitoring Service
GRECO	Group of States Against Corruption
GPO	General Prosecutors’ Office
HELP	Human rights Education for Legal Professionals
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
Istanbul Convention	Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Persons
LSC	Local Steering Committee
LTC	Lawyers Training Centre (Republic of Moldova)
MONEYVAL	Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism
MLA	Mutual Legal Assistance

Abbreviation	Full term
ML/TF	Money laundering and terrorism financing
MP	Member of Parliament
NCBC	Non-Conviction-Based Confiscation
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NIJ	National Institute of Justice (Republic of Moldova)
NHRI	National Human Rights Institution
NRA	National Risk Assessment
NSJ	National School of Judges
DPC	Directorate of Programme Co-ordination
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PACE	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
PGG	European Union/Council of Europe Partnership for Good Governance in the Eastern Partnership countries
PMM	Project Management Methodology
QRM	Quick Response Mechanism
RBA	Risk-based approach
ROM Report	Results Oriented Monitoring Report
SARAS	Service for Accounting, Reporting and Auditing Supervision (Georgia)
SC	Steering Committee
SSSG	State Security Service of Georgia
UN SDG	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
VAW	Violence against women
Venice Commission	European Commission for Democracy through Law – Council of Europe
Warsaw Convention	Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds of Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism

Executive Summary

Phase II of the European Union/ Council of Europe Partnership for Good Governance (PGG II) was a joint programme implemented in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries in 2019-2022. PGG II was designed to deliver technical support to national authorities and project beneficiaries in the areas of judicial reform and economic crime. It provided support to national authorities and institutions in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The cooperation with Belarus was put on hold in 2020 and suspended after the Russian invasion of Ukraine¹.

This evaluation concluded that the PGG II was highly relevant to the evolving needs of the EaP countries and addressed important areas of reform in line with the EU and CoE priorities for the region. Moreover, PGG II projects managed to adapt to the evolving political context in the region, thereby remaining relevant to national needs. In the broader political context, the PGG will continue to be an important programme promoting the rule of law, democracy and human rights in the region.

The PGG II Programme's unique format, together with the expertise of the Council of Europe and EU financial support combined to be an effective programme promoting a closer alignment with European standards. Overall, and despite various challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the war following the Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the PGG II has largely achieved its expected outcomes in its core thematic areas. This was achieved to a large extent thanks to its design, the dialogue-based approach to implementation and the co-ownership between the CoE project teams and project beneficiaries. Some early signs of change in the EaP countries' institutional and legislative framework suggest that the PGG II is on track to achieving its intended impacts.

The Council of Europe's expertise and knowledge of both standards and effective measures to promote reforms, as well as its links with the CoE monitoring bodies gave the PGG II a unique added value. The project activities were complemented by the ad hoc legal advice provided through the Quick Response Mechanism, contributing to useful updates to the legal frameworks in the EaP countries.

The evaluation put forward the following recommendations:

Main Recommendations from the Evaluation of PGG II

- **Recommendation 1 (High priority):** the Council of Europe and the European Union should continue their support for the countries covered by the PGG Programme.
- **Recommendation 2 (High priority):** there is room to further strengthen the CoE gender mainstreaming approach and the cross-cutting dimensions of the PGG Programme.
- **Recommendation 3 (Medium priority):** civil society organisations should be included to a greater extent in PGG project implementation both as promoters of change and in their capacity as 'watchdogs' of the reform process.
- **Recommendation 4 (Medium priority):** the results-oriented approach to reporting outcomes across projects and at programme level should continue to be strengthened.

¹ Following the presidential elections in Belarus in August 2020 and in line with the European Council decision of 12 October 2020, the PGG activities with Belarus were put on hold. In light of Belarus' involvement in the Russian military aggression against Ukraine and in line with the European Union Conclusions of 24 February 2022 and the Committee of the Council of Europe's decision of 17 March 2022, it was decided to suspend all technical co-operation with Belarusian authorities.

- **Recommendation 5 (Medium priority):** A detailed risk assessment should be conducted for projects at the start of PGG III to help anticipate challenges. Council of Europe field offices should have the means to react flexibly and quickly to changing circumstances in the field.
- **Recommendation 6 (Low priority):** Greater engagement with Council of Europe bodies through the QRM should be encouraged in the PGG beneficiary countries.

1 Introduction

This document contains the final report for the assignment ‘Final Evaluation of the European Union/Council of Europe Partnership for Good Governance Programme Phase II (PGG II)’. The study was commissioned by the Council of Europe and carried out in the second half of 2022 by the Centre for Strategy & Evaluation Services (CSES).

1.1 Resume - Purpose and scope of the assignment

The objectives of this assignment were to: provide an independent assessment of the performance of the Partnership for Good Governance – Phase II (PGG II) and the outcomes that have been achieved; and to inform recommendations for the follow up of the PGG II programme.

In terms of scope, the evaluation covers the PGG II 2019-2022 as a whole, which includes the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine (Belarus was originally also a beneficiary but co-operation with Belarus was suspended in 2020²). At the outset of this assignment it was decided to use a sample approach with a selection of projects for in-depth evaluation in Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova and two regional projects covering all the Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries. The PGG projects in Armenia were assessed in the framework of a recent country action plan evaluation and therefore not evaluated again. The situation in Ukraine meant it was not feasible to carry out data collection there.

1.2 Methodological approach

In line with the Council of Europe’s terms of reference, the evaluation investigated issues under the headings of relevance, effectiveness and added value:

- **Relevance** – to what extent are the PGG II projects implemented suited to the priorities of the Council of Europe, beneficiary countries and the needs of the target groups?
- **Effectiveness** – to what extent did the Programme achieve its objectives? What factors contributed (or hindered) the achievements of the objectives?
- **Added value** – to what extent have specificities of the Council of Europe (its specific approach, composition and working methods) made a significant contribution to the PGG II Programme outcomes and projects implementation?

The evaluation framework comprised an intervention logic outlining the expected effects that the PGG II aimed to achieve (Appendix A) and an evaluation matrix (Appendix B). The latter lists the key evaluation questions relating to relevance, effectiveness and added value, and the selected Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and data sources. Effectiveness has been assessed in line with the progress levels used by the Council of Europe to assess country Action Plans (see Section 3.2).

The methodology is consistent with the Council of Europe Evaluation Policy and the Evaluation Guidelines, as well as other relevant Council of Europe instruments such as the Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 and in particular with the Council of Europe’s strategic objective to achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures. The key questions were analysed integrating a gender and intersectional perspective.

² Following the presidential elections in Belarus in August 2020 and in line with the European Council decision of 12 October 2020, the PGG activities with Belarus were put on hold. In light of Belarus’ involvement in the Russian military aggression against Ukraine and in line with the European Union Conclusions of 24 February 2022 and the Committee of the Council of Europe’s decision of 17 March 2022, it was decided to suspend all technical co-operation with Belarusian authorities.

The sample of projects evaluated for this study is outlined below. Although the research involved a sample of projects and countries, the evaluation assessed the PGG II programme as a whole (the PGG II includes 12 country-specific projects and four regional projects).

Table 1.1: Sample of projects

No	Project name	Theme	Dimension	Geography
1	Strengthening anti-money laundering and asset recovery	Fight against corruption, anti-money laundering and asset recovery	Country	Azerbaijan
2	Strengthening the efficiency and quality of the judicial system	Judicial reform	Country	Azerbaijan
3	Enhancing the systems of prevention and combatting corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing	Fight against corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing	Country	Georgia
4	Strengthening the capacities of the justice sector actors to deliver justice in line with European standards, in particular to fight discrimination	Judicial reform	Country	Republic of Moldova
5	Strengthening measures to prevent and combat economic crime	Fight against corruption, ML/ TF	Regional	EaP countries
6	Women's Access to Justice: delivering on the Istanbul Convention and other European gender equality standards	Judicial reform, Gender equality	Regional	EaP countries

A mixed-methods approach was applied to the evaluation that included: a documentation review, an online survey of beneficiaries (a total of 73 responses were received from 210 target beneficiary organisations across all EaP countries³, i.e. a 35% response rate): 43 interviews with different stakeholder groups (see Table 1.2), and three field trips to the countries in the sample (Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova). A further 20 interviews took place in person in Strasbourg with Council of Europe staff and remotely with the European Commission (DG NEAR). Additional interviews took place with the evaluators of the Armenia Action Plan and with the Council of Europe project officer focusing on strengthening the results-based approach across EaP countries⁴, as well as with some additional project beneficiaries.

Table 1.2: Overview of interview programme

Key stakeholder groups	Target interviews	Target	Completed
(1) Council of Europe HQ staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DPC: 2 DGs project teams: 5 Venice Commission: 1 	8	20
(2) Council of Europe field staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CoE Office staff: 3 1 project officer per project: 6 	9	11
(3) European Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DG NEAR: 1 EU Delegations: 3 	4	4
(4) Project beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Country projects (x4): 8-10 Regional projects (x2): 5-7 	~35	32

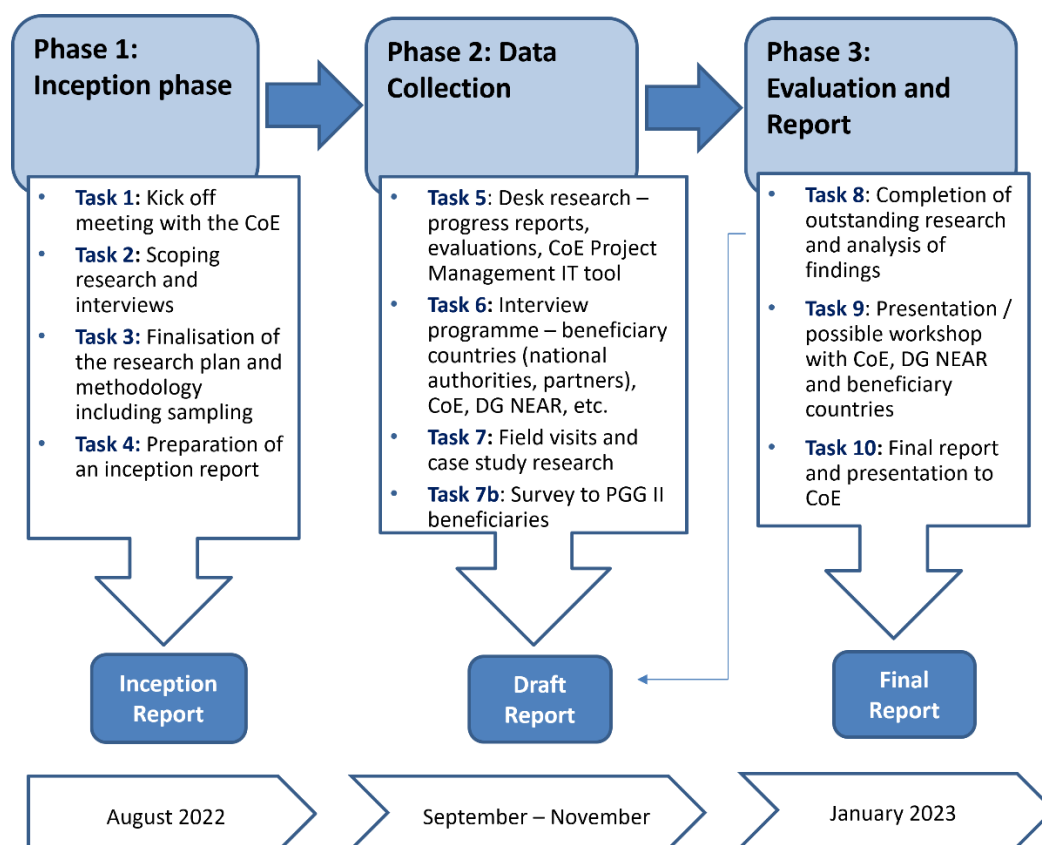
³ The survey was shared with the key project beneficiaries as identified by the Council of Europe field offices: Azerbaijan – 26 target respondents, Armenia – 52, Georgia – 53, Republic of Moldova – 39, Ukraine – 40.

⁴ The Project Officer in Tbilisi is not paid from the PGG budget.

Key stakeholder groups	Target interviews	Target	Completed
(5) Other		0	2
Total		~50	69

The assignment was carried out in three phases, summarised below:

Figure 1.1: Overview of Evaluation Plan



1.3 Limitations encountered and mitigation measures

A number of limitations have to some extent influenced the evaluation.

On the one hand, the short timeline available for the data collection and analysis (three months from September to the end of November 2022) meant that there was limited time to carry out the data collection. In addition, the field trips took place in parallel in the same week of October 2022 to fit into the tight timescales. The evaluation team did, however, carry out some additional follow-up interviews with PGG II beneficiaries as it was not possible to meet with some of the key organisations during the relatively short field trips.

Secondly, the sample approach meant that the evaluation paid more attention to some projects and countries than others, posing a challenge to draw conclusions applicable to the broader PGG II Programme. The risk of selection bias was reduced by the online survey covering all project beneficiaries and countries. The survey questionnaire was translated into local language to increase participation.

1.4 Structure of the final report

This report is structured as follows:

- **Section 2: Background to the PGG II** – overview of the key features of the PGG II Programme.
- **Section 3: Key evaluation findings** – an assessment of how PGG II performed in relation to the three key evaluation issues.
- **Section 4: Conclusions and recommendations** – the conclusions and resulting recommendations of the evaluation of PGG II.

The appendices to the report include the PGG II intervention logic, the evaluation matrix, the research tools (interview checklist and survey questionnaire), the programmes for the three field trips, the overview of outcomes by sample project as well as an overview of the Quick Response Mechanism (QRM) requests. The appendices also contain the six case studies and the references.

2 Background to the PGG II Programme

In this section we summarise our understanding of the background to the PGG II programme including the context, main projects and the PGG II budget, and programme management.

2.1 Background - The PGG II Programme

The Council of Europe (CoE) has a key role in promoting the rule of law, enhancing the respect of human rights and promoting democratic governance across its 46 member states and more widely. It works closely with the European Union (EU) in doing this, as the key principles at the core of its mission are fundamental priorities for the Eastern Partnership countries. To this end, the EU and the Council of Europe agreed to coordinate and mobilise their capacities and resources in the EaP and enlargement regions through joint programmes.

The EaP is a joint initiative involving the EU, its Member States and six Eastern European Partner countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. Launched in 2009, the EaP is a partnership based on common values and rules, mutual interests and commitments, as well as shared ownership and responsibilities. It aims to strengthen and deepen the political and economic relationships between the EU and the partner countries, as well as supports sustainable reform processes in countries of the EaP. Key objectives include: increasing trade, growth and jobs; investing in connectivity; strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law; supporting the green and digital transitions; and promoting fair, gender-equal and inclusive societies.⁵

This is the context in which the PGG was developed as an instrument to support the EaP countries in their reform processes and key areas including justice reform, fight against corruption, combating discrimination and violence against women and domestic violence, through provision of Council of Europe expertise, peer-to-peer advice and the sharing of best practices among participating countries. The PGG also serves as a framework for the implementation of multilateral activities (e.g. capacity-building, training). The technical support provided through the PGG for the implementation of recommendations by the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL) and other CoE bodies such as European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) constitutes one of the three elements of the Council of Europe strategic triangle, consisting of the setting of legally binding European standards, their monitoring by independent mechanisms and the technical co-operation to support their implementation.

The PGG Phase II followed on from the first phase (2015-2018) and recommendations emanating from the Council of Europe's monitoring and the opinions of advisory bodies. In addition, actions were prioritised according to the EaP countries' needs as identified by the Council of Europe and the EU and the objectives of the EU 2020 Deliverables for the EaP countries. This included two PGG II thematic areas: reform of the judiciary and fight against corruption and money laundering as well as two cross-cutting topics: combating discrimination and violence against women. The gender approach is mainstreamed across PGG projects, with the expert input of a gender advisor from the Council of Europe. It is supported by a budget of EUR 17.5 million of which 80% comes from the EU and 20% from the Council of Europe.

⁵ See https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/eap-beyond-2020_en

The PGG II Programme provides support for the beneficiary countries through a combination of technical assistance projects and legal and other expert advice linked to priority reforms. This is done through the PGG Quick Response Mechanism (QRM) which allows to provide ad-hoc legal opinions of the Venice Commission and other Council of Europe bodies to the beneficiary countries.

Below we summarise key features of the PGG II Programme:

Box 2.1: Key Features of PGG II Programme Beneficiary Countries

- PGG projects are currently being implemented in **Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine**. Cooperation with Belarus has been suspended.⁶
- The **Annual Plans of Action (APAs)** are the main tools to operationalise the PGG II. They provide an overview of the key areas of reform by country as identified by the Council of Europe and the EU and are designed to respond to the EU's 2020 Deliverables (namely, Deliverable 9 - Strengthen the rule of law and anti-corruption mechanisms, and Deliverable 10 - Support the implementation of key judicial reforms⁷, and Deliverable 2 - Increase gender equality and non-discrimination as transversal issues) while taking into account Council of Europe standards⁸. The priorities for each country are set out in the Council of Europe's Country Action Plans, the Council of Europe monitoring bodies and, if relevant, the respective EU Accession agreement.
- **Country specific projects** are designed and implemented with the support of national project partners to address key areas for reform. These are complemented by **PGG II regional projects**, which address common needs of the beneficiary countries.

2.2 Overview of PGG II projects

As mentioned before, PGG II covers two main thematic areas: reform of the judiciary and fight against corruption and money laundering, and two cross-cutting topics, namely combating discrimination and violence against women. To this end, PGG II supported a total of 12 country-specific projects and four regional projects which focus on one or more of these areas. Some projects have two separate components focusing on different aspects within the same area of reform (e.g. civil justice and criminal justice).

The timeline of most of the PGG II projects was extended twice - first to August 2022 and then to February 2023. These extensions were necessary because of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as due to the political situation in some EaP countries. The exception to this are the projects implemented in Belarus, for which the timeline has not been extended. The project in Ukraine was put on hold for some time because of the ongoing war.

The tables below present the policy area as covered by the individual projects.

⁶ At its 1429th meeting on 17 March 2022, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe reiterated the condemnation of the participation of Belarus in the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. It decided to suspend all technical co-operation with Belarus but to enhance relations with the Belarusian civil society and the opposition in exile, paying particular attention to Belarusian youth, independent media and human rights defenders. Similarly, the European Council stated in its Conclusions of 24 February 2022 that, as a result of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the involvement of Belarus, the EU would suspend planned and ongoing programmes and activities with the participation of Belarusian public authorities and state-owned enterprises.

⁷ European Union, '20 Deliverables for 2020: Bringing tangible results for citizens', Eastern Partnership, available on <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/44362/20-deliverables-for-2020.pdf>

⁸ European Union, 'Annex I – Description of the Action PGG II'

Table 2.1: PGG Phase II 2019-2022 Country-specific Projects

Project details		Thematic areas			
Country	Project title	Judicial reform (D10)	Fight against economic crime (D9)	Anti-Discrimination (D2)	Gender equality (D2)
Armenia	Strengthening institutional capacities to fight and prevent corruption		x		
	Implementation of judicial reforms	x			
Azerbaijan	Strengthening anti-money laundering and asset recovery		x		
	Strengthening the efficiency and quality of the judicial system	x			
	Raising awareness of the Istanbul Convention and other gender equality standards	x			x
Belarus ⁹	Countering money-laundering and terrorism financing		x		
	Implementation of judicial reforms	x			
Georgia	Enhancing the systems of prevention and combatting corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing		x		
	Implementation of judicial reforms	x			
Republic of Moldova	Support to further strengthening the efficiency and quality of the judicial system	x			
	Strengthening the capacities of the justice sector actors to deliver justice in line with European standards, in particular to fight discrimination	x		x	
Ukraine ¹⁰	Strengthening measures to counter money laundering and financing of terrorism		x		

Source: EU / CoE Partnership for Good Governance II 2019-2022 for Eastern Partnership countries Annual Plans of Action 2019 -2022 – revised for Addendum 4 (no-cost extension September 2022 – February 2023)

⁹ Considering the European Council Conclusions of February 2022 and the Decision of the Council of Europe Ministers’ Deputies of 17 March 2022, activities with the participation of Belarusian authorities are suspended. No new activities are planned to be organised with Belarus until February 2023.

¹⁰ The activities planned under the country specific project “Strengthening measures to counter money laundering and financing of terrorism in Ukraine” were put on hold as from the end of February 2022 following the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. Following ad hoc requests from the Ukrainian partners in this area, it was agreed with DG NEAR to resume co-operation as from end of June 2022, addressing emerging needs in a flexible manner, in consultation with the national partners and the European Union Delegation to Ukraine and with strict respect of the security requirements.

Table 2.2: PGG Phase II 2019-2022 Regional Projects

Project details		Thematic areas			
Project title	Main aim	Judicial reforms (D10)	Fight against economic crime (D9)	Anti-Discrimination	Gender equality
Strengthening measures to prevent and combat economic crime	Fight against economic crime		x		
Strengthening the profession of lawyer in line with European standards	Enhancing legal protection of citizens	x			
Women's Access to Justice: delivering on the Istanbul Convention and other European gender equality standards	Strengthening access to justice for women and women victims of violence	x		(x)	x
Strengthening the access to justice through non - judicial redress mechanisms for victims of discrimination, hate crime/speech	Improving the access to justice for victims of discrimination, hate crime and hate speech through non judiciary redress mechanisms	x		x	

Source: Results Factsheet, Partnership for Good Governance, regional projects, September 2020.

The projects are identified by the EU and the CoE in consultation with the Delegations of the European Union and the Council of Europe field offices in the various countries. In addition, these discussions were informed by stakeholder consultations and their views on the needs of the national authorities and the respective country priorities.

2.1 PGG II Programme Budget

The PGG II budget amounted € 17.5 million funded by the EU (80%) and the CoE (20%) for an initial period of 36 months (from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2021). The budget allocation was revised four times during the implementation of PGG II, the last two times (Addendum 3 and 4) linked to the no-cost extensions granted due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the political situation in some EaP countries. These amendments involved an internal reallocation of funds across projects and did not affect the overall budget.

The allocated budget for the PGG II Programme covered the costs relating to human resources (project management in the country field offices and programme management by the headquarters), travel, equipment and supplies for project beneficiaries and recipients (e.g. purchase of analytical software, purchase of a court hearings transcript system, an anti-corruption app for youth), local office expenses (e.g. office supplies, vehicle costs, office equipment) as well as other costs and services (e.g. publications, visibility actions) and other measures such as grants for peer-to-peer exchanges or for increasing awareness on discrimination and redress mechanisms.

The budget allocation by country and project is displayed in Table 2.3 below. By July 2022, actual expenditure accounted for in the Council of Europe's financial records for PGG II amounted €10,624,170, whereas actual expenditure and budget committed to activities not yet accounted for as expenditure in the Council of Europe's financial records were €11,581,141.¹¹ This meant that the PGG II Programme had just under €6 million funds for the remainder of the programme.

¹¹ Council of Europe financial records, revised consolidated budget as of 1 July 2022.

Table 2.3: Allocated budget for PGG II by country and project (in EUR)

Geographical Focus	Action code	Area	All Years Budget Initial	All Years Budget Addendum n°1	All Years Budget Addendum n°2	All Years Budget Addendum n°3	All Years Budget Addendum n°4	All Years Budget Notification SEP-22 Ukraine impact
Armenia	PGG 1	Rule of law and anti-corruption mechanisms (D9)	850,000	850,000	850,000	850,000	705,000	705,000
	PGG 2 - 3	Implementation of judicial reforms (D10)	1,420,000	1,420,000	1,780,000	1,790,000	1,933,000	1,933,000
Armenia Total			2,270,000	2,270,000	2,630,000	2,640,000	2,638,000	2,638,000
Azerbaijan	PGG 4	Rule of law and anti-corruption mechanisms (D9)	750,000	750,000	750,000	722,000	648,000	648,000
	PGG 5 - 22	Implementation of judicial reforms (D10)	915,000	832,600	1,332,600	1,414,600	1,605,000	1,605,000
Azerbaijan Total			1,665,000	1,582,600	2,082,600	2,136,600	2,253,000	2,253,000
Belarus	PGG 6	Rule of law and anti-corruption mechanisms (D9)	200,000	200,000	200,000	91,720	89,000	89,000
	PGG 7 - 8	Implementation of judicial reforms (D10)	670,000	670,000	740,000	427,250	428,200	428,200
Belarus Total			870,000	870,000	940,000	518,970	517,200	517,200
Georgia	PGG 9	Rule of law and anti-corruption mechanisms (D9)	500,000	500,000	500,000	556,000	619,000	619,000
	PGG 10 - 11	Implementation of judicial reforms (D10)	1,730,000	1,730,000	1,930,000	1,930,000	2,308,000	2,308,000
Georgia Total			2,230,000	2,230,000	2,430,000	2,486,000	2,927,000	2,927,000
Republic of Moldova	PGG 12 - 13	Implementation of judicial reforms (D10)	1,194,177	1,255,000	1,255,000	1,255,000	1,329,000	1,329,000
The Republic of Moldova Total			1,194,177	1,255,000	1,255,000	1,255,000	1,329,000	1,329,000
Ukraine	PGG 14	Rule of law and anti-corruption mechanisms (D9)	500,000	500,000	500,000	546,000	414,000	543,000
Ukraine Total			500,000	500,000	500,000	546,000	414,000	543,000
Eastern Partnership Region: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus,	PGG 15	Rule of law and anti-corruption mechanisms (D9)	800,000	800,000	800,000	814,000	760,000	631,000
	PGG 16 - 17 - 18	Implementation of judicial reforms - crosscutting	2,553,823	2,575,900	2,892,400	3,360,000	3,539,000	3,539,000

Geographical Focus	Action code	Area	All Years Budget Initial	All Years Budget Addendum n°1	All Years Budget Addendum n°2	All Years Budget Addendum n°3	All Years Budget Addendum n°4	All Years Budget Notification SEP-22 Ukraine impact
Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine	PGG 19	PGG II Co-ordination	2,478,000	2,477,500	2,477,500	2,569,000	2,539,000	2,539,000
	PGG 20	PGG II Reserve	2,000,000	2,000,000	553,500	329,430	0	0
	PGG 21	PGG II Quick Response Mechanism	939,000	939,000	939,000	845,000	583,800	583,800
Regional Total			8,770,823	8,792,400	7,662,400	7,917,430	7,421,800	7,292,800
TOTAL ELIGIBLE COSTS			17,500,000	17,500,000	17,500,000	17,500,000	17,500,000	17,500,000

Source: EU-CoE Partnership for Good Governance, Budget per country, September 2022

2.4 PGG II Programme Management

The PGG Programme was managed centrally by the PGG Coordination team of the Council of Europe headquarters (DPC) in Strasbourg and implemented through the field offices in the various countries. The country specific projects were managed by the project managers in Strasbourg and project officers in the CoE's offices in the different countries. Conversely, regional projects were managed from the headquarters with no project officers in the field, with the only exception of the regional project 'Strengthening the profession of lawyers'.. Steering Committee meetings took place between the CoE and the European Commission to coordinate and discuss progress on the PGG II Programme. For PGG II, a new governance structure bringing together the CoE, the European Commission, the EUDs and the beneficiaries in each EaP country was set up in the form of Local Steering Committees (LCS) to facilitate coordination on the ground between the three parties.

2.4.1 Reporting

Throughout the implementation of PGG II, increasing efforts were placed on the results-oriented monitoring of individual projects. This was done through the CoE's Project Management Methodology (PMM) and its IT tool, which encouraged teams to strengthen their results-based management approach to PGG project management. Regular reporting took place at various intervals (bi-monthly, six-month and annual reports) for individual country-specific and regional PGG projects, and they covered project implementation, problems encountered as well as risk management and mitigation policies.

In addition, a new staff member (Project Officer) was hired in the CoE's field office in Georgia to provide support with the results-based monitoring efforts across the EaP countries¹². Her role was introduced as a pilot to advise and train CoE project staff on data collection, result-based management and evidence-based reporting throughout all phases of the project lifecycle. This has, according to the interview feedback, increased awareness among staff on the importance of planning the monitoring strategy already at the project design phase, to prepare data collection tools and indicators, and to strengthen the focus on medium-term results beyond reporting on the more immediate project activities.

2.4.2 Visual identity and visibility

Communication and visibility of the PGG is managed jointly by the Council of Europe and the European Union. As reported in internal documents, shared communication efforts are considered important to raise the public's awareness of the PGG II and for keeping the stakeholders informed. Besides the PGG II website, social media communications (PGG Programme Facebook and Twitter accounts) as well as a regular newsletter are shared with the main beneficiaries. PGG communication material (media advisories, press releases, films, publications and similar) was co-ordinated centrally by the Council of Europe and disseminated across the CoE's offices in the beneficiary countries.

New PGG communication and visibility guidelines were introduced during the PGG II period, and the visual identity of the programme was reinforced. Communication material was to be submitted through the EUDIGITOOL for approval by the DG NEAR or the EUDs. To promote the actions and results of the PGG projects, communication products validated through the EUDIGITOOL could be extracted.¹³

Overall, during PGG II, as decided by the Steering Committee in 2019 and in line with the recommendations of the previous evaluation, great attention was given to communicating the results and benefits of the individual projects for citizens. For this purpose, several strategies were employed, for example sharing information on PGG II in an easy, understandable way, and sharing real life stories of citizens and explaining how efforts in the area of the PGG II had benefitted them directly.

¹² The Project Officer in Tbilisi is not paid from the PGG budget

¹³ The relevant websites are <https://euneighbourseast.eu> and the local websites, such as <https://eu4georgia.eu/>.

3 Key Evaluation Findings

This section presents the key evaluation findings for the PGG II assessment in relation to the criteria of relevance, effectiveness and added value.

3.1 Relevance

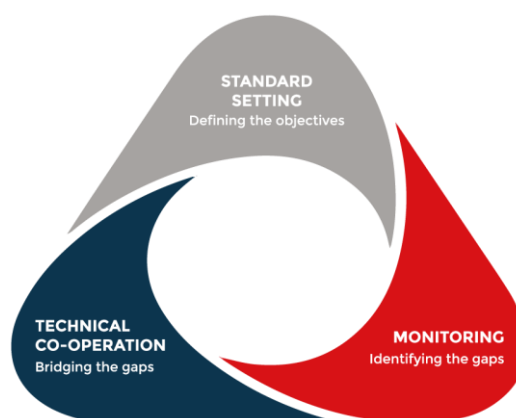
In this section we present an analysis of the relevance of the PGG II, understood as the extent to which the Programme was aligned with the priorities of the Organisation and the needs of the target groups.

3.1.1 To what extent is the PGG II in line with the priorities of the Council of Europe and of the European Union?

The PGG II addressed common priority areas for the Council of Europe and the EU and combined their experience and expertise to support democratic reforms in the beneficiary countries. The second phase of the programme built on the results from the first phase (2015-2018) and further strengthened the partnership based on the Statement of Intent (April 2014). As outlined in the statement, areas of common priority include “ensuring an efficient and independent judiciary” and “combating threats to the rule of law” as well as “promoting democratic governance” and more generally “protecting and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms”¹⁴, key lines of work of PGG II.

For the Council of Europe, the PGG II channelled its core areas of expertise and addressed priority areas for reform as identified by the monitoring bodies. The Programme drew on the expertise of the Council of Europe’s treaty-based and resolution-based control mechanisms and other CoE bodies, especially the Venice Commission, GRECO, MONEYVAL and the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ), to support the EaP countries in their reform process. By doing so, PGG II linked the technical support provided to the priority areas as identified by these bodies, with the Council of Europe strategic triangle of standard setting, monitoring and technical cooperation (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1: Council of Europe Strategic Triangle



Source: Council of Europe, Directorate of Programme Co-ordination¹⁵

This was the case for the four country specific projects covered by this evaluation’s fieldtrips, which addressed key areas of reform in the respective countries: in Georgia, reforms in the area of anti-corruption and money laundering addressed challenges identified by MONEYVAL (November 2020), and GRECO (April 2021) and are crucial among others to the country’s EU aspirations; in Azerbaijan,

¹⁴ Statement of intent for the cooperation between the Council of Europe and the European Commission, see [https://rm.coe.int/168066b99e#:~:text=The%20Council%20of%20Europe%20\(CoE,efficient%20way%2C%20and%20in%20accordance](https://rm.coe.int/168066b99e#:~:text=The%20Council%20of%20Europe%20(CoE,efficient%20way%2C%20and%20in%20accordance)

¹⁵ See <https://www.coe.int/en/web/programmes/cooperation-europe>

progress is needed in the areas of judicial reform and anti-corruption/anti-money laundering as expressed by the Council of Europe monitoring bodies (2014 MONEYVAL evaluation report, 2019 fourth evaluation round by GRECO, the Venice Commission, the Commissioner for Human Rights¹⁶). In the Republic of Moldova, the full implementation of non-discrimination guarantees is considered critical to the legal order (e.g. ECRI¹⁷, the Venice Commission, the Commissioner for Human Rights¹⁸).

The PGG formed part of the activities planned under the CoE Action Plan for each of the EaP countries, thereby complementing other areas of work in each country. In all EaP country Action Plans covering the period of PGG II (2019-2022) measures were included on ensuring justice and strengthening the quality and the independence of the judiciary, and countering threats to the rule of law such as through corruption, money laundering, and financing of terrorism. The sampled projects contributed to these two thematic areas.

For the European Commission, the PGG II provided support in three key areas of the 'EU 2020 Deliverables'. Adopted by the European Commission in June 2016, the 'EU 2020 Deliverables' highlighted 20 policy priorities for the EaP to deepen and strengthen relations between the EU and the EaP countries. As such, PGG II contributed to the EU goal of 'strengthening institutions and good governance' in line with three of the EU Deliverables: strengthening the rule of law and anti-corruption mechanisms, combating money laundering/terrorism financing (Deliverable 9), supporting the implementation of key judicial reforms (Deliverable 10) as well as the cross-cutting Deliverable 2 on increasing gender equality and non-discrimination.¹⁹

Other relevant policy priorities for the EU addressed by the PGG II included those in the European Neighbourhood Policy which focus on stabilisation of the region, and political, economic, and security related terms (all six EaP countries), EU Association Agreements (e.g. Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine), EU-Action Plan (Azerbaijan), EU Visa Liberalisation Action Plans (e.g. Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine) and the strategic document 'Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020', in which empowering women and girls is one of the four priorities of the EU external action (e.g. addressed by the PGG II in its cross-cutting theme, in the country specific project in Republic of Moldova and the regional project).

In addition, the PGG II supported progress on three of the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are priorities of both the European Union and the Council of Europe. The SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, in line with the cross-cutting thematic area of PGG II, whereas the SDG 10 aims to reduce inequality within and among countries. The SDG 16 aims to reduce inequality within and among countries and promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels, in line with the two core thematic areas of PGG II.

3.1.2 To what extent are the PGG II projects in line with the needs and priorities of the respective beneficiary countries?

Overall, the research findings indicate that the PGG II was in line with the needs and priorities of the beneficiary countries. This applies across all the countries and projects that have been covered by the research. There is broad consensus regarding the relevance of the PGG II Programme and of the individual projects to the needs of the respective countries, national authorities and other beneficiaries. All stakeholders interviewed highlighted the relevance of the projects to the reform process in the areas of judicial reform and economic crime in their countries and their alignment with the priorities as identified by the Council of Europe, the European Union and the national authorities

¹⁶ Country visit report by Dunja Mijatović. Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe (2019)

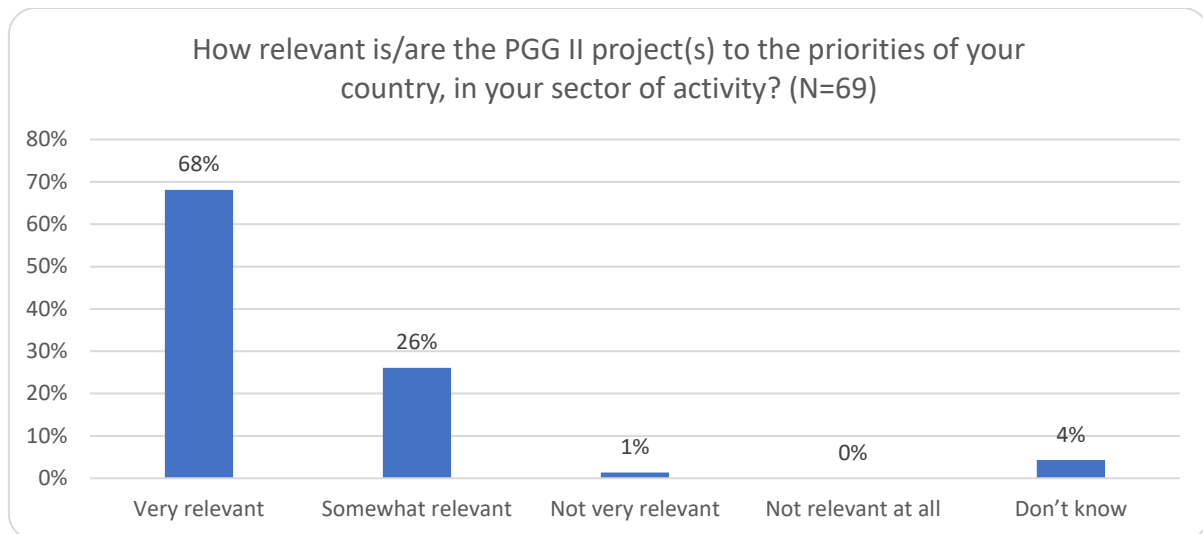
¹⁷ ECRI Report on Republic of Moldova (2021), (2018)

¹⁸ Country visit report by Dunja Mijatović. Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe (2020), Country visit report by Nils Muižnieks Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe (2013)

¹⁹ EC (2022). '20 Deliverables for 2020', See <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/eastern-partnership/20-deliverables-for-2020/#:~:text=They%20include%20cross%2Dcutting%20issues,investing%20in%20people%20and%20society.>

themselves. This view was shared by 94% of the survey respondents who considered the PGG II Programme and projects as ‘very relevant’ or ‘somewhat relevant’ (see Figure 3.2).

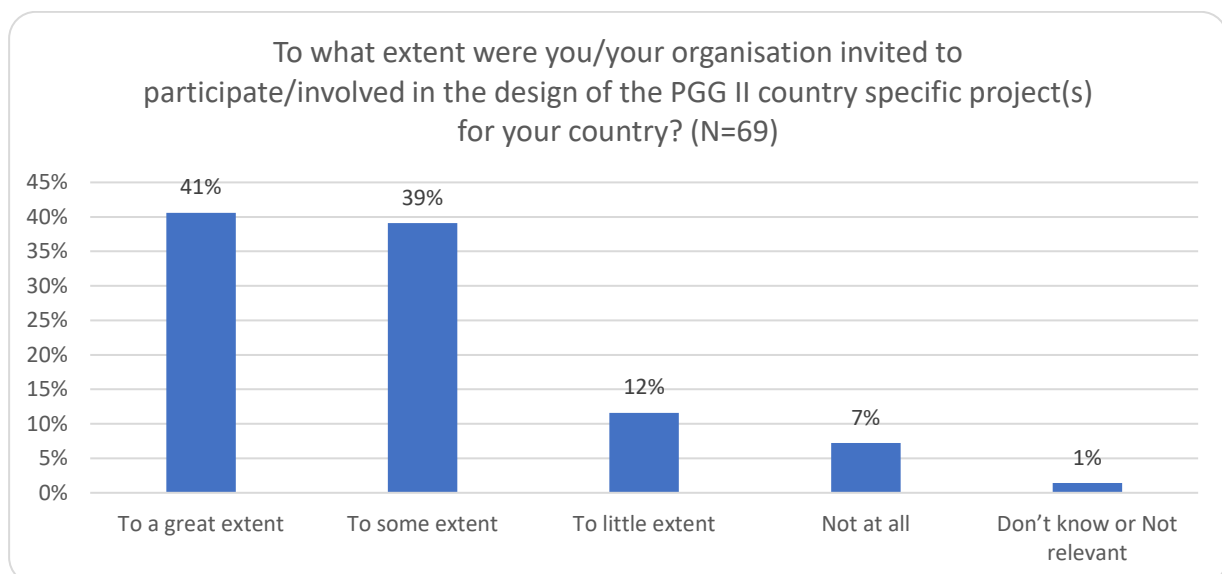
Figure 3.2: Relevance of the PGG II projects to country priorities



Source: CSES survey 2022

The PGG II projects were designed to promote specific policy, institutional and strategic priorities in the various countries. Those we interviewed appreciated the extensive consultations that were carried out with beneficiaries in the design of the PGG II and the opportunity to share their views on the priorities to be addressed in the second phase of PGG II (see Figure 3.2). In their view, the projects successfully promoted new and ongoing national priorities. For example, the country-specific project on anti-money laundering in Georgia was directly linked to the Government’s Strategy and Action Plan for Combating Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing, which aims to prioritise harmonisation with international standards and the implementation of compliance issues. In the Republic of Moldova, the PGG II sample project contributed to the implementation of the Moldovan National Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan by carrying out, among others, trainings of justice sector actors in relation to non-discrimination cases. In Azerbaijan, the project supporting judicial reforms is linked to the objectives to improve the quality and efficiency of justice set forth by the Presidential Decree on “Deepening of reforms in the judicial system” (3 April 2019).

Figure 3.3: Extent of consultation of stakeholders in the design of PGG II



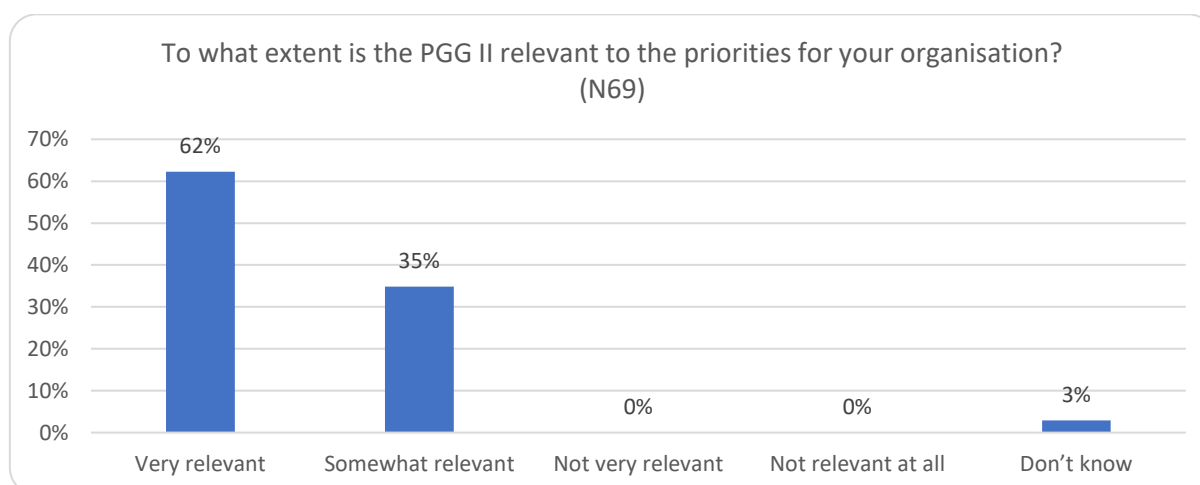
Source: CSES survey 2022

The close collaboration and trust that was developed between the Council of Europe field offices and the project beneficiaries meant that project workplans reflected the evolving needs and remained relevant in changing circumstances. Special attention was given to capacity building in newly-established institutions and newly-acquired competences by state authorities, as well as emerging priority areas. In Georgia, for example, the gambling sector was identified as posing a high money laundering and terrorist financing risk and prioritised for PGG II activities in 2019 and 2020 in consultation with the Financial Monitoring Service.

In addition, following the greater competence granted to the Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) in Georgia in regard to prevention of corruption, the PGG II organised a workshop on *"Prevention of Corruption in Public Sector"* (21-22 July 2020) in cooperation with the ACA to provide support in developing a good understanding of potential challenges linked to the new mandate and of international best practices. In Azerbaijan, the Financial Monitoring Service was restructured in May 2019 and PGG II supported its capacity to formulate effective, evidence-based anti-money laundering policies through a series of specialised training sessions in targeted areas, including open-source intelligence and strategic data analysis tools. In the same country, the new Anti-Corruption Training Centre of the General Prosecutor, established in June 2021, benefitted from the PGG II presentation of its handbooks on 'Anti-Corruption and Ethics in Public Service', developed under PGG I.

Those involved in the PGG II considered the projects to be relevant to the priorities of their own organisation, mainly national institutions (see Figure 3.4). Responses varied across countries, possibly linked to the type of authorities involved and the scope of each project. Relevance was ranked highest in Azerbaijan ('very relevant' - 100%) and Ukraine ('very relevant' - 100%), with the three other countries seeing a more even distribution of responses 'very relevant' and 'somewhat relevant'. A similar view was shared during the field trips, where project beneficiaries saw the projects and activities as relevant with the objectives of the institution they worked for.

Figure 3.4: Relevance of the PGG II to stakeholder organisation



Source: CSES survey 2022

3.1.3 To what extent were the recommendations of the Council of Europe monitoring and advisory bodies in respect of the EaP countries used in the design of the PGG Phase II with an aim to bring the national legislation and practice closer in line with the European standards?

The design and implementation of the PGG II reflected the recommendations of Council of Europe monitoring bodies in the beneficiary countries. The different types of activities were complementary in supporting the progress towards the alignment of the legal framework, the institutional framework and the practices across EaP countries with European and international standards.

In the economic crime sector, recommendations from MONEYVAL and GRECO were the cornerstone for the PGG II projects addressing anti-corruption and money laundering and terrorist financing. Key vulnerabilities were addressed as identified by Council of Europe bodies. For instance, the 2014

MONEYVAL evaluation considered the capacities of Azerbaijani authorities to combat money laundering and terrorist financing to be a key vulnerability for the country and questioned the effectiveness of many aspects of the AML/CFT regime of Azerbaijan, therefore recommending further training for Azerbaijani authorities on investigating such crimes and especially on financial investigations. In the case of Georgia, the fourth evaluation report by GRECO (2017) put forward recommendations related to improving the regulation, transparency and monitoring of systems of asset declaration, conflict of interest and integrity of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors, all areas addressed by PGG II. Interview feedback confirms that project beneficiaries perceived the PGG II projects as being very helpful in addressing the shortcomings highlighted in these evaluations and in thereby preparing for the next evaluation rounds.

In relation to the judicial reform, the CEPEJ Evaluation of judicial systems²⁰ helped identify areas for support in relation to the quality and effectiveness of the judicial system in Azerbaijan (2016) and the Republic of Moldova (2016). The use of CEPEJ indicators in an increasingly systematic way in these two countries allowed not only to get a better insight into the current judicial system but also helped monitor the progress towards European efficiency and quality standards.

In the field of non-discrimination, there was a clear link between the ECRI recommendations from 2018 and the areas of work of the project in the Republic of Moldova across a broad range of issues. This was the case in relation to capacity building efforts where ECRI recommended that “the training activities for law enforcement officials and the judiciary on hate crime, including hate speech, are scaled up” and, also in relation to legislative revisions, in line with ECRI’s recommendation that “the authorities amend the anti-discrimination legislation to remedy the gaps identified above in line with its General Policy Recommendation (GPR) No. 7”. Under PGG II, recommendations for improvement of the draft amendments to the non-discrimination legislation were provided.

By strengthening the institutional capacity of stakeholders with expert training sessions and exchanges of best practices across thematic areas, the PGG II projects contributed to enhancing the knowledge on European standards. Stakeholders emphasized the value of best practice examples implemented across Europe and the practical knowledge of European standards in specific national cases. For example, in Georgia the economic crime project exposed public officials to the best international anti-corruption practices, thereby helping them identify national shortfalls and ways to effectively address these in line with European practices. In Georgia, the PGG II also helped updating the Georgian AML/CFT legislation, among others in relation to the application of a Risk-Based Approach. In Azerbaijan, project trainings facilitated the interpretation of the Council of Europe (Warsaw) Convention for its integration into the national context in support of the investigation, prosecution and conviction of financial crimes. At the same time, expert advice in the form of legal input helped facilitate steps towards bringing the legislation closer to the European standards. This was the case in the Republic of Moldova where recommendations for improvement of the draft amendments to the non-discrimination legislation were provided upon the request of the Ministry of Justice.

3.2 Effectiveness

The assessment of effectiveness examines the extent to which the sample projects achieved their objectives as set out in their respective logframes and the effectiveness of the PGG II Programme overall. The analysed evaluation questions cover the broader achievement of objectives and outcomes as well as the extent to which this has been facilitated by appropriate support and suitable activities, the regional projects, successfully overcoming external challenges and the visibility of the PGG II.

²⁰ See <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cepej/cepej-work/evaluation-of-judicial-systems/former-evaluation-cycles>

3.2.1 To which extent has the PGG achieved its objectives and outcomes? Which factors have supported and hindered the effectiveness of the projects?

The assessment of effectiveness is based on the ‘progress’ definitions of the Council of Europe used in the CoE Action Plan reports for donors. There are four labels:

Box 3.1: Council of Europe progress levels

- **Very good progress** - legislative amendments and/or institution building led to changes in the socio-economic situation of end beneficiaries/target populations.
- **Good progress** - activities continued at a good pace with concrete results (legislative amendments, institution building incl. capacity building) having already been achieved during the period of reference.
- **Some progress** - activities are being implemented as planned and have good prospects of bringing concrete results (outputs achieved, signs of outcomes).
- **No progress** - either the project did not progress, and therefore activities were not implemented, or that the activities with an expected result are planned for a later implementation stage.

Source: Action Plan Annual reports for Donors, 2020 and 2021

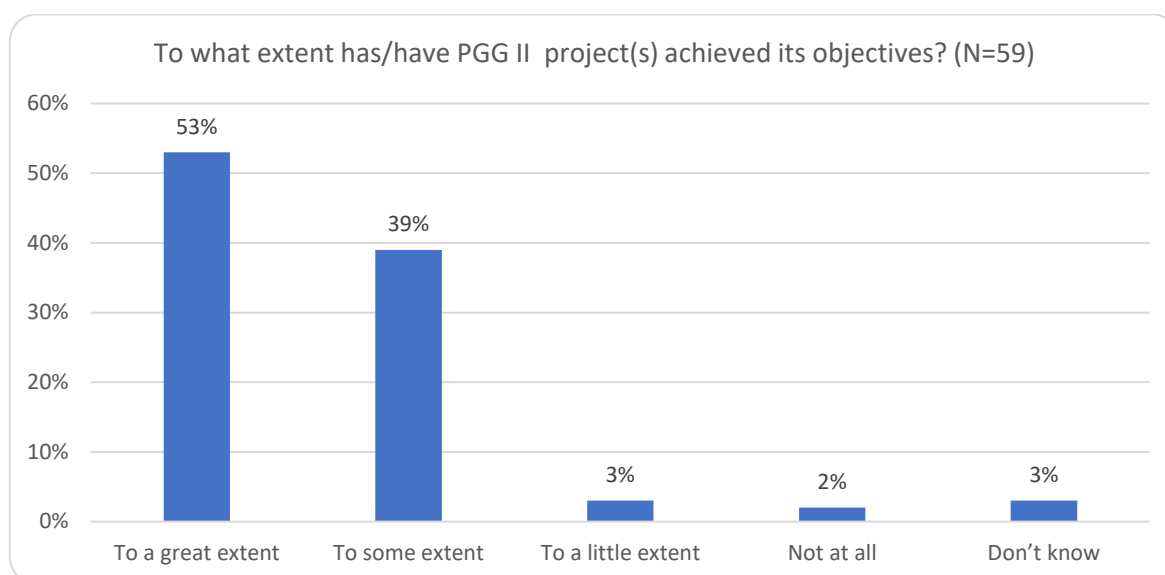
The assessment was based on desk research, on the review of individual project documentation²¹, and interview feedback, which made it possible to assess progress towards the indicators, expected outcomes and targets achieved as detailed in the project specific logframes.

Our assessment suggests that of the sample projects, one project has achieved ‘very good progress’ towards achieving its objectives and targets while a further five projects have made ‘good progress’.

The PGG II projects show a high level of effectiveness overall. The PGG II Programme contributed to progress in strengthened anti-corruption and anti-money laundering mechanisms as well as helping to develop effective judicial systems in the EaP region. In regard to the cross-cutting theme covering anti-discrimination and gender equality, progress was mainly observed through the dedicated thematic projects. Across these projects, most activities contributed to specific outcomes such as enhancing the capacities of the project beneficiaries and increasing awareness more broadly, the revision and in some cases adoption and implementation of legislation, and the strengthening of institutional frameworks.

The positive feedback reported by stakeholders further pointed to the effectiveness of the PGG II overall in delivering knowledge and sharing technical expertise. This view was shared by survey respondents across EaP countries as presented in Figure 3.5 below. Respondents stated that the PGG II projects had achieved their objectives ‘to a great extent’ (53%) or ‘to some extent’ (39%).

²¹ Documentation reviewed included the PGG II annual plans of action 2019-2022, PGG II country factsheets 2020 and 2022, Regional results factsheet 2020 and 2022, PGG II Annual Reports 2019, 2020, 2021, and Six-Month Report January-June 2020.

Figure 3.5: Extent of PGG II project achievement of objectives

Source: CSES survey 2022

All sampled projects have showed good outcomes in relation to enhancing the institutional capacity of key project beneficiaries. Beneficiaries enhanced their knowledge of good practices and European standards and became aware of shortcomings in their national frameworks. Moreover, it seems that the knowledge acquired was used in multiple cases, for example leading to a change in practice or to trainings being organised by the project beneficiary at their own initiative, reinforcing the sustainability aspect of the projects. This was the case for example in Georgia, where the locally trained trainers conducted awareness raising activities on anti-corruption, as well as in Azerbaijan, where the FIU organized a training at their own initiative using the knowledge and the material provided by the PGG project. In some cases, there were delays in making use of the knowledge gained from projects for a number of reasons (e.g. additional resources needed, limited time since training). Expert input led to revisions of legislations, structural changes and in some cases also to the adoption and implementation of new legislation. In many cases, more time is needed for the revised laws to be adopted and implemented.

It is too early to assess the long-term impact of most of the projects. The extent to which the observed outcomes will lead to clear changes 'on the ground' was unclear for most projects at the time when the data collection was undertaken. However, early signs of change to which the PGG II projects are likely to have contributed can be observed in various countries: important pieces of legislation were reviewed in all three countries and secondary legislation developed, including new AML/CFT laws, and changes to asset recovery mechanisms including the introduction of civil confiscation/non-conviction-based confiscation have taken place in Azerbaijan and the Republic of Moldova. Stakeholders viewed this as a fundamental change in the mechanisms for targeting illicit property and an addition to the traditional criminal law measures that would benefit the wider population. Stakeholders also viewed the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by the Republic of Moldova as a key step to achieving future changes in gender equality regulations. In their view, the PGG II programme contributed to the ratification of the convention, which could lead to legislative changes to effectively protect women and guaranteeing access to justice.

Several factors have influenced the effectiveness of the PGG II as a whole. On the one hand, external factors such as the wider political developments in the region and the ongoing measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic have posed challenges to the implementation of some activities. Measures to successfully overcome these (e.g. project extensions, adoption of virtual methods for meetings) have minimised the negative impacts on the overall achievement of results. On the other hand, the dialogue-based approach and co-ownership between the Council of Europe project teams and project beneficiaries has been highlighted as an important factor contributing to the successful

implementation of reforms. The very positive feedback shared across stakeholders consulted not only indicates the interest to continue implementing reforms in the near future but also the sustainability of the PGG II.

The table below shows some key achievements of the sample projects in relation to the expected PGG II and individual project outcomes. A more detailed table is available in Appendix F.

Table 3.1: Assessment of the contributions of sample projects towards the PGG II outcomes

Evidence of key achievements by expected outcome (selected examples)	CoE Progress Levels
ECONOMIC CRIME <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic crime - PGG II Intermediate outcome: Strengthened Rule of Law, enhanced anti-corruption and anti-money laundering mechanisms. Cross-cutting topic - PGG II Intermediate outcome: Enhanced protection of the rights of vulnerable groups and women. 	
SAMPLE PROJECT CONTRIBUTION: 'Strengthening anti-money laundering and asset recovery' (AZ)	Good progress
<u>Outcome 1: Increased strategic and operational capacities of Azerbaijani institutions to combat and prevent money laundering and terrorism financing</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened national AML/CFT framework through the adoption of a package of key legal amendments to improve the national legislative framework, including a new AML Law, a new Law on targeted financial sanctions, and a series of related legal amendments to existing legislation, as per PGGII recommendations. About 118 staff from various stakeholders are better equipped to better identify, assess and understand ML/FT risks second national ML/FT NRA. The government is better prepared to address AML/FT threats related to e.g. legal persons and legal arrangements and terrorism financing,, the findings of the NRA are expected to be translated into the national AML/CFT Action Plan in 2022. 431 staff of national agencies of the AML/CFT system, including the FIU, other financial supervisory institutions, Law enforcement and judiciary authorities are better equipped to prevent and fight money laundering and terrorism financing through different angles 103 representatives of the private sector, as well as the non-profit sector, are more aware of ML/TF risks, AML/CFT mechanisms and their role in applying them. 	<u>Outcome 2: A legal and institutional framework for recovering proceeds from crime is introduced</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased effectiveness of the asset recovery framework through the approval (and adoption) of the amendments to the Law on the Prosecutor's Office (April 2021), taking into account recommendations provided by the PGG II. Strengthened legal framework through the GPO initiative to introduce NCBC and parallel financial investigations based on PGG recommendations. Stakeholders implemented the knowledge on MLA in exchanges with European countries (CH, DE), the project was asked to help further analyse and improve the MLA requests made by the GPO.
SAMPLE PROJECT CONTRIBUTION: 'Enhancing the systems of prevention and combatting corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing' (GEO)	Good progress
<u>Outcome 1 - Effective measures on prevention of corruption</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amendments to the Law on conflict of interest and corruption in public service, addressing challenges of corruption and strengthening the position of the ACA. Amendment of the disciplinary liability regime in respect of the Georgian Prosecution system in line with PGG II recommendations on ensuring better compliance with Recommendation XV. Increasing awareness and use of the skills by beneficiaries, as evidenced e.g. by the SSSG staff trained by the project organising their own anti-corruption training events at local level, thereby multiplying the effects of the project across regions/municipalities. CBS confirmed their intention to implement measures to collect and verify the asset declarations by public officials. 	<u>Outcome 2 - Comprehensive measures on prevention and detection of AML/FT</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of the AML/CFT preventive law and secondary legislation, applied on a daily basis by a very broad segment of the private sector. Extensive support was provided by PGG II to its application, including support to the FMS, SARAS and private sector representatives (e.g. insurance, gambling, pawns). SARAS created a separate AML unit and developed sector-specific guidance for accountants and auditors in compliance with AML/CFT, as recommended by the PGG II The Law of Georgia on facilitating the suppression of ML/TF (adopted in October 2019) brought the legal framework closer to key international standards.
SAMPLE PROJECT CONTRIBUTION: Regional project 'Strengthening measures to prevent and combat economic crime' (EaP)	Good progress

Evidence of key achievements by expected outcome (selected examples)	CoE Progress Levels
<p>Outcome 1 – Effective measures on prevention of corruption</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved capacity of specialised corruption prevention and oversight bodies for the verification and analysis of declarations of assets across EaP. Enhanced existing parliamentary Codes of Conduct, e.g. through the Toolkit for drafting Codes of Conduct for members of Parliaments. <p>Outcome 2 – Strengthened institutional and legal capacities to combat corruption</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced capacity of 71 practitioners from oversight and monitoring bodies on efficient systems for the verification of declarations using red flags. Collaboration between state institutions and CSOs improved through joint events. 	<p>Outcome 3 - Effective measures on prevention and detection of ML/ FT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deeper understanding of BO practitioners on EU standards, regulatory frameworks and best practices of establishing and managing BO registers through a technical paper and conference. Enhanced knowledge of data protection and privacy in BO disclosure and cross-border exchange of data. <p>Outcome 4 - Enhanced cooperation and regulatory framework on seizure, confiscation of proceeds from crime</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of a revision of the regulatory and institutional framework for seizure, confiscation, management and disposal of proceeds from crime through events, participants agreed to the importance of having a framework for NCBC co-operation Progress was made towards the implementation of PACE Resolution 2218 (2018)²² in line with approaches and practices discussed during the project, e.g. in Azerbaijan at the initiative of the GPO, in Armenia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.
<p>JUDICIAL REFORM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PGG II Intermediate outcome: Strengthened independence, effectiveness and efficiency of justice systems in the Eastern Partnership region. Cross-cutting topic - PGG II Intermediate outcome: Enhanced protection of the rights of vulnerable groups and women. 	
<p>SAMPLE PROJECT CONTRIBUTION: ‘Strengthening the efficiency and quality of the judicial system’ (AZ)</p>	Good progress
<p>Outcome 1: The efficiency and quality of Azerbaijani courts are enhanced through the application of CEPEJ tools at national level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced knowledge from relevant administrative and judicial bodies about European good practices in the implementation of CEPEJ tools and improved participants’ understanding of the implementation of the CEPEJ tools in other countries. The Action Plan for the implementation of a roadmap for further dissemination of CEPEJ tools in all courts of Azerbaijan was finalised, translated into Azerbaijani and submitted to the national authorities. Pilot courts reported sharing their best practices across courts. PGG II developed and encouraged the introduction of a standard methodology of court performance reporting for the Azerbaijani judiciary contributing to reduce the court backlogs and case disposition time. Accountability and transparency of the courts and prosecutorial offices was improved through a technical paper and the communication strategy of the judiciary improved. 	<p>Outcome 2: The enforcement of court decisions is improved through legal and institutional modernisation of the enforcement system and strengthened institutional capacities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Azerbaijani authorities were supported in drafting the new legal framework for the system of enforcement of court decisions in civil and administrative matters. 70 CoE recommendations were incorporated in the draft Enforcement Code. Authorities submitted a report to the Minister of Justice with recommendations on how to reform the enforcement system produced with PGG II support, starting with a pilot project which would test the private bailiff system. Strengthened capacities of enforcement agents on the use of electronic data system, ICT solutions for the enforcement of court decisions and alternative mechanisms for enforcement of the decisions of courts and other bodies. Improved understanding of ways to increase the effectiveness of the enforcement system through expert reports on enforcement timeframes and recovery rates and ICT solutions for the enforcement system.

²² PACE Resolution 2218 (2018) invites all member States of the Council of Europe to provide for non-conviction-based confiscation or similar measures in their national laws, while establishing appropriate safeguards, and adopting successfully tested good practices. See <http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-EN.asp?fileid=24761>

Evidence of key achievements by expected outcome (selected examples)	CoE Progress Levels
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced knowledge on enforcement of court decisions on debt payments through the report on comparative analysis of data on domestic legislation and practices from Council of Europe member states in this field.
<p>SAMPLE PROJECT CONTRIBUTION: ‘Strengthening the capacities of the justice sector actors to deliver justice in line with European standards, in particular to fight discrimination’ (MD)</p>	<p>Very good progress</p>
<p><u>Outcome 1 - Capacity of judges and prosecutors to deliver higher quality justice with special focus on discrimination through a harmonised application of European standards is enhanced</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deeper knowledge of the NIJ and legal professionals on various aspects of discrimination. Participants reported increased their ability to identify discrimination, and increased likelihood of using/applying legal remedies. Deepened understanding by the national authorities and the society on access to justice of vulnerable groups, specially in relation to issues faced when accessing justice. Awareness of non-discrimination standards raised between the national authorities and NGOs in the region through an international conference facilitating an open exchange of experience for better protection against discrimination. <p><u>Outcome 2 – Lawyers training centre is effectively organising and delivering training courses</u> <i>Lawyers and intern lawyers are better trained on the implementation of European standards in line with their professional needs.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19 Lawyers received training on the procedure for examining admissibility of applications to the ECHR. 	<p><u>Outcome 3 – The Equality Council’s practice is strengthened, it is able to effectively fulfil its role</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft amendments to the Law 121 on ensuring equality and law 298 on the activity of the Equality Council included in the Action Plan of the Government for March 2022, following the PGG II recommendations provided in 2019. Growing awareness of non-discrimination issues amongst vulnerable groups, and where to go for help, as evidenced by the increased number of cases being referred to the EC and the legal profession, with benefits being felt by individuals. The Equality Council improved the efficiency of its monitoring system by developing and approving its monitoring strategy, incorporating PGG II recommendations.
<p>SAMPLE PROJECT CONTRIBUTION : Regional project ‘Women’s Access to Justice: delivering on the Istanbul Convention and other European gender equality standards’ (EaP)</p>	<p>Good progress</p>
<p><u>Outcome 1 - Authorities, justice sector professionals, and civil society apply new competences on the standards on access to justice of the Istanbul Convention, in order to remove obstacles to access to justice</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness and contribution to the approval of the Draft Law on the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by the Republic of Moldova (October 2021), discussions on the possible signature in Azerbaijan. Legal professionals are well equipped to train other legal professionals on ensuring women’s access to justice through a pilot mentoring programme for legal professionals. 	<p><u>Outcome 2 – Authorities, justice sector professionals and civil society introduce measures, including on training, to ensure that the justice chain is gender responsive, particularly for women victims of violence in line with the Istanbul Convention and other European standards</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The capacity building mechanisms of the national judicial institutions across 5 EaP countries were reinforced by incorporating the HELP course on Access to Justice for Women in their curricula, surpassing the PGG II target of 2 countries doing so. Strengthened role of CSO on combating discrimination through the support to the creation of the Equality Platform Azerbaijan, leading to discussions with the Ombudsperson office on collaboration going forward. Documentation on European standards was made available in the national languages. Enhanced knowledge on international standards on women's access to justice and violence against women in 5 EaP countries, including the case law of the ECtHR and the Istanbul Convention standards.

Sources: APAs 2019-2022 Main document, Country factsheets 2020 and 2022, Regional results factsheet 2020 and 2022, PGG II Annual Reports 2019, 2020, 2021, Six-Month Report January-June 2020, Interview feedback

3.2.2 Did the projects provide adequate support to the countries' efforts in addressing reforms in line with Council of Europe monitoring recommendations and with the European standards?

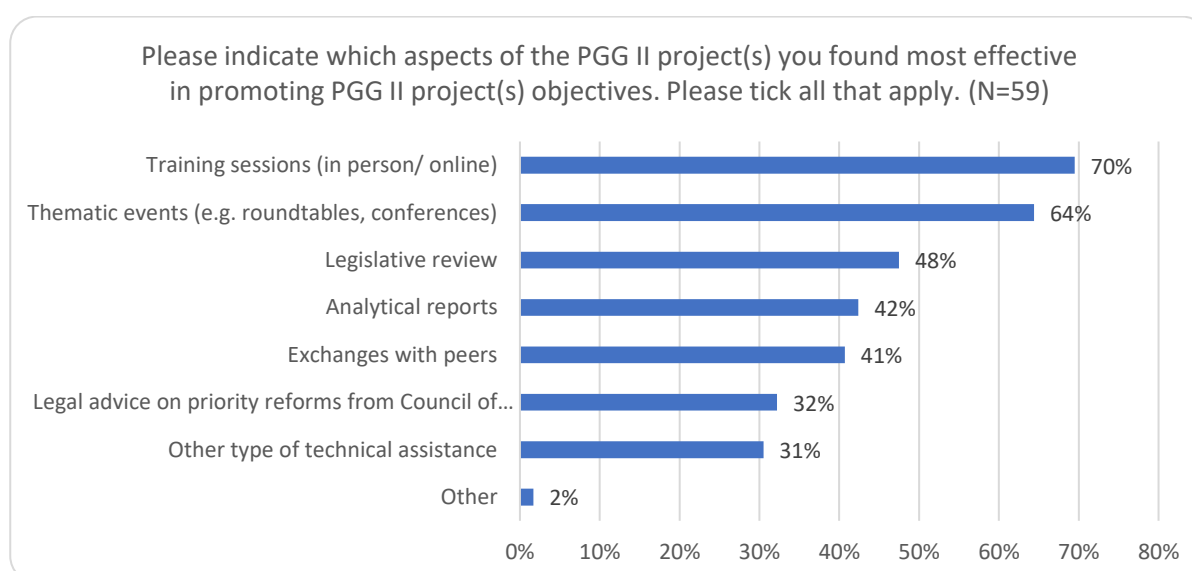
The technical support provided by the PGG II was appropriate to the priority areas of reform in the themes addressed and the types of activities carried out in all three countries covered by the study.

For example in Georgia, the PGG II component addressed judicial reforms in regard to the appointment of judges, i.e. on judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, findings of the Human Rights Commissioner, the opinions of the Venice Commission and the reports of the Parliamentary Assembly. The need to revise the criteria for recruitment of judges was also highlighted in the fourth evaluation round by GRECO. In Azerbaijan the PGG II projects covered, among other things, the enhancement of the anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) regime – a priority in the fourth evaluation round of MONEYVAL and the aim to improve the efficiency and quality of the judiciary highlighted in the CEPEJ evaluation exercise of 2016. The Azerbaijani projects were intended to contribute to a better enforcement and to the modernisation of the judicial system, thereby bringing the system closer to the European standards.

Expert advice and technical expertise were provided in different formats, reflecting the requirements of the different projects and the national contexts. In-person training sessions were considered by most interviewees as very helpful activities for capacity building. Likewise, analytical reports and revisions of legislative frameworks with the resulting actionable recommendations were perceived as very insightful. In that regard, the close collaboration with the relevant stakeholders when developing opinions and guidance further strengthened the relevance, adequacy and national ownership by beneficiaries. This was the case in Georgia, where the PGG II assisted the General Prosecutor's Office to update the legal framework related to the prosecutor's disciplinary liability in compliance with relevant GRECO recommendations. In the Republic of Moldova, a methodology workshop involving the Equality Council helped enhance the skills of its staff in regard to preparing decisions, which resulted in the rethinking of the process involved in drafting individual decisions.

Figure 3.6 below presents the aggregated responses from the PGG II countries. Results confirmed the interview feedback and suggest that all types of activities are considered relevant to some extent (over 30%), with practical activities – training sessions and thematic events - seen as most effective.

Figure 3.6: Most effective aspects of the PGG II programme

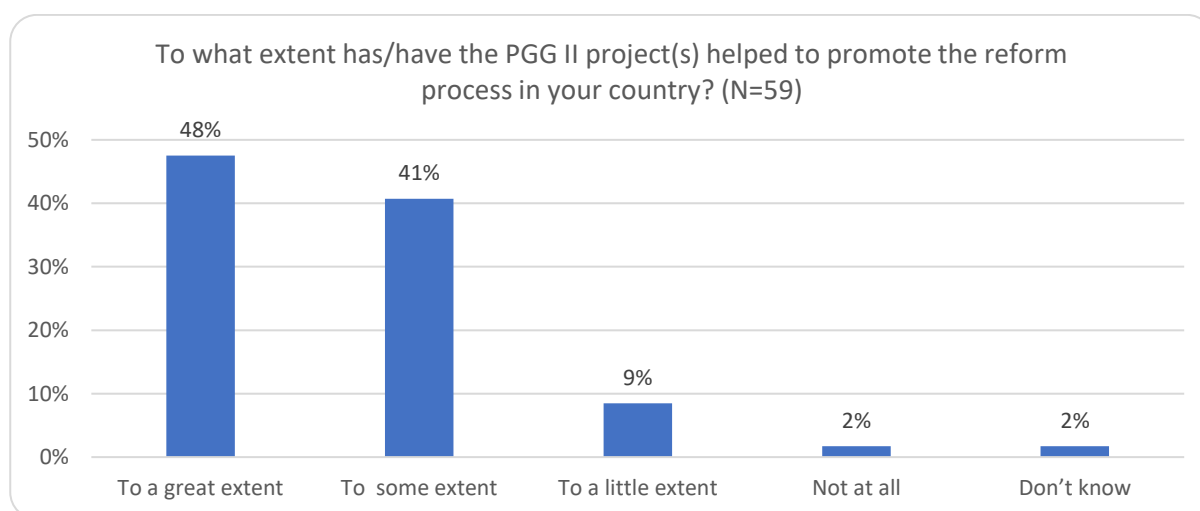


Source: CSES survey 2022

Overall, the consultations for this evaluation suggest that the PGG II Programme was considered to be effective in its support for the reform process at the national level in EaP countries either ‘to a great extent’ (48%) or ‘to some extent’ (41%) (see Figure 3.7).

Although the precise breakdown varies across countries, the picture is positive for all of them (e.g. Azerbaijan: ‘to a great extent’ (50%) and ‘to some extent’ (50%); Armenia: ‘to a great extent’ (44%), ‘to some extent’ (39%), ‘to a little extent’ (17%); Georgia: ‘to a great extent’ (67%) and ‘to some extent’ (33%); Republic of Moldova: ‘to a great extent’ (33%), ‘to some extent’ (48%), ‘to a little extent’ (10%), ‘not at all’ (5%), ‘don’t know’ (5%); Ukraine ‘to a large extent’ (75%), ‘to a little extent’ (25%).

Figure 3.7: PGG II support to the reform process at national level



Source: CSES survey 2022

The various forms of support provided by PGG II mainly targeted national authorities and institutions as the main target beneficiaries of PGG II, which explains the limited involvement of civil society organisations in many of the PGG II projects. Although not the main beneficiaries, some stakeholders saw the value in involving civil society to a greater extent (for example, attending some of the workshops and events on AML/ CFT would also help strengthen their capacity to detect and monitor these aspects, thereby strengthening their role as watchdogs of the democratic process). In addition, it was argued that civil society organisations could further strengthen the effectiveness of PGGII projects by increasing the accountability element of national authorities in implementing change in line with the recommendations of the PGG projects.

Several stakeholders welcomed the inclusion of civil society organisations as national partners in some PG II projects and suggested there should be further cooperation with them. For example, in the country-specific project in the Republic of Moldova, the project included two NGOs as national partners that had the opportunity to participate in certain meetings that contributed to the design of project activities. This was perceived by some stakeholders as highly beneficial to the project goals, especially when the ultimate beneficiary is the general public, as they could act as key intermediaries.

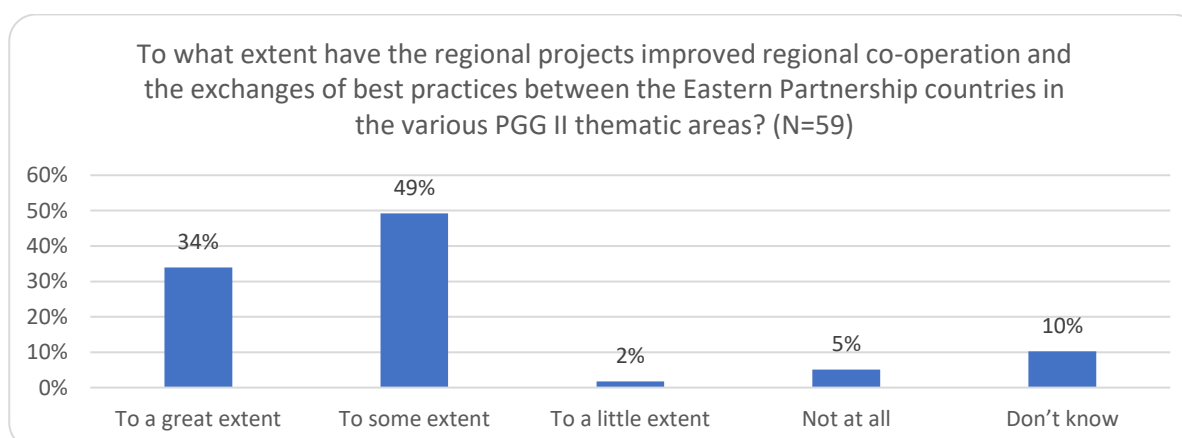
3.2.3 To what extent have the regional projects improved regional co-operation and the exchanges of best practices between the EaP countries in the thematic areas covered by the PGG programme? To which extent has the PGG enabled the creation of synergies among country specific and regional projects and contributed to their effectiveness?

The PGG II regional projects contributed to the co-operation across EaP countries by bringing together stakeholder groups that would otherwise not have had a shared platform to exchange knowledge. Several interviewees highlighted the value of the networking aspect of regional activities. These activities enabled the open exchanges between, for example, legal professionals and the creation of networks (i.e. female lawyers, young lawyers), thereby facilitating and encouraging the peer-to-peer sharing of best practices. The pilot mentoring programme for legal professionals carried out as part of the regional project on women's access to justice was mentioned as especially relevant due to its innovative nature. This programme enabled some 60 legal professionals to develop their capacity to train other legal professionals on ensuring women's access to justice and appropriate legal responses to violence against women, something not done before.

In the area of economic crime, the value of the PGG II regional activities was linked to the transnational nature of the topics addressed. Interviewees highlighted the need for national authorities in different countries to tackle anti-corruption and terrorism financing jointly and stressed the value in learning from best practices in the region and more widely in Europe. In that regard, thematic events and exchanges with peers were seen as most useful, together with field visits to hear more about the implementation of good practices. This was the case with the regional economic crime project which brought together practitioners from the region to, for example, learn about efficient systems for the verification of declarations using red flags or in relation to good practices in identifying and tracing terrorist funding.

While online methods of networking allowed regional activities to take place despite the COVID-19 travel restrictions in place, this impacted the networking dimension which should have ideally involved events taking place in person. Nevertheless, almost half of the survey respondents indicated the regional projects had improved regional co-operation and the best practice exchanges 'to some extent' (49%), followed by those reporting it to be the case 'to a great extent' (34%) (see Figure 3.8). These responses indicate an overall positive perception of regional activities, more so than through the interview feedback, where many stakeholders had limited awareness of such projects. At individual country level, survey respondents in Ukraine perceived regional projects as contributing to a 'greater extent' as compared to other countries ('to a great extent' - 75%), whereas in Armenia and the Republic of Moldova they were seen as only contributing 'to some extent' (61% and 62% respectively).

Figure 3.8: Contribution of regional projects to regional co-operation



Source: CSES survey 2022

The analysis suggests that the PGG II promoted synergies between the country specific and regional projects. The four regional projects addressed the two core thematic areas of PGG II, namely the fight against corruption and judicial reform, as well as the cross-cutting themes of gender equality and anti-discrimination. The themes and the activities of the regional projects were selected taking into account the country-specific projects, and vice versa. As Table 3-2 below shows, regional themes were also covered in country-specific projects in almost all EaP countries.

In the economic crime field, the regional PGG II project ' Strengthening measures to prevent and combat economic crime' addressed transversal issues and complemented country-specific projects. The regional project focused on sharing best practices and effective measures in areas such as the declarations of assets, conflicts of interest, and political funding. These topics were also addressed in the country-specific project in Georgia from the purely national angle, thereby creating further opportunities for state authorities to implement the best practices as relevant to the national context.

The topic of beneficial ownership was also covered in the regional project and in the country-specific project in Azerbaijan. The beneficiaries from Azerbaijan that attended the conference on advancing beneficial ownership transparency, which gathered international experts from more than ten jurisdictions and beneficiaries from the country-specific projects, asked for follow-up support at the national level to advise them on their own beneficial ownership system and future registers. Asset recovery is another example of a topic that created synergies at the regional and country levels. For example, Armenia used guidance provided by the country-specific project in Armenia and by the regional conference "From Asset Recovery to Asset Management" that took place in the Republic of Moldova in January 2020 to adopt the Law on Civil Forfeiture of Illegal Assets in 2020. Later on, the regional project developed a technical paper on the management of seized assets following country requests received within the country-specific projects.

The regional projects on gender equality and anti-discrimination provided a slightly different angle, complementing other country-specific projects addressing judicial reform and offering scope for synergies with the projects incorporating the cross-cutting theme into their design and implementation. The regional PGG II project on 'Women's Access to Justice: Delivering on the Istanbul Convention and other European Gender Equality Standards' created some synergies with the country-specific projects of the Republic of Moldova. Some interviewees reported that the country-specific project on non-discrimination in the Republic of Moldova integrated gender issues, including Istanbul Convention standards into some activities. The regional project 'Strengthening the Access to Justice through Non-Judicial Redress Mechanisms for Victims of Discrimination, Hate Crime and Hate Speech' contributed to creating stronger relations between equality bodies, ombudsman office representatives and CSOs, thereby making it easier to communicate and inform victims of discrimination of their rights, through seminars and a regional meeting involving all Eastern Partnership countries, which benefited some country-specific projects such as those relating to judicial reform or anti-discrimination.

Table 3.2: Overview of synergies between PGG regional and PGG country specific projects

Regional projects	Thematic areas	Thematic areas covered by country specific projects					
Project title	Main area	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Belarus	Georgia	Republic of Moldova	Ukraine
Strengthening measures to prevent and combat economic crime	Fight against economic crime	x	x	x	x		x
Strengthening the profession of lawyer	Judicial reform	x	x ²³	x	x	x	

²³ Azerbaijan joined the project as observer in 2021 and was allowed to participate in some project activities in 2022.

Regional projects	Thematic areas	Thematic areas covered by country specific projects					
Project title	Main area	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Belarus	Georgia	Republic of Moldova	Ukraine
in line with European standards							
Women's Access to Justice: delivering on the Istanbul Convention and other European gender equality standards	Judicial reform, anti-discrimination, gender equality		x			x	
Strengthening the access to justice through non-judiciary redress mechanisms for victims of discrimination, hate crime and hate speech	Judicial reform, anti-discrimination					x	

Source: CSES own analysis

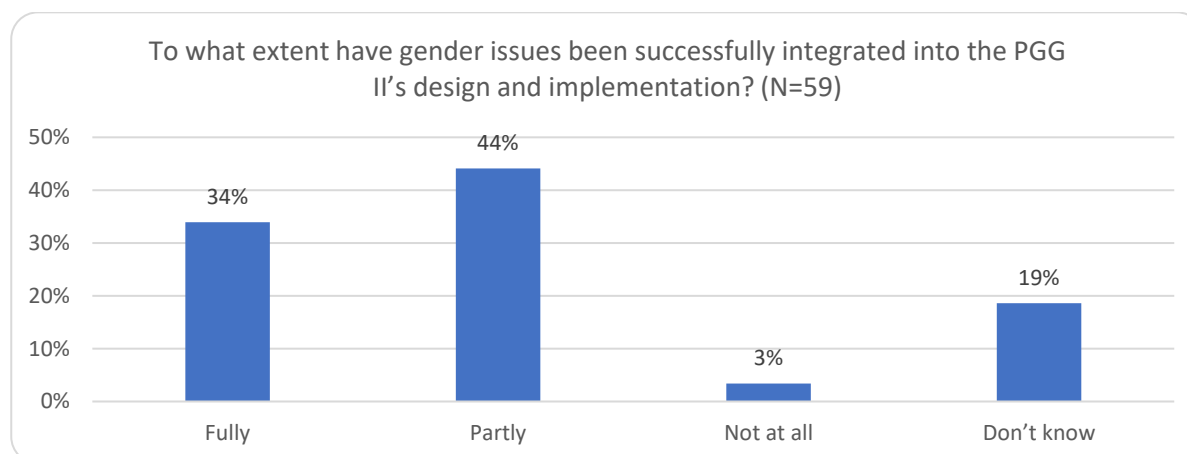
The interview feedback suggests that there was overall limited awareness of the regional projects among the country-specific stakeholders. This might be due to the fact that beneficiaries may see the Council of Europe or the PGG's support as a continuum (given the high interaction and complementarity between the regional and country projects as described above) rather than distinguishing formally between regional and country-specific project. In some cases, they perceived the activities of the regional project as valuable but just ad-hoc events. While this does not affect the value and the effectiveness of the events and the learnings taking place, it suggests there would be room to give regional projects additional visibility.

3.2.4 To what extent have gender issues been mainstreamed in PGG projects' design and implementation?

Gender issues were mainstreamed to a varying degree across PGG II projects in line with the Council of Europe's 2018-2023 Gender Equality Strategy²⁴ as well as EU priorities²⁵. All projects ensured gender mainstreaming through a balanced approach in selecting project participants and consultants, balanced representation in project events as well as using gender-sensitive language in project activities, indicators and outputs. However, the integration of gender issues into the PGG II projects' design and implementation varied depending on the project, most notably due to the technical nature of the issues addressed. This is reflected in Figure 3-9 below showing that survey respondents were of the view that gender issues had been integrated into the PGG II design and implementation to a varying extent. A total of 44% respondents were of the view that gender issues had been integrated into the PGG II 'partly', whereas 34% thought this had been the case 'fully'. A rather large number (almost 20%) selected 'Don't know' as their answer.

²⁴ Council of Europe (2018) Council of Europe's 2018-2023 Gender Equality Strategy.

²⁵ European Commission (2020) Gender Action Plan – Putting women and girls' rights at the heart of the global recovery for a gender-equal world

Figure 3.9: Integration of gender issues in the PGG II

Source: CSES survey 2022

The varying extent of integration of gender issues into PGG II projects is linked to thematic area covered. Not surprisingly, the regional project ‘Women’s access to justice: delivering on the Istanbul Convention and other European gender equality standards’ successfully mainstreamed gender issues, in particular in the tool ‘Checklist for gender mainstreaming Law Schools’. In addition, curricula²⁶ developed by the project in 2020 raised awareness on why gender mainstreaming reinforces access to justice for women and introduced participants to challenges and good practices on gender mainstreaming in universities. Conversely, the regional thematic project on economic crime integrated the gender dimension only to a limited extent. Similarly, at the national level, some projects had a clear gender element such as the project ‘Strengthening the capacities of the justice sector actors to deliver justice in line with European standards, in particular to fight discrimination’ in the Republic of Moldova. According to the interviewees, this project applied a gender perspective to almost all of its activities. In other projects, such as those relating to money laundering and anti-corruption, it was harder to integrate a gender perspective given the nature of the projects.

Some gender-related analyses were conducted in Armenia, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova as part of the country specific projects. The analyses were tailored to each country project and provided practical recommendations on gender inclusion while taking into account the national situation. There was, however, varying integration of the gender dimension in practice, due in part to the political and legal framework in the different countries. For instance, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova ratified the Istanbul Convention and strengthened their competences on international standards on gender issues; Georgia had ratified the convention in 2017, Armenia also signed it.

Additional efforts could have taken place to integrate gender issues in projects addressing themes of very technical nature in a suitable and meaningful way. Some interviewees suggested that even though the link with gender issues was perhaps less clear in areas such as terrorism financing or money laundering, there is room to further strengthen this dimension in projects of a technical nature in line with EU and Council of Europe priorities. The input provided by the Council of Europe gender advisor²⁷ has been a step in that direction. Indeed, the stakeholders we consulted said this had been very helpful in identifying ways in which to integrate a gender approach in a meaningful way, especially in sectors with less of a track record of doing so.

²⁶ [A4 Brochure_enchan_EuCouncil_112020 \(coe.int\)](#)

²⁷ The Gender Advisor is not paid from the PGG budget.

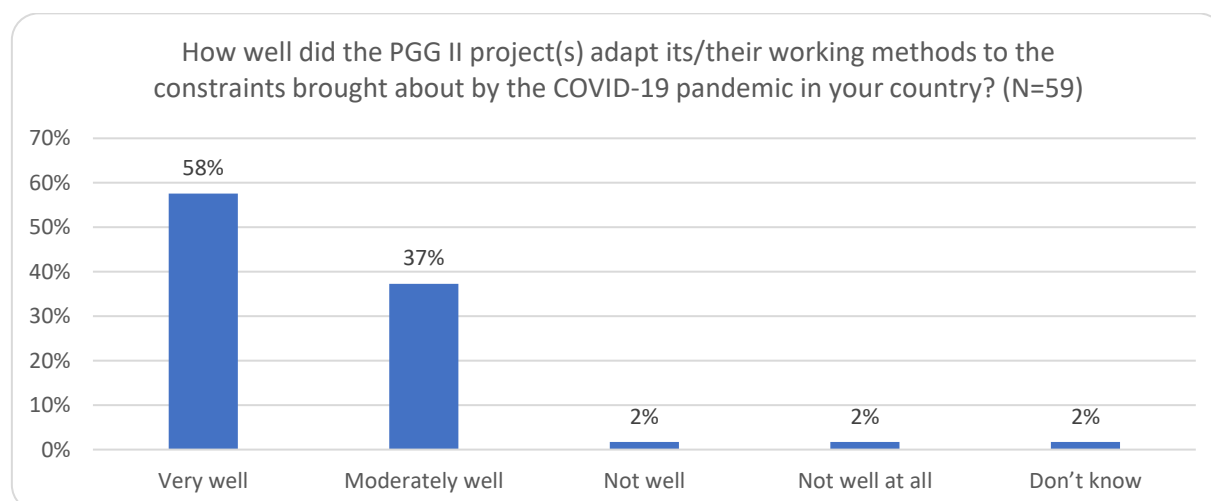
3.2.5 To what extent has the PGG II been able to adapt its working methods and approach to the constraints brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic? To what extent has the COVID-19 pandemic affected the results achieved by the PGG projects? To what extent have the political challenges in the region affected the implementation and the results achieved by the PGG projects?

There are several external factors that have strongly influenced the implementation of PGG II in the various countries: COVID-19, the Ukraine conflict and political developments in the region. This meant that project teams needed to adapt their work plan and the activities, in most cases in coordination with national authorities and project beneficiaries.

In all three countries covered by the fieldwork, PGG II adapted well to the COVID pandemic with online methods being adopted to carry out activities. Although the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak in February 2020 impacted the workplans of both regional and country-specific projects and delayed some of the activities, PGG II projects were flexible enough to adapt to the new circumstances. All sample projects responded well to the constraints brought about by the pandemic with an overall smooth transition to online methods. Whilst there were some drawbacks caused by, for example, the need to restructure activities planned to be in-person and then delivered online, or because some training participants did not switch on their webcams which, according to interviewees, made it difficult to get everyone fully involved in the sessions, there were also advantages in adopting online methods. This was the case especially in terms of extending the reach of different PGG II activities.

Other challenges reported by interviewees involved the lack of technical resources and skills, and reluctance by some to switch to online activities. In that regard, some trainings were carried out online, while others were postponed and took place in person later. In some instances, the scope shifted to other means of supporting the authorities (e.g. in the economic crime project in Georgia, trainings with the Civil Service Bureau were postponed and work focused on a technical paper providing guidance on best practices for public officials to report on cryptocurrencies instead). Across all the countries, survey respondents confirmed that the programme managed to adapt ‘very well’ (58%) or ‘moderately well’ (37%) to the COVID-19 pandemic (see Figure 3.10). These results are mirrored to a large extent at individual country level, with respondents selecting either of these two responses in over 90% of the cases.

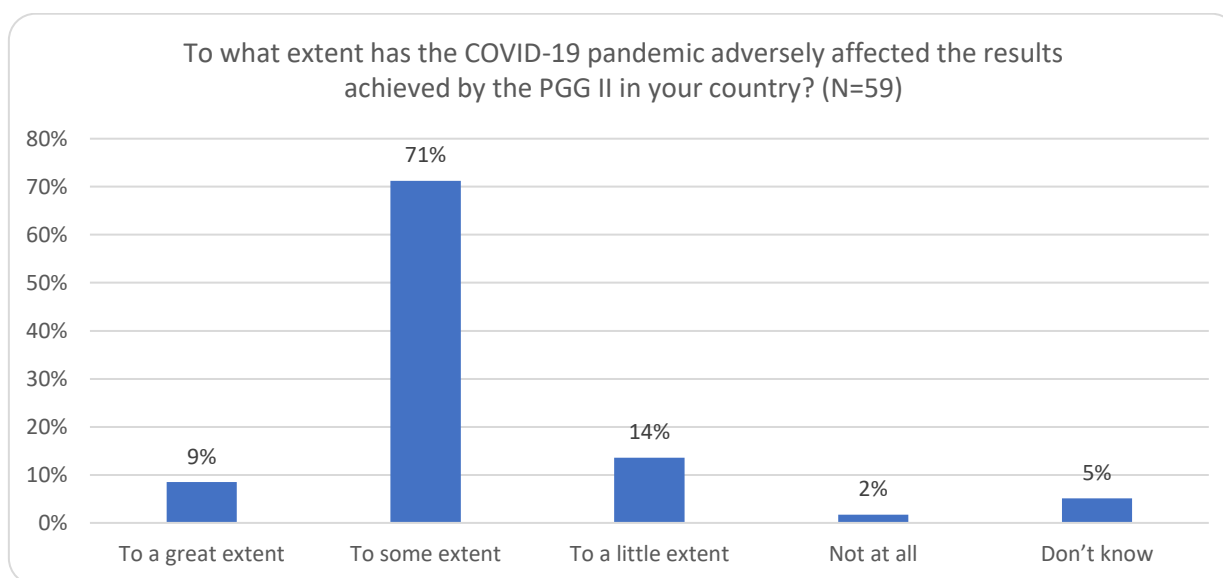
Figure 3.10: PGG II adaptation to the COVID-19 pandemic



Source: CSES survey 2022

The broad perception of survey respondents was that COVID-19 only adversely affected the results achieved by the PGG II at a national level “to some extent” (see Figure 3.11). This was also confirmed in the interviews where stakeholders highlighted the flexibility of the PGG II as critical in overcoming challenges and the two no-cost extensions as helpful in allowing to catch up with activities that were initially cancelled or postponed. Overall interviewees agreed that the COVID-19 pandemic affected the networking and interactive elements of the PGG II programme but that otherwise it did not substantially impact the main results of the projects.

Figure 3.11: Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to the achievement of the PGG II objectives



Source: CSES survey 2022

The war following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, apart from leading to the suspension of Belarus from PGG II in 2022 and putting the programme on hold in Ukraine temporarily²⁸, had several other consequences. Several countries (Georgia, Republic of Moldova) experienced the influx of very large numbers of Ukrainians refugees which raised (and still raises) human rights issues, as countries ensure their response is fully in line with international protection standards and fundamental rights. Furthermore, the national authorities became preoccupied with the crisis and less able to focus on PGG II. Besides, Russian was no longer used as the *lingua franca* in activities of the regional projects, with the resulting costs of switching activities into English, with the subsequent challenge for non-native speakers, and providing interpretation in all languages, which was not technically possible for online and hybrid events.

In addition, the broader political developments in the region impacted to some extent the regional dimension of the PGG II Programme. Firstly, the developments between Armenia and Azerbaijan created tensions in some regional events in which representatives of both countries participated. Secondly, on the positive side, the granting of EU candidate status to the Republic of Moldova and

²⁸ Following the presidential elections in Belarus in August 2020 and in line with the European Council decision of 12 October 2020, the PGG activities with Belarus were put on hold. In light of Belarus’ involvement in the Russian military aggression against Ukraine and in line with the European Union Conclusions of 24 February 2022 and the Committee of the Council of Europe’s decision of 17 March 2022, it was decided to suspend all technical co-operation with Belarusian authorities.

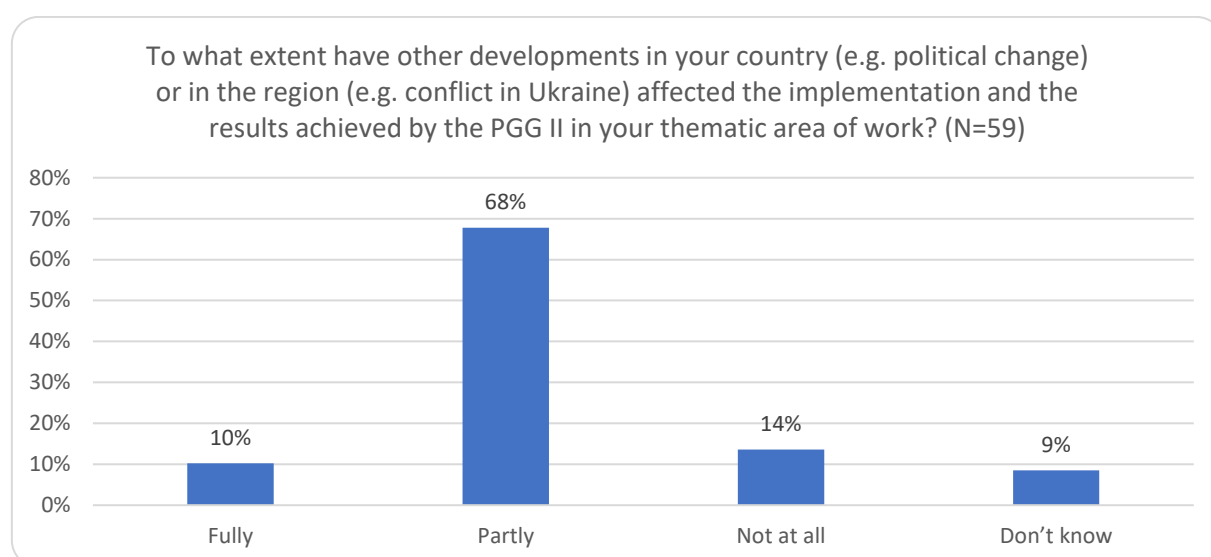
Following the Russian aggression against Ukraine on 24 February 2022, the country-specific PGG project for Ukraine was initially put on hold. However, some activities were implemented under the regional umbrella of the PGG. In consultation with the national partners and the European Union Delegation to Ukraine it was decided in May 2022 to continue addressing the country’s emerging needs in a flexible manner in the framework of the country-specific project on AML.

Ukraine and the European Perspective to Georgia in June 2022 gave added impetus to several aspects of PGG II. In particular, the conditionalities linked to the European Commission's opinions have encouraged the authorities and beneficiaries to make faster progress in implementing PGG II actions.

For instance, in the Republic of Moldova, the EU priorities are being addressed through a one-year action plan that is being implemented by the Moldovan Government prior to EU membership negotiations commencing. More specifically, certain aspects of Moldovan law will need to be clarified, for example in relation to gender equality and sexual orientation. Whilst this may have happened eventually anyway, the granting of EU candidate status to the Republic of Moldova has speeded up the process. For Georgia, several of the areas for reform highlighted by the EC's opinion in June 2022 as preconditions for further accession negotiations addressed thematic areas of PGG II, reinforcing the relevance of the programme in the country. In Azerbaijan, the PGG II constituted an important source of technical support, not available through other channels.

While these factors have impacted the smooth implementation of the PGG II projects, most survey respondents were of the view that they affected implementation and delivery of results only 'partly' (68%) (see Figure 3.12 below).

Figure 3.12: Impact of external factors on the PGG II



Source: CSES survey 2022

Overall, PGG II was successful in adapting to the unforeseen challenges arising during its period of implementation, with minimal impact on the expected outcomes. As evidenced in the level of results achieved across sample projects, the wider developments affected the work plans and timelines of the projects but did not negatively affect the achievement of expected results in a meaningful way.

3.2.6 To what extent has the European Union and Council of Europe visibility been ensured in the Programme's implementation? To what extent have the citizens, beneficiaries, national stakeholders and other target audiences been informed of the activities and outcomes of the Programme?

Throughout PGG II, the programme's visibility was reinforced with efforts to reach the end beneficiaries, as recommended in the ROM report of the PGG I. Progress in streamlining the communications aspects of individual projects in an appropriate and consistent way was achieved by introducing the PGG II Communication Guidelines, and by training CoE field office staff in the PGG communication requirements. In addition, the PGG II visual identity was amended and updated to continue including the joint logo of the Council of Europe and the European Union and the colour purple, thereby reinforcing the branding of the Programme and the visibility of both entities. The fact

that these changes were introduced once the PGG II Programme had been launched posed some challenges for the effective communication of the programme, as some material needed to be updated accordingly. Besides, some challenges to approve communication material in a timely manner were reported, which resulted in delays of activities (e.g. the micro-grants or on some deadlines expiring before the material had been made public). Nevertheless, stakeholders confirmed that overall these steps were important in strengthening the communications aspects of PGG II and the capabilities of project teams. In that regard, the introduction of strategic communications plans at a project level was considered to have contributed to more coherent messaging in a systematic way.

The PGG II website and social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter have shown a steady increase in visits and follower base over the years of implementation of PGG II. This is shown in Table 3-3. The proportion of this audience that represents citizens as end beneficiaries is less clear. Yet, the large number of individuals reached suggests that the outreach managed to go beyond national authorities, key partners and relevant stakeholders and that many of those reached were likely to be individuals. In that regard, efforts to diversify the visibility products, for example with testimonies by beneficiaries, were reported by field office staff to have been welcomed at the national level and made the benefits of PGG II more tangible to the wider population. Examples include a video with the testimonies of the Georgian delegation of judicial candidates from the High School of Justice during their study visit to the Council of Europe and a video with testimonies from project beneficiaries in Azerbaijan both in English and Azerbaijani languages.²⁹ Indeed, communication materials in local language is considered a key to effectively reaching the local population. Infographics on the mid-term results of PGG II by thematic area³⁰ were presented in a visual way and disseminated across the various channels.

Table 3.3: Key communication statistics

Channel	2019	2020	2021	Comparison to previous reporting period
Website	• 3,517 visits	• 8,203 visits	• 6,946 visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • +135.8% in visits 2019 vs 2018 • Decrease in 2021 vs 2020
Facebook	• 4,376 subscribers	• 4,492 subscribers	• 4,696 subscribers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable from 2019 to 2020 • +3.69% increase 2021 vs 2020
Twitter	• n/a	• 836 followers	• 1,277 followers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • +13 % increase in 2019 vs 2018 • +49% increase 2020 vs 2019 • +43.81% increase 2021 vs 2020
Youtube	• n/a	• 9,700 views	• 1,430 views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • +15 % increase in 2020 vs 2019 • Decrease in views in 2021 vs 2020, likely linked to the online events taking place during the pandemic (2020)

Source: PGG II Annual Report 2019-2021

In addition, country-specific and regional awareness-raising campaigns and innovative visibility events centred around the PGG II Programme results contributed to increasing the visibility of PGG II. For example, the *'#JusticeForAll'* online campaign in Georgia which aimed to raise awareness of barriers faced by different groups to accessing justice in the country reached 680 people through the PGG Facebook page and 405,865 people via the Facebook page of the Council of Europe office in Tbilisi, resulting in 46,593 direct engagements, including comments, likes, shares and reactions.³¹ Other innovative formats such as the participation of CoE field office staff in Georgia in a TV talk show as well

²⁹ See <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/pgg2/-/strengthening-anti-money-laundering-and-asset-recovery-in-azerbaijan>

³⁰ See [Infographics \(coe.int\)](#)

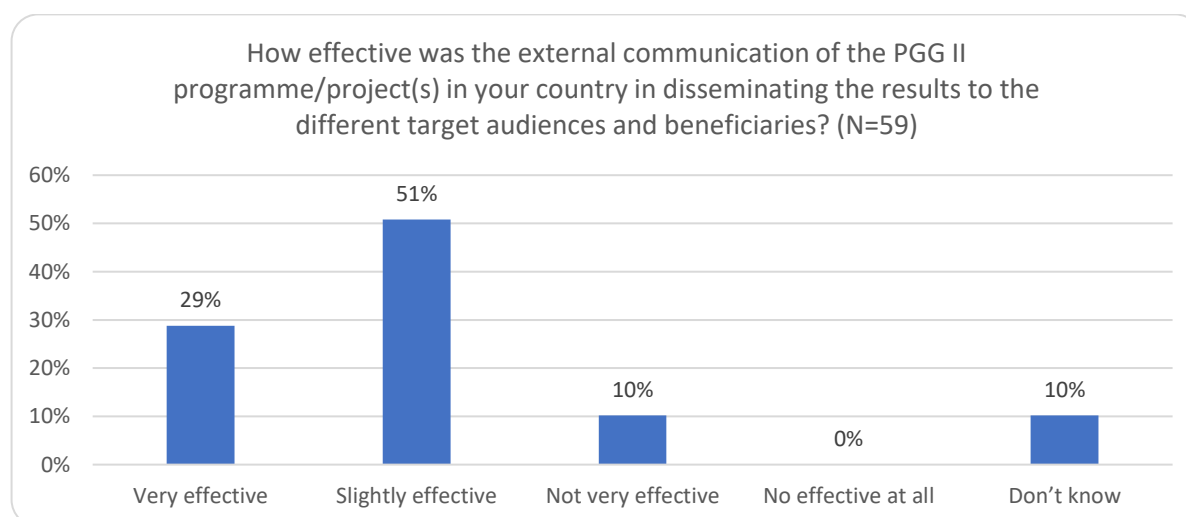
³¹ PGG II Annual Report 2021

as regional live panels facilitated the engagement of the broader population. Indeed, the live panels were followed by 4,300 people in total, and information on the individual events was shared widely on social media, reaching over 49,000 people.³² Country-specific actions with civil society organisations for the promotion of projects financed by micro-grants e.g. in the Republic of Moldova have proven effective in using social media to reach over 5,000 people on Facebook and be seen by over 22,000 times on Twitter.³³

During the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, the communication of PGG II activities focused on the promotion of relevant online tools such as the Human rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) courses, while also communicating on assistance provided by the European Union in times of crisis (e.g. in the Republic of Moldova) as shared by the EUD. Later on in the pandemic, regional online live panels covered, for example, responses to Covid-19 and lessons learned in the EaP region, which provided the opportunity to present the measures taken by the EU and the Council of Europe in response to the pandemic.

Survey respondents were of the view that the external communications aspects of PGG II were successful in their aims. As seen in Figure 3.13 below, 29% of the respondents considered the external communication of PGGII to be ‘very effective’, whereas 51% considered it ‘slightly effective’. This may be linked to the technical nature of the projects, which interviewees saw as a challenge to effectively reach the wider population.

Figure 3.13: Effectiveness of the external communication of PGG II



Source: CSES survey 2022

All in all, the communications aspects of PGG II are seen as having incorporated previous recommendation and made progress towards effectively reaching the wider population. As mentioned above, the technical nature of the projects posed a challenge which was successfully overcome through a variety of materials focusing on benefits for the wider population in the respective country. In that regard, efforts from the individual field offices in coordination with the CoE headquarters was crucial.

³² PGG II Annual Report 2020

³³ PGG II Annual Report 2021

3.3 Added value

This section analyses the extent to which specificities of the Council of Europe (its specific approach, composition and working methods) contributed added value to the PGG II Programme outcomes and projects' implementation.

3.3.1 To what extent is the PGG Programme perceived by the PGG stakeholders and beneficiaries as having a clear comparative advantage compared to other International actors active in the areas covered by the PGG Programme?

The added value of PGG II was strongly perceived by the project beneficiaries in the three countries in scope. As a standard setter, the Council of Europe's expertise in the areas addressed by PGG II and delivered through the high-quality trainings and expert advice were valuable to the stakeholders and not available from other sources. In those cases where projects were implemented in the same or a similar sector by international actors such as the EUD, the CoE field office ensured early coordination to avoid duplication and maintained continuous communication with the local partners to maximise the support offered. This was the case for example in Georgia.³⁴ The Council of Europe project staff were in close contact with the monitoring bodies including GRECO and MONEYVAL, thereby having direct access to the knowledge and expertise relevant to the PGG II projects that other international actors do not possess. In addition, the access to high-level experts, both in-house as well as externally, ensured that the experts delivering the trainings had the very best and most up-to-date expertise. In addition, direct contact with CEPEJ through CEPEJ expert support, the exchange of good practices, study visits as well as participation in the CEPEJ Plenary and working group meetings was highly valued by project partners. Indeed, beneficiaries gained directly from CEPEJ's expertise in the area of the functioning of justice systems and in relation to its tools and measures aimed at improving the efficiency and quality of user-oriented judicial systems, expertise that was not available through other channels.

The added value of PGG II was further evidenced by the access to knowledge related to European best practices, thereby delivering practical knowledge directly applicable to the PGG II countries. Project beneficiaries emphasised the benefits of exchanging knowledge and experience from European countries as well as the value of the international study visits, which had allowed them to introduce certain elements of the European countries' regulatory frameworks as innovations into their own legislative frameworks. These exchanges were unique to the technical support provided by the Council of Europe and highly appreciated as valuable contribution to the reform process.

For project beneficiaries, co-operation with the Council of Europe was a guarantee of stable financing of projects throughout its period of implementation. The reliability of the Council of Europe in its approach to technical co-operation was emphasized as being extremely valuable by project partners who were able to carry out the activities with the certainty of receiving the agreed funding. The set up of the EU/ CoE Joint Programmes certainly contributes to this, as in some cases like the PGG II 80% of the total budget comes from EU funding; this is not the case for call EU/CoE Joint Programmes.. The multi-stakeholder approach to project design and implementation meant that local stakeholders took co-ownership of the projects, thereby actively contributing to the reform process. This was possible, on the one hand, thanks to the inclusive process of programme design engaging various stakeholders at a national level. On the other hand, the continuity of the projects and the coherence with PGG I put project partners at the forefront.

³⁴The EU-UNDP project 'Consolidating Parliamentary Democracy in Georgia' (2019-2023) supported the institutional functioning and national ownership, see: <https://eu4georgia.eu/projects/eu-project-page/?id=715>

3.3.2 To what extent has the PGG been able to put its comparative advantage and expertise into action and create inter-linkages between projects and Council of Europe standard-setting and monitoring instruments during the implementation of the PGG?

The PGG II programme successfully created inter-linkages between the projects' activities and the CoE's monitoring instruments, such as GRECO and MONEYVAL evaluations, and the Venice Commission through the Quick Response Mechanism. As emphasised by project beneficiaries, the support of CoE experts under PGG II was particularly appreciated in the context of the evaluations carried out by GRECO and MONEYVAL, and in the light of the recommendations that they offered. For example, in Georgia the support to the AML/CFT supervision of the accounting and auditing sector followed MONEYVAL recommendations while in Azerbaijan the PGG II provided support to the NRA and Action Plan in preparing the next round of MONEYVAL evaluations at the same time as it addressed previously made recommendations. The value added of PGG II was derived from the programme's commitment to promotion of the policymaking standards in line with the Council's strategic documents such as 'Human Rights Approach: Practical Guide for Co-Operation Projects'³⁵, 'Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process'³⁶ or the CoE's 'Gender Equality Strategy' for a period of 2018-2023³⁷.

In this context, the PGG II addressed issues such as the promotion of human rights, efforts towards gender equality, and supporting the civil society, that receive limited attention from other donors across the EaP countries. The interview feedback confirmed that the Council of Europe support in these areas was crucial for the advancing in the reform process, also in areas perceived as politically sensitive at a national level. This was the case, for example, for vulnerable groups and the LGBT community in the EaP region. By providing technical support in these areas, the Council of Europe contributed to facilitating reforms.

In the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, the PGG II added value is linked particularly to the countries' reforms in light of those states' EU aspirations. In Azerbaijan, the CoE technical expertise supported the country in its reforms as a duty bearer and signatory of international conventions. As emphasised in one of the interviews, the convention-based nature of the CoE supports the general, socio-political reforms in the countries where the Council operates. This is because the implementation of the CoE projects, such as the PGGII, encourages the partner countries to become signatories of the CoE conventions. For example, Azerbaijan so far has signed 65 CoE conventions. Although it is unclear to what extent any of these were signed due to the PGGII, interviewees were of the view that the PGG II projects had contributed to implementing the CoE conventions by supporting the national reforms along those principles, thereby bringing the national system closer to the European standards.

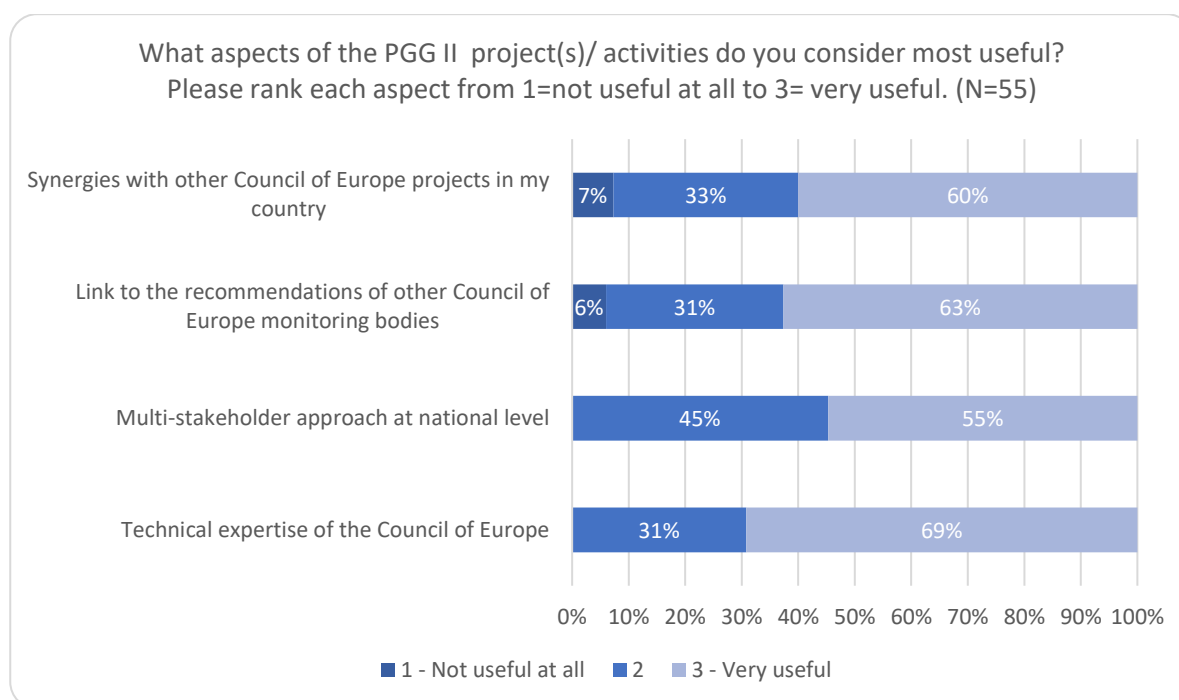
All of the above arguments have been reflected in the responses to the survey.

Figure 3.14: Most useful aspects of PGG projects as perceived by survey respondents

³⁵ Council of Europe (2020). Human Rights Approach: Practical Guide for Co-Operation Projects, Conseil de l'Europe - brochure A4 portrait (coe.int).

³⁶ Council of Europe (2019). Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-Making Process

³⁷ Council of Europe (2018). Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023, 16808b47e1 (coe.int).



Source: CSES survey 2022

3.3.3 What is the added value of the QRM and how to improve the use of this instrument?

The Quick Response Mechanism (QRM) has proved to be an effective tool for ad hoc expertise to the EaP countries upon request of the national authorities or the Council of Europe bodies. Over the period of implementation of PGG II, a total number of 42 Opinions were requested through the QRM, with a varying level of engagement across the countries (see Table 3.4). The number of requests remained stable over the three years (2019 – 12 requests, 2020 – 8 requests, 2021 – 11 requests, January to December 2022- 11 requests). This suggests a high level of engagement with national institutions and confirms that the authorities value the quick, targeted legal expertise provided.

Table 3.4: Overview of QRM requests issued by country in 2019-2022³⁸

Country	QRM opinions	Requesting authority	PGG theme
Armenia	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National authorities: 10 CoE bodies: 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes: 4 No: 4
Azerbaijan	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National authorities: 0 CoE bodies: 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes: - No: -
Belarus	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National authorities: 0 CoE bodies: 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes: - No: -
Georgia	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National authorities: 10 CoE bodies: 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes: 3 No: 6
Republic of Moldova	18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National authorities: 17 CoE bodies: 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes: 10 No: 7

³⁸ Table based on QRM requests by 16 August 2022, includes all requests issued, including two requests cancelled due to regulatory changes in the country before the opinion was issued, one request that was considered out of scope of the QRM and three opinions pending approval by DG NEAR.

Country	QRM opinions	Requesting authority	PGG theme
Ukraine	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National authorities: 4 CoE bodies: 0 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes: 1 No: 4
Grand Total	42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National authorities: 42 (97.7%) CoE bodies: 1 (2.3%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes: 18 (46%) No: 21 (54%)N

Source: QRM follow up table and VC website

The QRM worked well as a flexible tool for advice on PGG II topics. Interviewees saw the added value of the QRM mainly in the high-quality expertise in core reform areas, provided upon request in a timely manner. The expert advice was considered to be complementary in many cases to the activities of individual PGG II projects, especially in regard to judicial reforms. Beyond that, the almost balanced breakdown of thematic coverage (Opinions on PGG II themes – 46%, Opinions on non-PGG II topics – 54%) indicated that the authorities made use of the wider expertise of the Venice Commission and benefitted from advice beyond the core areas for PGG II. As stakeholders we consulted emphasised, PGG II made it possible to provide additional Venice Commission advice to EaP countries, which would otherwise most likely not be covered under the limited budget of the Venice Commission.

In the four countries making use of the QRM (Armenia, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine), the recommendations were in many cases adopted and implemented. In almost all cases, the Venice Commission opinions were requested by the national authorities, indicating willingness to engage with the Venice Commission and an openness to take its advice on board. Indeed, of the 42 Opinions issued (which therefore excludes two opinions initially requested from QRM funding; see Appendix G), over 38% were fully implemented or partially implemented (see Table 3-5). However, the figures to retain are the followings: out of the 23 opinions for which a follow-up procedure was possible (therefore excluding the categories “pending implementation” and “not applicable”), nearly 70% were fully or partially implemented. It is important to stress that implementation is out of the Council of Europe’s control, but nevertheless a good indication of the support facilitated by the PGG II to the ongoing reforms, taking into account that the follow-up procedure done by the Secretariat of the Venice Commission depends on the reactivity of the authorities to respond to such requests.

Table 3-5 below provides an assessment of the extent of implementation of the advice provided through the Venice Commission QRM by December 2022. The overview draws on the 42 requests leading to a completed opinion and does not take into account two requests being prepared at the time, three requests pending approval by DG NEAR and four requests that were cancelled due to changes in the national context (e.g. crisis ending before the adoption of the Opinion in the Republic of Moldova or the draft Law being adopted prior to the issuing of the opinion on the matter in Ukraine). Appendix G provides a detailed assessment of the implementation.

Table 3.5: Overview of extent of implementation of Legal Opinions provided through the QRM³⁹

Extent of implementation	Number of Opinions January 2019-December 2022	Percentage
Fully implemented	6	16.22%
Partially implemented	10	27.03%
Not implemented	7	18.92%
Pending implementation	10	13.51%
Not applicable	9	24.32%

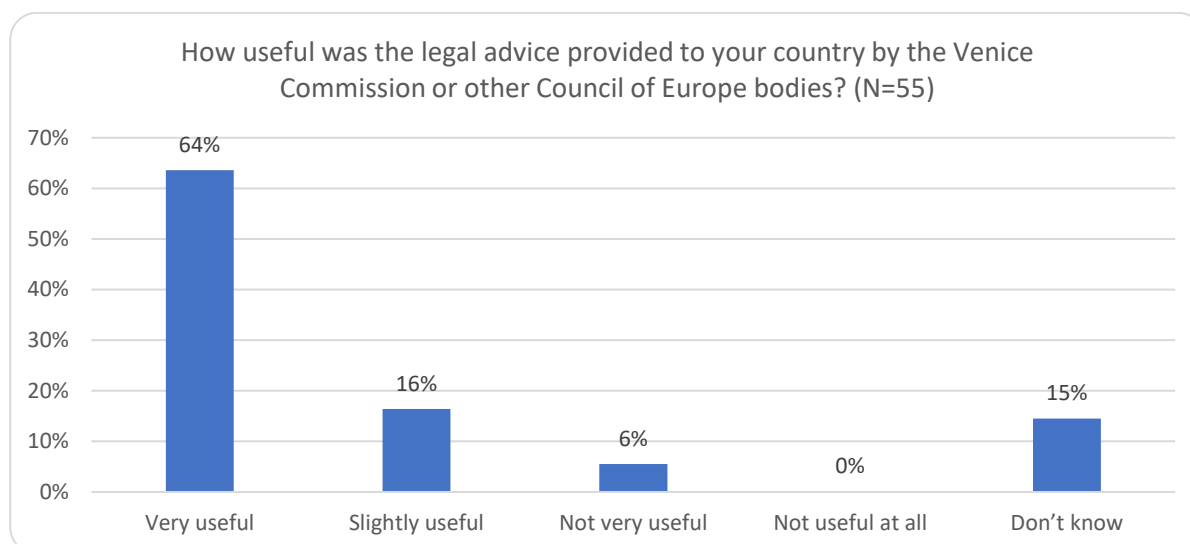
³⁹ Fully implemented = most of the key recommendations if not all were taken on board and implemented, Partially implemented = some recommendations were taken on board and implemented, Not implemented = recommendations were not taken into account, either because authorities decided not to do so or because there has not been enough time to do so.

Total	42	100.00%
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Source: QRM Follow up Table, PGG II Annual Report 2019 - 2021, Venice Commission Website

The stakeholders we consulted considered the legal advice provided through the QRM useful to their respective country and helpful to their reforms. As shown below, the majority of survey respondents considered it to be 'very useful' (64%).

Figure 3.15: Usefulness of provision of legal advice



Source: CSES survey 2022

Looking ahead, the evaluation suggests that there is room for EaP countries to engage more widely with other Council of Europe bodies covered under the QRM to benefit from their expertise through tailored legal advice. Since the scope of the QRM was enlarged in 2019 to include other CoE bodies beyond the Venice Commission, limited use has been made of their expertise. Only one Opinion was provided by a different CoE body to the Venice Commission, namely by the Media Department of the Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law⁴⁰. This might be linked to the recent inclusion of these bodies under the QRM or to the fact that national authorities already rely on the recommendations provided by CoE bodies such as GRECO and MONEYVAL through the evaluation reports to make reforms. Nevertheless, engaging with CoE bodies specialised in areas beyond those of the Venice Commission to a larger extent on specific, ad hoc questions could further increase the value of the QRM in line with the core areas of PGG.

⁴⁰ By August 2022, one legal Opinion had been provided outside of the area of expertise of the Venice Commission namely by the Media Department of the Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law to the Armenian Ministry of Justice in the field of Law on Mass Media. See <https://rm.coe.int/armenia-tp-needsassessmentreport-update2022-jul22-2756-5040-1542-v-1-e/1680a841de>

4 Overall Conclusions & Recommendations

This section presents the conclusions of the evaluation of the PGG II Programme and the resulting recommendations. We have also included several lessons learned which have wider applicability.

4.1 Overall Conclusion

Despite various challenges, the PGG II Programme successfully delivered technical support to national authorities and project beneficiaries in the countries covered by the intervention, thereby making a significant contribution to the promotion of good governance. Our evaluation suggests that PGG II largely achieved its main aims although some actions will need to be continued to do so. Despite it being still too early to assess longer-term impacts, changes in the legislative and institutional frameworks in the three countries in scope already point in the direction of change.

The PGG II Programme's unique format, together with the expertise of the Council of Europe and EU financial support combined to generate considerable added value. In the broader political context, the PGG will continue to be an important programme supporting respect for the rule of law, democracy and human rights.

4.2 Specific Conclusions and recommendations

The evaluation of PGG II indicates a high degree of relevance in addressing key priorities of the Council of Europe and the European Union in the Eastern Partnership countries. PGG II focused on important areas for reform in the PGG II countries. In this regard, the programme successfully linked the technical assistance it provided with the recommendations of Council of Europe bodies, thereby supporting EaP countries in their efforts to promote a closer alignment with European standards. In addition, there is broad consensus regarding the relevance of the PGG II Programme and of the individual projects to the evolving needs of the respective countries, and national authorities and other beneficiaries in them. Indeed, the Programme remains relevant in all EaP countries, despite the situation in Belarus and Ukraine. . Nevertheless, whilst progress has been made in the beneficiary countries, additional PGG support is needed to complete reforms.

Recommendation 1 (High priority): The Council of Europe and the European Union should continue their support for the countries covered by the PGG Programme. Further interventions should retain the basic approach that has been adopted under PGG II, i.e. the multi-stakeholder approach to ensure that projects target beneficiary needs in implementing the recommendations of the Council of Europe bodies and maintain the co-ownership model to project design and implementation. Continuity and complementarity between the PGG II and future phases in the themes addressed and partners engaged would be beneficial.

Overall, the PGG II has proved to be an effective programme that has largely achieved its expected outcomes in its core thematic areas. The PGG II activities, including expert advice, legal assessments and capacity building initiatives were effective in promoting the programme objectives and in addressing the needs of the beneficiary countries. While it is too early to assess the impact of the programme, the outcomes to date suggest that PGG II is likely to have significant impacts and will contribute to the resilience and stability of the EaP region and the reform process in individual countries.

The design of PGG II worked well. While country-specific projects supported the national authorities and other stakeholders in a targeted manner, regional projects facilitated valuable exchanges of good practices and encouraged the implementation of reforms. The cross-cutting themes, namely combating discrimination and violence against women, were embedded to varying degrees in the individual PGG projects. Good progress was made with the mainstreaming of gender equality

compared with PGG I. However, greater emphasis could be placed on integrating this approach at the project design stage of projects covering technical topics, for example in the field of money laundering and terrorism financing.

Recommendation 2 (High priority): There is room to further strengthen the CoE's gender mainstreaming approach and the cross-cutting dimensions of the PGG Programme. The gender dimension could be further embedded across PGG projects, for example by including key indicators and targets for individual projects, and by streamlining gender analysis at the start of every project. Expert advice from Council of Europe gender advisers could achieve this given the highly technical nature of the PGG projects. In addition, anti-discrimination efforts could be further embedded across projects, thereby recognising the sensitivity of the topic in some EaP countries while encouraging progress in this area.

Factors contributing to the effectiveness of the PGG II Programme included the partnership approach with project beneficiaries, the ongoing communication between key stakeholders and the involvement of the Council of Europe's field offices in helping to manage the implementation of projects. Local Steering Committees strengthened the partnership approach. The inclusion of a wider range of actors, including the private sector and civil society organisations, as recommended in the ROM report of the PGG I evaluation, contributed to strengthening their capacity to engage in the reform process.

Recommendation 3 (Medium priority): Civil society organisations should be included to a greater extent in PGG project implementation activities both as promoters of change as well as in their capacity as 'watchdogs' of the reform process. Civil society organisations play an important role in monitoring the effectiveness and transparency of democratic processes and safeguarding the rule of law. They could benefit from PGG projects by, for example, attending workshops and other events or participating in the consultative process to provide their views on shortcomings and potential solutions to the revision and implementation of specific pieces of legislation. In addition, creating channels for civil society organisations to regularly engage with national authorities in the context of PGG III for example in relation to initiatives and projects they are carrying out in the PGG thematic areas would help to ensure effective programme coordination and contribute to building more inclusive societies.

In regard to performance monitoring, extensive reporting was undertaken at the PGG programme and project level. Overall, reporting focused to a large extent on describing the PGG-supported activities carried out and number of outputs (e.g. number of training participants) and less on the outcomes achieved. Efforts are already underway to strengthen result-based management and evidence-based reporting. For example, the six-month reports to DG NEAR and the 2021 PGG Annual Report now include achievements by objective and as such are a step in the right direction. There is scope to improve programme and project monitoring.

Recommendation 4 (Medium priority): Continue strengthening the results-oriented approach to reporting outcomes across projects and programme level in a systematic way. Reporting should focus more on outcomes achieved in relation to targets. Target setting should be improved. Incorporating quantifiable targets across projects, in consultation with national stakeholders would allow to measure progress more easily. In addition, improved self-reporting tools and follow-ups with beneficiaries, for example in the form of surveys, would increase the understanding of achievements and provide a better picture of factors contributing to successful outcomes.

The PGG II Programme successfully adapted to and overcame challenges to implementation posed by factors such as COVID-19, the consequences of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the political developments in the region. The flexibility embedded into the PGG II programme design, the proactive

approach of the Council of Europe field offices, the adoption of digital communication methods and the two extensions to the PGG II Programme minimised the negative effects of such external factors. In all three countries covered by the data collection, PGG II adapted well to the COVID pandemic with online methods being adopted for the delivery of training courses and other activities. Whilst there were some drawbacks there were also advantages in adopting online methods, especially in terms of extending the reach of different PGG II activities, although this applied more to the national than the regional projects.

Recommendation 5 (Medium priority): A detailed risk assessment should be conducted for projects at the start of PGG III to make it easier to take into account challenges in the region, and the project teams in Strasbourg should continue to work closely together with the project teams in the Council of Europe field offices to enable PGG III to react flexibly and quickly to changing circumstances in the field. Conducting a detailed risk assessment at the outset of the PGG projects would help prepare the project teams for any potential developments that might impact the implementation of the projects and enable mitigation measures to be built into interventions. In addition, relying to a greater extent on the continuous assessment of the field offices for decision-making (in consultation with Strasbourg and Brussels) to adapt the individual projects to developments at national level would further strengthen the ability to respond quickly and effectively, and minimise potential disruptions to the PGG.

The visibility of the PGG II Programme was strengthened throughout its second phase, and the variety of promotional materials made it easier to reach a wider audience. Although the technical nature of the projects posed a challenge in effectively reaching citizens and end beneficiaries, the innovative approaches and format of events and the use of social media and online platforms strengthened the PGG II Programme's implementation and effects.

The role of the Council Europe as a standard-setter in the two main PGG fields of judicial reform and economic crime, as well as its links with the relevant monitoring bodies, demonstrated considerable added value. The Council of Europe expertise and knowledge of both standards and effective measures to promote reforms across gave the PGG II a unique value compared to other programmes and international actors active in the region. The ad-hoc tailored legal advice provided by the Venice Commission and other Council of Europe bodies through the QRM contributed to important updates to the legal frameworks in the EaP countries.

Recommendation 6 (Low priority): Greater engagement with Council of Europe bodies through the QRM should be encouraged in the PGG beneficiary countries. Making greater use of the QRM also in relation to reforms in the areas of expertise of CoE beyond those of the Venice Commission would allow the EaP countries to maximise their access to ad hoc expert legal advice. By doing so, the added value of the PGG Programme would be further enhanced and project beneficiaries could get a better insight to the extent of their reform progress towards the European standards.

The granting of EU candidate status to the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine has given a strong impetus to PGG II in these countries. For Georgia, several of the areas for reform highlighted by the EU in June 2022 as preconditions for further accession negotiations addressed thematic areas of PGG II, reinforcing the relevance of the programme in the country. In Azerbaijan, the PGG Programme constituted an important source of technical support, not available through other channels. In the Republic of Moldova, the prospect of EU accession negotiations starting encouraged the authorities to make faster progress in implementing PGG II actions.

4.3 Lessons Learned

The lessons learned from this evaluation can be divided in two categories, methodological and operational. While both sets of recommendations are applicable to the wider ways of working of the Council of Europe, the former are relevant for evaluation exercises while the latter focus on strengthening the operationalization of joint programmes.

Summary of Lessons Learned

Methodological lessons learned

It would be beneficial to invite local CoE project teams and Heads/Deputy Heads of Office to be part of the Reference Group for future evaluation exercises. The PGG II project teams were consulted as part of the interview programme and their views were integrated into the findings and informed the recommendations of this evaluation. They also provided feedback on the draft reports. However, it would be beneficial to have the field offices represented also at earlier and later stages in the evaluation process, i.e. as part of the Reference Group and attending its meetings. This would increase their chances to input in the process and ensure their view is acknowledged throughout together with that of the CoE headquarters.

The PGG and other evaluations could be planned slightly earlier in the programme lifecycle to more easily inform various decisions linked to the following phase of the given programme. Without overlapping with any interim evaluations, if the final evaluation was brought forward slightly this could help inform, for example, the decision on which individual projects should be continued or not in the subsequent phase of the programme. In addition, the different options for the selection of projects to be analyzed as part of the sampling approach (i.e. by theme, by geography, etc.) could be decided more easily in consultation with the project teams to maximize the overall benefits of the evaluation. This would further strengthen the value of the resulting recommendations for the follow-up programme.

Operational lessons learned

Channels for regular exchanges between partners on the ground are a key to success and could be embedded across CoE/EU joint programmes. The newly implemented Local Steering Committees for PGG II which regularly bring together the CoE project team, the EUD and local project partners were highly valued by those involved. These meetings created the channel for ongoing communication, helped coordination and further strengthened the projects' adaptability to changing circumstances. LSC could be replicated also for other joint programmes involving various partners on the ground.

The CoE could provide training on results-oriented monitoring and reporting to project staff both in the headquarters and in the field offices. Ongoing efforts to strengthen the results-oriented approach to programme monitoring and reporting are already visible in PGG II project and programme management. There is room to continue strengthening the knowledge and practical understanding of this approach across CoE projects more broadly to support teams in the joint effort to develop more effective programme management tools of this sort.

Appendices

The following appendices are provided:

- **Appendix A:** Intervention logic
- **Appendix B:** Evaluation Matrix
- **Appendix C:** Interview checklist
- **Appendix D:** Survey questionnaire
- **Appendix E:** Agendas for the three field missions
- **Appendix F:** Overview of outcomes by sample project
- **Appendix G:** Overview of QRM opinions 2019-2022
- **Appendix H:** Project case studies:
 - *‘Strengthening anti-money laundering and asset recovery’* in Azerbaijan
 - *‘Strengthening the efficiency and quality of the judicial system’* in Azerbaijan
 - *‘Enhancing the systems of prevention and combatting corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing’* in Georgia
 - *‘Strengthening the capacities of the justice sector actors to deliver justice in line with European standards, in particular to fight discrimination’* in the Republic of Moldova
 - *‘Strengthening measures to prevent and combat economic crime’* in the EaP countries
 - *‘Women’s Access to Justice: delivering on the Istanbul Convention and other European gender equality standards’* in the EaP countries
- **Appendix I:** References

Appendix A: PGG II Intervention Logic

ISSUES	OBJECTIVES	INTERVENTIONS/ INPUTS	OUTPUTS	INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME	IMPACTS
<p>Limited alignment of the national legislation and practice with European standards</p>	<p>Programme objective:</p> <p>Increase the EaP region's stabilisation and resilience.</p>	<p>Financial resources:</p> <p>EUR 17.5 million of which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% comes from the EU, • 20% from the Council of Europe. <p>Potential additional national and regional EU funding.</p>	<p>Legislative framework, implementing mechanisms and procedural accountability in the prevention of corruption and money laundering in compliance with European standards, including those on gender equality.</p>	<p>Strengthened Rule of Law, enhanced anti-corruption and anti-money laundering mechanisms in the Eastern Partnership region.</p>	<p>Strengthened stability and resilience in the Eastern Partnership region.</p>
<p>Specific issues addressed through the PGG II:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to support national projects with capacity building and exchange of best practice; • Need to strengthen rule of law and anti-corruption mechanisms, combating money laundering/ terrorism financing; • Need to implement key judicial reforms; • Need to combat discrimination and protect the rights of vulnerable groups; • Need to address gender inequality. 	<p>Strategic objective:</p> <p>Prevent and combat threats to the Rule of Law and support justice sector reforms.</p>	<p>Human resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Steering Committees • Council of Europe ODGP • Council of Europe staff implementing the projects • PGG Experts • PGG National Coordinators 	<p>Strengthened institutional capacities of anti-corruption and money laundering special bodies to implement Council of Europe recommendations and European standards in fighting and preventing corruption, money-laundering and terrorist financing</p>	<p>Strengthened independence, effectiveness and efficiency of justice systems in the Eastern Partnership region.</p>	
	<p>Operational objective:</p> <p>Support the alignment of the national legislation and practice with European standards in the field of combating threats to the Rule of Law and support of judicial reforms according to the individual needs of the Eastern Partnership countries.</p>	<p>16 projects* providing support in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance • Legal advice through the Quick Response Mechanism (QRM) 	<p>Strengthened regional co-operation to address national shortcomings and regional challenges to judicial reform.</p>	<p>Enhanced protection of the rights of vulnerable groups and women.</p>	
			<p>Strengthened regional co-operation to address national shortcomings and regional challenges to judicial reform.</p>		
			<p>Legislative framework and implementing mechanisms involved for judicial reform in compliance with European standards, including those on gender equality.</p>		
			<p>Support to implementation of targeted judicial reforms in the Eastern Partnership region with a view to strengthening the independence, effectiveness and efficiency of judiciary.</p>		

*At its 1429th meeting on 17 March 2022, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe reiterated the condemnation of the active participation of Belarus in the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and decided to suspend all technical co-operation with Belarus but to enhance the Organisation's relations with the Belarusian civil society and the opposition in exile, paying particular attention to the Belarusian youth, independent media and human rights defenders. Similarly, the European Council stated in its Conclusions of 24 February 2022 that, as a result of the Russian military aggression against Ukraine and the involvement of Belarus, the European Union is further suspending planned and ongoing programmes and activities with the participation of Belarusian public authorities and state-owned enterprises. The European Union will continue to step up its support to Belarusian civil society.

Appendix B: PGG II Evaluation Matrix

Sub-question	Measure(s)/ Indicator(s)	Data collection instrument(s)	Data Source(s)
Relevance – To what extent are the projects implemented suited to the priorities of the Organisation and the needs of the target groups?			
To what extent is the PGG II in line with the priorities of the Council of Europe and of the European Union?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent of alignment of the PGG II with the Eastern Partnership Post 2020 Priorities Extent of alignment of the PGG II with the Council of Europe broader key policy objectives Extent of alignment of the PGG II with the objectives of the EU's Deliverables 2020 for the EaP countries Extent of alignment of the PGG II with the European Union broader key policy objectives Extent of alignment of the PGG II with the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 	<p>Document review</p> <p>Interviews</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council of Europe/ European Union joint Statement of Intent PGG II Programme documents (e.g. activity/ progress reports by country) Eastern Partnership Post 2020 Priorities EU's Deliverables 2020 for the EaP countries, documentation on EU EaP policy and its flagship initiatives Interviews with representatives of the Council of Europe (DPC, DGI, DGII, Council of Europe offices in the EaP countries) and of the European Union (DG NEAR)
To what extent are the PGG II projects in line with the needs and priorities of the respective beneficiary countries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of requests for and extent of application of legal advice on priority reforms provided through the QRM, by country Extent to which the challenges in member states were addressed by the PGG II technical assistance projects Level of satisfaction of national partners with the cooperation with the Council of Europe / EU and other PGG II partners 	<p>Document review</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>Case studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PGG II activity reports and result reports by country Annual Plan of Actions (APAs) and Council of Europe Action Plans by country Interviews with national authorities, civil society organisations, project beneficiaries Cases showing the ways in which the PGG has addressed challenges in member states
To what extent were the recommendations of the Council of Europe monitoring and advisory bodies in respect of the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent of alignment between the Council of Europe bodies' recommendations and the PGG II objectives and thematic areas Extent of alignment of national legislation 	Document review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendations by Council of Europe monitoring and advisory bodies (PACE, Venice Commission, etc.) PGG II Programme documents (e.g. activity/ progress reports by country)

Sub-question	Measure(s)/ Indicator(s)	Data collection instrument(s)	Data Source(s)
EaP countries used in the design of the PGG Phase II with an aim to bring the national legislation and practice closer in line with the European standards?	and practice with European standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder perceptions on the linkages between Council of Europe bodies' recommendations and the regional and country specific projects 	Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Plan of Actions (APAs) and Council of Europe Action Plans by country Mid-term and final evaluation of the PGG Phase I Interviews with representatives of the Council of Europe (DPC, DGI, DGII, Council of Europe offices in the EaP countries) and of the European Union (DG NEAR)
Effectiveness - To what extent have the PGG II and the projects attained their objectives?			
To which extent has the PGG achieved its objectives and outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and nature of legislative changes in beneficiary countries to which the PGG projects have contributed to Extent of alignment of national legislation with European standards Stakeholder perceptions on changes in legal practices Extent to which best practices were applied as recommended through the QRM Extent to which changes in legislation and practices are attributable to the PGG II 	Document review Interviews Case studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PGG progress reports prepared by DPC Mid-term and final evaluation of the PGG Phase I National legislation documents, reports on legislative changes in beneficiary countries Monitoring reports from other international organisations on legislative developments Interviews with representatives of the Council of Europe (DPC, DGI, DGII, Council of Europe offices in the EaP countries) and of the European Union (DG NEAR) Interviews with national authorities, civil society organisations Cases showcasing outcomes attributable to the PGG II in the two thematic areas (judiciary and fight against corruption) and across geographies
Which factors have supported and hindered the effectiveness of the projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List of factors influencing the outcomes of the PGG II in positive ways List of factors influencing the outcomes of the PGG II in negative ways 	Document review Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National legislation documents, reports on legislative changes in beneficiary countries Monitoring reports from other international organisations on legislative developments Interviews with representatives of the Council of Europe (DPC, DGI, DGII, Council of Europe offices in the EaP countries) and of the European Union (DG NEAR) Interviews with national authorities, civil society

Sub-question	Measure(s)/ Indicator(s)	Data collection instrument(s)	Data Source(s)
		Case studies	<p>organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cases showcasing outcomes attributable to the PGG II in the two thematic areas (judiciary and fight against corruption) and across geographies
Did the projects provide adequate support to the countries' efforts in addressing reforms in line with Council of Europe monitoring recommendations and with the European standards?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and nature of outputs delivered by country (including legislative review, conferences, seminars, working groups, networking, analytical reports, training sessions) Budget allocation and resources available per project vs project/country objectives Level of satisfaction of national partners with the support received 	<p>Document review</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>Case studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PGG II activity reports, budgets and result reports by country Annual Plan of Actions (APAs) and Council of Europe Action Plans by country Interviews with Council of Europe and European Union staff Interviews with national authorities, civil society organisations, project beneficiaries Cases showcasing outcomes attributable to the PGG II
To what extent have the regional projects improved regional co-operation and the exchanges of best practices between the EaP countries in the thematic areas covered by the PGG programme?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and nature of exchanges of best practices between EaP countries within the PGG II regional projects Evidence of implementation of best practices attributable to the PGG II regional projects Evidence of strengthened regional cooperation attributable to the PGG II Level of satisfaction of national/ regional partners with regional projects 	<p>Document review</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>Case studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PGG II regional projects documentation, progress reports Interviews with Council of Europe staff and European Union staff Interviews with national authorities, civil society organisations Cases showcasing outcomes attributable to the PGG II regional projects within the two thematic areas (judiciary and fight against corruption)
To which extent has the PGG enabled the creation of synergies among country specific and regional projects and contributed to their effectiveness?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent of alignment of objectives and activities between national and regional projects Perception of synergies by national partners and wider stakeholders contributing to their effectiveness 	<p>Documentation review</p> <p>Interviews</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PGG II programming documents, project activity reports and result reports Interviews with Council of Europe staff and European Union staff Interviews with national authorities, civil society organisations and project beneficiaries Cases providing evidence of observed synergies

Sub-question	Measure(s)/ Indicator(s)	Data collection instrument(s)	Data Source(s)
		Case studies	between national and regional projects
To what extent have gender issues been mainstreamed in PGG projects' design and implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which gender issues have been incorporated into the PGG II projects design Extent to which gender issues have been considered in the implementation of the PGG II projects 	Documentation review Interviews Case studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PGG II project activity reports and result reports, internal project documentation Interviews with national authorities, civil society organisations and project beneficiaries Cases reflecting the ways in which gender issues have been mainstreamed in PGG II projects
To what extent has the PGG II been able to adapt its working methods and approach to the constraints brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic? To what extent has the COVID-19 pandemic affected the results achieved by the PGG projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and nature of changes in working methods implemented due to the COVID-19 pandemic Extent to which changes in working methods have been successful in overcoming constraints brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic Number and nature of activities and results of the PGG II projects affected by the COVID-19 pandemic 	Documentation review Interviews Case studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PGG II project activity reports and result reports, internal project documentation Interviews with Council of Europe staff and European Union staff Interviews with national authorities, civil society organisations and project beneficiaries Cases reflecting changes in working methods implemented Cases reflecting the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on PGG II project results
To what extent have the political challenges in the region affected the implementation and the results achieved by the PGG projects?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative assessment of the ways in which the political challenges in the region have affected the PGG II projects Number and nature of activities and results of the PGG II projects affected/ postponed/ cancelled due to political challenges 	Documentation review Interviews Case studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PGG II project activity reports and result reports, internal project documentation Interviews with Council of Europe staff and European Union staff Interviews with national authorities, civil society organisations and project beneficiaries Cases reflecting the impact of the political challenges in project implementation and project results
To what extent has the European Union and Council of Europe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence and assessment of corporate visual identity guidelines in place for PGG II 	Documentation review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PGG II programme documentation PG II project leaflets, publications and other

Sub-question	Measure(s)/ Indicator(s)	Data collection instrument(s)	Data Source(s)
<p>visibility been ensured in the Programme's implementation? To what extent have the citizens, beneficiaries, national stakeholders and other target audiences been informed of the activities and outcomes of the Programme?</p>	<p>projects and activity publications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and nature of promotional and public material produced for the PG II programme/ projects • Number of PGG II programme/ project mentions in national media sources referring to the Council of Europe/ European Union • Number of references by PGG implementation partners to the Council of Europe/ European Union 	<p>Interviews</p> <p>Case studies</p>	<p>promotional documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media reports and press coverage in beneficiary countries • Interviews with Council of Europe staff and European Union staff • Interviews with national authorities, civil society organisations and project beneficiaries • Cases reflecting the ways in which the PG II programme and the projects have communicated about their activities and outcomes
<p>Added value - To what extent did the specificities of the Council of Europe (its specific approach, composition and working methods) make a significant contribution to the Programme outcomes and projects implementation?</p>			
<p>To what extent is the PGG Programme perceived by the PGG stakeholders and beneficiaries as having a clear comparative advantage compared to other International actors active in the areas covered by the PGG Programme?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived added value of the PGG programme by stakeholders and beneficiaries • Qualitative assessment of the type and nature of the comparative advantage of the PGG II Programme compared to other international programmes and actors in the PGG II thematic areas 	<p>Documentation review</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>Case studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports and documentation of international actors active in the thematic and cross-sectoral areas covered by the PGGII (e.g. OSCE/ ODHIR, World Bank, EIGE) • Interviews with Council of Europe staff and European Union staff • Interviews with national authorities, civil society organisations and project beneficiaries • Cases showing evidence of the Council of Europe added value in the PGG II projects
<p>To what extent has the PGG been able to put its comparative advantage and expertise into action and create inter-linkages between projects and Council of Europe standard-setting and monitoring instruments during the implementation of the PGG?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment of the PGG II thematic areas, projects and activities with the wider expertise of Council of Europe bodies • Extent to which Council of Europe standard-setting and monitoring instruments have been used/ referenced during the PGG II implementation • Extent to which other areas of the Council of Europe have supported the PGG II 	<p>Documentation review</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>Case studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports and documentation of Council of Europe bodies (e.g. PACE) • Interviews with Council of Europe staff • Interviews with national authorities, civil society organisations and project beneficiaries • Cases showing the extent and ways in which Council of Europe expertise, and standard-setting and monitoring instruments have been used for the PG II

Sub-question	Measure(s)/ Indicator(s)	Data collection instrument(s)	Data Source(s)
<p>What is the added value of the QRM and how to improve the use of this instrument?</p>	<p>implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and nature of cases in which legal advice has been requested/ provided through the QRM by beneficiary country • Qualitative assessment of the added value of the QRM to provide legal advice • Identified gaps and shortcomings of the QRM 	<p>Documentation review</p> <p>Interviews</p> <p>Case studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PGG II programme documentation, activity reports • QRM legal advice provided, including Venice Commission opinions and recommendations by other Council of Europe bodies • Interviews with national authorities, civil society organisations and project beneficiaries • Cases showing the added value of the QRM and potential shortcomings

Appendix C: Interview Checklist

This list of questions is being used to carry out interviews for the evaluation of the Partnership for Good Governance Programme Phase II (PGG II) programme in your country. The interview should not last more than 45 minutes and will be confidential.

The PGG II's relevance to your country

- 1) To what extent is the PGG II in line with the priorities of the Council of Europe and of the European Union?
- 2) To what extent is the PGG programme/ the PGG project you are involved in addressing key needs of the beneficiary country?
- 3) To what extent has the PGG programme/ project responded to the practical and strategic gender needs of women?
- 4) To what extent were the recommendations of the Council of Europe monitoring and advisory bodies in respect of the EaP countries used in the design of the PGG Phase II with an aim to bring the national legislation and practice closer in line with the European standards?

How effectively PGG II has been implemented

- 5) Did the projects provide adequate support to the countries' efforts in addressing reforms in line with Council of Europe monitoring recommendations and with the European standards?
- 6) To which extent has the PGG achieved its objectives and outcomes? Which factors have supported and hindered the effectiveness of the projects?
- 7) To what extent have the regional projects improved regional co-operation and the exchanges of best practices between the EaP countries in the thematic areas covered by the PGG programme?
- 8) To which extent has the PGG enabled the creation of synergies among country specific and regional projects and contributed to their effectiveness?
- 9) To what extent have gender issues been mainstreamed in PGG projects' design and implementation?
- 10) To what extent has the PGG II contributed to the creation of favourable conditions for gender equality?
- 11) To what extent has the PGG II been able to adapt its working methods and approach to the constraints brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic? To what extent has the COVID-19 pandemic affected the results achieved by the PGG projects?
- 12) To what extent have the political challenges in the region affected the implementation and the results achieved by the PGG projects?
- 13) To what extent has the European Union and Council of Europe visibility been ensured in the Programme's implementation? To what extent have the citizens, beneficiaries, national stakeholders and other target audiences been informed of the activities and outcomes of the Programme?

Added value of PGG II

- 14) To what extent is the Partnership for Good Governance Programme perceived by the PGG stakeholders and beneficiaries as having a clear comparative advantage compared to other International actors active in the areas covered by the PGG Programme?
- 15) To what extent has the PGG been able to put its comparative advantage and expertise into action and create inter-linkages between projects and Council of Europe standard-setting and monitoring instruments during the implementation of the PGG?
- 16) What is the added value of the QRM and how to improve the use of this instrument?
- 17) Please share any additional insights with the evaluation team.

Thank you for your participation!

Appendix D: Survey Questionnaire

Before you start ...	Response options
Please tick the box that best describes your organisation	International organisation, national authority, local or regional authority, academia, civil society organisation or NGO, media, private sector company, other (please specify)
Which country do you live in?	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Other
Which thematic area of the PGG II do you mainly work in? Please tick all that apply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fight against economic crime (including anti-money laundering, anti-corruption, terrorist financing) • Judicial reform • Gender equality • Anti-discrimination
The PGG II's relevance to your country	
1) To what extent were you/ your organisation invited to participate/involved in the design of the PGG II country specific project(s) for your country?	To a great extent/ To some extent/ To little extent/ Not at all/ Don't know or Not relevant
2) How relevant is/are the PGG II project(s) to the priorities of your country, in your sector of activity?	Very relevant/ Somewhat relevant/ Not very relevant/ Not relevant at all/ Don't know
3) To what extent is the PGG II relevant to the priorities for your organisation?	Very relevant/ Somewhat relevant/ Not very relevant/ Not relevant at all/ Don't know
How effectively has PGG II been implemented	
4) To what extent has/have PPG II project(s) achieved its objectives?	To a great extent/ To some extent/ To a little extent/ Not at all/ Don't know
5) To what extent has/have the PGG II project(s) helped to promote the reform process in your country?	To a great extent/ To some extent/ To a little extent/ Not at all/ Don't know
6) Please indicate which aspects of the PGG II project(s) you found most effective in promoting PGG II project(s) objectives. Please tick all that apply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislative review • Training sessions (in person/ online) • Exchanges with peers • Thematic events (e.g. roundtables, conferences) • Analytical reports • Other type of technical assistance • Legal advice on priority reforms from Council of Europe bodies (e.g. Venice Commission) • Other – please specify
7) To what extent have the regional projects improved regional co-operation and the exchanges of best practices between the Eastern	To a great extent/ To some extent/ To a little extent/ Not at all/ Don't know

Before you start ...	Response options
Partnership countries in the various PGG II thematic areas?	
8) To what extent have gender issues been successfully integrated into the PGG II's design and implementation?	Fully/partly/not at all/ Don't know
9) How well did the PGG II project(s) adapt its/their working methods to the constraints brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic in your country?	Very well/ Moderately well/ Not well/ Not well at all/ Don't know
10) To what extent has the COVID-19 pandemic adversely affected the results achieved by the PGG II in your country?	To a great extent/ To some extent/ To a little extent/ Not at all/ Don't know
11) To what extent have other developments in your country (e.g. political change) or in the region (e.g. conflict in Ukraine) affected the implementation and the results achieved by the PGG II in your thematic area of work?	Fully/partly/not at all/ Don't know
12) How effective was the external communication of the PGG II programme/project(s) in your country in disseminating the results to the different target audiences and beneficiaries?	Very effective/ Slightly effective/ Not very effective/ No effective at all/ Don't know
Added value of PGG II	
13) What aspects of the PGG II project(s)/ activities do you consider most useful? Please rank each aspect from 1=not useful at all to 3= very useful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical expertise of the Council of Europe • Multi-stakeholder approach at national level • Link to the recommendations of other Council of Europe monitoring bodies • Synergies with other Council of Europe projects in my country • Other – please specify
14) How useful was the legal advice provided to your country by the Venice Commission or other Council of Europe bodies?	Very useful/ Slightly useful / Not very useful / Not useful at all/ Don't know
15) What should the priorities for the next phase of the PGG Programme be for your country?	
Additional comments	
16) Please share any additional insights with the evaluation team.	
17) If you would like to participate in an interview about the PGG II with the evaluation team, please provide your name and contact details.	Name / email

Thank you for answering the questionnaire !

Appendix E: Agendas for the Field Trips

Azerbaijan (25-26 October 2022)

Day, time	Institution	Location
Wednesday 26 October		
9:00-10:00	CoE Office in Baku	<i>CoE Office</i>
10:30-11:30	Financial Monitoring Service	<i>CoE Office</i>
12:00-13:00	General Prosecutor's Office	<i>General Prosecutor's Office</i>
14:00-15:00	Ministry of Justice	<i>Ministry of Justice, Inshaatchilar Ave. 1</i>
17:00-18:00	Court presidents	<i>Yasamal district court, Mikayil Mushfig, 5, Baku, Yasamal, AZ1021</i>
Thursday 27 October		
9:00-10:00	EU Delegation	<i>EU Delegation</i>
10:30-11:30	MFA, PGG National coordinator	<i>MFA (50 Shikhali Gurbanov Street)</i>
12:00-13:00	Justice Academy of the MOJ - <i>(unable to attend, provided written feedback)</i>	<i>CoE Office</i>

Georgia (27-28 October 2022)

Day, time	Institution	Location
Thursday 27 October		
09:00-10:00	Council of Europe office in Tbilisi	<i>CoE Office</i>
12:00-12:45	Civil Service Bureau	<i>Civil Service Bureau, (7 Ingorokva str.)</i>
15:00-15:30	Training Centre, Office of the Prosecutor General	<i>Prosecutor's Office</i>
16:00-16:45	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia	<i>CoE Office</i>
Friday 28 October		
11:15-12:00	EU Delegation	<i>CoE Office</i>
12:00-12:45	Service for Accounting, Reporting, Auditing and Auditing Supervision	<i>CoE Office</i>
15:00-16:00	State Security Service	<i>72 Vazha-Pshavela Ave.</i>

Republic of Moldova (26 - 27 October 2022)

Day, time	Institution/ role	Location
Wednesday 26 October		
9:00-11 :00	CoE office in Chisinau	<i>CoE Office</i>
11:00-12:00	National Institute of Justice	<i>CoE Office</i>
12:30-13:30	Moldovan Bar Association Lawyers Training Centre	<i>CoE Office</i>
14:30-15:30	EU Delegation	<i>CoE Office</i>
16:00-17:00	Human Rights Expert, Promo Lex	<i>CoE Office</i>
17:00-18:00	Equality Council	<i>CoE Office</i>
Thursday 27 October		
10:00-11:00	PGG National Coordinator	<i>MFA</i>
12:00-13:00	Legal Resource Centre of Moldova	<i>CoE Office</i>

Appendix F: PGG II Outcomes for Sampled Projects

PGG II project outcomes	Final Project Targets	Progress by CoE Definition
<p>ECONOMIC CRIME Economic crime - PGG II Intermediate outcome: Strengthened Rule of Law, enhanced anti-corruption and anti-money laundering mechanisms in the Eastern Partnership region. Cross-cutting topic - PGG II Intermediate outcome: Enhanced protection of the rights of vulnerable groups and women.</p>		
<p>SAMPLE PROJECT CONTRIBUTION : 'Strengthening anti-money laundering and asset recovery' (AZ)</p>		<p>Good progress</p>
<p><u>Outcome 1: Increased strategic and operational capacities of Azerbaijani institutions to combat and prevent money laundering and terrorism financing</u> <i>Strengthened strategic and operational capacities of AML/CFT structures in line with European and international standards</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened national AML/CFT framework through the Legal Opinion on the national legislative framework related to the implementation of targeted financial sanctions on terrorism and terrorism financing, and the Legal Opinions on the New Law on the prevention of the legalisation of criminally obtained property and the financing of terrorism and New Law on Targeted Financial Sanctions, as recommended by the PGG II (adopted by the Parliament in December 2022, pending President's approval). • Updated package of draft legal amendments to improve the current national legislative framework on beneficial ownership, as recommended by the PGG II (pending adoption). • Enhanced technical capacities of the FIU staff through specialised training sessions on open source intelligence and on strategic financial data analysis, which was followed by a follow-up training organised and delivered by themselves at their own initiative. • Effective channels for knowledge transfer created as evidenced through e.g. the trainings on data analysis tools organised by the FMS for AML/CFT specialists of banks. <p><i>Law enforcement and judiciary are equipped to investigate and process ML/FT cases effectively and efficiently</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced capacity of 41 candidate judges, 25 judges and one employee of the judicial staff on money laundering and other economic crime concepts and good practices in the adjudication of related cases • Enhanced knowledge and capacities of law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies on different aspects of fighting ML and TF. <p><i>Strengthened capacities to carry out AML/CFT National Risk Assessments (NRA)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support provided throughout the process of developing the NRA. • Awareness of the non-profit and private sectors was raised on several aspects of the AML/CFT for the development of the second National AML/CFT Risk Assessment. 	<p><u>Outcome 1 Targets:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSOs involved in discussion of national AML/CFT strategic and policy documents. • A National AML/CFT Strategy and NRA adopted taking on board advice and recommendations provided by the project. • The national AML/CFT legislative framework strengthened taking into account the recommendations provided by the project. • Practitioners trained in effective ML/TF investigations • Practitioners from law enforcement, financial intelligence and other competent authorities with improved policy and operational skills and knowledge 	<p><u>Evaluators' comments:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness raised and institutional capacity developed • Varying degree of targets met (e.g. limited participation of CSO and of women) • More time is needed for implementation of knowledge and legislative amendments • More time is needed for the impacts to materialise. No evidence yet of the wider population benefitting from the project outcomes

PGG II project outcomes	Final Project Targets	Progress by CoE Definition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Draft NRA report and the draft national AML/CFT Action Plan were reviewed with a view to better identify ML/TF risks and effectively prioritise strategies. <p>Enhanced capacities and awareness of key AML/CFT agencies on the NRA and the implementation of its recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The skills and knowledge of 118 representatives of various stakeholders involved in the second national ML/FT NRA were enhanced to better identify, assess and understand ML/FT risks. The government was further supported on AML/FT threats and vulnerabilities related to legal persons and legal arrangements by learning best practices in other jurisdictions in assessing such risks and applying relevant mitigation measures. 		
<p>Outcome 2: A legal and institutional framework for recovering proceeds from crime is introduced Review and analyse the legal framework and institutional capacities for asset recovery and recommend amendments in line with European and international standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved understanding of national authorities through the development of a comprehensive assessment of the national legal and institutional framework for asset recovery, through multi-stakeholder workshops and meetings, and a technical paper to enhance their knowledge, allowing the government to improve the national asset recovery framework. Increased effectiveness of the asset recovery framework through the approval (and adoption) of the amendments to the Law on the Prosecutor’s Office by the Azerbaijani government (April 2021), aimed at improving the emerging national asset recovery structure, taking into account recommendations provided by the PGG II. Enhanced awareness and increasing interest of stakeholders to apply the new initiatives (see above), as evidenced by the follow-up requests for practical trainings and their participation in the trainings. Strengthened legal framework and awareness among key stakeholders, as evidenced by the GPO initiative to develop amendments to introduce non-conviction based confiscation and parallel financial investigations based on the project’s recommendations. <p>Enhance procedures and capacities of authorities to identify, seize, confiscate and subsequently manage and dispose criminal proceeds and property</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced capacities of law enforcement, judiciary, the Financial Monitoring Service and other relevant state authorities through a series of specialised training sessions and workshops. Increasing awareness and application of advice provided by the project as evidenced by follow-up requests being made by authorities (e.g. GPO and FMS) after the initially planned support provided in the form of advice and training, to further develop the application of advice and skills that were acquired through the initial activities. <p>Enhanced capacities for international cooperation in asset recovery</p>	<p>Outcome 2 Targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff of competent authorities trained in asset recovery tools and procedures Legislative and institutional mechanisms for asset recovery set up reflecting advice and recommendations provided by the project 	

PGG II project outcomes	Final Project Targets	Progress by CoE Definition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced capacity and knowledge of prosecutors, investigators, judges and other law enforcement authorities on mutual legal assistance (MLA), through targeted training to minimise the grounds for refusal from foreign jurisdictions. Stakeholders reported exchanges taking place with European countries (CH, DE). Evidence of practical use of advice by the GPO, e.g. on MLA request, where the project was asked to help further analyse and improve the MLA requests made by the institution. Enhanced technical knowledge and skills of the AML/CFT structures through activities addressing mechanisms for international cooperation. As a result, the Department for Coordination of Special Confiscation Issues under the General Prosecutor's Office has recently announced their intention to take actions, for the first time, to confiscate and repatriate illicit proceeds of convicted individuals in foreign jurisdictions, following court decisions. 		
<p>SAMPLE PROJECT CONTRIBUTION : 'Enhancing the systems of prevention and combatting corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing' (GEO)</p>		Good progress
<p>Outcome 1 - Effective measures on prevention of corruption</p> <p><i>Improved regulation and monitoring of systems of asset declarations and conflict of interest</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amendments to the Law on conflict of interest and corruption in public service, addressing challenges of corruption and strengthening the position of the Anti-Corruption Council. Enhanced understanding of recommended improvements to the disciplinary liability for employees of the Georgian Prosecution Service through a technical paper (2020) (pending implementation) Developed capacities of the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) to identify the necessary measures to collect and verify the asset declarations by public officials, and implement GRECO Recommendation XVI (GrecoRC4(2021)9) (2021), which will be implemented as confirmed by stakeholders in the near future (pending implementation) <p><i>Strengthened anti-corruption policy-making process through support to strategy development and measurement</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved knowledge on main methods to prevent corruption by relevant anti-corruption law enforcement agencies (LEAs) through a technical paper on "Sharing good practices on prevention of corruption in public sector applied by relevant anti-corruption law enforcement agencies". Increased the awareness of 39 representatives from the municipalities of Kakheti Region (first such meetings outside of the capital) on the risks of corruption, prevention of conflict of interest and the protection of whistle blowers. In addition, public officials are now trained to deliver similar awareness raisings workshops, reinforcing the sustainability of the investment. <p><i>Increased capacities to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate corruption</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced capacity of the ACA to perform their new corruption prevention mandate, e.g. through training sessions 	<p>Outcome 1 Targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff of competent authorities trained in efficient implementation of asset declarations system and prevention of conflicts of interest and stakeholders are aware about conflict-of-interest regulations and other anti-corruption restrictions and requirements. Competent authorities apply tools and advice provided by the project to improve anti-corruption policies and measures. Authorities implement recommendations provided by the project to modify and apply methodologies for asset declaration and prevention/management of conflict of interest. 	<p>Evaluators' comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of key beneficiaries developed Evidence of outcomes materialising to a large extent, specific targets met to a varying degree (e.g. limited participation of CSO and of women as per information available) Some evidence of the practical implementation of skills and knowledge acquired, adoption/ implementation of some legislative amendments Additional time is needed for some targets to be achieved, e.g. analytical software is still being implemented and improvement in this to improve the ability to identify suspicious transactions will likely manifest in the future

PGG II project outcomes	Final Project Targets	Progress by CoE Definition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened capacity of the ACA's staff to become local anti-corruption trainers as stipulated in the Anti-Corruption Action Plan (e.g. Training of Trainers, October 2021), contributing to the sustainability of the project. • 80 practitioners are better equipped in establishing the corporate criminal liability to legal entities (through 3 trainings with investigators and prosecutors) • Over 80 representatives of the public sector improved their capacity in the area of corruption prevention (e.g. workshops in July 2020, in May 2021 in support of the recently acquired corruption prevention aspect of the ACA's mandate). • Increasing awareness and use of the skills by beneficiaries, as evidenced e.g. by the trainers of the SSSG trained by the project organising their own anti-corruption training events at local level to pass on the acquired skills, thereby multiplying the effects of the project across regions/municipalities. • Positive feedback from the local level on the trainings organised and delivered by the project indicate relevance and effective delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorities implement recommendations provided by the project to modify and apply methodologies for asset declaration and prevention/management of conflict of interest. • Investigators, prosecutors and judges trained and applying knowledge acquired through participation in project activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time is needed for impact to become evident and for project to result in benefits perceived by the wider population
<p><u>Outcome 2 - Comprehensive measures on prevention and detection of money laundering and terrorist financing</u> <i>Improved frameworks and operational capacities for investigations, prosecution and adjudication of ML/TF cases</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the National risk assessment, which is the basis for the strategic development of the system and planning of relevant mitigating action in the AML field affecting all institutions and large segments of the society (private sector). • Development of the AML/CFT preventive law and secondary legislation, which is applied on a daily basis by a very broad segment of the private sector (e.g. financial institutions: banks, securities, insurance; non-financial like lawyers, notaries, gambling, real estate intermediaries). Extensive support was provided by PGG II to its application, including support to the FMS, SARAS and other supervisory authorities. • Supported the implementation of the Law and of the national AML/CFT institutions' own plans and priorities. • Enhanced capacity of Judges of the Supreme Court, who after applying principles discussed in a first training sessions with CoE experts on ML and asset recovery (online) requested a follow-up discussion to address specific practical challenges encountered in this regard • Enhanced professional skills of the Georgian law enforcement agencies (SSSG Counterterrorism Centre, Office of the Prosecutor General, Investigation Service of the Ministry of Finance) to conduct investigation and prosecution in counter-terrorism operations, contributing to mitigating the terrorist financing risks (e.g. training on "Investigation and Prosecution of Terrorist Financing Cases" , January 2022) • Enhanced the capacities of Georgian LEAs, prosecutors and judges to consider effective mechanisms for seizure, confiscation, and recovery of proceeds of corruption, money laundering and other economic 	<p><u>Outcome 2 Targets:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training manuals developed and associated trainings provided in ML/FT investigations, prosecutions and adjudication. • New analytical software made available, and capacities built on its application. • Representatives of obliged entities trained in AML/CFT compliance requirements. • Recommendations made available to develop NRA and its Action Plan. • Competent authorities trained and supplied with guidance on RBA supervision • AML/CFT regulatory framework improved and implemented taking into account the project recommendations 	

PGG II project outcomes	Final Project Targets	Progress by CoE Definition
<p>crimes in line with international standards and national asset recovery frameworks (e.g. through the online trainings in November 2020; December 2021)</p> <p>Increased compliance of AML/CTF Regulatory and supervisory legal framework with international standards and good practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SARS created a separate AML unit, as recommended by the PGG II (Technical paper “Guidance on Anti-money laundering/countering financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) compliance for the sector of accounting/auditing”), and developed sector-specific guidance for accountants and auditors in compliance with AML/CFT, following guidance from the PGG II. • The Law of Georgia on facilitating the suppression of money laundering and terrorism financing (adopted in October 2019) brought the legal framework closer to key international standards in the field of anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism. • Stakeholders stated that trainings improved awareness with frameworks (e.g. microfinance and virtual assets exchange offices) as evidenced in the Bank’s on site inspections <p>Reinforced capacities of supervisors and monitoring entities to implement AML/CFT obligations, including Financial Intelligence Unit of Georgia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced capacity of the financial sector institutions trained (e.g. FMS, accountants and auditors, commercial banks, microfinance organisations) in the effective implementation of the NRA Report 2019 and the AML/CFT legal framework adopted in 2019. Improved quality in the reporting by these entities to the FIU evidences they are already applying the acquired knowledge. • Strengthened risk-based approach (RBA) to supervision of the non-financial institutions and increased awareness on national AML/CFT requirements as applicable to the gambling sector (e.g. 30 sector representatives trained in November 2020) • Follow up trainings delivered at the initiative of project beneficiaries point at the fact that the knowledge is being applied and awareness has increased, e.g. the Microsoft Power BI (data analysis) trainings delivered by the FIU on their own initiative as a follow-up to the one the project. • 27 insurance sector and non-state pension scheme funders trained on the AML/CFT requirements for the sector following its consideration as reporting entity (e.g. training in June 2022) • 45 representatives of commercial banks and payment service providers trained on the international and domestic ultimate beneficial ownership (UBO) requirements (e.g. online training “Transparency of Beneficial Ownership”, May 2022) • Enhanced the compliance of the Georgian currency exchange sector with the national AML/CFT obligations (e.g. 2 day online training on “Anti-money laundering/countering financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) compliance for currency exchange bureaus”, June 2021) • The Ministry of Justice reported positive feedback from staff trained in the execution of ML/FT legislation and implementation of the knowledge in their everyday work. 		

PGG II project outcomes	Final Project Targets	Progress by CoE Definition
SAMPLE PROJECT CONTRIBUTION : Regional project ‘Strengthening measures to prevent and combat economic crime’(EaP)		Good progress
<p><u>Outcome 1 – Effective measures on prevention of corruption</u> <i>Effective mechanisms and frameworks for asset declarations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved capacity of specialised corruption prevention and oversight bodies for the verification and analysis of declarations of assets and interests across EaP countries. Effective mechanisms were strengthened through the PGG II activities on electronic submission of asset declarations in the region. <p><i>Strengthened controlling mechanisms on conflict of interests</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support was provided to policy makers in drafting or enhancing existing parliamentary Codes of Conduct, e.g. through the development of a Toolkit for drafting Codes of Conduct for members of Parliaments. Oversight bodies and parliamentarians of the Eastern Partnership countries are better equipped to prevent and control potential conflicts of interest through the presentation of best practices on regulating MPs’ conduct and conflicts of interest. 	<p><u>Outcome 1 Targets:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced methodologies and tools to increase effectiveness of asset declarations verification made available Toolkit on Code of Conduct and guidelines made available and oversight capacities improved on compliance with ethics rules for MPs Political party and electoral campaign financing monitoring and investigations capacities improved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools and methodologies made available, technical papers with recommendations produced Knowledge and skills of key project beneficiaries enhanced Some evidence of the practical implementation of skills and knowledge acquired, adoption/ implementation of some legislative amendments More time is needed for impact to become evident and for project to result in benefits perceived by the wider population
<p><u>Outcome 2 – Strengthened institutional and legal capacities to combat corruption</u> <i>Increased efficiency of operational and human resource capacities of specialised anti-corruption bodies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 71 practitioners from oversight and monitoring bodies in the Eastern Partnership region improved their knowledge of efficient systems for the verification of declarations using red flags. Stakeholders reported a regional event being organised in December 2022 to enhance the collaboration between state institutions and CSOs in the prevention and fight against corruption and other economic crimes. 	<p><u>Outcome 2 Targets:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialised anti-corruption bodies implement the recommendations to improve effective implementation of their mandates CSOs with strengthened capacities to constructively engage with governments in the area of corruption prevention Authorities implement the recommendations for improved enforcement measures provided by the project 	
<p><u>Outcome 3 - Effective measures on prevention and detection of money laundering/terrorist financing</u> <i>Improved frameworks and operational tools for financial investigations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased knowledge of 20 practitioners and policymakers in relation to good practices in identifying and tracing terrorist and proliferation funding, implementing effective national co-ordination mechanisms, and enforcing sanctions for terrorism and proliferation financing through a regional workshop. 	<p><u>Outcome 3 Targets:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidelines and improved capacities for verification of information in the registries of beneficial owners and enforcement of BO obligations available 	

PGG II project outcomes	Final Project Targets	Progress by CoE Definition
<p><i>Strengthened the capacities of the Financial Intelligence Units</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved understanding of 17 professionals and policy makers from the region on the good practices in identifying and tracing terrorist and proliferation funds, effective national coordination mechanisms, and enforcement of sanctions concerning terrorism and proliferation financing through a regional workshop (December 2019) <p><i>Enhanced regulatory framework or/and operational regimes on beneficial ownership</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deeper understanding of 53 beneficial ownership (BO) practitioners from the region on EU standards, regulatory frameworks and best practices of establishing and managing BO registers through the technical paper on the conceptual and practical roadmap for the implementation and interconnection of ultimate beneficial ownership registers in the EaP countries. Enhanced knowledge of data protection and privacy in beneficial ownership disclosure and cross-border exchange of data through a regional workshop (May 2020). <p><i>Introduction of legal frameworks for registries of beneficial ownership</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project supported the efforts of the Azerbaijani authorities to identify the institutional and legal mechanisms to advance BO transparency by providing a clear view of practical next steps and of potential approaches to establishing and managing BO registries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial intelligence analysts skills on strategic and tactical analysis skills improved Law enforcement officers trained in conducting ML and TF investigations 	
<p><u>Outcome 4 - Enhanced (cross border) cooperation and regulatory framework on seizure, confiscation of proceeds from crime</u></p> <p><i>Reviewed regulatory and institutional framework for seizure, confiscation, management and disposal of proceeds from crime</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparative practices were exchanged at a seminar for 79 national stakeholders from Eastern Partnership countries, thereby promoting the revision of the regulatory and institutional framework for seizure, confiscation, management and disposal of proceeds from crime. Participants reported agreeing on the importance of having a framework for NCBC co-operation amongst countries as well as an effective, suitable NCBC enforcement system in each jurisdiction. Progress was made towards the implementation of PACE Resolution 2218 (2018)⁴² inviting all member States of the Council of Europe to provide for non-conviction-based confiscation or similar measures in their national laws, while establishing appropriate safeguards, and adopting successfully tested good practices. Progress has been made in Azerbaijan at the initiative of the GPO. <p><i>Strengthened international (cross border) cooperation in Asset Recovery between EaP countries</i></p>	<p><u>Outcome 4 Targets:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Law enforcement officers trained on the use of informal cooperation in asset recovery Guidelines and capacities available to strengthen legislative and institutional measures for effective asset recovery and management Law enforcement practitioners and judiciary trained in crosscountry asset recovery 	

⁴² <http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-EN.asp?fileid=24761>

PGG II project outcomes	Final Project Targets	Progress by CoE Definition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased co-operation on asset recovery among authorities from the Eastern Partnership countries through the provision of tools, best practices, information exchange and networking on a number of relevant topics. Increased links and networks created across stakeholders in the region through e.g. a series of meetings with asset declarations oversight bodies from the European Union, Western Balkans and the Eastern Partnership (EaP) region (2020) <p>Gender mainstreaming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total participants in project events in 2020: 66% men, 34% women. 		
<p>JUDICIAL REFORM PGG II Intermediate outcome: Strengthened independence, effectiveness and efficiency of justice systems in the Eastern Partnership region. Cross-cutting topic - PGG II Intermediate outcome: Enhanced protection of the rights of vulnerable groups and women.</p>		
<p>SAMPLE PROJECT CONTRIBUTION: 'Strengthening the efficiency and quality of the judicial system' (AZ)</p>		<p>Good progress</p>
<p><u>Outcome 1: The efficiency and quality of Azerbaijani courts are enhanced through the application of CEPEJ tools at national level.</u> <i>Strengthened awareness and knowledge on the tools for public access to judicial statistics, based on the concept of CEPEJSTAT database.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced knowledge of 46 participants from relevant administrative and judicial bodies about European good practices in the implementation of CEPEJ tools in the regular monitoring of the work of courts and the judicial reporting system. The PGGII activities improved participants' understanding of the implementation of the CEPEJ tools in other countries, and identified requirements for the creation of national database comparable to the CEPEJ-STAT. Accountability and transparency of the courts and prosecutorial offices was improved through a technical paper on the "Communication strategy for the judiciary of Azerbaijan" and the Rules of communication between the judiciary, the media and the public. The strategy is accompanied by an action plan providing a set of concrete activities to improve the communication strategy. <p><i>Skills and know-how on judicial statistics' collection and analysis for policy-making and managerial purposes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Azerbaijani courts improved their efficiency and quality through the use of CEPEJ tools, as broadly evidenced in the CEPEJ figures⁴³. PGGII support led to an improvement of the day-to-day administration of courts, and the collection of judicial statistics. 5 Pilot courts reported sharing their best practices with courts not involved in the pilot programme at their own initiative, proving increasing interest in the use of CEPEJ tools. 	<p><u>Outcome 1 Targets:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEPEJ tools applied in all courts and at central level A unified data collection and reporting methodology on courts' efficiency and quality is introduced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities carried out as planned to a large extent, capacity of key project beneficiaries developed and tools and methodologies produced. Overall targets not met (e.g. CEPEJ tools applied in all courts and at central level) Some evidence of the practical implementation of skills and knowledge acquired, adoption/ implementation of some legislative amendments More time is needed for impact to become evident and for project to result in benefits perceived by the wider population

⁴³ See CEPEJ report 2022, p. 24, available on <https://rm.coe.int/cepej-fiche-pays-2020-22-e-web/1680a86276>

PGG II project outcomes	Final Project Targets	Progress by CoE Definition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Action Plan for the implementation of a road map for further dissemination of CEPEJ efficiency and quality measurement tools in all courts of Azerbaijan was finalised, translated into Azerbaijani and submitted to the national authorities for their feedback, making progress towards the PGG II target of having all courts report on the basis of a unified methodology supported by the CEPEJ. In September 2021, the PGG II helped the representatives of four project beneficiaries (Ministry of Justice, Supreme Court, Judicial Legal Council and Justice Academy) identify unified, national-level indicators to measure the effect of judicial reforms in order to reduce the court backlogs and case disposition time. <p><i>Modern management methods and tools applied by Azerbaijani courts in view of better efficiency and user satisfaction</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PGG II developed and encouraged the introduction of a standard methodology of court performance reporting for the Azerbaijani judiciary contributing to reduce the court backlogs and case disposition time. • PGG II supported the process to define the indicators and track records able to demonstrate the effect of judicial reforms. • Enhanced knowledge of the judges and court staff on the use of key indicators and SATURN Time Management Guidelines. • Better access to justice was provided to vulnerable groups through the PGG II expert report on “Access to justice for vulnerable groups”, which presented an analysis of the situation and provided recommendations to facilitate access to courts for four categories of groups (persons with physical/mental disabilities, minority members, victims of violence and minors). • Increased knowledge of 130 court presidents, judges, court staff, legal advisors and assistants to judges (30 women and 100 men) from courts in Baku and other regions on judicial time management and measuring the quality of justice through online cascade training sessions using the modules on peer-to-peer court management • Improved capacity of the Justice Academy of Azerbaijan through the establishment of a pool of 15 trainers including court chairpersons, judges and court staff, five training modules on various aspects of court management (judicial statistics, analysis and reporting, case and time management, performance evaluation, and measuring the quality of justice) and a training methodology and curricula of the Academy. • Enhanced use of ICT tools, including the use of sound and audio-visual recordings in court proceedings through expert advice on relevant CEPEJ tools and standards, the case law of the ECtHR and good practices from other member States. • (Moderate) increased participation of CSO representatives, e.g. in the assessment meetings on the development of an expert advice on audio and videorecording of court proceedings. 		

PGG II project outcomes	Final Project Targets	Progress by CoE Definition
<p><u>Outcome 2: The enforcement of court decisions is improved through legal and institutional modernisation of the enforcement system and strengthened capacities of the involved institutions</u> <i>Expert recommendations are provided in view of improving the enforcement legislation in line with the European standards</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Azerbaijani authorities were supported in drafting the new legal framework for the system of enforcement of court decisions in civil and administrative matters. 70 CoE recommendations were incorporated in the draft Enforcement Code. Improved understanding of ways to increase the effectiveness of the enforcement system through 3 expert reports on enforcement timeframes and recovery rates, ICT solutions for the enforcement system, and compliance of the draft Code of Enforcement with the ECHR. Enhanced knowledge on enforcement of court decisions on debt payments through the report on comparative analysis of data on domestic legislation and practices from Council of Europe member states in this field. With the PGG II's support (study visits, workshop, round table) the authorities submitted a report to the Minister of Justice with recommendations on how to reform the enforcement system starting with a pilot project which would test the private bailiff system <p><i>Increased awareness and knowledge among the national stakeholders on the European good practices in enforcement proceedings and related case management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced knowledge of 25 representatives of the Directorate General of Enforcement of the Ministry of Justice and enforcement agents on the use of electronic data system and ICT solutions for the enforcement of court decisions, as well as on alternative mechanisms for enforcement of the decisions of courts and other bodies. 	<p><u>Outcome 2 Targets:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new Enforcement Code in line with European standards is adopted and implemented. 	
<p>SAMPLE PROJECT CONTRIBUTION: 'Strengthening the capacities of the justice sector actors to deliver justice in line with European standards, in particular to fight discrimination' (MD)</p>		<p>Very good progress</p>
<p><u>Outcome 1 - The capacity of the judges and prosecutors to deliver higher quality justice with special focus on discrimination through a harmonised application of European standards is enhanced</u> <i>The National Institute of Justice has a higher capacity to deliver courses to improve knowledge and skills to judges, prosecutors and judicial staff on European standard</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 47 trainers of the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and 131 legal professionals improved their skills and knowledge on various aspects of discrimination. The Training Impact Assessment (TIA) conducted evidences the participants' increase in ability to identify discrimination, and increased likelihood of using/applying legal remedies through the specialised training on anti-discrimination conducted by the NIJ with PGG II support. In addition, the TIA concluded that the trainings of trainers improved the know-how and behaviours of NIJ trainers to provide online training, effectively contributing to addressing the knowledge gap also in the longer-term. 	<p><u>Outcome 1 Target:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Findings and recommendations considered by the National Institute of Justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities carried out as planned to a large extent. Knowledge and skills of key project beneficiaries enhanced. The Training Impact Assessment concluded clear improvement of know-how among participants of project trainings overall.

PGG II project outcomes	Final Project Targets	Progress by CoE Definition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new pool of certified trainers was additionally created with the HELP team of the Council of Europe, contributing to the sustainability of the project. <p><i>Greater number of legal professionals know and apply non-discrimination related European standards in their work</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deepened understanding by the national authorities and the society on access to justice of vulnerable groups, specially in relation to barriers in the national practice and legal framework preventing certain categories of people from benefitting free access to justice. Awareness of non-discrimination standards and enhancement of relations raised between the national authorities and NGOs in the region through an international conference facilitating an open exchange of experience for better protection against discrimination. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing awareness of non-discrimination issues amongst vulnerable groups, with the benefits being felt by individuals who are better protected against discrimination and better able to obtain access to justice if their rights are infringed.
<p>Outcome 2 – Lawyers training centre is effectively organising and delivering training courses <i>Lawyers and intern lawyers are better trained on the implementation of European standards in line with their professional needs.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19 Lawyers received training on the procedure for examining admissibility of applications to the ECHR as part of the assistance provided to the Lawyers’ Training Centre of the Moldovan Bar Association. 	<p>Outcome 2 Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 % of recommendations incorporated in the final regulation 2 new training courses incorporated (by the end of 2020) 	
<p>Outcome 3 – The Equality Council’s practice is further strengthened, and it is able to more effectively fulfil its role <i>The Equality Council’s staff and members are empowered to implement European standards in dealing with non-discrimination cases and are enabled to efficiently cooperate with other relevant actors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft amendments to the Law 121 on ensuring equality and law 298 on the activity of the Equality Council included in the Action Plan of the Government for March 2022, following the PGG II recommendations provided in 2019. Growing awareness of non-discrimination issues amongst vulnerable groups, and where to go for help, as evidenced by the increased number of cases being referred to the EC and the legal profession, with benefits being felt by individuals. Increasing awareness and clear view of actions to address the existing gender challenges in the activity of the Equality Council, National Institute of Justice and Lawyer’s Training Centre through the gender analysis report produced by the PGG II. <p><i>The Equality Council’s monitoring instruments are improved, and effectiveness of sanctions is measured</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Equality Council improved the efficiency of its monitoring system by developing and approving its monitoring strategy, which incorporates the recommendations of the PGG II as outlined in the report on the assessment of the monitoring mechanism and instruments of the Equality Council. Enhanced skills of the Equality Council staff in regards to writing decisions, resulting in them rethinking the process of motivation of the decisions through the methodological workshop organised. 	<p>Outcome 3 Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30% of CoE recommendations implemented (in 2022) 176 (10% increase by the end of 2022) 15% of unimplemented decisions by the end of 2022 	

PGG II project outcomes	Final Project Targets	Progress by CoE Definition
SAMPLE PROJECT CONTRIBUTION : Regional project 'Women's Access to Justice: delivering on the Istanbul Convention and other European gender equality standards' (EaP)		
<p><u>Outcome 1 - Authorities, justice sector professionals, and civil society apply new competences on the standards on access to justice of the Istanbul Convention, in order to remove obstacles to access to justice</u> <i>Practice oriented educational activities targeting legal professionals involved at the different stages of the justice chain on gender sensitive responses to cases of violence against women and victim's access to justice in line with the Istanbul Convention and other European standards.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness on women's access to justice and the Istanbul Convention across the region Contribution to the approval of the Draft Law on the ratification of the Istanbul Convention by the Parliament in the Republic of Moldova in October 2021 and the discussions on the possible signature in Azerbaijan. Enhanced capacity of 30 legal professionals to train other legal professionals on ensuring women's access to justice and appropriate legal answer to violence against women through a pilot mentoring programme for legal professionals, and strengthened skills of 30 additional legal professionals involved as mentors in the programme, meeting the targets set for PGG II (60 professionals in total). <p><i>Proposed Framework for measuring access to justice including specific challenges facing women to support the EaP countries in observing and monitoring women's access to justice.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project contributed to develop indicators to measure access to justice for women by organising regional activity and bringing together 35 high level ministerial decision-makers of the Eastern Partnership countries. 	<p><u>Outcome 1 Targets:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 50% of total participating professionals of EaP countries report using new competences in compliance with the Istanbul Convention. At least 50% of the total participating professionals of EaP countries will be women. 	<p>Good progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity of key project beneficiaries enhanced, documentation on European standards made available. Awareness of Istanbul Convention was raised. Some evidence of the practical implementation of skills and knowledge acquired and of institutional changes (e.g. the HELP course was made mandatory in the curricula). More time is needed for impact to become evident and for project to result in benefits perceived by the wider population.
<p><u>Outcome 2 – Authorities, justice sector professionals and civil society introduce measures, including on training, to ensure that the justice chain is gender responsive, particularly for women victims of violence in line with the Istanbul Convention and other European standards</u> <i>The national training curricula for legal professionals in at least 2 Eastern Partnership countries incorporate issues related to gender equality and violence against women</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The capacity building mechanisms of the national judicial institutions across 5 EaP countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine) were reinforced by incorporating the HELP course on Access to Justice for Women in their curricula, surpassing the PGG II target of 2 countries doing so. 224 legal professionals (111 of which are certified), strengthened and expanded their competences in the field of women's access to justice by following tutored HELP courses on Access to justice for women in their national language, adding to the 5765 participants enrolled in self-learning (703 of which received their certification). This surpassed the PG II target, set at 60 students completing the HELP course. 	<p><u>Outcome 2 Targets:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 2 EaP countries revise national policies on preventing and combating domestic violence to bring them in concordance with the Istanbul Convention standards At least 2 EaP countries introduce gender responsive measures included in the country studies (2021) 	

PGG II project outcomes	Final Project Targets	Progress by CoE Definition
<p><i>Targeted outreach and awareness-raising activities, including distribution of information in national languages, for enhancing women's access to legal aid in line with the Istanbul Convention and other European standards. Targeted groups: legal aid institutions and CSOs, including women's organisations, in Eastern Partnership countries</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy exchanges on access to justice and gender equality in the EaP countries contributed to enhancing the knowledge of relevant stakeholders involved through regular guided meetings with international experts. • Strengthened role of CSO on combating discrimination through the support to the creation of the Equality Platform Azerbaijan, formed by 13 CSO, leading to discussions with the Ombudsperson office on collaboration going forward. • Documentation on important European standards was made available in the national languages, ECRI general policy recommendations 2 (for Armenia and Azerbaijan) and 15 (for Armenia and Ukraine) were translated. Four project newsletters⁴⁴ were disseminated featuring good practices from the region, reaching on average 500 recipients each. <p><i>Regional outreach and awareness-raising activities, including best practices events, to foster understanding of the standards of the Istanbul Convention and other European standards.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The competences on international standards on women's access to justice and violence against women of 97 legal aid lawyers in 5 EaP countries (58 women, 39 men) were strengthened, including the case law of the ECtHR and the Istanbul Convention standards. The target set for PGG II was reached, as set at 90 professionals trained. 		

Sources: APAs 2019-2022 Main document, Country factsheets 2020 and 2022, Regional results factsheet 2020 and 2022, PGG II Annual Reports 2019, 2020, 2021, Six-Month Report January-June 2020, Interview feedback

⁴⁴ See <https://rm.coe.int/pgg-newsletter-5-en-html/16809fec2e>

Appendix G: Overview of QRM Opinions 2019-2022

No	Country	Name	Year requested	Requestor category	Body providing opinion	PGG II Themes	Status	Category
1	Georgia	Venice Commission Opinion on the concept of the legislative amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code concerning the relationship between the Prosecution and the Investigators	2019	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	Not implemented
2	Georgia	Venice Commission urgent Opinion on the selection and appointment criteria for Supreme Court judges	2019	National authorities	VC	Yes	Completed	Partially implemented
3	Republic of Moldova	Venice Commission's urgent Opinion on the constitutional situation in the Republic of Moldova with particular reference to the possibility of dissolving parliament	2019	COE	VC	No	Completed	n/a
4	Armenia	Venice Commission's Opinion on the constitutional implications of the ratification of the Istanbul Convention in Armenia	2019	National authorities	VC	Yes	Completed	Partially implemented
5	Armenia	The joint Opinion of the Venice Commission and the Directorate of Human Rights of the Council of Europe on the amendments to the Judicial Code of Armenia on disciplinary liability of judges	2019	National authorities	VC and CoE DGI	Yes	Completed	Partially implemented
6	Republic of Moldova	Venice Commission's opinion on the Draft Law on the reform of the Supreme Court of Justice and the prosecutor's office	2019	National authorities	VC	Yes	Completed	Fully implemented
7	Armenia	Venice Commission's amicus curiae opinion for the Constitutional Court of Armenia relating to Article 300.1 of the Criminal Code	2019	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	Fully implemented
8	Ukraine	Venice Commission's amicus curiae Opinion for the Constitutional Court of Ukraine relating to the early termination of the powers of the People's Deputy of Ukraine	2019	National authorities	VC	Yes	Completed	Fully implemented

No	Country	Name	Year requested	Requestor category	Body providing opinion	PGG II Themes	Status	Category
9	Republic of Moldova	Venice Commission's <i>Amicus Curiae</i> brief for the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Moldova on the criminal liability of constitutional court judges	2019	National authorities	VC	Yes	Completed	Fully implemented
10	Republic of Moldova	Venice Commission's urgent opinion on the amendments to the Law on the Superior Council of Magistracy of the Republic of Moldova	2019	National authorities	VC	Yes	Completed/ Cancelled	n/a
11	Republic of Moldova	Venice Commission's <i>amicus curiae</i> Opinion for the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Moldova on the constitutional implications of some of the provisions of the new Law on the Prosecutor's Office	2019	National authorities	VC	Yes	Completed	n/a
12	Republic of Moldova	The interim joint Opinion of the Venice Commission and the Directorate of Human Rights of the Council of Europe on the Draft Law on the reform of the Supreme Court of Justice and the Prosecutor's Office of the Republic of Moldova	2019	National authorities	VC and CoE DGI	Yes	Completed	n/a
13	Republic of Moldova	Venice Commission's opinion on the draft law on amending and supplementing the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova pertaining to the appointment and career of judges, the role and composition of the Superior Council of Magistracy	2020	National authorities	VC	Yes	Completed	n/a
14	Armenia	Venice Commission's opinion on draft amendments to the legislation concerning political parties	2020	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	Partially implemented
15	Armenia	Venice Commission's opinion on three questions concerning the constitutional amendments pertaining to the mandate of the judges of the Constitutional Court	2020	National authorities	VC	Yes	Completed	Partially implemented

No	Country	Name	Year requested	Requestor category	Body providing opinion	PGG II Themes	Status	Category
16	Republic of Moldova	Venice Commission's opinion on the revised draft law on amending and supplementing the Constitution	2020	National authorities	VC	Yes	Completed	Fully implemented
17	Republic of Moldova	Venice Commission's urgent opinion on the draft law on amending the Electoral Code and the Code of Audiovisual Media Services	2020	National authorities	VC	Yes	Completed	Not implemented
18	Georgia	Venice Commission's opinion on the draft Organic Law amending the Organic Law on Common Courts	2020	National authorities	VC	Yes	Completed	Partially implemented
19	Republic of Moldova	Venice Commission's amicus curiae opinion on legal questions concerning the mandate of members of constitutional bodies	2020	National authorities	VC	Yes	Completed	Fully implemented
20	Georgia	Venice Commission's opinion on the draft amendments to the Election Code, the Organic Law on the Political Associations of Citizens and the Rules of Procedure of Parliament of Georgia	2020	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	Not implemented
21	Georgia	Venice Commission's opinion on the draft Article 79.1 of the Electoral Code (revocation of party registration)	2021	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	Fully implemented
22	Republic of Moldova	Venice Commission's opinion on a draft Law for amending some normative acts	2021	National authorities	VC	Yes	Cancelled	n/a
23	Republic of Moldova	Venice Commission's amicus curiae brief on three legal questions concerning constitutional review of law-making procedures in Parliament	2021	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	n/a
24	Armenia	Venice Commission and OSCE-ODIHR Joint opinion on draft amendments to the Electoral Code and other pieces of legislation of Armenia	2021	National authorities	VC and OSCE-ODIHR	No	Completed	Partially implemented
25	Georgia	Venice Commission's Urgent Joint opinion on draft amendments to the Election Code of Georgia	2021	National authorities	VC and OSCE-ODIHR	No	Completed	Partially implemented

No	Country	Name	Year requested	Requestor category	Body providing opinion	PGG II Themes	Status	Category
26	Armenia	Council of Europe expert opinion on draft amendments to the Law on Mass Media and to the Code of Administrative Offences of the Republic of Armenia	2021	National authorities	Media Department of CoE DG I	No	Completed	Not implemented
27	Georgia	Venice Commission's opinion on certain amendments to the Organic Law on Common Court relating to the procedure of selection of Supreme Court judges.	2021	National authorities	VC	Yes	Completed	Partially implemented
28	Georgia	Venice Commission's urgent opinion on certain amendments to the Organic Law "Election Code of Georgia"	2021	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	Partially implemented
29	Ukraine	Venice Commission's Opinion on the draft law "On the principles of state policy in the transitional period" of Ukraine	2021	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	Not implemented
30	Ukraine	Venice Commission's Opinion on the "draft law on the prevention of threats to national security, associated with excessive influence of persons having significant economic or political weight in social life (oligarchs)"	2021	National authorities	VC	No	Completed/ Cancelled	n/a
31	Ukraine	OSCE/ODIHR and Venice Commission's Joint Opinion on the Draft Law of Ukraine "On Improving The Procedure For Establishing The Impossibility Of Holding National And Local Elections, All-Ukrainian And Local Referenda In Certain Territories And Polling Stations"	2021	National authorities	VC and OSCE-ODIHR	No	Completed	Not implemented
32	Armenia	Draft Joint Opinion of the Venice Commission and the Directorate General for Human Rights and Rule of Law on the draft laws on making amendments to the Judicial Code and to the Constitutional Law on the Constitutional Court of Armenia	2022	National authorities	VC and CoE DGI	Yes	Completed	Not implemented

No	Country	Name	Year requested	Requestor category	Body providing opinion	PGG II Themes	Status	Category
33	Ukraine	Venice Commission Amicus Curiae brief on the limits of subsequent (a posteriori) review of constitutional amendments by the Constitutional Court	2022	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	<i>Pending</i>
34	Republic of Moldova	Venice Commission Opinion on draft law amending some normative acts (Judiciary)	2022	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	Fully implemented
35	Georgia	Venice Commission's Urgent Opinion on the Amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code	2022	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	<i>Pending</i>
36	Republic of Moldova	Venice Commission's Opinion on amendments to the Audiovisual Media Services Code and to the Contravention Code including the ban on symbols associated with and used in military aggression actions	2022	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	<i>Pending</i>
37	Republic of Moldova	Joint opinion of the Venice Commission and the OSCE/ODIHR on the draft Electoral Code	2022	National authorities	VC and OSCE-ODIHR	No	Completed	<i>Pending</i>
38	Republic of Moldova	Amicus curiae brief on the offence of illicit enrichment	2022	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	<i>Pending</i>
39	Republic of Moldova	Amicus curiae brief on the clarity of provisions on combating extremist activity	2022	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	<i>Pending</i>
40	Armenia	Urgent opinion on the draft Law on the institute of the appeal against the decisions of the Supreme Judicial Council	2022	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	<i>Pending</i>
41	Republic of Moldova	Joint Opinion on the draft Law on the Supreme Court of Justice	2022	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	<i>Pending</i>
42	Georgia	Joint opinion on draft amendments to the Electoral Code	2022	National authorities	VC	No	Completed	<i>Pending</i>

Source: QRM Follow up Table, PGG II Annual Report 2019, 2020, 2021, Venice Commission Website

Appendix H: Case Studies

[See separate file for Appendix H.](#)

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