PEER REVIEW

THE EVALUATION FUNCTION OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Inception Paper (final)

20 May 2022

Prepared by:

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Abbreviations:

CM	Committee of Ministers
DGS	Deputy Secretary General
DIO	Directorate of Internal Oversight
ED	Evaluation Division
FGD	Focus group discussion
MAE	Major Administrative Entity
OAC	Oversight Advisory Committee
ODGP	Office of the Directorate General of Programmes
PandB	Programme and Budget
PMM	Programme Management Methodology
PO	Private Office of the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General
RBM	Results-based management
SG	Secretary General
ToR	Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

The terms of reference (ToR) for the peer review were prepared by DIO/ED before the panel was appointed. The ToR established that the peer review panel will comprise of three evaluation professionals from international organisations and that the panel will be assisted by a peer review consultant who will be reporting to the panel chair. This inception paper was prepared by the peer review consultant with inputs from the panel members. The inception paper is based on the ToR for this peer review, several interactions with the ED, an exchange with the Director of DIO and an initial document and website review.

This is the third peer review of the evaluation function of the Council of Europe. The last peer review of the evaluation function took place in 2017 and the first was conducted in 2010. The 2017 peer review found several challenges to the Council's evaluation function, i.e. the political sensitivity of the Council's work, the influence of the Private Office of the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General on the evaluation function, the partly limited usefulness of the evaluation function and the need to strengthen decentralised evaluations. Based on the 2017 peer review and its recommendations, several efforts were made to strengthen the evaluation function of the Council of Europe. In November 2019, the Committee of Ministers approved the new Evaluation Policy. Based on the new Evaluation Policy, the Evaluation Guidelines were updated, the decentralised Quality Assurance Framework was put in place, a clear process for publication of evaluation reports alongside a management response and action plan has been put in place, a framework contract for consultants was created to be used both for DIO and decentralised evaluations, the DIO website was revamped, follow-up of recommendations were systematised with Action Plans with a new IT tool (TeamMate), more efforts were invested in streamlining evaluation processes and methods in DIO and evaluations were promoted through videos and events.

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation.[1] All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. (see more facts about the Council of Europe in Annex 1). The external environment for the Council is one of risks and uncertainties. Several crises have challenged the Council. The pandemic has been disruptive and the war in Ukraine is particularly challenging to the work of the council. These crises can have the effect to distract the organisation from its objective. Internal and external challenges reconfirm the importance of a strong evaluation function in supporting organisational reforms, improved performance and a stronger focus on results.

2. Purpose of peer assessment

International good practice calls for evaluation functions of public organisations being regularly peer reviewed. The Council of Europe is adhering to this good practice in its Evaluation Policy which calls on DIO to periodically commissions an external peer review of the Evaluation Policy and evaluation function.[2] The Directorate of Internal Oversight (DIO) therefore included a peer review in its 2022 work programme. This is one way which helps the function to keep abreast with most recent evaluation developments and to have independent feedback about the maturity level of the Council of Europe evaluation function (within DIO and decentralised function). The purpose of the 2022 peer review is to receive advice from the peers on how to improve the evaluation

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[1] https://www.Council of Europe.int/en/web/about-us/who-we-are
[2] Council of Europe Evaluation Policy, 2019, p. 18

function of the Council of Europe for both the central evaluations managed by DIO/ED and decentralised evaluations managed by the Major Administrative Entity (MAE) in order for the evaluation function to effectively contribute to organisational decision making, programme effectiveness, learning and accountability for results.

3. Subject and scope

The period of the review is 2017 (last peer review) until June 2022 with a focus on the current situation (June 2022).

The peer review is looking at both the central evaluation function (DIO/ED) and the decentralised evaluations of the MAE in the Council of Europe.

In the past years (2017-2021) the central evaluation function (DIO/ED) produced 15 evaluation reports, plus two ex-ante evaluations (Annex 7). In addition, approx. 10-15 decentralised evaluations are commissioned each year.

4. Objectives and assessment criteria

The objectives of the peer review are – according to the ToR - to assess:

   a) the state of implementation of the evaluation policy
   b) the current set-up and functioning of the Evaluation Division in the Council of Europe
   c) the set-up and functioning of the decentralised evaluation function

The main assessment criteria are the ones generally used in peer reviews of evaluation functions to make a judgement on their level of maturity. The four assessment criteria are:

   1. Enabling environment
   2. Independence and impartiality
   3. Credibility, quality, reliability
   4. Utility and potential impact

The ToR for the peer review included a fifth criteria, i.e. decentralised evaluation function and decentralised evaluations. While the panel members fully acknowledge the importance of decentralised evaluations, they are of the view that it is not an assessment criteria, rather the four assessment criteria also apply to the decentralised evaluations. In any case, the decentralised evaluation function will be examined closely during the peer review.

The ToR provide a list of possible sub-criteria for the panel to consider (Annex 3).

5. Peer review panel and support

The peer review panel is composed of:
   – Mr. Arild Hauge, Chair of the panel, former Deputy Director of the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), UNDP (Oslo)
   – Ms. Claudia Ibarguen, panel member, Head of Evaluation at UNESCO (Paris)
   – Mr. Guy Thijs, panel member, Director, Office of Evaluation, ILO (Geneva)

The panel is supported by a peer review consultant:
   – Mr. Urs Zollinger, international evaluation consultant (Zurich)

The peer review panel and the consultant will be supported by the Evaluation Division in terms of

providing and facilitating access to documents and persons during the peer review exercise.

6. Work done until now and emerging issues and priorities

Based on the assessment criteria and sub-criteria proposed in the ToR, the consultant prepared a preliminary review matrix (Annex 3). The review matrix also included references to the self-assessment recently conducted by the DIO Evaluation Division (in preparation for the current peer assessment) using the Self-Assessment Maturity Matrix for UN Evaluation Functions.[3]

The panel interacted with the DOI/ED during the inception phase (Annex 6) and reviewed a number of documents and websites (Annex 8). In particular, the panel reviewed the summary of progress in implementing recommendations of last peer review in 2017 (Annex 4).

Emerging issues and priorities

The initial interaction with DIO/ED, the document analysis and the preliminary review matrix allowed the panel to identify emerging issues which require particular attention during the review process. This allowed the panel to set some priorities as the panel was of the view that the preliminary set of assessment criteria and sub-criteria was too numerous. Subsequently a revised review matrix was prepared (Annex 2).

The emerging issues and priorities the panel will focus on are:

1. **Independence of the evaluation function (and enabling environment)**[4]

    a. To what extent is the evaluation function **financially independent**? Adequate funding is crucial (regular budget allocation). The Evaluation Division should not have to go to donors to ask for funding. What is the funding mechanism for evaluation, both central and decentralised evaluations? The oversight budget is <u>not</u> a separate item in the Council of Europe Programme and Budget which is unusual for international organisations. The Evaluation Policy is vague on funding with no "hard" commitments. The financial set-up, amount, source of funds and independence in decision making over these funds will be a priority area of inquiry. Are evaluation topics not taken on because funds cannot be assured?

    b. **Who sets the evaluation agenda?** How is the evaluation work plan being developed? How are the evaluation topics selected? How independent is ED in selecting the topics? Is the Office of the SG or the DSG able to veto topics? How strong is the influence of the Oversight Advisory Committee (OAC) on the selection of the topics? The focus here will be to see whether ED has the *ultimate say* in setting the workplan. OAC and other stakeholders such as the CM, the SG the MAE can propose or request evaluation topics. The peer review will assess if ED has the ability (which speaks to independence), after gathering, reviewing and assessing potential topics, to decide what goes in and out of the workplan. How is programmatic coverage ensured?

    c. What are ED's **reporting line**? According to the Evaluation Policy, ED is under the authority of the SG/DSG and "transmits" evaluation reports to the chair of the CM. The peer review will assess whether this process is followed. All DIO evaluation reports are

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[3] Self-Assessment Maturity Matrix for UN Evaluation Functions, Working Draft, Updated February 28th, DIO/ED, Feb. 2022

[4] Location of the Evaluation Division: the JIU report of 2014 contains useful criteria to assess the location of the evaluation office; Analysis of the Evaluation Function in the United Nations System, Joint Inspection Unit, United Nations, Geneva 2014

now published (which was not the case prior to 2017). Are their efforts to communicate and disseminate results and findings?

d. The current **Director of DIO** is recruited from within Council of Europe for two terms of six years each. He/she can be internal or external. The review will assess whether internal recruitments and not having one term limit has an impact on independence of the evaluation function. Should the DIO Director be recruited from outside for only one six year term? The new DIO Charter (Draft) is proposing only one six year term, as recommended by the OAC.

2. Demand for evaluation (utility)

a. What is the demand for evaluation from the Committee of Minsters, the Secretary General and the MAEs? How is this demand or interest expressed? Is it that the CM requests evaluations? What is the process of preparing the DIO work programme (including and evaluation plan)? What is the planning process for deciding on decentralised evaluations? What is the coverage of main programmatic areas in order to ensure adequate accountability and learning? Does the CM engage with ED during presentation of findings? How are the CM and the SG using evaluations? Is there a demand for follow-up of past evaluations?[5]

b. To what extent does the Council's *type of work* (i.e. normative work, standard setting with its own control mechanism) and the *sensitive nature* of the Council's work (i.e. human rights issues) affect the demand for evaluations? How can the use of evaluation be strengthened in a standard-setting organisation?

c. Does the fact that the technical co-operation activities of the Council of Europe are rather small limit the opportunities for evaluation? The issue of coverage is important as well. How to ensure there is sufficient coverage to provide assurances that there is value for money?

d. Good practise in some international organisations: as part of the submission of the budget it is mandatory to report what the organisation has learned from evaluations. What is the practise in the Council of Europe?

3. Evaluation strategy (credibility)

a. Does ED have an evaluation strategy for the roll out of the evaluation policy, with milestones and targets? How does ED measure and report on progress in the implementation of the evaluation strategy?

b. The evaluation strategy is part of the DIO strategy. Is this appropriate? Sufficient?

c. The reporting on the implementation of the evaluations policy (policy in the absence of a strategy?) is part of the DIO annual reporting. Is this appropriate? Sufficient?

4. Decentralised evaluations (enabling environment, independence, credibility, utility)

a. How do the decentralised evaluation fit? Decentralised evaluations normally focus on programmatic areas that are more directly under the control of managers. The responsibility for financing decentralised evaluations is often with those managing the projects or programmes. It is important that the label "independent" is controlled by the Evaluation Division. A decentralised evaluation should only be allowed to be labelled as

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[5] ED to prepare an overview of formal references to evaluations in official Council of Europe documents since 2018 (CM documents, SG documents).

independent if the Evaluation Division maintains oversight control and is accountable for their quality and independence (unless the evaluations are self or internal).

b. There are not very many decentralised evaluation reports: 15 in 2019, 11 in 2020, 17 in 2021 while there are around 300 on-going projects. Why is it that projects are not putting in place evaluation processes?

c. Are decentralised evaluation reports of a good quality? (credibility) The review will focus on the quality of the decentralised evaluation reports.

d. Council of Europe PMM handbook (Project Management Methodology) emphasises the importance of evaluation[6] and refers to the evaluation guidelines. As such, rules for decentralised evaluations exist. However, the rules are not enforced and there are no mandatory evaluations. Who has the authority to enforce the rules? Given the "voluntary" nature, why are some projects evaluated and others not? Is it because donors request them or because there are "enlightened" managers that recognise the value of evaluations? The budget for decentralised evaluations is limited. Few MAE staff have training in managing and conducting evaluations (according to DIO). Not all decentralised reports are published and the overall follow-up to recommendations is unclear (to DIO). The extent to which DIO can play a role in their follow up is not clear. Currently, DIO has put the management response in the TeamMate of only of 5 decentralised reports.

e. There are Council of Europe institutions that do not conduct evaluations such as the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) or the European Court of Human Rights (the Court). Why are no evaluations conducted? Is it seen as work that is not evaluable? DIO/ED includes them in the thematic evaluations. Would evaluations in these areas help the Council? Would it fill a knowledge gap? Would the knowledge be used? Also, the intergovernmental committees and monitoring bodies are not evaluated. DIO evaluates them across the board or as part of larger evaluations. In any case, they do not have in-built mechanisms to evaluate their work. If DO does not approach them, they would not be evaluated – unlike the technical co-operation programmes financed by donors, who demand evaluations. Partial agreements are rarely evaluated (Eurimages was evaluated). The Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) has an evaluation function. Is there a link to the DIO/ED?

7. Assessment methodology and work plan

Based on the emerging issues and priorities, the assessment methodology was defined and the work plan established.

The main data collection methods for the peer review are:
- Focus group discussions (Annex 5 for details)
- Interviews with Council of Europe stakeholders (Annex 5 for details)
- Document review (Annex 8 provides a preliminary list of documents)
- Review of selected evaluation reports with a focus on decentralised evaluations

The data sources and collection methods for each review area are presented in the **final review matrix** (Annex 2).

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[6] "*The evaluation of projects is a fundamental element of project management and needs to be considered throughout all the phases of the project management cycle.*" PPM Handbook, p.15.

An important milestone of the peer review will be the **visit of the panel to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg**. This will be key for the data collection from interviews and focus group discussions. The proposed list of stakeholders for focus group discussions and interviews during the visit to Strasbourg is presented in Annex 5. The time in Strasbourg will also be a key moment for the panel to discuss early findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Prior to the visit of the panel to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, the consultant will prepare a **working paper** structured along the emerging issues and priorities identified in chapter 6 above. The paper will be based on a review of documents (identified in the final review matrix, Annex 2) and come up with early findings if possible.

The panel will have **weekly meetings** (online) in order to discuss emerging issues and early findings.

Content analysis of interview notes, FGD notes and documents will be the main data analysis methods. The content analysis will be conducted along the review areas identified in the final review matrix (Annex 2). The analysis will, however, be open to additional emerging issues.

The peer review has three phases: inception phase, data collection/ analysis phase and the report drafting phase. The detailed work plan is presented in the table.

Table 2: Work Plan

What	When	Who	
		Peer review panel	Peer review consultant
Inception phase			
Interaction with DIO/ED	April		☑
Initial desk review	April		☑
Development of review matrix	April		☑
Weekly panel meetings (online)	28 April onwards	☑	☑
Draft inception report	10 May		☑
Inception report (revised draft)	17 May		☑
Data collection and analysis			
Document review	May/June	☑	☑
Working paper	8 June		☑
Review of evaluation reports	May/June	☑	☑
Panel visit to Council of Europe in Strasbourg for interviews and focus group discussion; preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations	**15-17 June***	☑	☑
Additional online interviews (if necessary, tbd)	June	☑	☑
Report drafting			
Draft review report	11 July		☑
Panel reviews draft report	15 July	☑	
First draft of the review report for DIO comments	20 July	☑	☑
Preparation of second draft report	30 July		☑
Panel reviews second draft report	15 August	☑	

Preparation of the final report	22 August		☑
Adoption by the panel of the final report	31 August	☑	
Presentation of panel report to senior management and Committee of Ministers	Sept./Oct.	☑	
*Panel members may arrive prior to the 15 June, depending on availability and travel options. The consultant will be arriving on the 13 June 2022.			

8. Reporting and use

The draft review report will be shared with DIO/ED for comments. Parts of the report may also be shared with other entities for comment as considered appropriate. After finalising the report, it is envisaged that panel presents the report to the Council of Europe senior management as well as to the Committee of Ministers.

9. Limitation and mitigation

Given the nature of peer reviews, i.e. panel members participate on a voluntary basis and in addition to their normal duties, the panel members can only dedicate a limited time to the peer review. This can be compensated by the consultant taking the lead in preparatory work, document analysis and report drafting.

One panel member can't travel to Strasbourg. The panel member will participate online in the focus group discussions and team meetings as appropriate and feasible.

Annex 1: About the Council of Europe

Some facts about the Council of Europe:[7]

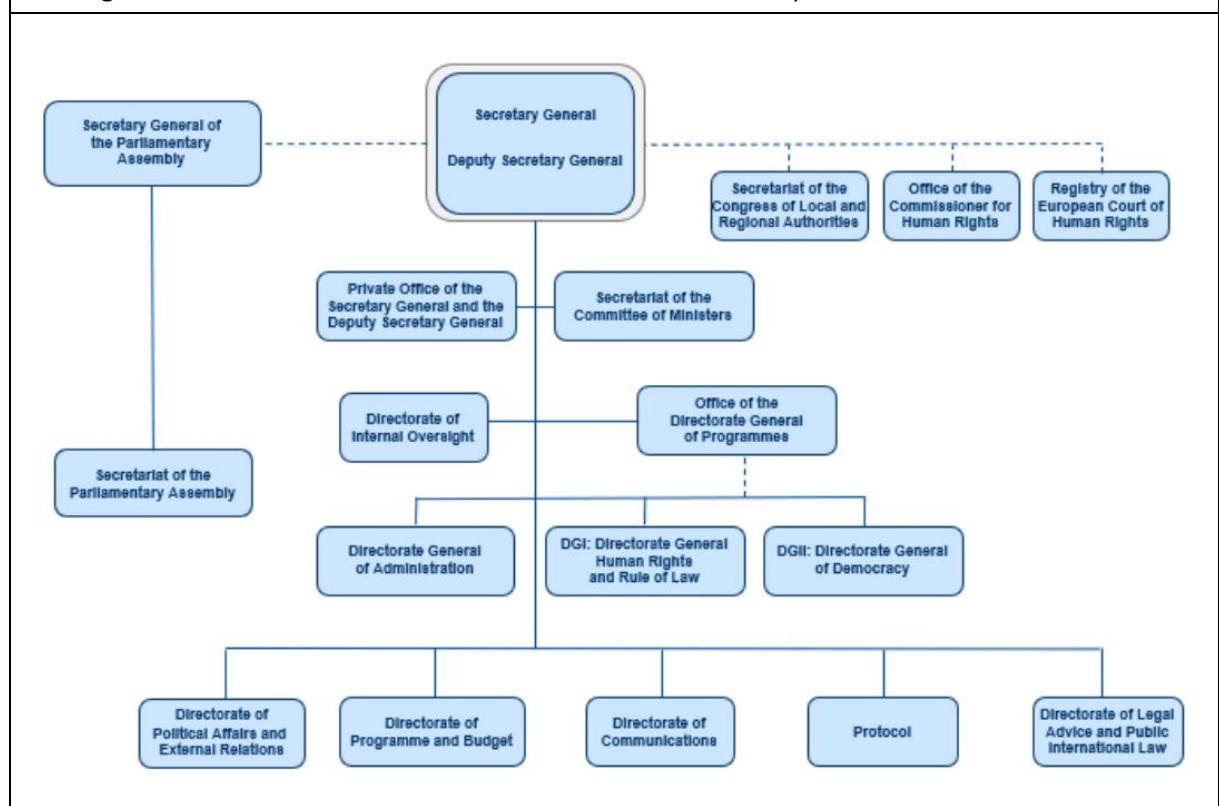|	
Thematic priorities:	Human rights, rule of law and democracy
Member states	46
Total resources for 2022	€ 477m
Number of staff member	2060
Key strategic priorities 2022 – 2025:	1. Implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) 2. Ensuring freedom of expression, both online and offline 3. Fighting growing social inequalities and poverty 4. Non-discrimination and ensuring the protection of vulnerable groups 5. Fighting inequality, racism, xenophobia and discrimination on grounds of religion or belief or any other ground. 6. Independence, efficiency and resilience of the judicial systems of our member states 7. Fight against corruption and money laundering, as well as combating cybercrime 8. Fight against human trafficking 9. Artificial intelligence (AI) 10. Fight against environmental degradation and climate change 11. Supporting the role and diversity of civil society, including human rights defenders, as well as national human rights institutions in member states 12. Education for democratic citizenship and empowerment and strengthening of young people's role in decision making

The Structure of the Council of Europe:[8]	
Secretary General / Deputy Secretary General	The Secretary General is elected by the PACE for a five-year term at the head of the Organisation. She is responsible for the strategic planning and direction of the Council's work programme and budget. She leads and represents the Organisation. The Deputy Secretary General is also elected for a five-year term by the PACE, in an election separate to the one held for the Secretary General.
Committee of Ministers:	This is the Council's decision-making body and is made up of the ministers of foreign affairs of each member state or their permanent diplomatic representatives in Strasbourg. The Committee of Ministers decides Council of Europe policy and approves its budget and programme of activities.
Parliamentary Assembly:	The PACE consists of 306 members of parliament from the 46 member states; the Assembly elects the Secretary General, the Human Rights Commissioner and the judges to the Court; it provides a democratic forum for debate and monitors elections; its committees play an important role in examining current issues.
Congress of Local and Regional Authorities:	The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities is responsible for strengthening local and regional democracy in its 46 member states. Composed of two chambers – the Chamber of Local Authorities and the Chamber of Regions –

[7] Council of Europe Programme and Budget for 2022 – 2025, CM(2022)1, 10 December 2021
[8] www.Council of Europe.int/en/web/about-us/structure

	and three committees, it brings together 612 elected officials representing more than 150 000 local and regional authorities.
European Court of Human Rights:	This is the permanent judicial body which guarantees for all Europeans the rights safeguarded by the European Convention on Human Rights. It is open to states and individuals regardless of nationality. The 46 member states of the Council of Europe are parties to the Convention.
Commissioner for Human Rights:	The Human Rights Commissioner independently addresses and brings attention to human rights violations.
Conference of INGOs:	The Conference includes some 400 international Non- Governmental Organisations (INGOs). It provides vital links between politicians and the public and brings the voice of civil society to the Council. The Council's work benefits extensively from the INGOs' expertise and their outreach to European citizens.

The organisational chart of the Secretariat of the Council of Europe

Annex 2: Final review matrix

Emerging issues and priorities (review areas)	Source of information, data collection methods	
	Interviews and focus group discussions	**Document review**
1. Independence of the evaluation function (and enabling environment)		
a. To what extent is the evaluation function **financially independent**? Adequate funding is crucial (regular budget allocation). The Evaluation Division should not have to go to donors to ask for funding. What is the funding mechanism for evaluation, both central and decentralised evaluations? The oversight budget is <u>not</u> a separate item in the Council of Europe Programme and Budget which is unusual for international organisations. The Evaluation Policy is vague on funding with no "hard" commitments. The financial set-up, amount, source of funds and independence in decision making over these funds will be a priority area of inquiry. Are evaluation topics not taken on because funds cannot be assured?	FGD with member state representatives FGD with members of the OAC Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED Interviews with SG, DSG, Private Office (PO) Interviews with member state representatives (based in Strasbourg) Interviews with donor representatives (based in capitals) Interview with Directorate of PandB	Council of Europe Programme and Budget 2022-25 DIO Charter (draft) Evaluation Policy Evaluation Guidelines DIO annual reports OAC annual reports Financial analysis DIO budget and staff
b. **Who sets the evaluation agenda?** How is the evaluation work plan being developed? How are the evaluation topics selected? How independent is ED in selecting the topics? Is the Office of the SG or the DSG able to veto topics? How strong is the influence of the OAC on the selection of the topics? The focus here will be to see whether ED has the *ultimate say* in setting the workplan. OAC, and other stakeholders such as the CM, the SG the MAE can propose or request evaluation topics. The peer review will assess if ED has the ability (which speaks to independence), after gathering, reviewing and assessing potential topics, to decide what goes in and out of the workplan. How is programmatic coverage ensured?	FGD with member state representatives FGD with members of the OAC FGD with operational directorates Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED Interviews with SG, DSG, Private Office (PO) Interviews with member state representatives (based in Strasbourg) Interviews with donor representatives (based in capitals) Interviews with ED staff	DIO Charter (draft) Evaluation Policy Evaluation Guidelines DIO Strategy DIO work programmes DIO annual reports OAC annual reports OAC draft revised terms of reference
c. What are ED's **reporting line**? According to the Evaluation Policy, ED is under the authority of the SG/DSG and	FGD with member state representatives	DIO Charter (draft)

"transmits" evaluation reports to the chair of the CM. The peer review will assess whether this process is followed. All DIO evaluation reports are now published (which was not the case prior to 2017). Are their efforts to communicate and disseminate results and findings?	FGD with members of the OAC Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED Interviews with SG, DSG, Private Office (PO) Interviews with member state representatives (based in Strasbourg) Interviews with donor representatives (based in capitals) Interviews with ED staff	Evaluation Policy Evaluation Guidelines DIO Strategy DIO work programmes SG annual reports DIO annual reports OAC annual reports
d. The current **Director of DIO** is recruited from within Council of Europe for two terms of six years each. He/she can be internal or external. The review will assess whether internal recruitments and not having one term limit has an impact on independence of the evaluation function. Should the DIO Director be recruited from outside for only one six year term? The new DIO Charter (Draft) is proposing only one six year term, as recommended by the OAC.	FGD with member state representatives FGD with members of the OAC Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED Interviews with SG, DSG, Private Office (PO) Interviews with member state representatives (based in Strasbourg) Interviews with donor representatives (based in capitals) Interviews heads of Council of Europe investigation and audit Interviews with ED staff	DIO Charter (draft) Evaluation Policy
2. Demand for evaluation (utility)		
a. What is the demand for evaluation from the Committee of Minsters, the Secretary General and the MAEs? How is this demand or interest expressed? Is it that the CM requests evaluations? What is the process of preparing the DIO work programme (including and evaluation plan)? What is the planning process for deciding on decentralised evaluations? What is the coverage of main programmatic areas in order to ensure adequate accountability and learning? Does the CM engage with ED during presentation of findings? How are the CM and the SG using evaluations? Is there a demand for follow-up of past evaluations?[9]	FGD with member state representatives FGD with members of the OAC FGD with operational directorates FGD with MAE staff Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED Interviews with SG, DSG, Private Office (PO) Interviews with member state representatives (based in Strasbourg) Interviews with donor representatives (based in capitals)	DIO Strategy DIO work programmes SG annual reports DIO annual reports OAC annual reports

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[9] ED to prepare an overview of formal references to evaluations in official Council of Europe documents since 2018 (CM documents, SG documents).

		Interview with ODGP (Office of the Directorate General of Programmes)	
		Interviews with ED staff	
b.	To what extent does the Council's *type of work* (i.e. normative work, standard setting with its own control mechanism) and the *sensitive nature* of the Council's work (i.e. human rights issues) affect the demand for evaluations? How can the use of evaluation be strengthened in a standard-setting organisation?	FGD with member state representatives FGD with members of the OAC FGD with operational directorates FGD with MAE staff Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED Interviews with SG, DSG, Private Office (PO) Interviews with member state representatives (based in Strasbourg) Interviews with donor representatives (based in capitals) Interview with ODGP (Office of the Directorate General of Programmes) Interviews with ED staff	SG annual reports Council of Europe Evaluation Website External Audit of the Council of Europe, Audit Report (2021)
c.	Does the fact that the technical co-operation activities of the Council of Europe are rather small limit the opportunities for evaluation? The issue of coverage is important as well. How to ensure there is sufficient coverage to provide assurances that there is value for money?	FGD with member state representatives FGD with members of the OAC FGD with operational directorates FGD with MAE staff Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED Interviews with SG, DSG, Private Office (PO) Interviews with member state representatives (based in Strasbourg) Interviews with donor representatives (based in capitals) Interview with ODGP (Office of the Directorate General of Programmes) Interviews with ED staff	SG annual reports Council of Europe Evaluation Website DIO work programmes DIO annual reports OAC annual reports
d.	Good practise in some international organisations: as part of the submission of the budget it is mandatory to report what the organisation has learned from evaluations. What is the practise in the Council of Europe?	FGD with members of the OAC FGD with MAE staff Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED	Council of Europe Programme and Budget 2022-25

		Interviews with ED staff	
3. Evaluation strategy (credibility, quality and reliability)			
a.	Does ED have an evaluation strategy for the role out of the evaluation policy, with milestones and targets? How does ED measure progress in the implementation of the evaluation strategy?	FGD with members of the OAC Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED Interviews heads of Council of Europe investigation and audit Interviews with ED staff	DIO Charter (draft) Evaluation Policy DIO Strategy DIO work programmes DIO annual reports OAC annual reports
b.	The evaluation strategy is part of the DIO strategy. Is this appropriate? Sufficient?	FGD with members of the OAC Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED Interviews heads of Council of Europe investigation and audit Interviews with ED staff	DIO Charter (draft) Evaluation Policy DIO Strategy DIO work programmes DIO annual reports OAC annual reports
c.	The reporting on the implementation of the evaluations policy (policy in the absence of a strategy?) is part of the DIO annual reporting. Is this appropriate? Sufficient?	FGD with members of the OAC Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED Interviews heads of Council of Europe investigation and audit Interviews with ED staff	DIO annual reports OAC annual reports
4. Decentralised evaluations (enabling environment, independence, credibility, utility)			
a.	How do the decentralised evaluation fit? Decentralised evaluations normally focus on programmatic areas that are more directly under the control of managers. The responsibility for financing decentralised evaluations is often with those managing the projects or programmes. It is important that the label "independent" is controlled by the Evaluation Division. A decentralised evaluation should only be allowed to be labelled as independent if	FGD with members of the OAC FGD with operational directorates FGD with MAE staff Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED Interviews with SG, DSG, Private Office (PO) Interviews with member state representatives (based in Strasbourg)	Evaluation Policy Evaluation Guidelines Decentralised Evaluations – State of Play, (Power Point Presentation 2022)

	the Evaluation Division maintains oversight control and is accountable for their quality and independence (unless the evaluations are self or internal).	Interviews with donor representatives (based in capitals) Interview with ODGP (Office of the Directorate General of Programmes) Interviews with ED staff	"Stocktaking of Decentralised Evaluations" (DIO/ED report 2020)
b.	There are not very many decentralised evaluation reports: 15 in 2019, 11 in 2020, 17 in 2021 while there are around 300 on-going projects. Why is it that projects are not putting in place evaluation processes?	FGD with members of the OAC FGD with operational directorates FGD with MAE staff Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED Interviews with SG, DSG, Private Office (PO) Interviews with member state representatives (based in Strasbourg) Interviews with donor representatives (based in capitals) Interview with ODGP (Office of the Directorate General of Programmes) Interviews with ED staff	Evaluation Policy Evaluation Guidelines Website: decentralised evaluation reports
c.	Are decentralised evaluation reports of a good quality?	FGD with members of the OAC FGD with MAE staff Interviews with ED staff	Review of evaluation reports (sample)
d.	Council of Europe PMM handbook (Project Management Methodology) emphasises the importance of evaluation[10] and refers to the evaluation guidelines. As such, rules for decentralised evaluations exist. However, the rules are not enforced and there are no mandatory evaluations. Who has the authority to enforce the rules? Given the "voluntary" nature, why are some projects evaluated and others not? Is it because donors request them or because there are "enlightened" managers that recognise the value of evaluations? The budget for decentralised evaluations is limited. Few MAE staff have training in managing and conducting evaluations (according to DIO).	FGD with members of the OAC FGD with operational directorates FGD with MAE staff Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED Interviews with SG, DSG, Private Office (PO) Interviews with member state representatives (based in Strasbourg) Interviews with donor representatives (based in capitals) Interview with ODGP (Office of the Directorate General of Programmes)	PMM handbook (Project Management Methodology) Evaluation Policy Evaluation Guidelines Quality Assurance Framework DIO annual reports

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[10] "*The evaluation of projects is a fundamental element of project management and needs to be considered throughout all the phases of the project management cycle.*" PPM Handbook, p.15.

	Not all decentralised reports are published and the follow-up to recommendations is unclear (to DIO). The extent to which DIO can play a role in their follow up is not clear. Currently, DIO puts the management response in the TeamMate of only of 5 decentralised reports.	Interviews with ED staff	
e.	There are Council of Europe institutions that do not conduct evaluations such as the PACE or the Court. Why are no evaluations conducted? Is it seen as work that is not evaluable? DIO/ED includes them in the thematic evaluations. Would evaluations in these areas help the Council? Would it fill a knowledge gap? Would the knowledge be used? Also, the intergovernmental committees and monitoring bodies are not evaluated and partial agreements are rarely evaluated (Eurimages was evaluated). The Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) has an evaluation function. Is there a link to the DIO/ED?	FGD with members of the OAC FGD with operational directorates FGD with MAE staff Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED Interviews with SG, DSG, Private Office (PO) Interviews with member state representatives (based in Strasbourg) Interviews with donor representatives (based in capitals) Interview with ODGP (Office of the Directorate General of Programmes) Interviews with ED staff	DIO Charter (draft) Evaluation Policy Evaluation Guidelines Quality Assurance Framework DIO annual reports

Annex 3: Preliminary review matrix ("long-list", based on ToR)

Assessment criteria and sub-criteria based on ToR	Source of information, data collection methods, data analysis methods tentative	Comments reference is made to the ED Self-assessment (Feb. 2022) which is using the UNEG self-assessment with 53 factors and four levels; level 4 being the strongest. -> Emerging issues are in red font
1. Enabling environment:		
a) The clarity of the mandate and guiding and supportive nature of the Evaluation Policy, Evaluation Guidelines, DIO Strategy and the DIO Charter.	- Document review: Evaluation Policy, Evaluation Guidelines, DIO Strategy, the DIO Charter (draft), OAC annual reports, DIO survey of MAE staff (2020)	- ED Self-assessment: factor 36/level 4, factor 40 / level 4 - A new DIO Charter is under development
b) Leadership support (DIO Director/Secretary General (SG)/Deputy Secretary General (DSG)/Senior Management Group)	- Interviews with SG, DSG, Senior Management Group, DIO Director and member state representatives - FGD with members of the OAC	- ED Self-assessment: Level 37/level 3 -
c) The mandate of the OAC and its fulfilment	- Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED - FGD with members of the OAC - Document review of OAC annual reports	- ED Self-assessment: factor 33/level 3 -
d) The mandate of the Committee of Ministers and its fulfilment	- Interviews with DIO Director, Head of ED and - Member state representatives	- ED Self-assessment: Level 33/level 3 -
e) Maturity of the Evaluation culture: MAEs, SG, DSG, CM/Permanent Representations	- Interviews with SG, DSG and member state representatives - FGD with MAE staff - Document review of Council of Europe PandB 2022-25, in particular theory of change, OAC annual reports	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 34 /level 3, - The evaluation culture has apparently somewhat improved but is still not very strong.
f) "Embeddedness" of evaluations (mandatory or voluntary nature of evaluations)	- Document review of Evaluation Policy, DIO Work Programmes, OAC annual reports, PandB	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 46 /level 2, - There are no mandatory rules to evaluate programmes, sub-programmes or projects. Should some be mandatory? Criteria?
g) Links with the Programme and Budget (PandB)/RBM), evaluation readiness of the Directorate of Programme and Budget (PandB)	- Document review of PanB, in particular theory of change - Interview with Directorate of PandB	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 44 /level 3, - COUNCIL OF EUROPE has introduced theories of change into the PandB at programme level - Are these theories of change evaluable?

h)	Co-operation of ED with other Council of Europe internal and external oversight functions: audit and investigation	- Interviews heads of Council of Europe investigation and audit - FGD with ED staff - Desk review of external auditor's report on administrative reform	- The added value of co-location with audit and investigation? Is another organisational set up desirable?
2. Independence and Impartiality			
a)	DIO Budget and staff, resources allocated to evaluation as proportion of organisation's overall resources (financial independence)	- Financial analysis of *Council of Europe PandB* and DIO budget and staff - Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED - FGD ED staff	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 42 / level 3; factor 43 /level 3 - ED is not free to approach donors for financial support for evaluations. Is access to LS funding clear ?.
b)	Appointment of head of evaluation and evaluation staff	- Document review of Evaluation Policy - Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED - FGD with ED staff - FGD with members of OAC	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 41 /level 2 - Should the DIO Director be recruited from outside the Council of Europe? Should the DIO Director have a background in evaluation?
c)	Guarantees of independence: policy and practice (SG, DIO Director, OAC, Evaluation Policy) and the location of the Evaluation Division – Organisational independence	- Interviews with SG, DSG and DIO Director - FGD with ED staff - FGD with members of OAC - Document review of Evaluation Policy, OAC annual reports	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 13 /level 4; factor 16/ level 3; factor 20 / level 4 - The evaluation is part of the Directorate of Internal Oversight (DIO), together with audit and investigation; this has advantages and disadvantages
d)	Political influence/interference (behavioural independence)	- Interviews with Private Office (PO), DIO Director, Head of ED and member state representatives - FGD with members of OAC - Desk review: Amendments of PO to evaluation reports, OAC's amended Terms of reference	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 14 /level 4; factor 15 / level 4; factor 19 / level 3; factor 31 / level 3
e)	Publication policy and practices	- Document review Evaluation Policy and Evaluation Guidelines, OAC annual reports - Review of DIO Website - Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 23 /level 4 - Similar rules for decentralised evaluations exist but are not followed and not fully complied with
f)	Evaluation planning and selection of evaluation topics	- Document review DIO Work Programmes, incl. APPENDIX II – Evaluation Selection Criteria and Evaluation planning process, OAC annual reports - Interviews with DIO Director, Head of ED and member state representatives - FGD with members of OAC	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 15 /level 4 - Apparently some members of the OAC havestrong view what should be evaluated, in particular unrealistic views of what could be evaluated given the limited resources of ED and the size of some programmes.There may be other thematic issues to evaluate that are more important for the organisation (ED should be free)

			- ED has to however consider coverage and programmes should have a reasonable expectation to be evaluated at some point in a not too long cycle
g)	Contractual arrangements with consultants (recurrence,) and recruitment policy	- FGD with ED staff - Document review of Evaluation Policy	-
3.	**Credibility, Quality and Reliability**		
a)	Quality control system:	- Evaluation policy, chapter IV, Evaluation Guidelines chapters 3.4, 5.6, appendix 2,3,5,7	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 10/level 4; factor 11 / level 4; factor 12/ level 3, factor 24 / level 3
•	The role of OAC (OAC annual reports, recommendations)	- Interview with members of the OAC - Document review of OAC annual report - Interviews with DIO Director and Head of ED	-
•	Peer Reviews – implementation of recommendations	- Document review of peer review reports	- (ED Self-assessment: Factor 39 /level 4) - The external consultant to the current peer panel was part of both previous peer reviews.
•	External quality assurance of evaluations	- Document review of selected external quality assurances	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 10 /level 4; factor 11 / 4 - Are the external quality assurances available?
b)	Consultants or DIO evaluators?	- Evaluations undertaken by DIO vs those undertaken by consultants	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 10 /level 4; factor 18 (a.) /level 4; factor 27 / level 3 - What is good practice: should the ED staff evaluate or should it hire external consultants? What about mixed teams?
c)	Clarity and transparency of the internal and external processes of operation (Evaluation Guidelines, manual, guidance to consultants)	- Document review of Evaluation Guidelines and manual	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 22 / level 4; factor 33/ level 3; factor 34 / level 3; factor 36 / level 4; factor 38 /level 3; factor 40 / level 4; factor 47 / level 3
d)	Management of the evaluation lifecycle:		
•	Planning, monitoring and supervision of evaluations (TeamMate, time sheets, logbook)	- FGD with ED staff	-
•	Business processes within DIO (visa routes, distribution of work)	- FGD with ED staff	- Structure of Evaluation Division – 4 A2/3 and one A4 – no structural administrative support
•	Risk management	- Interview with head of ED - FGD with ED staff	-
e)	The validity of methodology used in evaluations and evaluation processes	- Quality assessment of DIO evaluation reports 2017-2022	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 9 / level 3; Factor 10 /level 4
f)	Competence of DIO staff/professional development	- Interview with head of ED	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 26 /level 3 ;

		- FGD with ED staff	
g)	Training of DIO staff	- Interview with head of ED - FGD with ED staff	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 29 / level 3
h)	Ethical aspects	- Document review of code of conduct for evaluators, Evaluation Policy and Evaluation Guidelines	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 21 /level 4 ; factor 28 / level 4; - Code of conduct to be signed by external and DIO evaluators: Is the paragraph on confidentiality too restrictive?
i)	human rights and gender equality	- Quality assessment of DIO evaluation reports 2017-2022	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 24 /level 3
j)	Links with evaluation networks	- Interview with head of ED - FGD with ED staff	-
4.	**Utility and Potential Impact –** This section 4 only applies to DIO and not to decentralised evaluation function which is under section 5		
a)	"Client" view of usefulness of evaluation function (MAEs)	- Interviews with SG, DSG, PO, Senior Management Group and member state representatives - FGD with donor representatives - FGD with MAE staff	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 2 /level 3;
b)	Informed decision making through use of evaluations (SG, CM and MAEs)	- Interviews with SG, DSG, PO, Senior Management Group and member state representatives - FGD with donor representatives - FG with MAE staff	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 2 /level 3; factor 17 / 4; factor 46 / level 2; factor 50 / level 3; factor 51 / level 3; factor 52 / level 3
c)	Identifying what to evaluate: DIO annual work programme's relevance, timeliness, responsiveness and adaptability and the strategic nature of programmes/themes selected for evaluation, policies/processes for deciding what interventions should be subject to a decentralised evaluation	- Interviews with SG, DSG, PO, Senior Management Group and member state representatives - FGD with MAE staff - Document review of DIO annual work programmes, OAC annual reports	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 2 /level 3; factor 45 / level 4; factor 46 / level 2
d)	The transformative nature of evaluation recommendations	- Interviews with SG, DSG, PO, Senior Management Group and member state representatives - FGD with donor representatives - FG with MAE staff	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 7/level 3

e)	The process of systematic tracking of recommendations through the TeamMate tool and reporting	- Review of tracking of recommendations in TeamMate	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 48/ level 4; factor 49 / level 3 - Responses provided by MAEs not always satisfactory
f)	Dissemination of results, knowledge sharing and sharing lessons learnt	- Review of DIO website - Document review of Evaluation Policy and Evaluation Guidelines - FG with MAE staff - FGD with ED staff	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 3 /level 3; factor 4 / level 3
g)	Repository of evaluation reports: DIO and decentralised	- Review of DIO website	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 23 /level 4 - Not all decentralised reports are published
h)	Other communication through DIO website.	- Review of DIO website	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 23 / level 4
5.	**Decentralised Evaluation Function and Decentralised Evaluations**		- Major issue, according to ED
a)	Existence of decentralised evaluation function and the authority of DIO vis-à-vis decentralised evaluations in policy and practice	- FGD with MAE staff - FGD with ED staff - Interview with ODGP - Document review of Evaluation Policy, Evaluation Guidelines, OAC annual reports	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 32 /level 3; factor 34/ level 3; factor 36 / level 4
b)	Importance given to evaluation in Project Management Methodology (PMM)	- Document review of PMM - Interview with Director ODGP, plus co-ordinator	- PMM handbook does not include evaluation; very limited evaluation culture; there are guidelines, but evaluations are not mandatory; Who has the authority? Is the evaluation function strong enough in the PMM? Is there budget allocated for evaluation? What are the criteria to conduct evaluations?
c)	DIO support to decentralised evaluations	- FGD with MAE staff - FGD with ED staff - Document review OAC annual reports	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 34 /level 3
d)	Level of support provided by central sections of MAEs to evaluations	- FGD with MAE staff - FGD with ED staff	- (ED Self-assessment: Factor 37 /level 3)
e)	Quality of evaluation reports and particularly of recommendations	- Quality assessment of decentralised evaluation reports 2020-2022 - Document review "Stocktaking of Decentralised Evaluations" (DIO/ED report 2020) - FGD with donor representatives - FGD with MAE staff	- ED Self-assessment: Factor /level - Sometimes weak ToRs (according to ED)

f)	Implementation of the Quality Assurance Framework	- FGD with MAE staff - FGD with ED staff - Document review "Stocktaking of Decentralised Evaluations" (DIO/ED report 2020)	- ED Self-assessment: Factor /level - ED provides quality check for ToR, provides a new pool of consultants;
g)	Coverage of evaluations, including normative work	- FGD with MAE staff - Interview with ODGP - Document review OAC annual reports	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 46 /level 2 - only 10-15 decentralised evaluations per year; - There are institutions that do not evaluate such as the PACE or the Court. Should they have their own evaluation functions? , (DIO/ED includes them in the thematic evaluations). Also, the intergovernmental committees and monitoring bodies are not evaluated and partial agreements are rarely evaluated (Eurimages was evaluated). The Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) has an evaluation function.
h)	Evaluation capacity across MAEs: competence, staff and evaluation budget	- FGD with MAE staff - FGD with ED staff - FGD with donor representatives - Financial data analysis - Document review OAC annual reports	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 8: MAE staff does not have training and experience in managing and conducting evaluations - limited budgets
i)	Training of managers of decentralised evaluations	- FGD with MAE staff - FGD with ED staff - Document review OAC annual reports	- ED Self-assessment: Factor 8: MAE staff does not have training in managing and conducting evaluations
j)	Publication of evaluations	- Review of Council of Europe website - FGD with MAE staff	- ED Self-assessment: Factor ? - Limited availability, transparency - Very few decentralised reports are received to publish in the DIO website
k)	Management response and follow-up of recommendations	- Document review of management responses and follow-up, OAC annual reports - FGD with donor representatives - FGD with MAE staff	- ED Self-assessment: Factor ? - unclear follow-up - Answers provided by the MAEs for the follow-up of recommendations may reveal a lack of ownership or weak evaluation culture

Annex 4: Summary of progress in implementing recommendations of peer review 2017

Source: DIO/ED, March 2021

The order of the recommendations has been changed to recognise that certain different actions taken address several recommendations.

Rec No.	Recommendation – Peer Assessment	Status of implementation	Implementation details
1	The Leadership of the Organisation, in particular the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General/Deputy Secretary General should demand more often specific evaluations of topics relevant for their strategic decision making across all three core functions of the Council of Europe Triangle.	Implemented	The Evaluation Policy contains the following reference to the role of the Committee of Ministers in the planning of evaluations: "The Committee of Ministers communicates its needs in terms of support for its decision making to the DIO and takes note of the evaluation work programme".

The Evaluation Policy, updated following the recommendation of the OAC, contains the following reference to the role of the SG in the planning of evaluations: "The Secretary General communicates decision-making needs to DIO and reviews and endorses the evaluation work programme" (see Section II). |
| 10 | The Private Office together with the Secretariat of the Committee of Ministers and DIO should establish a modality whereby the Committee of Minsters can a) be consulted for the selection of subjects to be evaluated and b) decide which evaluation reports the Committee of Ministers wants to discuss. The Committee of Ministers could for example be invited to take note of the recommendations arising from this Peer Assessment. | | DIO has developed selection criteria for evaluation topics and has included those in the Appendix 2 to the Evaluation Policy.

The revised Evaluation Guidelines adopted in December 2020 further define this process. Section 3.3.1. specifies the manner in which Permanent Representations and the Ministers' Deputies can contribute to the development of the work programme. Section 4.1.2 explains in detail how the work programme is developed and approved.

When planning the work for 2020-2021, DIO consulted key political documents of the Council of Europe, such as the Secretary General's Annual Report, key strategic documents such as the Programme and Budget 2020-2021, the annual report of the Secretary General on multilateralism, and the eight-point Helsinki decisions, and held consultations with senior management, the Private Office and an informal meeting with Permanent Representations. |
| 6 | DIO-ED to establish a more systematic selection process of evaluation subjects by for example using a rating system | | In 2020, Secretariat of CM and the DIO agreed on a procedure of transmitting evaluation reports to the Chair of the Ministers' Deputies as envisaged by the Policy. The CM Bureau considered the procedure for the Deputies' handling of evaluation reports that according to the new policy would become public and be |

Rec No.	Recommendation – Peer Assessment	Status of implementation	Implementation details
	assessing different criteria (e.g. decision-making needs of Committee of Ministers and Secretary General) in combination with a long term plan covering all important areas of Council of Europe tasks over a certain period of time.		transmitted to the Chair of the Committee of Ministers together with the management response. The Bureau agreed to recommend that these reports be sent to the GR-PBA for follow-up. If the latter considers that another rapporteur group should also discuss a specific report, it could make a proposal in that sense to the Deputies.
2	The organisation should ensure that the evaluation policy should contain a clear process on the issue of publication, communication and dissemination of reports. The evaluation policy should be published in an attractive format for wide dissemination within the Council of Europe.	Implemented	The Evaluation Policy contains relevant sections on publication and dissemination of evaluation reports (Section V): "40. DIO-managed Council of Europe evaluation reports are made public on the DIO intranet and internet sites within two months after the Director of Internal Oversight has declared them being final, whether or not a management response has been received. 41. Decentralised evaluation reports and their action plans shall be published on the Internet and Intranet sites of the Council of Europe. 42. As per Section II concerning the role of the Council of Europe management and staff, they shall submit to the DIO (for publication) and the Secretary General final evaluation reports and action plans." The Evaluation Policy has been published in an attractive format and has been widely disseminated across the organisation. It has been made available on the DIO intranet and internet websites (link to Evaluation Policy) The revised Evaluation Guidelines define in detail the dissemination and publication process of DIO and decentralised evaluation reports, as defined in sections 4.4.2 (DIO), as well as in sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.2 (decentralised evaluations).
5	DIO-ED to amend and Committee of Ministers to adopt the Evaluation Policy to set out clearly the responsibility of all actors throughout the evaluation process particularly to reduce the burden of the Council of Europe management in quality control tasks.	Implemented	The Policy outlines the responsibilities of all actors involved in evaluation (Section II). Regarding the role of the DIO, the Policy states that it: • assures the quality of the DIO-managed evaluation process and products and has the authority to declare evaluation reports final. • establishes a framework that provides technical and quality assurance support to decentralised evaluations.

Rec No.	Recommendation – Peer Assessment	Status of implementation	Implementation details
			Regarding the role of the Council of Europe management, the Evaluation Policy stipulates that the "Secretary General is the final arbiter on the adequacy of proposals for effective implementation of recommendations and management responses by the MAEs." (Section II).
			The revised Evaluation Guidelines clearly define in detail i) the role and responsibilities of DIO (Section 3.2.), ii) roles and responsibilities of other COUNCIL OF EUROPE entities (Section 3.3.) and iii) Council of Europe Evaluation quality assurance framework both for DIO evaluations (Section 3.4) and for decentralised evaluations (Section 5.6).
			The DIO communication officer has ensured the appropriate format of the Policy and its wide dissemination.
4	ED to promote the role of evaluations with a widely disseminated flyer and other awareness-raising efforts clearly explaining what an evaluation does to enhance the evaluation culture in the organisation. This flyer might also contain a typology of evaluations.	in progress	Further work on promoting evaluations and an evaluation culture has been carried out in 2020 and a DIO communication strategy is in development. In 2020, a video was published on the New Evaluation Policy (https://vimeo.com/422826425). DIO is planning further activities in 2021 such as an update of the current website. A website dedicated to decentralised evaluations has been launched. An online E-learning course on evaluation, as well as the preparation of additional tools to support decentralised evaluations are in preparation. As a matter of practice, an infographic is now prepared for each evaluation report as it is published to enhance the accessibility of evaluation reports.
11	In evaluation reports DIO-ED develop recommendations with boldness that are implementable so that evaluations fulfil their objective to contribute to meaningful learning and subsequent innovation and change.	in progress	The Policy has a relevant reference (Section II): "DIO ensures that recommendations are targeted towards precise needs, are of a transformative nature contributing to meaningful learning and subsequent innovation and change".
			The revised Evaluation Guidelines go a step further – in section 4.3.5. on Draft Evaluation reports, the criteria to assess the quality of the report are defined. The check list for evaluation reports also contains the criteria from Rec.11.
			Section 4.3.6 on 2nd Reference Group meeting, also defines that the RG is expected to comment on the relevance, usefulness and implementability of recommendations.
12	In the evaluation processes DIO-ED consider introducing a senior	Implemented	The Evaluation Policy contains the following references: "Council of Europe management and staff submit the management responses to evaluations, including an action plan with timeline to DIO" (Section II). And:

Rec No.	Recommendation – Peer Assessment	Status of implementation	Implementation details
	management response that reflects on the recommendations in evaluation reports and subsequently monitor implementation of the management response with an action plan to enhance independence.		"44. Council of Europe evaluation reports require a management response. The response should be prepared no later than two months after an evaluation report has been declared final by the Director of Internal Oversight and shall be published at the same time as the evaluation report or when it is received if this is after the publication of the report.
			45. The management response consists of two parts: (i) a general statement providing management's overall view on the report findings and recommendations, and (ii) details on whether management accepts individual recommendations and how it intends to address accepted recommendations. As such, the management response signals a strong commitment to follow-up."
			Evaluation Guidelines define in detail the management response process in Section 4.4.1. Management response and an action plan are now required for both DIO and decentralised evaluations (for dec. evaluations see Section 5.5.1). The Secretary General has the responsibility to ensure that the Secretariat prepares a management response, including an Action Plan. MAEs to whom evaluation recommendations are addressed are required to prepare the management response and an action plan that describes the activities that they commit to carry out in order to implement the recommendations. DIO sends an action plan template to the entities together with instructions on how to complete it. The entities concerned are requested to return the completed action plan template to DIO within two months after receiving it.
9	ED introduces clear timelines including their defined roles and responsibilities in evaluation processes to serve as mutual contract amongst internal stakeholders throughout the evaluation.	Implemented	The Evaluation Policy contains a description of roles of all actors involved in evaluation throughout the evaluation stages. Evaluation Guidelines state that evaluations are conducted or managed by DIO staff and assisted by external consultants as necessary (Section 3.2.1).
			Evaluation Guidelines define the evaluation process and its timeline in detail in Section 4.2. on Planning and Scoping, Section 4.3. on Conduct and management of evaluation by DIO and Section 4.4 on Evaluation follow-up.
13	The ED should provide systematically quality support to the terms of reference and assessment of evaluation reports of decentralised evaluations and collect all decentralised evaluations in a central database for institutional learning.	Implemented	The Evaluation Policy contains a section on DIO support to decentralised evaluations (Section II) and clearly states its role in quality assurance of decentralised evaluations.
			Under Section II, the Policy stipulates that the DIO is responsible for assurance of the quality of decentralised evaluations. The DIO:
			• establishes a framework that provides technical and quality assurance support to decentralised evaluations;

Rec No.	Recommendation – Peer Assessment	Status of implementation	Implementation details
			• provides advice on the selection of consultants, drafting of terms of reference and draft evaluation reports; • supports the development of learning groups of practice and knowledge networks; • provides technical advice on the implementation of Evaluation Guidelines; • provides training and coaching on evaluation methodologies and processes; • provides advice on the evaluability of Council of Europe interventions such as programmes, strategies and policies. • publishes decentralised evaluation reports on the DIO intranet and internet websites. Evaluation Guidelines define in detail the newly established quality assurance framework for decentralised evaluations, as well as its processes. All Council of Europe staff members have been notified to seek DIO's support during the evaluation process on the definition of the Terms of Reference (ToR), selection of the external consultants and the quality checking of draft evaluation reports. Chapter 5 of the Guidelines offers a step-by-step guidance through this process, which is also presented in a simplified from on the DIO website (https://intranet.Council of Europe.int/en/group/internal-oversight/decentralised-evaluations), including additional resources for staff members. The website will also serve as a database of final evaluation reports as DIO will publish here all finalised decentralised evaluation reports starting in 2021. A shared workspace in DMS has also been created so that all Council of Europe staff members can share their documents with DIO in a more efficient and organised manner.
14	The ED should establish a light community of practice within the Council of Europe to strengthen the sharing of experience and knowledge in conducting evaluations.	In progress	The Evaluation Policy contains a relevant reference, according to which DIO: supports the development of learning groups of practice and knowledge networks. Evaluation Guidelines state in Section 5.1.2. that as part of the quality assurance framework, a community of practitioners, an informal group composed of staff members with experience and/or interest in evaluations, will meet regularly. The aim of the group is to facilitate the support to decentralised evaluations and further promote the evaluation culture in the Council of Europe. Participation in the community is open to all staff members on a voluntary basis. With the development of the quality assurance framework for decentralised evaluations and additional resources for other entities in place, the first meeting of the community of practitioners can take place and will be organised in the course of 2021.

Rec No.	Recommendation – Peer Assessment	Status of implementation	Implementation details
8	Secretary General to appoint a senior director of DIO with a high degree of political sensitivity to develop a trust relationship with Council of Europe management and fully assume the last step of quality control of evaluations - the 'gate-keeper' - thus enhancing the credibility and independence of evaluations	implemented	The Director of DIO was appointed. The role of the Director is outlined in the policy, which states that he/she: "assures the quality of the DIO-managed evaluation process and products" Section 2.4.2. of Evaluation Guidelines states that the Director of DIO has the authority to initiate, carry out and report on any action. The Director of DIO informs the OAC and the Committee of Ministers of any restrictions and limitations in the conduct of his/her duties. Section 4.3.7 states that the Director of DIO declares the report final and on the same date submits it to the Secretary General with reference group members in copy, together with an Action Plan template for preparation of the Management Response, in accordance with paragraphs 44 and 45 of the Evaluation Policy. The final report is published within two months of finalisation and transmitted to the Chair of the Ministers' Deputies.
3	Appointment of new members for a strong OAC with both audit and evaluation functions well represented.	implemented	The members of the OAC who have been appointed have a varied background including evaluation experience. With the appointment of the new OAC member with strong evaluation experience as of 1 October 2020, the OAC has been further strengthened to oversee the Council of Europe's evaluation function. Evaluation Guidelines further define the role of OAC in Section 3.3.3.

Annex 5: Proposed list of stakeholders for focus group discussions and interviews

- Focus group discussions (4 FGDs): (7-8 participants maximum)
    1. With member state representatives (e.g. members of the Human Rights Trust Fund)
    2. With members of the OAC
    3. With operational directorates (covering DGI Human rights, Rule of Law, Culture, Heritage, Youth, Environment)
    4. With staff of the MAEs

- Interviews (16 interviews):
    1. Member state representatives (Committee of Ministers), (4 interviews), as proposed by ED:
        1. Sweden, chair of CM/GR-DEM (Democracy)
        2. Belgium, Belgian Rule of Law Trust Fund
        3. Denmark, chair of GR-PBA (Programme, budget and administration)
        4. Azerbaijan, chair of GR-C (Education, culture, sport, youth and environment)
    2. Secretary General (1)
    3. Deputy Secretary General (1)
    4. Private Office of the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General (1)
    5. Director, Office of the Directorate General of Programmes (1)
    6. Directorate of Programme and Budget (1)
    7. Director, Directorate of Internal Oversight (1)
    8. Head of Evaluation Division (1)
    9. Head of Investigation (1)
    10. Head of Audit (1)
    11. Staff of the Evaluation Division (3 interviews).

- Interviews (online):
    12. Donor representatives based at headquarters (to be determined after Strasbourg)

Annex 6: Persons interacted with during inception phase

- Mr. Colin Wall, Director, Directorate of Internal Oversight Services
- Ms. Aygen Becquart, Head of Evaluation Division
- Ms. Teodora Lukovic, Senior Evaluator, Evaluation Division
- Ms. Cristina Matei, Evaluation Assistant, Evaluation Division

Annex 7: DIO-managed evaluations and other products (2017-2022)

Year of completion according to DIO website and DIO annual reports. (publishing dates may differ from completion dates)

2017[11]

Evaluation of the World Forum for Democracy, 2017

Review of decentralised evaluations

2018[12]

Evaluation of resource mobilisation and allocation in the Council of Europe (not on website), 2018

Evaluation of digital communications and access to information, 2018

Evaluation of the support in the fight against corruption, 2018

Evaluation of the support to the protection of promotion of freedom of expression, 2019

2019[13]

Evaluation of the support to the protection of promotion of freedom of expression, 2019

Evaluation of the Intergovernmental Committees, 2019

Stocktaking of decentralised evaluations, 2019

Evaluability of the Council of Europe administrative reform documents, 2019

Ex-Ante assessment of the IT reform logic, 2019

Ex-Ante assessment of the HR reform logic, 2019

2020[14]

Evaluation of Strategy Development and Reporting, 2020

Evaluation of the Council of Europe's work under the programme line "Prisons and police" 2016-2019, 2020

Evaluation of Results-based management, 2020

2021[15]

Evaluation of the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisations, 2021

Evaluation of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), 2021

Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), 2021 (not on website)

2022

Evaluation of the Council of Europe's Monitoring mechanisms, 2022

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[11] Annual report 2017 of the Directorate of Internal Oversight, CM(2018)39, 27 February 2018
[12] Annual Report 2018 of the Directorate of Internal Oversight, CM(2019)265 March 2019
[13] Annual Report 2019 of the Directorate of Internal Oversight, CM(2020)47, May 2020
[14] Annual Report 2020 of the Directorate of Internal Oversight, CM(2021)81, May 2021
[15] Annual Report 2021 of the Directorate of Internal Oversight, CM(2022)…, May 2022

Evaluation of the Council of Europe's support to member states in addressing challenges related to the Covid-19 pandemic, 2022

Ongoing Evaluations 2022

Evaluation of the Sub-programme on Culture, Nature and Heritage / Cultural Routes / Major Hazards

Evaluation of the Sub-programme on Action against crime and protection of citizens (excl. work of CDPC and technical co-operation on corruption as recently evaluated)

Evaluation of the Sub-programme on Independence and Efficiency of Justice

Evaluation of Civil society participation in co-operation activities (not initiated yet)

Annex 8: List of documents reviewed during inception phase

Websites

Council of Europe Evaluation Website: https://www.Council of Europe.int/en/web/internal-oversight/evaluation

DIO Evaluation reports: https://www.Council of Europe.int/en/web/internal-oversight/evaluation-reports

Decentralised evaluation reports: https://www.Council of Europe.int/en/web/internal-oversight/decentralised-evaluation-reports

Related to peer reviews

Self-Assessment Maturity Matrix for UN Evaluation Functions, Working Draft, Updated February 28th, (self-assessment of the DIO Evaluation Division, preparatory work for this peer review) DIO/ED, Feb. 2022

Peer Assessment: The Evaluation Function of the Council of Europe – Progress on Implementation of Recommendations, March 2021

Peer Assessment Recommendations as addressed in the revised Evaluation Guidelines, DIO/ED, September 2020

Peer Assessment Mission Report, Rapid Peer Assessment of the Evaluation Function of the Directorate of Internal Oversight, Council of Europe, Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC), Bern, 2010

Final Report, Peer Assessment: The Evaluation Function of the Council of Europe, Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC), Bern, 2017

Directorate of Internal Oversight documents (general)

Work Programme 2022-2023 of the Directorate of Internal Oversight, GR-PBA(2022)3, Feb. 2022

Council of Europe Internal Oversight Charter (draft), Directorate of Internal Oversight, Item to be considered by the GR-PBA at its meeting on 2 June 2022

Directorate of Internal Oversight – Strategy 2020-2024, DIO, April 2020

Annual Report 2020 of the Directorate of Internal Oversight, CM(2021)81, May 2021

Annual Report 2021 of the Directorate of Internal Oversight, CM(2022)…, May 2022

Directorate of Internal Oversight documents (evaluation specific)

Council of Europe Evaluation Policy, DIO, Nov. 2019

Council of Europe Evaluation Guidelines, DIO, Oct. 2020

Council of Europe Code of Conduct for Evaluation, DIO (date n.a.)

Code of Conduct of Evaluators (to be signed by evaluators), DIO (date n.a.)

Analyse of the results of the DIO Study on Comm (DIO survey of MAE staff), DIO, December 2020

Decentralised evaluations

Quality Assurance Framework - Support for Decentralised Evaluations, Memorandum, DIO, Feb. 2021

Decentralised Evaluations – State of Play, Teodora Lukovic, Senior Evaluator, (Power Point Presentation), DIO, March 2022

Quality Assurance Framework for Decentralised Evaluations, Teodora Lukovic, Senior Evaluator, (Power Point Presentation), DIO, July 2021

Planned Decentralised Evaluations 2021-2022 (Excel table showing all planned decentralised evaluations), DIO/ED, 2022

DIO Evaluation Support provided to MAE, (Excel table showing all support activities), DIO/ED, 2022

Stocktaking of Decentralised Evaluations with a view to establishing an evaluation framework and designing a quality assurance system, Final Report, DO/ED, Jan. 2020

Decentralised evaluations: templates, checklists, examples, guidance

Evaluation Matrix Template, DIO/ED

Example of Evaluation ToR (annotated), TOR for the Evaluation of the Project: HELP in the member state, DIO/ED

Quality Assurance Checklist for Evaluation ToR, DIO/ED

Quality Assurance Checklist for Evaluation Inception Report, DIO/ED

Quality Assurance Checklist for Evaluation Reports, DIO/ED

Information Note on the Procurement of Consultants for Decentralised Evaluations, DIO/ED

Oversight Advisory Committee

OAC Annual report from 1 October 2020 to 30 November 2021, CM(2022)38, Feb. 2022

OAC Draft revised terms of reference, CM(2022)39, Feb..2022

Council of Europe documents

Moving Forward 2022, Annual report of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Council of Europe, April 2022

State of Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law - A democratic renewal for Europe, Report by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe 2021, Council of Europe, May 2021

Council of Europe Programme and Budget for 2022 – 2025, CM(2022)1, 10 December 2021

External Audit of the Council of Europe, Audit Report, Review of the Administrative and Organisational Reform of the Council of Europe, Financial years 2018 to 2021, Cours des Comptes, 2021.

Creation of a Network of national correspondents of police authorities, Item to be considered by the GR-J at its meeting on 17 March 2022, Item submitted to the Committee of Ministers for decision, CM(2022)29, (showing the use of evaluation), February 2022

Project Management Methodology, Handbook, Council of Europe, 2016

Other documents (not Council documents)

Analysis of the Evaluation Function in the United Nations System, Joint Inspection Unit, United Nations, Geneva 2014