



## NEWSLETTER

### DG Human Rights and Rule of Law (DGI)

#### October 2023

### CPT

The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) published one report in October 2023, on its ad hoc visit to **Romania** on psychiatric establishments and care homes, which took place from 19 to 30 September 2022.

The Committee also carried out three monitoring visits in October 2023: a periodic visit to **Malta** from 26 September to 5 October with the aim of examining the treatment and conditions of detention of persons held in prison and in immigration detention, as well as the treatment and safeguards afforded to persons detained by law enforcement agencies; a periodic visit to **North Macedonia** from 2 to 12 October in order to assess the treatment of persons held in prisons, psychiatric hospitals and a social care home, as well as to look into the treatment of persons deprived of their liberty by the police; and a periodic visit to **Ukraine** from 16 to 27 October to assess the treatment and safeguards afforded to persons deprived of their liberty by the police and the situation in prison establishments, including those holding life-sentenced prisoners, as well as to examine the situation of persons held in military detention facilities.

### Venice Commission

On 5 October the Commission organised the [78<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Council for Democratic Elections](#) while on 6-7 October it held its [136<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session in Venice adopting/endorsing 18 opinions concerning ten states](#).

In October, the Commission was engaged in the preparation notably of the following:

- **Armenia** - Joint Opinion with DGI on the Concept Paper concerning the reform of the Ethics and Disciplinary Committee of the General Assembly of Judges – requested by the Minister of Justice;
- **Georgia:**
  - Opinion on the Law on the Special Investigation Service;
  - Joint Opinion with ODIHR on the draft amendments to the Election Code and to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament of Georgia;
  - Joint Opinion with DGI on provisions of the Law on the Fight against Corruption regarding the Anti-Corruption Bureau;
  - Opinion on the provisions of the Law on Personal Data Protection concerning the Personal Data Protection Service – in all cases the opinions were requested by the Speaker of Parliament;
- **Kosovo**<sup>\*i</sup> - Follow-up opinion on the previous opinions concerning the Law on the Prosecutorial Council – requested by the President of the Kosovo Assembly;

- **Kyrgyzstan** - Opinion on the Law on Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts (to the Law "On the Branches (Representative Offices) of Non-Profit Organisations" and to the Criminal Code) – requested by the Minister of Justice;
- **Lebanon** – Opinion on the draft law on the Administrative Judiciary – requested by the Minister of Justice;
- **Republic of Moldova** – Joint Follow-up Opinion with ODIHR on the Joint Opinion on amendments to the Electoral Code and other related laws concerning ineligibility of persons connected to political parties declared unconstitutional – requested by the Speaker of Parliament;
- **Ukraine** - *Amicus curiae* brief relating to additional sanctions for committing an administrative offence – requested by the Chairman of the Constitutional Court;
- Study related to the interim opinion on Article 49.3 of the Constitution of **France**.

On 24 October the President of the Venice Commission, Ms Claire Bazy Malaurie, [addressed the 45<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session](#) of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, held in Strasbourg, **France**.

In addition, representatives of the Venice Commission accompanied the PACE election observation delegation to advise on the legal framework of the parliamentary elections held on 15 October in **Poland**. The Commission also co-organised with the Supreme Court of **Kyrgyzstan** the international conference on "[Criminal Justice and Human Rights – Emerging Trends and Challenges](#)" held in Bishkek on 20 October. Lastly, on 23-26 October, Mr Gianni Buquicchio, President Emeritus / Special Representative of the Commission, and Ms S. Granata-Menghini, Secretary of the Commission, took part in [the Annual General Meeting of the Southern and Eastern African Chief Justices' Forum \(SEACJF\)](#), held in Arusha, **Tanzania**.

## Register of Damage for Ukraine

The Register of Damage for Ukraine is continuing its work, recruiting staff (legal vacancies at grades A1/A2 and A4 have been advertised for external competition on the CoE website, and additional vacancy notices are forthcoming) and setting up its bodies, functions and facilities. This includes active preparations for the 3rd meeting of the Conference of Participants, to be held on 16-17 November in Strasbourg. The main agenda item of the meeting will be the appointment of members of the Board of the Register. Given that the Register will be in an entirely digital format, a significant amount of time is dedicated to finding IT solutions to ensure that claims are properly received. In parallel, premises that could potentially serve as the Register's permanent office in The Hague have been identified, and negotiations with the landlord over a lease agreement are ongoing.

The Executive Director, Mr Markiyan Kliuchkovskiy, attended International Law Week at the United Nations in New York, where he had a series of bilateral meetings aimed at encouraging States that supported the UNGA resolution "Furtherance of Remedy and Reparation for Aggression against Ukraine" to join the Register. The Register also organised a side event with the **Czech Republic, the Netherlands and the UK**, with a presentation on the activities of the Register, and the opportunities for non-members of the CoE to become Participants or Associate Members of the Enlarged Partial Agreement.

The Executive Director and other Register staff members have been carrying out missions and attended various meetings around Europe to raise awareness of the Register, present its work and mandate, and discuss the next steps towards a compensation mechanism.

## Implementation of Human Rights, Justice and Legal Co-operation Standards

The yearly **European Day of Justice** took place on 25 October with events in several Member States ([CEPEJ publication](#)). At the [CCBE conference](#) organised on that occasion, in her [speech](#), the Secretary General highlighted the CEPEJ's work on the use of AI in Justice. The EU Justice Commissioner highlighted the crucial role of legal education and of the HELP Programme of the Council of Europe.

**CEPEJ:** the 2023 European "[Crystal Scales of Justice](#)" Prize was awarded to the "*Kids in Court Game (KiCGame)*" project from **Cyprus**. CEPEJ Working Groups met - on [Judicial Time Management](#) (focusing on case-weighting in public prosecution services), on [Quality of Justice](#) (focusing on the operationalisation of the European [Ethical Charter's](#) principles), on the [evaluation of judicial systems](#) (preparation of the 2024 evaluation cycle ) and on [cyberjustice and artificial intelligence](#) (draft guidelines on "online Alternative Dispute Resolution"). The CEPEJ [presented its work on case weighting](#) at a symposium on the workload of judges at the French Court of Cassation.

**HELP Programme:** courses were launched, including [Prohibition of Ill-treatment](#) in **Montenegro**, [Ethics for Judges, Prosecutors and Lawyers](#) in **Albania**, [Data Protection and Privacy Rights](#) and [Family Law](#) in **Bosnia and Herzegovina**; under EU-CoE funded projects: [Violence against Women](#) in **Italy, Spain** and **Latvia**, Cybercrime in **Hungary, Ireland** and **Republic of Moldova** and Hate Crime in **Romania**. A seminar on [Judicial Reasoning](#) was organized for **Italian** judges.

Under other **co-operation projects** (non-exhaustive) - The [TJENI](#) project held its [annual conference](#) in **Oslo** and discussed open data in justice. A new "[Guidance document on the European Prison Rules](#)" was developed under the joint EU/CoE project 'The European NPM Forum' and presented at [EuroPris webinar on soft law](#). A round table discussion was held on [human rights situation in the armed forces](#) in **Armenia**. In the *Co-operation Programmes Division*: **Georgia** – [Awareness raising campaigns on free legal aid](#), an [international conference on restorative justice](#); **Republic of Moldova** - [a launching conference of a new joint project on justice reform](#); **Montenegro** - [a roundtable on admissibility of encrypted communications in criminal proceedings](#); **Türkiye** - several discussion forums for legal professionals countrywide; **Ukraine** - official visit of [a delegation](#) of prosecutorial self-governance and disciplinary bodies to the Council of Europe, [trainings](#) for the National Police and Security Service on ECHR standards, a [presentation on the implementation of Recommendations of the Ombudsman's Special Report on the rights of persons affected by the war](#).

**Abolition of the death penalty:** before the European and world day against the death penalty, the Director General presented to Ministers' Deputies 5 strands of work aiming to implement the Reykjavik declaration concerning the abolition of death penalty, and a series of [decisions](#) were adopted. The coordinator for the abolition of death penalty had an exchange of views on 5 October with a delegation of the ASEAN intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and on 3 October in the framework of a training course to support action for democratic youth participation in Belarus based on Council of Europe standards. Moreover, a virtual space for exchanges has been created on the HELP platform for the participants to the workshop for advocacy for the abolition of death penalty which took place in June in the EYC.

## Execution of Judgments of the ECtHR

The Department carried out a mission to **Slovenia** to discuss with representatives of the State Attorney's Office, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Finance the execution of cases concerning the lack of an effective remedy to challenge or seek compensation for the national bank's extraordinary measures in 2013-2014, cancelling the applicants' shares and bonds ([Pintar](#) case), and concerning a violation of a right to a fair trial due to the recognition of foreign judgments rendered in unfair proceedings ([Dolenc](#) case). The delegation also met the members of the Project Unit for the coordination of the execution of ECtHR judgments at the Ministry of Justice and attended a meeting of the Inter-ministerial working group for the coordination of the execution of ECtHR judgments.

The Department carried out a mission to **Poland** to discuss the cases concerning judicial independence with the representatives of the Government Agent's Office and to meet with the representative of the Representation of the EU Commission in Warsaw. The delegation participated in the 14th Warsaw Human Rights Seminar, dedicated to the topic of Human Rights in Situations of Crisis: Turning Challenging Circumstances into Opportunities, with the participation of the Director General of Human Rights and Rule of Law, presenting information on the challenges concerning the execution of cases against the **Russian Federation**.

The Department took part in a seminar held in Bucharest for the launching of the HELP course on combatting hate crime (national adaptation for prosecutors), as part of the support provided by several Council of Europe units (HELP, SOGI and RTT) to the execution, by **Romania**, of cases concerning impunity for hate crime.

The Department met with the Qualification and Disciplinary Commission of Prosecutors, the Council of Prosecutors and the Office of the Prosecutor General of **Ukraine**. The exchange focused on the progress made and the outstanding measures required for the full implementation of the [Lutsenko group](#) of cases, in particular as regards the strengthening of the independence of the prosecution service and the autonomy of prosecutors, as well as the functioning of the prosecutorial self-governance and disciplinary bodies.

## Social Rights

On **5 October 2023**, the President of the [Governmental Committee](#) and members of the Secretariat met representatives of the UK Government to discuss the follow-up to selected monitoring conclusions of the [European Committee of Social Rights](#). It was the first example of the enhanced dialogue indicated by the Committee of Ministers in reform decisions of the [European Social Charter](#) system.



"The Revised [European Social Charter](#) is a key instrument for the purpose of tackling poverty and social exclusion" said Aoife Nolan, President of the [European Committee of Social Rights](#), in a [statement](#) on **17 October**, International day for the Eradication of Poverty.

The [European Committee of Social Rights](#) (ECSR) met from **16 to 20 October 2023**, in Strasbourg. It examined state reports for the preparation of Conclusions 2023 and adopted a number of [decisions](#) in collective complaints, both as regards admissibility and merits.

The president of the ECSR, Aoife Nolan, held an [exchange of views](#) with the Committee of Ministers on **18 October**. She informed the Minister's Deputies about key activities and achievements of the ECSR during the past year, notably under the [reporting](#) and [collective](#)

[complaints](#) procedures, and also addressed current developments and challenges facing social rights protection in Europe in general and the ECSR's monitoring in particular.

On **19 October**, the Department of Social Rights co-organised with the Academic Network on the European Social Charter (ANESC) an [event](#) to present the project and book "Commentary on the European Social Charter". The presentation was followed by a panel discussion on the cost-of-living crisis with the participation of academics, practitioners and ECSR members. The event was transmitted live, and its recording is now available.

## Police, Detention, Drugs and Addictions

### Pompidou Group

The 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Expert Group on new forms of addictions was organised online on 2 October. The aim of the meeting was to discuss the initial draft report on 'Risks and harms associated with online gaming and gambling and overview of current responses' prepared by the Group and to define the next steps in the Group's work.

On 3-5 October, the third Study visit of the South-East Europe Cooperation Group on Developing comprehensive drug treatment systems (PRISEE) in prisons was organised in **Chisinau, Republic of Moldova**. Policy makers and practitioners working on drug treatment programmes in custodial settings appointed to this group participated in this event, coming from 14 Pompidou Group member States.

Module III of the 2023 Drug Policy Executive Course took place in **Valletta, Malta** on 10-13 October 2023. The focus of this module was on practice: how to monitor and evaluate policies, how to communicate effectively to achieve better results, and how to be part of change. Theoretical knowledge and practical experience shared by international experts, intensive discussions, study visits to Maltese health services - a rich programme culminated in the graduation ceremony where 22 participants received the Certificate in Advanced Drug Policy Management by the International Drug Policy Academy.

The yearly plenary and technical meetings of the Co-operation Group of South-East European Airports took place in **Zagreb**, on 18-19 October 2023, hosted by the Croatian authorities. Permanent members of the group, police and customs officers working at airports of the region on drug-related investigations, from 11 countries and Kosovo\* exchanged information on recent trends, modus operandi and case studies on drug trafficking.

The 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the reconstituted expert group on human rights and drug policy took place on 19-20 October in **Paris**. The Group conducted a first review of the use of the self-assessment tool for drug policy compliance with human rights. Furthermore, work on preparing new guidelines on the topic was initiated.

### Co-operation in Police and Deprivation of Liberty

In **Slovenia**, a team of trainers coached by the Council of Europe delivered a [first round of training](#) under the auspices of the Slovenian Prison Administration to 14 newly recruited staff from 8 prisons on the management of parenting by prisoners, dynamic security, communication, conflict management, in-house prison regulations and the enforcement of criminal sanctions, and search before a visit to a prisoner

On 3-5 October, a six-member delegation from the Prison Healthcare Department, **Kosovo\***'s Ministry of Health, [explored Finnish best practices](#) on occupational therapy for prisoners with mental health disorders. The visit also incorporated broader learnings from Finnish counterparts on prison healthcare, mental health, and rehabilitation.

On 9 October, the Abovyan penitentiary institution in **Armenia** hosted an [awareness-raising session](#) to mark the World Mental Health Day. During the event the manual "Specialised Skills and Knowledge for Psychologists and Psychiatrists Working in Penitentiary Institutions" developed by the Council of Europe was presented. A part of the session was spent providing detainees with guidance on looking after their own mental health.

On 17-19 October in Bucharest (**Romania**), 16 medical and non-medical personnel from 4 prisons were [trained as trainers](#) for their peers on managing prisoners with mental health disorders. On 19 October in **North Macedonia**, a [high-level meeting](#) with the participation of the Ministers of Health and Justice, agreed to establish a working group to coordinate efforts to meet most urgent needs in terms of healthcare in prisons revealed by an earlier Council of Europe analysis: increasing the number of medical personnel in prisons, strengthening the co-ordination capacity of the Ministry of Health, as well as ensuring proper training of medical staff.

## Human Rights, Justice and Legal Co-operation Standard-Setting activities

### Human Rights Intergovernmental Co-operation

On 24-26 October, the CDDH Drafting Group on human rights in situations of crisis ([CDDH-SCR](#)) participated in the [14th Warsaw Human Rights Seminar](#) on "Human rights in situations of crisis: turning challenging circumstances into opportunities", organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland under the auspices of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, and then at its [5th meeting](#) it began working on a draft non-binding legal instrument on the effective protection of human rights in situations of crisis.

On 6 October, the [Consultation of the Parties](#) to the [Convention on access to official documents](#) (Tromsø Convention) at its [third meeting](#), elected its Chairperson and Vice-chairperson. On 12 October a [Workshop](#) on "The right to access State-held information - Council of Europe standards" was organised in the margins of the OSCE/ODIHR Warsaw Human Dimension Conference.

### Legal Co-operation

The Committee of Experts on the Rights and the Best Interests of the Child in Parental Separation and in Care Proceedings (CJ/ENF-ISE) at its 8<sup>th</sup> meeting (4-6 October) finalised the draft recommendation on the protection of the rights and the best interests of the child in parental separation proceedings and its draft explanatory memorandum. They will be examined for approval by the European Committee on Legal Cooperation (CDCJ) and the Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF) during a joint session on 16 November.

The Committee of Experts on the Protection of Lawyers (CJ-AV) at its 6<sup>th</sup> meeting (17-19 October) completed a first reading of the draft convention for the protection of the profession of lawyer and examined for the first time the draft text of the explanatory report.

On 19-20 October, the Consultative Council of European Prosecutors (CCPE) adopted Opinion No. 18 (2023) on Councils of Prosecutors as key bodies of prosecutorial self-governance. This Opinion highlights the role of bodies dealing with prosecutorial self-governance in safeguarding institutional independence of prosecution services and functional independence of individual prosecutors and provides a set of recommendations as regards their status, composition, competence and functioning. It also adopted two thematic studies, respectively on digitalisation in the work of prosecution services and international co-operation, on an overview of Councils of Prosecutors and other bodies dealing with prosecutorial self-governance in member States.

## Information Society – Action against crime

### Media



A continent-wide [Campaign for the Safety of Journalists](#) under the slogan “Journalists matter” was launched in Riga, **Latvia**, on 5 October, at the [international conference](#) “The Pen is mightier than the sword? Meeting today’s challenges to freedom of expression and the safety of journalists”, organised in cooperation with the Latvian Presidency of the Committee of Ministers. Two expert committees have met to review the policy documents in preparation: a guidance note on AI for/by journalists, and a report on sustainable funding of media, by the Committee of Experts on Increasing Resilience of Media on 5-6 October; and a future recommendation on SLAPPs by the Committee of Experts on Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs) on 17-18 October.

### Cooperation on Freedom of Expression

The media regulator of **Serbia** (REM) applied the capacities developed with the support of the HFIII PROFREX action in the field of media literacy, by [providing knowledge, skills and tools to 90 pre-school educators](#) during the Open Media Literacy Days. The [PRO-M-FEX project](#) in **Azerbaijan** introduced a “Curriculum on Conflict-Sensitive Journalism” into four universities and provided 20 faculty members with the knowledge to effectively integrate the curriculum into their teaching methodologies. Developed collaboratively with Council of Europe experts and Azerbaijani professors, it’s now integral to their journalism programmes. The project also organised training for 20 media professionals, enhancing their skills for responsible reporting in conflict-prone situations.

### Artificial Intelligence



Two events were organized at the IGF 2023 in Kyoto, **Japan**: on “[Shaping artificial intelligence to ensure respect for human rights and democratic values](#)” opened by Deputy Secretary General Bjørn Berge on 8 October; and on “[Artificial Intelligence and Environment](#)” moderated by Patrick Penninckx, Head of the Information Society Department on 12 October 2023. On 24-26 October the Committee on Artificial Intelligence of the Council of Europe had its 7th Plenary meeting which was followed by a meeting of the members of its Drafting Group.

### Data Protection



Two new ratifications for [Convention 108+](#): **Portugal** on 18 October, and **Hungary** on 19 October. Only 8 more ratifications are **needed** for its entry into force. Within the Council of Europe [Digital Partnership](#) framework, the Data Protection Unit organised a “Workshop on Data Protection and Privacy”, gathering business partners. The 6<sup>th</sup> [Stefano Rodotà Award competition](#) was launched on 16 October. [The Council of Europe Data Protection Commissioner](#) participated in the [International Organisations Workshop on Data Protection 2023](#) co-organised by INTERPOL and the European Data Protection Supervisor on 24-25 October.

## **Cybercrime**

The [Cybercrime Programme Office](#) supported more than 40 activities that involved following countries: Albania, Algeria, Antigua y Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Georgia, Ghana, Granada, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Kosovo\*, Lebanon, Mexico, Malawi, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, North Macedonia, Panamá, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Santa Lucía, Serbia, Singapore, Spain, Surinam, Trinidad y Tobago, Tunisia, Türkiye, Ukraine. [Rwanda and São Tomé and Príncipe were invited to accede](#) to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime.

## **GRECO**



[Group of States against Corruption](#)

[Groupe d'États contre la corruption](#)

[Netherlands](#), all relating to the 5<sup>th</sup> round on preventing corruption and promoting integrity in the central governments (top executive functions) and law enforcement agencies. In the context of its synergies work with partner international peer-review mechanisms, the GRECO Secretariat took part in the OECD-ACN Network in **Paris**, and the GRECO President spoke at the European Network for Public Ethics (ENPE) Conference on Strengthening Public Integrity and Countering Undue Influence in Democracies in **Ljubljana**.

The Statutory Committee of GRECO met on 4 October under the Presidency of the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the Council of Europe Ambassador Sandy Moss and approved the budget for GRECO for 2024. GRECO published the Evaluation Report on [Cyprus](#) and the Second Compliance Reports on [North Macedonia](#) and the

## **MONEYVAL and Criminal Asset Recovery Division**



MONEYVAL carried out an on-site visit to the United Kingdom Crown Dependency of **Jersey** from 27 September to 10 October 2023, as part of MONEYVAL's 5th round evaluation round. A representative of the secretariat spoke at the Annual General Conference of the Corporate Registers Forum, gathering in **Malta** from 18-20 October delegates from over 40 international corporate registries. A delegation, including Elżbieta Frankow-Jaśkiewicz, Chair of MONEYVAL, several MONEYVAL members, and a Council of Europe delegation, contributed to the plenary meeting and working groups of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), from 23 to 27 October 2023. At this meeting, the FATF updated statements identifying high risk jurisdictions and those under [Increased Monitoring](#) with respect to 3 MONEYVAL's members (**Albania, Bulgaria, Gibraltar**). **Albania** was removed from the list as the FATF recognised the country's significant progress in addressing the strategic AML/CFT deficiencies previously identified during their mutual evaluation after a successful on-site visit. A Vacant position for a secondment is currently open until **30 November 2023** (see <https://bit.ly/45vPsxk>).

MONEYVAL carried out an on-site visit to the United Kingdom Crown Dependency of **Jersey** from 27 September to 10 October 2023, as part of MONEYVAL's 5th round evaluation round. A representative of the secretariat spoke at the Annual General Conference of the Corporate Registers Forum, gathering in **Malta** from 18-20 October delegates from over 40 international corporate registries.

## **Economic Crime and Cooperation**

- Representatives of beneficiary institutions from 12 jurisdictions representing **Central Asia, the Southern Mediterranean, and Kosovo\*** and their peers from several EU member States participated in an inter-regional workshop on "Preventing the abuse of virtual assets – tools and comparative experiences against economic crime".



- **Albanian** authorities benefited from advice on the finalization of the 4<sup>th</sup> National Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Risk Assessment Report (NRA), based on the Council of Europe methodology.
- **Armenian** investigators, prosecutors and judges benefited from a training on investigation and prosecution of terrorism Financing cases organized on 17-18 October 2023.
- Judicial and prosecutorial authorities in **Azerbaijan** benefited from advice in the field of improving prosecution and adjudication of money laundering and asset recovery cases.
- Representatives of the **Bulgarian** Financial Intelligence Directorate within the State Agency for National Security, the National Revenue Agency and the Communications Regulation Commission benefited from a training on the risk-based Anti-Money Laundering and Countering Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) supervision of Designated Non-financial Businesses and Professions (DNFBP) sector.
- Developed two guidance documents for the **Croatian** National Bank on a) assessing Terrorist Financing (TF) risks in its supervised sectors, and b) Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (ML/TF) risks associated with payment and e-money institutions.
- The Superior Council of Magistrates of the **Republic of Moldova** received guidance in improving the internal regulatory framework in regard to disciplinary liability and performance evaluation of inspector-judges.
- Representatives of the Anti-money laundering (AML) and countering of financing of terrorism (CFT) supervisory authorities and the law enforcement agencies of **Ukraine** participated in a virtual workshop on countering proliferation financing.
- Practitioners representing the Financial Intelligence Unit, Security Service and Prosecutor General's Office of **Ukraine** benefited from an advanced training on Open-Source Intelligence (OSINT).

## **Criminal Law**

The fourth and final meeting of the [Committee of Experts on Hate Crime](#) (PC/ADI-CH) took place on 4-6 October 2023 in Strasbourg to finalise the draft Recommendation on combating hate crime and its accompanying Explanatory Memorandum.

The draft texts will be submitted to the European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC) and to the Steering Committee on Anti-Discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI) for adoption in November 2023.

The [CDPC Bureau](#) held its meeting on 5-6 October 2023 at the Council of Europe Office in Paris (**France**). It discussed the current work carried out by its permanent sub-committees (PC-OC and PC-CP) as well as by its other ad hoc bodies (the expert committees on hate crime, on the protection of the environment through criminal law and on artificial intelligence and criminal law; as well as of the Council of Europe Network of Prosecutors on Migrant Smuggling). It also discussed future activities of the CDPC and took note of the work of other Council of Europe bodies relevant to its area of competence.

The [PC-CP](#) held their [plenary meeting](#) on 10-12 October in Paris. The delegates considered a draft CM Recommendation on the ethical and organisational aspects of the use of AI by the prison and probation services and a draft CM Recommendation on the management of mental disorders and the promotion of positive mental health by the prison and probation services. The PC-CP Secretary as well as several PC-CP WG members were among the key speakers at the 25th Conference of the International Corrections and Prisons Association - ICPA (22-27 October Antwerp, **Belgium**). [The Conference](#) was attended by 900 participants and a number of important topics were discussed. The Council of Europe role in the prison and probation area was acknowledged and highly praised by a number of speakers.

The [PC-ENV](#) held its 2nd meeting on 16-18 October 2023 in Strasbourg. The meeting saw the start of formal negotiations on the draft Convention on the Protection of the

Environment through Criminal Law. Mr Šimon Pepřík (**Czech Republic**), Chair of the PC-ENV, welcomed the members of the Committee and invited them to provide general comments on the draft Convention then proceed to the first reading of Articles 1-30. Representatives of the European Commission presented its mandate representing 25 EU member States. The draft Convention on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law was presented by the CDPC Secretariat and generally well received by the members of the PC-ENV, who suggested amendments and identified the themes requiring further analysis in the work going forward. Following the 2nd meeting, the delegations' comments and suggestions for modifications will be compiled and distributed to the PC-ENV in an updated draft Convention, forming a basis for future negotiations. The 3rd meeting of the PC-ENV will be held on 27-29 February 2024 in Strasbourg. It will be dedicated to the first reading negotiations of the remaining articles and to a debate on the questions raised during the 2nd meeting.

### **MEDICRIME, Trafficking in Human Organs and Cultural property**

A bilateral meeting with **INTERPOL** was held to both strengthen synergies between the two international organisations and encourage the accession of third countries to the [MEDICRIME Convention](#) (11 October). On 24 October, the [Slovak Republic](#) became the 19th country to sign the [MEDICRIME Convention](#). The [Committee of the Parties](#) to the Council of Europe [Convention against the Trafficking in Human Organs](#) organised its 4th Plenary meeting (25-26 October). Among other items, the Committee adopted the country profile report and the theme of its 1st monitoring round: prevention and awareness mechanisms to counter trafficking in human organs. [Azerbaijan](#) signed the Santiago de Compostela Convention (30 October). The [Nicosia Convention](#) was promoted at the Meeting of the Informal Network of Police Forces and Experts in the field of Cultural Property organised in **Spain** (24-26 October).

### **Counter-Terrorism**

In October, the Committee on Counter-Terrorism (CDCT) held its 11th Bureau meeting and hosted its working groups preparing the Comparative practices on the use of information collected in conflict zones as evidence in criminal proceedings and Guidelines for public and private sector authorities on preparedness and emergency responses to the immediate aftermath of terrorist attacks.

The CDCT Bureau meeting focused on strategic decisions regarding the preparations for the upcoming 11th CDCT Plenary, including continuation of formal negotiations on the pan-European definition of terrorism, while the working group meetings examined the draft texts of two future CDCT documents.

The Guidelines on preparedness and emergency responses to the immediate aftermath of terrorist attacks are expected to be finalised by the end of this year and work on the Comparative practices on the use of information collected in conflict zones as evidence in criminal proceedings will continue in the first half of 2024.

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<sup>i</sup> \* All references to Kosovo, whether the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo