

Neighbourhood Partnership with Tunisia 2022-2025



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Developed jointly with the Tunisian authorities, the Neighbourhood Partnership 2022-2025 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CM) aims at continuing to assist Tunisia with the process of democratic transition by helping it to tackle the challenges relating to human rights, the rule of law and democracy.

Since 2012, the strategic co-operation established between the Council of Europe and Tunisia in areas of Council of Europe expertise relevant for the democratic reforms has been continuously consolidated and expanded and supported by a political dialogue that has been enhanced from year to year.

The enhanced political dialogue has provided widespread opportunities for dialogue between the Council of Europe and the Tunisian authorities. In practice, apart from the period dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic, when it was less extensive, the dialogue established with Tunisia has developed successfully both at high level and at the level of experts (especially with regard to their participation in certain intergovernmental and Council of Europe convention committees). It should also be emphasised that institutional relations with Tunisia were strengthened when the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress) granted it Partner for Local Democracy status in October 2019, thus providing an additional framework for the political and technical dialogue. The present Neighbourhood Partnership should enable these achievements to be confirmed and developed.

In connection with this Neighbourhood Partnership, the Council of Europe and the Tunisian authorities have agreed to jointly pursue, as part of co-operation projects, a number of democratic reforms, including some that have been supported by the Council of Europe for several years.

Tunisia has continued to enter into new commitments with the Council of Europe, especially by acceding to a number of its conventions. It is a Contracting Party to the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (Convention 108) and its additional protocol and has signed the Protocol amending this convention (Convention 108+). Tunisia was the first Arab country to accede to the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention). It is also the first country in the region to have been invited by the CM to accede to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) and the International Co-operation Group on drugs and addictions (Pompidou Group).

In the field of human rights, this new partnership aims to make progress on combating violence against women, on children's rights, on combating human trafficking and on data protection, while at the same time consolidating the achievements of the last few years. Particular attention will be paid to building the capacities of legal professionals to apply the new legislation and follow practices that conform to European and international human rights standards. There will also be continued assistance for constitutional and institutional bodies, which are key institutional players in the field of human rights, by supporting their efforts to broaden their scope for action through the appropriate tools and resources, for example by putting the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims of human trafficking into operation throughout the country.

With a view to improving the independence and efficiency of the judiciary, the Council of Europe's support will aim in particular at improving the operation and performance of the judicial services. This support will take into account the new challenges created by the Covid-19 pandemic in the justice sector. It is also planned to develop tools to measure the effectiveness of the reforms in this area.

The promotion of good governance will remain at the heart of the Neighbourhood Partnership, so that combating different forms of organised crime and the development of links between them is among the priorities of the present document, which also puts greater emphasis on the fight against terrorism.

In the field of democracy, support for the decentralisation process in Tunisia will be continued, especially through the expertise provided by the Congress in the preparation of the implementing decrees deriving from the Code of Local Authorities. The situation of young people in Tunisia deserves special attention. As far as they are concerned, this partnership attaches importance to human rights education and education for democracy and provides for the development of specific tools aimed at them, such as the Guide for Minors in Detention and European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals – Council of Europe (HELP) training courses extended to the universities.

The Neighbourhood Partnership aims to help Tunisia in its efforts to implement the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goals 3¹, 4², 5³, 8⁴, 10⁵, 11⁶ and 16⁷.

The Neighbourhood Partnership's overall budget is estimated at €15,1 million. Although its funding is guaranteed up to €3.1 million, additional funding is essential in order to fully implement the priority actions identified for 2022-2025.

Since 25 July 2021, the country has been governed by the President of the Republic, Mr Kais Saied, on the basis of decrees. The latest one, Presidential Decree No. 2021-117 of 22 September 2021, on exceptional measures, not limited in time, confirms the suspension of Parliament and provides the President with the exercise of legislative power in the form of decree-laws. According to the same decree, the President has the competence to elaborate "projects aiming to revisions relating to political reforms". In the light of ongoing and future developments, the present Neighbourhood Partnership, developed jointly with the Tunisian authorities before and after 25 July 2021, could be revised. The Committee of Ministers, while approving this Neighbourhood Partnership, calls on the Tunisian authorities to respect and guarantee democracy, fundamental rights and the rule of law in Tunisia. The Committee of Ministers will monitor the implementation of the Neighbourhood Partnership and take relevant decisions.

¹ Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

² Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

³ Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

⁴ Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

⁵ Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

⁶ Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

⁷ Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	National Constituent Assembly -Tunisia
AP-JUST	European Union/Council of Europe joint programme on “Improving the functioning, performance, and access to justice in Tunisia”
ARP	Assembly of the People's Representatives – Tunisia
ASF	Lawyers without Borders
Budapest Convention	Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime
CCJE	Consultative Council of European Judges
CCPE	Consultative Council of European Prosecutors
CDCT-TTOC	Working Group of Experts on Terrorism and Transnational Organised Crime
CEJJ	Centre of Legal and Judicial Studies – Tunisia
CEPEJ	European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice – Council of Europe
CERDA	Centre for Studies, Research and Documentation of Lawyers – Tunisia
CFAD	Centre for Training and Support to Decentralisation – Tunisia
CGPR	General Committee for Prisons and Rehabilitation – Tunisia
CM	Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe
CNP	National Press Council – Tunisia
Convention 108	Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data
Convention 108+	Protocol amending the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data
CPT	European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
CSM	Supreme Judicial Council – Tunisia
CyberSouth	European Union/Council of Europe joint programme on “Co-operation on cybercrime in the Southern Neighbourhood Region”
DCAF	Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (previously Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces)
DGPR	Directorate-General of Prisons and Rehabilitation – Tunisia
DGSN	General Directorate for National Security – Tunisia
DGST	General Directorate of Territorial Surveillance – Tunisia
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
EPR	European Prison Rules
ESC / RESC	European Social Charter / Revised European Social Charter
EU	European Union
FNCT	National Federation of Tunisian Cities
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
GEC	Gender Equality Commission – Council of Europe
GRECO	Group of States against Corruption – Council of Europe
GREVIO	Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence – Council of Europe
GR-EXT	Rapporteur Group on External Relations - Council of Europe
HAICA	High Independent Authority for Audio-visual Communication – Tunisia
HELP	European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals – Council of Europe
IBOGOLUCC	Independent Constitutional Body for Good Governance and the Fight against Corruption – Tunisia
ICA	Audio-visual Communication Authority – Tunisia
IDDDGF	Authority for Sustainable Development and the Rights of Future Generations – Tunisia
IDH	Human Rights Authority – Tunisia
IDLO	International Development Law Organization
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IG	General Inspection – Tunisia
ILAC	International Legal Assistance Consortium
ILF	The International Legal Foundation
INAI	National Authority for Access to Information – Tunisia
INLTP	National Authority against Trafficking in Human Beings – Tunisia

INLUCC	National Anti-Corruption Authority – Tunisia
INPDP	National Authority for the Protection of Personal Data – Tunisia
INPT	National Authority for the Prevention of Torture – Tunisia
IPAPD	Authority of Prospection and Support to the Decentralisation Process – Tunisia
ISIE	Higher Independent Authority for Elections – Tunisia
ISM	Higher Institute of the Judiciary – Tunisia
ISPA	Higher Institute for the Legal Profession – Tunisia
Istanbul Convention	Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
Lanzarote Convention	Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse
MEDICRIME Convention	Council of Europe Convention on the Counterfeiting of Medical Products and Similar Crimes involving Threats to Public Health
MedNET	Mediterranean Network for co-operation on drugs and addictions of the Pompidou Group – Council of Europe
MedSPAD	Mediterranean School Survey Project on Alcohol and other Drugs – Council of Europe
MedUni	Mediterranean University on Youth and Global Citizenship – Council of Europe
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
NCPA	Šibenik Network of Corruption Prevention Agencies
Nicosia Convention	Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property
North-South Centre	European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity – Council of Europe
NPM	National Preventive Mechanism against torture
NRM	National Referral Mechanism
ODGP	Office of the Directorate General of Programmes – Council of Europe
ONAT	Tunisian Order of Lawyers
OPCAT	Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of the United Nations
PACE	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
PAII-T	European Union/ Council of Europe joint programme “Project to Support Independent Bodies in Tunisia”
PMM	Project Management Methodology – Council of Europe
Pompidou Group	International Co-operation Group on drugs and addictions – Council of Europe
RFCDG	Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture of the Council of Europe
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal of the United Nations
SNJT	National Union of Tunisian Journalists
South Programme I	European Union/Council of Europe Joint Programme on “Strengthening democratic reform in the Southern Neighbourhood”
South Programme II	European Union/Council of Europe Joint Programme on “Towards Strengthened Democratic Governance in the Southern Mediterranean”
South Programme III	European Union/Council of Europe Joint Programme on “Ensuring Sustainable Democratic Governance and Human Rights in the Southern Mediterranean”
South Programme IV	European Union/Council of Europe Joint Programme on “Regional Support to Reinforce Human rights, Rule of Law and Democracy in the Southern Mediterranean”
T-ES	Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children Against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse
The Congress	Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe
T-PD	Consultative Committee of the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data
Tromsø Convention	Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents
TSoP	Tunisian School of Political Studies
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UniDem Med	University for Democracy for the Southern Mediterranean
UN	United Nations
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
Venice Commission	European Commission for Democracy through Law - Council of Europe

PART I - INTRODUCTION

1.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW

1.1.1 COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S POLICY TOWARDS NEIGHBOURING REGIONS

At its 121st session on 11 May 2011 in Istanbul, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CM) endorsed the proposals made by the Secretary General regarding a Council of Europe policy towards its immediate neighbourhood, aimed at promoting dialogue and co-operation with the countries and regions in the vicinity of Europe which express the will to co-operate with the Council of Europe, based on the common values of human rights, the rule of law and democracy. The Committee of Ministers further invited the Secretary General to draw up action plans for the implementation of this policy.

The Council of Europe policy towards neighbouring regions, which is demand-driven and country-specific, is designed for partners in North Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia, and pursues the following three objectives:

- to facilitate democratic political transition in the countries concerned;
- to help promote good governance through the protection of human rights and the rule of law;
- to reinforce and enlarge Council of Europe regional action in combating transborder and global threats.

The policy has been implemented in close partnership with the European Union (EU), on the basis of the arrangements endorsed by the Committee of Ministers, in particular its two key components:

- *the Neighbourhood Co-operation Dialogue*, carried out at political level; and
- *the Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities*, setting out specific co-operation activities to be carried out in the fields of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

The primary aim of the Council of Europe's policy towards neighbouring regions is to extend co-operation beyond the continent and develop a common legal area. It is based on the 2011 "Istanbul parameters", according to which co-operation with the countries concerned must in particular be demand-driven, tailored to needs and flexible. A regional dimension is in some instances complemented by bilateral co-operation with the most active partners, especially Tunisia. The Southern Mediterranean regional dimension makes it possible to involve other countries and engage in "south-south" co-operation, including through the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre).

In this connection, and following increasingly fruitful co-operation, on 4 February 2015 the CM approved in particular a "Neighbourhood Partnership" document with Tunisia for the period 2015-2017.

At its 127th Session held in Nicosia on 19 May 2017, the CM invited the Ministers' Deputies and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to assess the results of the policy towards the neighbouring regions in order to decide what follow-up action to take. On 3 October 2017, the Ministers' Deputies expressed broad support for the Secretary General's proposals to build on the results achieved under the 2011 "Istanbul parameters" and, in particular, to renew the Partnership with Tunisia for the period 2018-2021 (see "The Council of Europe and Tunisia" below).

On 4 November 2020, at its 130th session in Athens,⁸ the CM welcomed the fact that the implementation of the policy towards neighbouring regions had enabled the Council of Europe and the beneficiaries in North Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia to make progress towards setting up a common legal area based on the Organisation's values and instruments. In addition, looking ahead to the 10th anniversary of this policy, the CM invited its Deputies to review it in order to clarify its geographical scope and conditionality and further improve its transparency and efficiency in the light of respective strategic priorities and implementation capacities.

Accordingly, on 12 November 2020, as part of the follow-up to the Athens decisions, the CM instructed its Rapporteur Group on External Relations (GR-EXT) to carry out a review of the Council of Europe's policy towards neighbouring regions since its inception in 2011, in the light of the decisions adopted by the CM, as well as to make proposals for its continuation and report back to them within a year. On [10 November 2021], the CM took note of the document of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe SG/Inf (2021)14 "Review of the policy towards neighbouring regions and the Council of Europe contribution to global governance".

This document entitled "Neighbourhood Partnership with Tunisia 2022-2025" was approved by the CM on [10 November 2021]. It is divided into two parts:

- **enhanced political dialogue** (see Part II of the document)
- **co-operation** (see Part III of the document)

The enhanced political dialogue offers wide opportunities for dialogue between the Council of Europe and the Tunisian authorities, ranging from high-level strategic dialogue with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the CM on issues on the bilateral agenda and political issues of common interest to more technical consultations on the implementation of the Neighbourhood Partnership.

The co-operation priorities for 2022-2025 have been identified in consultations between the Council of Europe and the relevant Tunisian national authorities.

1.1.2 THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND TUNISIA

The relationship between the Council of Europe and Tunisia has been enhanced in the context of the implementation of the Neighbourhood Policy established by the Council of Europe in 2011, making the country a key partner in the region.

However, Tunisia already had relations with the Council of Europe before then, although the possibilities for co-operation on issues relating to human rights, democracy and the rule of law were relatively limited. It has been a member of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) since 2010 and has ratified several Council of Europe conventions. It has also had observer status with the European Pharmacopoeia since 1987, has been a member of the North-South Centre since 2016 and has participated in the Mediterranean Network for Co-operation on Drugs and Addictions (MedNET) of the International Co-operation Group on drugs and addictions (Pompidou Group) since 2006.

⁸ 130th Session of the Committee of Ministers (Videoconference, Athens, 4 November 2020) – 5. Council of Europe policy towards neighbouring regions https://search.coe.int/cm/pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680a03d77

Co-operation between Tunisia and the Council of Europe on issues at the core of the Organisation's work saw a sharp upswing after 2011. The preparation of the document "Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities for Tunisia 2012-2014", approved by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Tunisian Minister of Foreign Affairs in April 2012, laid formal foundations for the strengthening of co-operation. The subsequent signing of the Memorandum of Understanding paved the way for the opening of the Council of Europe office in Tunis in 2013.

Since 2012, co-operation has focused mainly on support for constitutional reforms, the establishment of new governance bodies and the promotion of common standards on human rights, the rule of law and democracy, in particular through Council of Europe conventions, with the aim of creating a common legal area. At the date of the adoption of the present partnership, Tunisia had ratified eight Council of Europe conventions and additional protocols: the European Agreement concerning Programme Exchanges by means of Television Films (ETS 027), the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (ETS 104), the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (ETS 108), the Additional Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data, concerning supervisory authorities and transborder data flows (ETS 181), the Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters as amended by the 2010 Protocol (ETS 127), the Anti-Doping Convention (ETS 135) and its Additional Protocol (ETS 188) and the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (ETS 201). Since 2012, it has also been working with the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) to strengthen the efficiency and quality of its judicial system. In April 2015, it also obtained observer status with the CEPEJ (see Appendix IV).

In 2015, further to the fruitful political dialogue between the Council of Europe and the Tunisian authorities and the successful implementation of the Priorities for 2012-2014, the CM considered it necessary to give new momentum to the relations with the country, which shares the Organisation's values of human rights, the rule of law and democracy. On 4 February 2015, at its 1218th meeting, the CM adopted a "Neighbourhood Partnership with Tunisia 2015-2017", combining and strengthening the two pillars of the Council of Europe's policy towards neighbouring regions – political dialogue and co-operation – along the lines established in Istanbul in 2011. The partnership provided a framework for enhanced political dialogue, on the one hand, and co-operation activities on human rights, the rule of law and democracy, on the other. Following its successful implementation, on 21 March 2018, the CM renewed the partnership with Tunisia for the period 2018-2021.

Monitoring of the implementation of this partnership has underlined the country's commitment to human rights, the rule of law and democracy. Tunisia has continued the reforms underway and entered into new commitments with the Council of Europe by becoming, for example, the first Arab country to accede to the Lanzarote Convention.

Furthermore, apart from the period dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic, during which it was less extensive, the enhanced dialogue has developed successfully both at the political level and in terms of the participation of Tunisian experts in the Council of Europe's intergovernmental work. Among other things, for instance, the Tunisian Minister of Foreign Affairs visited the Council of Europe on 9 October 2018. In his speech during the autumn session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) and at his meeting with the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General, he reaffirmed his country's commitment to the democratic transition and its confidence in the Council of Europe's

expertise and in deepening co-operation. He also reported on his country's progress, challenges and expectations. The Deputy Secretary General also visited Tunisia in June 2019. Finally, it should be noted that institutional relations with Tunisia have been strengthened since the Congress granted it partner for local democracy status on 29 October 2019, thus providing an additional framework for political and technical dialogue. Tunisia has accordingly consolidated the momentum observed during the previous Neighbourhood Partnership (2015-2017).

As a follow-up to the decisions taken by the CM in Athens in 2020 (see above), consultations were initiated in early 2021 with the Tunisian authorities on the future of the Council of Europe's policy towards the neighbouring regions and co-operation with Tunisia. The Tunisian representatives expressed their willingness to continue the co-operation and the enhanced political dialogue.

1.1.3 ADDED VALUE OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE'S TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES

Council of Europe technical assistance programmes form an integral part of the unique strategic triangle of standard-setting, monitoring and co-operation: the development of legally binding standards is linked to their monitoring by independent mechanisms and supplemented by technical co-operation to facilitate their implementation. The Organisation's actions are developed and implemented in areas where the Council of Europe has strong expertise and added value.

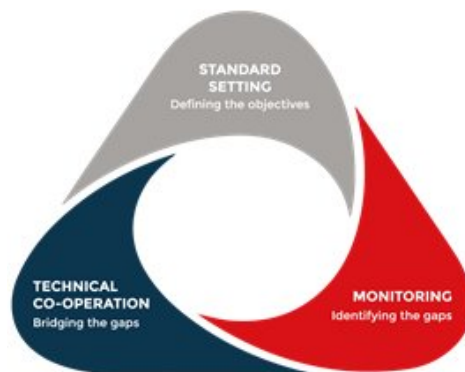


Figure 1: Council of Europe strategic triangle

In the case of Tunisia, as a non-member State of the Council of Europe, monitoring mechanisms will not apply until the country becomes a contracting party of the relevant conventions, such as the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention). Other relevant accession processes have already been set in motion by Tunisia (see Appendix IV).

However, the methodologies of a number of monitoring mechanisms are employed to assess the country's situation in certain fields and to formulate recommendations, enabling roadmaps to be established to support the reforms in line with European legislation and practice.

A wide range of Council of Europe tools will be used to ensure fruitful, needs-based co-operation, including:

- the Council of Europe conventions open to non-member States and, more generally, Council of Europe standards in the priority areas;
- the long-standing expertise of several Council of Europe bodies, such as the intergovernmental organs, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress), the European Commission for

Democracy through Law (the Venice Commission), the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ), the International Co-operation Group on drugs and addictions (Pompidou Group) and the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre);

- the methodologies developed within the Council of Europe to regularly assess and respond to shared challenges (such as those of the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO),⁹ the CEPEJ or tools such as the European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP).

The working methods to make Council of Europe expertise available to Tunisia include:

- support for assessing the existing legal and institutional framework in selected areas and identifying needs and follow-up activities;
- assistance in drafting new legislation, revising existing legislation, establishing human rights institutions and new governance bodies, based on European and other international standards, Council of Europe expert networks in key priority areas, Council of Europe standards and reference documents;
- transferring knowledge and expertise on specific subjects to strengthen national capacities;
- sharing of experience and good practices between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean partner countries benefiting from Council of Europe co-operation projects, as well as between countries in the region, and creating relevant formal and informal networks.

The co-operation projects are designed to help the country, through concrete action taken within the framework of projects implemented jointly by the Council of Europe's specialised teams and the relevant partners in Tunisia, to develop tools and expertise appropriate for the national context and capable of addressing the problems identified.

Tunisia is one of the priority beneficiaries of joint European Union/Council of Europe regional programmes, especially the various phases of the South Programme¹⁰ and of CyberSouth.¹¹ At the bilateral level, it has also benefited from joint European Union/Council of Europe programmes including the "project to Support Independent Bodies in Tunisia" (PAII-T),¹² and the project "improving the functioning, performance and access to justice in Tunisia" (AP-JUST).¹³

⁹ The Committee of Ministers invited Tunisia to join GRECO on 8 November 2017 at its 1299th session.

¹⁰ South Programme I "Strengthening democratic reform in the Southern Neighbourhood", total budget: €4.8 million (EU: 100%), January 2012 – December 2014.

South Programme II "Towards a strengthened democratic governance in the Southern Mediterranean", total budget: €7.37 million (EU: 94.98%, CoE: 5.02%), March 2015 – February 2018.

South Programme III "Ensuring sustainable democratic governance and human rights in the Southern Mediterranean", total budget: €3.334 million (EU: 89.98%, CoE: 10.02%), March 2018 – February 2020.

South Programme IV "Regional Support to Reinforce Human Rights, Rule of Law and Democracy in the Southern Mediterranean", total budget: €3.334 million (EU: 89.98%, CoE: 10.02%), March 2020 – February 2022.

¹¹ "Co-operation on cybercrime in the Southern Neighbourhood Region", total budget: €5.005 million (EU: 89.91%, CoE: 10.09%), July 2017- December 2021.

¹² "Project to Support Independent Bodies in Tunisia (PAII-T)", total budget: €5.556 million (EU 90%, CoE 10%) January 2019 – December 2021.

¹³ "Improving the functioning, performance and access to justice in Tunisia" (AP-JUST), total budget: €5 million (EU 90%, CoE 10%), January 2019 – December 2021.

The main achievements of the Neighbourhood Partnership 2018-2021 with Tunisia are summarised below :

Human rights

- Entry into force of the Lanzarote Convention on 1 February 2020;
- Invitation by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CM) to accede to the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) in April 2020;
- Establishment of a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) by Law No. 2016/61 with regard to identifying victims of human trafficking;
- Strengthening the capacities of the National Authority for the Prevention of Torture (INPT) to report and combat ill-treatment in places of detention;
- Drawing up and official presentation of the “Prisoner’s Guide” and the “Tunisian Prison Law Manual”;
- Building the capacities of legal professionals, law students and civil society with regard to human rights issues based on European and international standards through the increased use of the HELP Programme;
- Enhancing the capacities of staff of independent bodies with regard to the fulfilment of their respective remits, including combating corruption and human trafficking, freedom of expression, the protection of personal data and access to information.

Rule of law

- The CM invited Tunisia to accede to the Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention) in February 2018;
- In May 2019, Tunisia signed the Protocol amending the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (Convention 108+);
- The CM invited Tunisia to accede to the Council of Europe Convention on the counterfeiting of medical products and similar crimes involving threats to public health (MEDICRIME Convention) in February 2018;
- Tunisia officially became a member of the Network of Corruption Prevention Agencies in October 2019;¹⁴
- The Venice Commission prepared an assessment of the legislative framework of constitutional and independent bodies, in order to support the current drafting of legislation with the aim of consolidating their independence and effective operation, in line with their remits;
- The Venice Commission adopted an opinion on the draft institutional law on the organisation of political parties and their funding in October 2018 and an opinion on the draft institutional law on the Authority for Sustainable Development and the Rights of Future Generations (IDDDGF) in June 2019;
- Continued progress towards the greater independence and efficiency of the judiciary through the support provided to key players in this field such as the Supreme Judicial Council (CSM) of Tunisia, continued work with selected courts, the continued use of CEPEJ tools and the modernisation of IT equipment enabling better access to justice, including during the pandemic;
- Increased awareness of alternative dispute resolution ;

¹⁴ Network of Corruption Prevention Agencies established in Šibenik in October 2018 with Council of Europe support.

- Strengthening access to justice for citizens by improving access to information through the participation of civil society organisations, as well as improved access to free legal aid, with a particular focus on migrants and women victims of domestic violence.

Democracy

- Tunisia became a Partner for Local Democracy with the Congress in October 2019;
- Adoption of the Code of Local Authorities;
- Capacity building for local authorities and their associations, such as the National Federation of Tunisian Municipalities (FNCT), to carry out relevant reforms in line with Council of Europe standards;
- The increasing participation of civil society representatives in the reform processes supported by the Neighbourhood Partnership, including through the involvement of the Tunis School of Politics (TSoP) and the North-South Centre.

From March 2020, in response to the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council of Europe immediately took mitigating measures to continue the implementation of the Neighbourhood Partnership 2018-2021. Work plans were revised in line with overall priorities and in accordance with the restrictions in force. Working methods were adapted (working from home and use of new information technologies, use of written procedures, studies, expert analyses, provision of reference documents in Arabic, etc.). These measures have helped to maintain continuity of action and progress towards the Neighbourhood Partnership objectives.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP

The main objective of the co-operation between Tunisia and the Council of Europe, in line with the Council of Europe's policy towards neighbouring regions, is to assist Tunisia with its ongoing democratic reforms by helping it to tackle challenges relating to human rights, the rule of law and democracy.

This Neighbourhood Partnership is a strategic, flexible and dynamic programming instrument that sets out the priorities for co-operation between Tunisia and the Council of Europe for the period 2022-2025. It aims in particular to:

- consolidate the results of the co-operation implemented since 2012,¹⁵ initiate new areas of co-operation in line with national reform priorities, in accordance with the demand-driven approach, in such areas of Council of Europe expertise;
- continue the political dialogue at high level and by different means, including the participation of Tunisian experts in relevant intergovernmental committees and the Council of Europe's convention bodies;
- continue the efforts being made to facilitate the creation of a common legal area between Europe and Tunisia, by encouraging the harmonisation of Tunisian legislation with European and international standards and the ratification of Council of Europe conventions open to non-member States, in compliance with the procedures set out in the relevant conventions. In this context, provide support, according to needs, for drafting and effectively implementing new laws in line with European and other international standards;

¹⁵ "Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities for Tunisia 2012-2014", "Neighbourhood Partnership with Tunisia 2015-2017" and "Neighbourhood Partnership with Tunisia 2018-2021".

- support the establishment and effective operation of human rights bodies and new governance structures;
- in addition to Tunisia's presence in the Council of Europe bodies in which the country has member or observer status,¹⁶ promote its participation in other Council of Europe bodies.

The main areas of co-operation mentioned were identified through high-level consultations and detailed technical consultations between the Tunisian authorities concerned and the Council of Europe.

Consultations have also been carried out with other international organisations – especially the European Union as the Council of Europe's principal partner in the region – and bilateral stakeholders, including the main contributors to the financing of the Council of Europe action in the country, in order to ensure a co-ordinated approach. Accordingly, the priority areas of co-operation aim to foster synergies between all the relevant stakeholders in order to avoid duplication.

In achieving its objectives, the Neighbourhood Partnership will also support Tunisia in its efforts to implement the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

¹⁶ European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre), European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ), Mediterranean Network for co-operation on drugs and drug addiction (MedNET) of the Co-operation Group to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking (Pompidou Group).

PART II – ENHANCED POLITICAL DIALOGUE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Neighbourhood Partnership provides a framework for enhanced political dialogue between the Council of Europe and the relevant Tunisian authorities, the intensity of which could reflect the quality of co-operation between Tunisia and the Organisation. The enhanced political dialogue provides various opportunities, ranging from high-level dialogue on issues on the bilateral agenda and political issues of common interest, to more technical consultations on the implementation of the Neighbourhood Partnership. In addition, the arrangements set out below cover the full range of Council of Europe intergovernmental bodies, from political bodies to expert committees.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CM) will closely monitor the implementation of the enhanced political dialogue.

2.2 HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CM) may invite the Tunisian Minister of Foreign Affairs, or other high-level government representatives, to attend its sessions.

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Tunisian Minister of Foreign Affairs will hold consultations at least once a year on issues covered by the bilateral agenda and matters of common interest.

Ministers from Tunisia may be invited to participate as observers in the Conferences of Specialised Ministers relevant to the implementation of the Neighbourhood Partnership, as provided for in Resolution CM/Res(2011)7.

2.3 CONSULTATIONS

In addition to the high-level dialogue, the Ministers' Deputies may invite relevant Tunisian ministries and institutions for consultations on issues related to the implementation of the Neighbourhood Partnership.

The CM Rapporteur Group on External Relations (GR-EXT) will hold exchanges of views with representatives of the Tunisian ministries and institutions concerned when examining issues relating to co-operation with Tunisia and follow-up to the implementation of the Partnership. The other rapporteur groups may also hold such exchanges of views.

2.4 PARTICIPATION IN INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEES OF EXPERTS

Representatives of Tunisia will be able to attend certain parts of relevant meetings of intergovernmental committees of experts as observers when matters relating to the implementation of the Neighbourhood Partnership are being discussed.

2.5 NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP REPRESENTATIVE

The Consul General of Tunisia in Strasbourg has been appointed by the Tunisian authorities as the Neighbourhood Partnership representative to the Council of Europe to liaise on its implementation.

PART III – CO-OPERATION PRIORITIES

The proposed co-operation priorities are set out below by pillar of action, adhering to the structure of the Council of Europe's Programme and Budget.

3.1 HUMAN RIGHTS

Since 2012, Tunisia has made important commitments on the basis of European and international human rights instruments. The protection of human rights in the country is at the heart of the political dialogue and co-operation between the Council of Europe and Tunisia and a fundamental dimension of the Neighbourhood Partnership 2022-2025.

Tunisia's participation in several key Council of Europe conventions reflects its strong commitment to advancing human rights in compliance with Council of Europe standards. Tunisia has ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) and the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (Convention 108) and signed the amending Protocol to Convention 108, and it was the first country in the region to be invited by the CM to accede to Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention). These very positive developments have been complemented by significant progress on the harmonisation of legislation in relevant areas and the establishment of instruments to improve the protection of human rights. In this connection, particular attention should be drawn to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims of human trafficking, the mechanisms for identifying and protecting child victims of sexual abuse, the launch of work on introducing the NRM for victims of domestic violence, and the completion of instruments to prevent and combat torture and ill-treatment in prisons, such as the Prisoner's Guide and the Prison Law Manual for professionals working in this sensitive area. Tunisia has embarked on a legislative review process with a view to ratifying the modernised Convention 108 – the Convention 108+ – and adapting its legislative framework to the most recent international standards.

The 2014 Constitution¹⁷, drafted with the support of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), has established an institutional landscape in which the promotion and protection of fundamental rights relies on several institutional stakeholders, including constitutional and independent bodies. The implementation of the Constitution has made good progress in establishing these bodies but remains incomplete. At the time of writing this document, some independent bodies have yet to be replaced by constitutional ones (e.g., the Audiovisual Communication Authority (ICA) is supposed to replace the High Independent Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HAICA) and the Independent Constitutional Body for Good Governance and the Fight against Corruption (IBOGOLUCC) is supposed to succeed the National Anti-Corruption Authority (INLUCC)¹⁸. In addition, the Constitutional Court and the Human Rights Authority (IDH) have yet to be set up. Similarly, some institutional laws, such as the Personal Data Protection Act, which will strengthen the protection of certain rights, are awaiting approval by the Assembly of People's Representatives (ARP)¹⁹. Overall, the country is still engaged in a broad process of legislative reform.

¹⁷ In accordance with Presidential Decree No. 2021-117 of 22 September 2021 on exceptional measures, the preamble to the 2014 Constitution, its first chapter on general principles and its second chapter on rights and freedoms, as well as all constitutional provisions not contrary to the provisions of the said decree, shall continue to be applied.

¹⁸ In the context of developments in Tunisia since 25 July 2021, the National Anti-Corruption Authority was closed on 20 August 2021 by decision of the minister responsible for matters relating to the interior.

¹⁹ In accordance with Decree No. 2021-117 of 22 September 2021, parliament is suspended with the lifting of the parliamentary immunity of all its members. Legislative power is henceforth exercised in the form of decree-laws, which are not subject to appeal for annulment and may be submitted to a referendum.

All the constitutional and independent bodies in place have benefited, through the Neighbourhood Partnership, from the Council of Europe's expertise, which has enabled them to make considerable progress in the effective and independent exercise of their remits, in order to protect and promote human rights in accordance with their powers.

The Neighbourhood Partnership 2022-2025 will endeavour to continue to promote human rights through a universal approach based on European and international standards. The Council of Europe remains at Tunisia's disposal to address all human rights issues under this Neighbourhood Partnership.

This work will contribute to achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) especially 4,²⁰ 5²¹ and 16.²²

3.1.1 PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS

Capacities of the national authorities, legal professionals, and civil society to better protect and promote human rights

One of the main objectives of the Council of Europe's expertise, made available to Tunisia through the present Neighbourhood Partnership, is to help, by various means, to build the capacities of all relevant national stakeholders to provide better protection for human rights.

In this respect, the extension of the European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) to Tunisia in recent years has contributed to better understanding and adoption of European and international human rights standards by national authorities, including the constitutional and independent bodies, which have benefited from training using specialised modules.

Legal professionals, including judges, prosecutors and lawyers and members of the criminal police as well as law students, have also benefited from these courses tutored and moderated by HELP-certified national tutors. These courses have enabled awareness of European and international standards to be raised among civil society representatives.

The HELP platform's online format has proved particularly relevant given the exceptional restrictions linked to the Covid-19 pandemic and there was a sharp increase in the number of users in Tunisia in 2020.²³ By the end of 2020, the modules on combating violence against women and domestic violence and on combating human trafficking had been contextualised, taking into account the country's recent legislative reforms.

Given the success of the HELP programme in Tunisia, the present Neighbourhood Partnership will continue to promote its use and the provision of more contextualised courses in Neighbourhood Partnership priority areas. These will include HELP courses on the prevention of torture (CPT standards) and ill-treatment, the prevention of radicalisation, child-friendly justice, cybercrime, alternatives to detention, international criminal co-operation, freedom of expression and judicial ethics. The "Ethics for Judges, Prosecutors and Lawyers" course developed in mid-2020 could prove useful in strengthening the rule of law and judicial independence. In addition to the training of national HELP tutors, the inclusion of modules in the training curricula of some institutions and universities will aim to ensure sustainability of the training and gradually make Tunisia autonomous in its use.

²⁰ Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

²¹ Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

²² Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

²³ The number of users increased fivefold, from 93 to 464, between January and November 2020.

The HELP training programme will be developed in consultation with the main partners involved and in close co-ordination with the Ministry of Justice.

Overall objective: to build the capacities of legal professionals, the national authorities and civil society to protect and promote human rights

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** An increased number of legal professionals, members and staff of constitutional and independent bodies and law students have improved their knowledge of European and international human rights standards and thus acquired the necessary skills to implement national human rights legislation;
- **Expected outcome 2:** An increased number of representatives of civil society have familiarised themselves with European and international human rights standards and acquired sufficient knowledge to promote and protect human rights in their field of work.

***Main national partners:** Ministry of Justice and other relevant specialised ministries, constitutional and independent bodies, Higher Institute of the Judiciary (ISM), National Bar Association of Tunisia (ONAT), Higher Institute for the Legal Profession (ISPA), Centre for Legal and Judicial Studies (CEJJ), national training institutions, universities/law faculties, civil society.*

Prevention of torture and ill-treatment in prisons and other places of deprivation of liberty and prevention of radicalisation in prisons in Tunisia

The National Authority for the Prevention of Torture (INPT) was set up in March 2016. As Tunisia's National Preventive Mechanism against torture (NPM), it monitors the situation of persons deprived of their liberty and engages in dialogue with the relevant authorities with a view to improving the protection of these individuals, in accordance with Tunisia's commitments under the Optional Protocol to Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of the United Nations (OPCAT).

The Council of Europe has been supporting the INPT for several years in its efforts to build its capacities and improve the exercise of its remit in complete independence. Today, the INPT exercises its mandate to visit places of deprivation of liberty and to prepare reports on these visits in accordance with international standards and practices. Training sessions have proved necessary to ensure the consolidation of its members' knowledge and skills, particularly with regard to prison visits. The Authority has requested further training to continue this process and support future new members of the INPT. At the same time, the close co-operation between the INPT, the Ministry of Justice and the General Committee for Prisons and Rehabilitation (CGPR) promoted under the Neighbourhood Partnership has resulted in the development of innovative instruments and improvements in national legislation. These have also been strongly supported by strategic partners, notably the European Union and the Council of Europe as well as the United Nations, as a partner in this specific field. The Prisoner's Guide, which is being duly shown and distributed to prisoners and prison staff and should contribute to greater awareness of detainees' rights, is now serving as an example for other countries in the region. The campaign to disseminate it began in January 2020 in Tunisian prisons, including the only women's

prison in Tunisia, but has inevitably been slowed down by the pandemic. It is also planned to assess its actual impact with a view to a possible future revision.

The strong collaboration between all these partners has also resulted in the development of a Prison Law Manual, the second edition of which was launched in June 2021. This tool is aimed at a more specialised audience that requires in-depth knowledge of the national legal framework and the relevant European and international standards to combat torture and ill-treatment. It also contributes to the efforts to promote the teaching of comparative prison law and torture prevention standards in Tunisian universities, which also provide HELP training contextualised to Tunisia. Drawing on the revised European Prison Rules (EPR), it also deals in greater depth with matters relating to the specific needs of women prisoners.

These tools help to make both the rights of detainees and the INPT's mission better known, so it seemed necessary to complement this initiative by enabling the INPT to set up a unit ("*Pôle saisine*") for collecting and processing referrals. A comparative study was recently carried out by the Council of Europe and will contribute to setting up this facility within the Authority.

In addition, as the INPT's remit is not limited to prisons; it is planned to extend the action of the present Neighbourhood Partnership to other places of deprivation of liberty, such as police stations and reception and guidance centres.

As the radicalisation phenomenon is having a considerable impact on Tunisia, where several foreign fighters are currently detained in the country's prisons, the implementation of the National Strategy for Combating Terrorism and Radicalisation could benefit from the expertise and mechanisms developed in this area by the Council of Europe in recent years. Similarly, the development of policies aimed at the social reintegration of these particular prisoners could be considered and tackled with the help of strategic partners and civil society.

Overall objectives: to combat torture and ill-treatment in places of deprivation of liberty and radicalisation in prisons

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** The INPT's ability to exercise its powers under the OPCAT is strengthened in accordance with European and international standards;
- **Expected outcome 2:** Prison staff and the professionals involved increase their knowledge of the rights of persons deprived of their liberty (training courses, HELP courses, etc.), apply them in the course of their duties and make effective use of the tools developed with the support of the Council of Europe (Prisoner's Guide, Prison Law Manual, guides on the rights of minors in detention, etc.);
- **Expected outcome 3:** Prison staff and the professionals involved enhance their skills to better combat radicalisation in prisons, effectively implement appropriate policies and use the tools developed with the support of the Council of Europe;
- **Expected outcome 4:** Persons deprived of their liberty are better informed about their rights and can assert them through appropriate mechanisms.

Main national partners: National Authority for the Prevention of Torture (INPT), Ministry of the Interior – especially the Directorate General of Human Rights, Ministry of Justice – especially the General Committee for Prisons and Rehabilitation (CGPR), National Anti-Terrorism Commission, legal professionals, universities, civil society.

Police and human rights

Recent international reports²⁴ indicate the need to improve police compliance with human rights when people are arrested in connection with demonstrations, are held in police custody and are questioned. Both the INPT and human rights organisations within civil society have been highly critical of the detention of more than 2 000 young people, including some 500 minors, in connection with demonstrations linked to the 10th anniversary of the 2011 revolution. These detentions have further highlighted the need to continue to improve the protection of human rights in the law enforcement systems by promoting the harmonisation of certain standards and practices in Tunisia with European and international standards. The Council of Europe is therefore helping the INPT with the preparation of a manual on the rights of minors during the first hours of detention in police stations.

This Neighbourhood Partnership also envisages helping the Tunisian authorities with the development of policies and the adoption of measures that will strengthen the abilities of the Ministry of Interior and law enforcement agencies to control public gatherings in order to ensure respect for human rights before, during and after such events, including when arrests are made and the police question suspects. In order to achieve this objective, the Council of Europe will provide Tunisia with its expertise in drafting rules and adopting measures that will enhance the abilities of law enforcement agencies to maintain order at public gatherings while guaranteeing fundamental rights; and to develop tools and mechanisms at national level to prevent and combat ill-treatment by the police, based on the best practices of Council of Europe member States.

Overall objective: to ensure human rights compliant treatment by law enforcement officers at public gatherings

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** The capacities of law enforcement agencies to control public gatherings while ensuring respect for human rights before, during and after such events, including when suspects are arrested and questioned by the police, are strengthened and measures are implemented;
- **Expected outcome 2:** The capacities of law enforcement agencies to protect the rights of minors in the first hours of holding them in custody at police stations are strengthened.

Main national partners: Ministry of the Interior – especially the Directorate General of Human Rights, Ministry of Justice, National Children's Commission, law enforcement agencies, National Association of Tunisian Security Force Trade Unions, civil society.

²⁴ <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2020/country-chapters/tunisia>
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/middle-east-and-north-africa/tunisia/report-tunisia/>

Promotion of freedom of expression and media pluralism

Since 2012, the Council of Europe has supported Tunisia in the process of strengthening freedom of expression with the aim of consolidating a diverse, pluralistic and democratic media landscape. The various framework co-operation agreements with the Council of Europe have helped to raise awareness among key Tunisian stakeholders of the principles deriving from European and international standards through the sharing of best practices of Council of Europe member States. They have also supported the independence of the High Independent Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HAICA) since its creation and facilitated its networking with similar institutions in Europe while strengthening its role at international level.

In accordance with the 2014 Constitution, the Audiovisual Communication Authority (ICA) should eventually oversee the regulation of the audiovisual sector by guaranteeing freedom of expression and media pluralism. However, the draft law establishing this constitutional body has not yet been promulgated, and the tasks of media regulation remain with the HAICA, which was set up in 2013.

In addition to the adoption of regulatory frameworks, the obstacles to the actual realisation of freedom of expression and media freedom remain significant. While progress in this area has been very significant since the revolution, Tunisia's ranking in the World Press Freedom Index compiled by Reporters Without Borders dropped in 2021.²⁵ According to this report, the working climate for journalists has deteriorated significantly, particularly during the health crisis. Obstacles to press freedom have led to protests by civil society, journalists' associations and many media outlets, who criticised undue government interference.

For its part, the National Authority for Access to Information (INAI) set up under Institutional Law No. 2016-22 promulgated by the Assembly of People's Representatives (ARP) on 24 March 2016 is responsible for safeguarding the right of access to information and promoting transparent access to information for citizens. The regulatory framework governing this independent body also remains incomplete. The operation of the INAI, including the development of practical instruments such as a data centre, and the adoption of European standards in this area, taking as a benchmark the Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents (Tromsø Convention), will be prioritised by this Neighbourhood Partnership.

In addition to supporting these two independent bodies, HAICA and INAI, the Council of Europe has worked to promote freedom of expression and freedom of the press in the context of democratic transition and by organising training workshops for journalists in partnership with the National Union of Tunisian Journalists (SNJT). The National Press Council (CNP), an independent self-regulatory body for journalists, was established in September 2020. Its mission is to contribute to ensuring compliance with ethical rules through mechanisms of self-regulation and to promote press freedom.

Particular attention has also been paid to initiatives aimed at combating gender stereotypes in the media and their role in gender-based violence, by facilitating regional dialogue on these issues between media regulators, including the HAICA, journalists and civil society representatives from the Southern Mediterranean region.

This partnership will continue efforts in the above areas, in close co-ordination with other international partners.

²⁵ <https://rsf.org/en/ranking/2021>

Overall objective: to promote freedom of expression and a democratic media landscape

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** The legislative frameworks with regard to freedom of expression, media freedom and access to information are brought more into line with European and international standards;
- **Expected outcome 2:** The audiovisual and media sector regulator exercises its powers effectively and independently;
- **Expected outcome 3:** The work of the National Authority for Access to Information (INAI) is placed on a sound footing and brought more into line with European standards;
- **Expected outcome 4:** The capacities of the National Press Council (CNP) and the National Union of Tunisian Journalists (SNJT) as well as other civil society players are enhanced as far as the promotion and monitoring of freedom of expression, investigative journalism, the protection of journalists and media ethics and professionalism are concerned.

Main national partners: High Independent Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HAICA)/future Audiovisual Communication Authority (ICA), National Authority for Access to Information (INAI), National Union of Tunisian Journalists (SNJT), National Press Council (CNP), journalists' associations, civil society.

Protection of personal data

The National Authority for the Protection of Personal Data (INPDP) set up by Institutional Law no. 2004-63 on the protection of personal data began exercising its powers in 2009. The Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (Convention 108) and its Additional Protocol entered into force in Tunisia in November 2017. Moreover, Tunisia was the first Southern Mediterranean country to sign the amending Protocol (Convention 108+), which modernises Convention 108, the aim being both to meet the challenges arising from the use of the new information and communication technologies and to strengthen the effective implementation of the Convention.

The adoption of the draft institutional law on data protection to replace the 2004 legislation was completed in 2019 with Council of Europe support but is still awaiting adoption by the parliament. Despite the lack of a proper regulatory framework, the INPDP has played a very active role since its creation in raising the level of personal data protection, in gradually improving the legal framework and in fostering a data protection culture in Tunisia, including by raising awareness of this fundamental right in the public and private sectors. Personal data protection in Tunisia thus continues to be strengthened, setting an example for other countries in the region.

The Council of Europe has provided the INPDP with support and expertise since its inception, helping to ensure it can carry out its duties independently and effectively. Particular attention was paid in 2020 to the health sector, especially in view of the Covid-19 pandemic. At the same time, data protection has been given due consideration in other Neighbourhood Partnership areas, such as human trafficking (in the context of the establishment of the National Referral Mechanism), the media and young people.

The Neighbourhood Partnership will continue to provide help with the legislative review resulting from Tunisia's accession to the Council of Europe's instruments in the data protection field and also support the ratification of Convention 108+.

Strengthening the INPDP's independence and ability to act will also remain a priority, so that it can continue and enhance its leading role in the region with regard to the legislative, technical and societal developments necessary for data protection, while work targeting the health and youth sectors. Work will also be targeted at those sectors identified as needing special attention following checks carried out by the INPDP.

Furthermore, as data protection is an issue broadly shared by other sectors, synergies will continue to be strengthened with other areas of work covered by this partnership including as regards cybercrime and human trafficking.

Overall objective: to ensure the application of European data protection standards

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** The legislative and institutional personal data protection framework in Tunisia is brought into line with Convention 108 and Convention 108+.
- **Expected outcome 2:** The capacities of the institutions involved in protecting personal data and privacy are strengthened, and these institutions possess the necessary skills and tools for their tasks, including with a view to reinforced international co-operation.
- **Expected outcome 3:** The knowledge and practices of professionals and players from different private and public sectors with regard to data protection and civil society are enhanced.
- **Expected outcome 4:** A culture of respect for privacy and personal data protection is fostered and strengthened within Tunisian society through better knowledge of the standards required and of the institutions responsible for dealing with these matters.

Main national partners: *National Authority for the Protection of Personal Data (INPDP), Ministry of Justice, other relevant sectoral ministries, constitutional and institutional bodies, legal professionals, private and public sector players, civil society.*

3.1.2 EQUALITY AND HUMAN DIGNITY

The Neighbourhood Partnership's main priorities include combating violence against women and domestic violence and protecting children's rights, two areas where Tunisia has made significant progress in bringing its legal and institutional frameworks into line with Council of Europe standards.

In addition to specific projects in this field, all Neighbourhood Partnership activities follow a cross-cutting gender-sensitive approach, based on the tools developed by the Council of Europe to take this dimension into account (see Part IV, section 4.1).

Combating violence against women and domestic violence

In April 2020, Tunisia was the first Southern Mediterranean country to be invited by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CM) to accede to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention). In addition to its great symbolic value, accession would enable Tunisia to participate in the Committee of the Parties to this Convention and pave the way for monitoring by the Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) on an equal footing with the Organisation's member States.

The Council of Europe supported the drafting and implementation of Institutional Law No. 2017-58 on the elimination of violence against women, adopted in August 2017 and based on the standards of the Istanbul Convention. Key stakeholders' institutional capacities and professional skills have been enhanced as a result of addressing such issues as the effective implementation of protection orders, the prosecution of perpetrators, preventive measures, assistance with and the establishment of shelters, legal advice for victims and the role of the judiciary. This work has been supported by, inter alia, the HELP course on combating violence against women, adapted to the Tunisian context, and by such tools as a booklet and cards on the rights of women victims of violence. Extensive co-ordination at national level and at local level through the intersectoral co-ordination group in the Governorate of Ben Arous has enabled doctors, psychologists, midwives, prosecutors, social workers and civil society representatives to be mobilised to protect women victims of violence. In this context, a second edition of the HELP course, focusing on multisectoral care for women victims of violence, has been developed and will be made available to the regional co-ordination commissions for combating violence against women in the 24 governorates.

The Neighbourhood Partnership will provide the Tunisian authorities with support for completing the procedure for acceding to the Istanbul Convention, including by raising the awareness of members of the parliament. In response to a request to the Council of Europe from the Ministry for Women, the Family and Senior Citizens, the Neighbourhood Partnership will aim to establish a National Referral System for women victims of violence under the auspices of the Ministry, in co-ordination with local intersectoral co-ordination groups and the new National Observatory for Combating Violence against Women set up by Government decree in February 2020. Based on the model of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims of human trafficking, the operation of this National Referral Mechanism System will be gradually extended to all Tunisian governorates. The establishment of a secure data collection system is essential in this context and will be supported as a matter of priority. Raising public awareness of the need to combat gender-based violence against women and girls by various means will also continue to be a Neighbourhood Partnership priority.

Furthermore, as a platform for intercultural and inter-agency dialogue, the North-South Centre will continue to contribute to boosting the capacities of Tunisian civil society organisations with regard to preventing and combating violence against women through the sharing of experiences and good practices between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean.

Overall objective: to combat violence against women and domestic violence

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** Tunisia is assisted in the Istanbul Convention accession process and in the effective implementation of the relevant legislation.

- **Expected outcome 2:** The National Referral System for women victims of violence is operational, including in the governorates of Tunisia.
- **Expected outcome 3:** The capacities of members and staff of independent bodies as well as institutions and professionals involved in protecting women victims of violence, including civil society, are strengthened.
- **Expected outcome 4:** Greater prominence is given to the problem and to measures to combat violence against women through a strategic communication plan to raise media and public awareness of the issue.

Main national partners: Ministry for Women, the Family and Senior Citizens, other relevant sectoral ministries, National Observatory for Combating Violence against Women, professional groups involved, National Union of Tunisian Journalists (SNJT), National Press Council (CNP), constitutional and independent bodies, civil society (especially women's associations).

Children's rights

The Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) entered into force in Tunisia in February 2020. The Neighbourhood Partnership 2022-2025 will support the effective implementation of the convention in line with Tunisia's new commitments and other relevant Council of Europe standards and guidelines in this area.

A national discussion led with the Ministry for Women, the Family and Senior Citizens, the Ministry of Health (forensic and child psychiatry divisions), the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior and the child protection delegates has made it possible to take stock of sexual violence against children in Tunisia and define priority measures to be implemented. In response to recommendations made by the various players involved in the process, a steering committee responsible for promoting child-friendly justice and comprehensive multisector assistance for child victims of sexual violence has been set up with the support of the previous Neighbourhood Partnership.

Capacity building for institutions and professionals responsible for assisting child victims of violence in line with European standards and best practices will be continued as a priority under this Neighbourhood Partnership. This approach will include the training of specialised staff and the establishment of a group of inspectors, psychologists and educators within the Ministry of Education, trained to identify cases of child sexual abuse and initiate protection procedures.

Overall objective: to promote children's rights and to fight against violence and sexual abuse towards children

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** Legislative and institutional frameworks, including the Child Protection Code, and bodies for protecting children from sexual exploitation and abuse are brought into line with the Lanzarote Convention and other relevant Council of Europe standards and guidelines in this area;

- **Expected outcome 2:** The capacities of institutions, bodies and professionals responsible for assisting child victims of violence are strengthened in line with European best practice;
- **Expected outcome 3:** The public, parents, children and childcare professionals are made more aware of the efforts to combat the sexual abuse and exploitation of children;
- **Expected outcome 4:** The media are made more aware of issues related to child sexual exploitation and abuse and are taking steps to monitor their coverage to protect victims.

Main national partners: Ministry for Women, the Family and Senior Citizens, Ministry of Justice, other relevant sectoral ministries, Chief Child Protection Officer, High Independent Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HAICA)/future Audiovisual Communication Authority (ICA), National Union of Tunisian Journalists (SNJT), National Press Council (CNP), National Children's Rights Observatory, civil society.

3.1.3 GUARANTEEING SOCIAL RIGHTS

European Social Charter

The Tunisian Constitution guarantees a number of social and economic rights such as the right to health, social security, education, work and fair remuneration.

Although not open to non-member States of the Council of Europe, the European Social Charter (ESC) and the revised European Social Charter (RESC) remain benchmark instruments for guaranteeing these rights beyond Europe. In this connection, Tunisia has expressed its interest in gradually bringing its national legislation into line with their provisions, including with a view to strengthening the social dialogue between the social partners, particularly in the event of emergency situations such as health crises.

In raising awareness of the standards set by the ESC and the RESC, particular attention will be paid to women's rights to safe and healthy working conditions and the situation of migrant workers.

Overall objective: to improve awareness of Council of Europe social rights standards

- **Expected outcome:** Representatives of the Government, the parliament and civil society are made more aware of the Council of Europe social rights standards with a view to gradually bringing Tunisian legislation into line with European standards.

Main national partners: Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Higher Education, parliament, civil society.

3.2 RULE OF LAW

Bilateral co-operation between the Council of Europe and Tunisia has also enabled the country to make considerable progress on promoting the rule of law. In addition to Tunisia's participation in several

Council of Europe conventions and partial agreements, the Neighbourhood Partnership has supported reforms in this area. As a member of the Venice Commission since 2010, Tunisia has relied heavily on the expertise of this consultative body to draw up reform roadmaps aimed at strengthening the rule of law.

Tunisia has continued to make progress with reforms to implement the 2014 Constitution. However, the Constitutional Court, the Human Rights Authority (IDH) and the Independent Constitutional Body for Good Governance and the Fight against Corruption (IBOGOLUCC) are still not in place. The lack of a Constitutional Court, which should have been set up shortly after the adoption of the Constitution, continues to be a matter of national controversy and has prevented the possibility of formally challenging the constitutionality of certain laws. More recently, this issue became topical again following the presidential decree of 25 July 2021 declaring a state of emergency, invoking Article 80 of the constitution and the impossibility of consulting the constitutional court. There are also significant challenges regarding the reform of the judiciary and the fight against corruption and money laundering and other forms of organised crime.

In continuation of the co-operation already underway, the present Neighbourhood Partnership will maintain the support for Tunisia's efforts to strengthen the rule of law and preserve the gains made. At Tunisia's request, the fight against terrorism will be a new focus of this co-operation on the basis of the Council of Europe conventions and instruments.

These efforts are contributing to achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goals 3,²⁶ 5,²⁷ 8²⁸ and 16.²⁹

3.2.1 RULE OF LAW-BASED INSTITUTIONS

European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission)

Tunisia has been a full member of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) since 2010. In addition to supporting the drafting of the 2014 Constitution, the Venice Commission has been asked to give its opinion on a number of texts, including the draft law on the Constitutional Court, the draft law on the Authority for Sustainable Development and the Rights of Future Generations (IDDDGF), and the draft institutional law on the organisation of political parties and their funding.³⁰ The Venice Commission³¹ will remain available during the period 2022-2025 to provide specific support for the drafting and revision of other draft laws. Similarly, the Constitutional Court, once set up, will be able to benefit from the Venice Commission's expertise, including in terms of building its members' capacities in the exercise of their duties.

Institutional Law No. 42/2016 establishing the Human Rights Authority as provided for in Article 128 of the 2014 Constitution was enacted in October 2018, but the body has not yet been set up owing to the lack of agreement within the Assembly of People's Representatives (ARP) on the election of its

²⁶ Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

²⁷ Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

²⁸ Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

²⁹ Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

³⁰ [https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2019\)013-e](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2019)013-e)

[https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2018\)025-e](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2018)025-e)

[https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2015\)024-e](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2015)024-e)

³¹ In his public statement of 26 August 2021, the President of the Venice Commission underlined the need to find a solution to the constitutional crisis triggered on 25 July 2021 within the democratic parameters set by the Tunisian Constitution.

members. As soon as it has been set up, the Council of Europe will be able to provide, when asked to do so, expertise and technical support to contribute to its proper operation, in accordance with its remit.

In this connection, the present Neighbourhood Partnership will seek to strengthen the dialogue between the parliament and the Venice Commission.

In the case of the constitutional and independent bodies, on the basis of the assessment of the legislative and regulatory framework of Tunisian independent bodies that was drawn up at the end of 2019 by the Venice Commission and constitutes a roadmap for reforms relating to these bodies, this Neighbourhood Partnership will enable the measures taken since 2015 concerning the guarantees of the independence of, and the legislative framework for, these bodies to be further developed. The Venice Commission will also continue to support the work of the Independent Bodies Steering Committee³² to enable it to increase its influence with other national institutional actors.

With regard more specifically to the Higher Independent Authority for Elections (ISIE), co-operation with the Venice Commission will continue to focus on the revision of the electoral legislative framework as a matter of priority. Similarly, the Venice Commission will support the ISIE's 2021-2024 Strategic Plan, and its training and human resources plans in order to build the capacities of the body's members and staff. It will continue to support the networking of the ISIE with comparable foreign bodies.

Co-ordination with other international players operating in this field in Tunisia (notably the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) will continue to be ensured under the auspices of the ISIE.

In addition, the Venice Commission will continue to organise University for Democracy (UniDem Med) seminars aimed at building the capacities of senior officials on issues related to the Venice Commission's areas of expertise, with Tunisia's full involvement.

Overall objective: the Venice Commission supports the full achievement of rule of law

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** At the authorities' request, the Venice Commission provides expertise on draft legislation, where appropriate in co-ordination with other specialised Council of Europe bodies;
- **Expected outcome 2:** The establishment and proper functioning of constitutional and independent bodies – including the Constitutional Court and the Human Rights Authority (IDH) – are supported, including through capacity building for members and staff and increased co-ordination between bodies;
- **Expected outcome 3:** The Constitutional Court and other constitutional governance bodies have established a network of relations with similar bodies in Council of Europe member States and other regions, especially the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region;
- **Expected outcome 4:** Through seminars of the University for Democracy (UniDem Med), an increased number of senior officials of the Tunisian administration, have improved their knowledge of European and international standards relating to the rule of law and have acquired the necessary skills to implement legislation in this area.

³² The Independent Bodies Steering Committee co-ordinates interaction between the Presidency of the Government and the independent bodies.

National partners: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Migration and Tunisians Abroad, Ministry of Justice, other relevant sectoral ministries, constitutional and independent bodies, future Constitutional Court, future Human Rights Authority (IDH), parliament.

Independence and efficiency of justice

The co-operation initiated since 2013 between the CEPEJ and several pilot courts,³³ followed by entities under the Ministry of Justice,³⁴ the Supreme Judicial Council and other justice partners,³⁵ has helped, on the basis of the instruments and methodologies developed by the CEPEJ in the 47 Council of Europe member States, to strengthen the independence and impartiality of the judiciary, improve the quality of justice and broaden access to the law. In April 2015, Tunisia was granted observer status with the CEPEJ and has since then been participating fully in its plenary sessions and working group meetings, contributing to the discussions and the work connected to the Commission's initiatives and main activities.

The measures proposed for the period 2022-2025 aim to continue this strong partnership relationship in order to ensure its continuity and sustainability, to maintain the support for the judicial institutions following the national reform of the judicial system begun in 2014 and thereby continue to improve the independence of justice the quality and efficiency of the day-to-day operation of the public justice service provided for Tunisian citizens by the courts and justice professionals.

Accordingly, the support provided will be continued and expanded in order to disseminate the CEPEJ's tools and methodologies with regard to the quality of justice and a Network of Tunisian Pilot Courts allowing the implementation and follow-up of tailor-made actions will be reactivated : building the capacities and skills of justice stakeholders (judges, prosecutors, registrars, lawyers, bailiffs, judicial experts), in particular through continuing training courses and field visits to promote the exchange of experience and good practice, reform of the system for assessing the functioning of the justice system, the courts and the performance of judges and prosecutors and administrative managers, (provision of measurement and evaluation tools, indicators), and support for improving the internal organisation (case management) and planning of courts; with regard to judicial time: improving time management and case backlog management tools, in the area of mediation: raising the awareness of all justice stakeholders and setting up pilot projects. Further work is also planned on cyberjustice, electronic working methods between lawyers and judges, and remote trials.

An overall and detailed assessment of the Tunisian judicial system, in accordance with the methodology recognised by the CEPEJ for all its member States and some observer States, could also make a useful contribution to highlighting the concrete progress on, and persistent problems concerning, the different aspects of the current operation of the justice system and the various judicial institutions. Such a review, carried out in close co-operation with the Tunisian authorities, would be a genuine public policy tool and provide data and statistics that are analysed, compared with other systems and accompanied by recommendations for action in the short, medium and long term. The efforts here should be accompanied by training in the collection ,use and the analysis of judicial statistics for the bodies

³³ Court of Cassation; courts of first instance of Gabes, Kairouan, Nabeul, Sidi Bouzid, Tunis and Zaghuan; district courts of Gabes, Sidi Bouzid and Zaghuan.

³⁴ General Inspectorate (IG), Higher Institute of the Judiciary (ISM), Higher Institute for the Legal Profession (ISPA), Centre for Legal and Judicial Studies (CEJJ).

³⁵ The National Bar Association (ONAT), judicial experts.

concerned, in particular the General Inspectorate and the Ministry of Justice. These statistical data will also contribute to the definition and implementation of targeted actions in the pilot courts.

In addition to the CEPEJ's expertise, that of the Venice Commission, the Consultative Council of European Judges (CCJE) and the Consultative Council of European Prosecutors (CCPE) will be called upon, where appropriate, to assist the Ministry of Justice, the Supreme Judicial Council (CSM), the General Inspectorate, the National Bar Association (ONAT), lawyers and court officers in carrying out their duties. Similarly, the CEPEJ, in collaboration with other Council of Europe bodies and international partners, will be able to help the Ministry of Justice in determining the direction of structural reforms of the judicial system.

Overall objective: to promote the independence, efficiency and quality of justice by supporting the revision of the relevant legislative frameworks, improving the organisation and operation of the judicial institutions, building the professional capacities and skills of justice stakeholders and carrying out a comprehensive assessment of justice in Tunisia in order to have a reliable and documented public policy tool available.

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** At the authorities' request, the CEPEJ, the Venice Commission and/or the CCJE/CCPE provide expertise on draft laws on the operation of the justice system;
- **Expected outcome 2:** Justice stakeholders improve their professional qualifications and knowledge of modern court management methods through training (training cycle, field visits), various activities (provision of tools for measuring and assessing the operation of the justice system, the courts and the work of judges) and the sharing of European good practices on these matters;
- **Expected outcome 3:** Justice stakeholders strengthen their capacity for statistical collection and analysis and take steps to plan, evaluate and improve the operation, organisation and governance of the justice system;
- **Expected outcome 4:** Tunisia participates in the CEPEJ's evaluation of judicial systems.

Main national partners: *Ministry of Justice, Higher Institute of the Judiciary (ISM), Supreme Judicial Council (CSM), Tunisian courts, Tunisian judges and prosecutors, the National Bar Association (ONAT), judicial experts, court registrars, civil society.*

Common standards and policies

One of the principal objectives of the Council of Europe's policy towards neighbouring regions is the creation of a common legal area based on Council of Europe standards. Accordingly, since 2012 a main priority of co-operation with Tunisia has been to facilitate the expansion of a common legal area by bringing Tunisian legislation into line with Council of Europe standards and promoting accession to key conventions and to partial agreements.

Tunisia has made progress beyond initial expectations. The political dialogue has been essential to support progress on expanding the common legal area with the country. Participation in steering

committees such as the Gender Equality Commission (GEC) and in some of the Council of Europe's conventions committees, the Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (T-ES) and the Consultative Committee of the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (T-PD) among others, has contributed to better understanding of Council of Europe standards and the potential impact of accession to these instruments, as well as increasing the country's interest in other conventions. In 2020, Tunisia continued to participate in meetings on the Neighbourhood Partnership's priority intervention areas.

Tunisia is now a contracting party to several Council of Europe conventions (see Appendix IV), including Convention 108 and its Additional Protocol, and the Lanzarote Convention. It is also a full member of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) and the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre) and has observer status with the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ).

Tunisia has been invited by the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers (CM) to accede to several conventions, including the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, the Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention) and the Convention on Counterfeiting of Medical Products and Similar Crimes Involving Threats to Public Health (MEDICRIME Convention) as well as partial agreements, including the International Co-operation Group on Drugs and Addictions (Pompidou Group) and the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO). In addition, it has Partner for Local Democracy status with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress).

Tunisia is the country in the region that has taken the most progressive approach to certain democratic reforms and is in this respect an example for other countries in the region. Indeed, it was the first Arab country to be invited to accede to key Council of Europe instruments, such as the Istanbul Convention and GRECO.

These positive developments have taken place in a political situation often characterised by instability. Successive elections and political fragmentation have frequently slowed down the legislative process but, despite the difficult context, accession processes and the revision of relevant legislative frameworks have continued at Government level. Events since 25 July 2021 have resulted in the slowing down or even halting of ongoing procedures relating to accession to Council of Europe legal instruments.

Progress in the accession processes is monitored by the Council of Europe through regular meetings of the working group with the Tunisian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and regular exchanges with the relevant authorities at project level, thus providing an opportunity to discuss possible ways of overcoming perceived difficulties concerning the obligations enshrined in these conventions.

In addition to the conventions that have so far been the subject of co-operation with Tunisia, the country has an interest in more recently developed legal instruments, such as the Council of Europe Convention against Trafficking in Human Organs and the Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property.

The Council of Europe will also be able to advise, at the request of the authorities, on the revision of the Criminal Code, on issues such as the trial of civilian cases by military courts, on the basis of its expertise and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights.

Overall objective: to enlarge the common legal area between Europe and Tunisia

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** Tunisia completes the ongoing processes of ratifying Council of Europe conventions and asks to be invited to accede to other instruments in the priority areas covered by the Neighbourhood Partnership;
- **Expected outcome 2:** National legislation in priority areas is brought into line with European and international standards and effectively implemented;
- **Expected outcome 3:** The relevant authorities, such as ministries, governance bodies and civil society, have improved their knowledge of Council of Europe conventions and partial agreements in their respective areas of responsibility.

Main national partners: *Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Migration and Tunisians Abroad, Ministry of Justice, other relevant sectoral ministries, parliament, constitutional and independent bodies, civil society.*

3.2.2 ACTION ON CRIME, SECURITY AND PROTECTION OF CITIZENS

Combating human trafficking

Tunisia has been strongly committed to combating the scourge of human trafficking for several years and successive Neighbourhood Partnerships have supported its efforts in this regard. The Committee of Ministers invited the country to accede to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings in 2018 and the Council of Europe has continued to support the accession process. National legislation has been largely brought into line with its provisions. Other laws, such as the law on private agencies that place workers abroad, were pending approval by the Assembly of People's Representatives (ARP). The draft law on child victims and witnesses has been completed but reforms still need to be made in this connection.

Tunisia is the only country in the region to have developed a National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims of trafficking, an outcome achieved through co-operation between a large number of partners under the auspices of the National Authority against Trafficking in Human Beings (INLTP), with the collaboration of the relevant ministries, various professionals and civil society. This mechanism, which should be supported by a Government decree, will now be made operational and gradually extended to the whole country over the next few years. The initial focus will be on the regions most affected by trafficking.

The process of putting the NRM into operation should be accompanied by the automated collection and processing of victim data. Since the information collected on individual trafficking cases is very sensitive, data protection is crucially important in this connection.

The training of relevant professionals remains essential for making the NRM fully operational. The abilities of the stakeholders concerned, especially INLTP members, to identify victims of trafficking have been strengthened by means of tools developed for the NRM, including victim identification and referral fact sheets, a list of indicators for detecting and identifying victims of trafficking, a “passport” and cards setting out victims’ rights, an Interview Kit, a Guide to the Social Reintegration of Victims and a Stakeholder Map. The European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) training module on combating human trafficking, which has already been translated into Arabic and adapted to the Tunisian context, has also contributed to these efforts, but more work is needed to ensure that all partners involved in this mechanism are able to apply it.

Human trafficking is a global phenomenon that seriously affects certain Southern Mediterranean countries, and effectively combating it requires a transnational approach, the harmonisation of concepts, effective means of sharing information and the upgrading of skills at the regional level. The experience of establishing the NRM in Tunisia has already raised interest from other countries in the region and Tunisia will be invited to share its expertise in the context of regional co-operation programmes.

Overall objective: to combat human trafficking

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** Tunisia is supported in the process of acceding to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings as well as with regard to completing the revision of the national legislative framework in this area and its effective implementation;
- **Expected outcome 2:** The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims of trafficking is in operation in all Tunisian governorates;
- **Expected outcome 3:** A secure system for collecting and processing data on victims of trafficking is in place;
- **Expected outcome 4:** A national training strategy is adopted and allows the strengthening of awareness and the development of skills of all stakeholders on the Tunisian territory;
- **Expected outcome 5:** The INLTP is networked with other relevant bodies and players in the Southern Mediterranean region in order to promote initiatives to combat trafficking at regional level;

Main national partners: *the INLTP, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of the Interior, other relevant sectoral ministries and independent bodies, such as the INPDP, INAI, HAICA, civil society.*

Combating terrorism

The Council of Europe contributes to the development and reinforcement of legal standards essential for preventing and punishing acts of terrorism. Following a comprehensive approach, it works to help member States combat terrorism more effectively by strengthening and improving their national

legislation, thus facilitating international co-operation. Its expertise is also of interest to non-member countries.

The Council of Europe's main international legal instrument in the field of counter-terrorism is the 2005 Warsaw Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, which sets out measures that countries must take to prevent terrorism and prosecute effectively those involved in terrorist activities. These measures include education and information initiatives to combat radicalisation leading to terrorism, as well as training and co-ordination plans for civil emergencies and the provision of protection, compensation and support for victims of terrorism. They also include making it a criminal offence to publicly incite people to commit terrorist acts, provide training for terrorism and engage in various forms of recruitment for terrorism. As international co-operation is a key factor in the fight against terrorism, the Convention provides a basis for co-operation between States Parties where no other mechanism is available.

The Additional Protocol to the Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism aims to address the criminal law aspects of the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters and those among them who return to their own countries. The Protocol, which was opened for signature in Riga on 22 October 2015 and entered into force on 1 July 2017, requires member States to make it a criminal offence to participate in an association or group for the purpose of terrorism, to receive training for terrorism, to travel abroad for the purpose of terrorism, and to finance or organise travel for that purpose. On the basis of the Additional Protocol, the Council of Europe supports a network to facilitate the rapid sharing of relevant police information on terrorist fighters suspected of travelling to or from member States. The Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2018-2022) is based on prevention, prosecution and protection. It draws on the existing legal framework and standards and sets out a range of measures and instruments for national authorities. There is also a series of other Council of Europe conventions applicable to the issue of terrorism, such as the European Convention on Extradition, the European Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters and the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism.

In the past, Tunisian experts have in particular participated in meetings of the Committee of Experts on Terrorism (CODEXTER) and the Working Group of Experts on Terrorism and Transnational Organised Crime (CDCT-TTOC). Tunisian representatives have also participated in regional Council of Europe events, such as the 2nd Conference on Terrorism and Organised Crime (September 2017, Malaga, Spain). Furthermore, in 2015, in connection with the drafting of the law on combating terrorism and money laundering, which was promulgated in August that year, discussions between Council of Europe experts, members of the Assembly of People's Representatives and the Anti-Terrorism Unit focused on the Council of Europe's conventions, tools and practice in this area. Adopted against a background of growing threats after terrorist attacks, the law reintroduces the death penalty for certain terrorist crimes, provides for a 15-day period of custody during which a suspect cannot consult a lawyer and makes it easier to intercept telephone calls. It was controversial and has been criticised by civil society, which sees it as a threat to personal freedoms.

This Neighbourhood Partnership aims to strengthen work with Tunisia to combat the terrorist threat by promoting European standards and networking between Tunisia and Europe. In addition to the work envisaged to combat money laundering for terrorist purposes (see section 3.2.2) and radicalisation in prisons (see section 3.1.1), other issues of common interest, such as cyber-terrorism, could be the subject of specific measures.

Overall objective: to combat terrorism through co-ordinated action in co-operation with European states and in the Southern Mediterranean region

Expected outcome: Representatives of the Government, the parliament and civil society are made more aware of the Council of Europe's principal standards for combating terrorism with a view to gradually bringing Tunisian legislation into line with them.

Main national partners: *Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Communication Technologies and the Digital Economy, other relevant sectoral ministries, Directorate General of National Security (DGSN), independent bodies, civil society.*

Combating cybercrime

Tunisia was invited by the Committee of Ministers of Council of Europe (CM) to accede to the Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention) in February 2018. The final touches are being made to the draft law bringing Tunisian legislation into line with the Convention's requirements, enabling Tunisia to proceed with ratification. In addition, it has been decided that the 24/7 Unit will be housed by the Ministry of the Interior.

Support for the relevant authorities to promote understanding of Council of Europe standards in this area has been strengthened to enable targeted training and national strategies to combat cybercrime to be developed. A team of Tunisian trainers was set up in 2019 to design a Tunisian course on cybercrime and electronic evidence for judges and prosecutors. Highlighting the benefits of developing "standard operating procedures" in line with international standards and introducing legislative procedures and tools for investigating cybercrime and gathering electronic evidence were also priorities under the previous Neighbourhood Partnership. In continuation of this initiative, a national working group consisting of representatives of all stakeholders will be set up and follow-up meetings will be organised to support the Tunisian authorities in the process of implementing the standard procedures.

During the period 2022-2025, the Neighbourhood Partnership will continue to support the completion of the accession process to the Budapest Convention and the implementation of cybercrime legislation in Tunisia. To this end, it is also planned to finalise the course and improve the knowledge of Tunisian judges and prosecutors regarding cybercrime and electronic evidence. Particular attention will be paid to building the capacities of the security forces in the fight against cybercrime.

Overall objective: to combat cybercrime through co-ordinated action in co-operation with European States and in the Southern Mediterranean region

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** Tunisia is supported in the process of acceding to the Budapest Convention and helped to complete and effectively implement the revision of the national legislative framework in this area.
- **Expected outcome 2:** The dialogue between criminal justice and the cybersecurity sector, including the private sector, is strengthened.
- **Expected outcome 3:** Standard operating procedures for law enforcement and first responders with regard to the collection and analysis of electronic evidence are approved and implemented.
- **Expected outcome 4:** Stakeholders' capacities for combating cybercrime and handling electronic evidence are enhanced, with the focus on the judiciary and law enforcement officers.

Main national partners: *Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Migration and Tunisians Abroad, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Communication Technologies and the Digital Economy, other relevant sectoral ministries, Higher Institute of the Judiciary (ISM), National Authority for the Protection of Personal Data (INPDP), Directorate General of National Security (DGSN), Directorate General of Territorial Surveillance (DGST), National Guard and Forensic Medicine Laboratory.*

Combating the counterfeiting of medical products

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CM) invited Tunisia to accede to the Council of Europe Convention on the counterfeiting of medical products and similar crimes involving threats to public health (MEDICRIME Convention) in February 2018.

The situation linked to the health crisis that has seriously affected Tunisia since March 2020 has made it all the more a priority to accede to this convention, which has been the subject of discussions with Council of Europe experts concerning its content, the accession procedure and monitoring activities. In view of the renewed interest expressed by Tunisia, efforts to raise awareness of the benefits and challenges associated with the ratification of this instrument will continue under the new Neighbourhood Partnership.

Overall objective: to combat the counterfeiting of medical products

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** Tunisia is supported in the process of accession to the MEDICRIME Convention and helped to complete and effectively implement the revision of the national legislative framework in this area.

- **Expected outcome 2:** The skills of stakeholders in combating the counterfeiting of medical products and other similar offences are enhanced with the focus on the judiciary and law enforcement officers.
- **Expected outcome 3:** The dialogue between criminal justice and law enforcement agencies is strengthened through a 24/7 network to combat such illegal activities and promote international co-operation in criminal matters.

Main national partners: Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Interior, parliament, civil society.

Combating offences relating to cultural property

The issue of cultural property offences is a matter of concern in many countries around the world. According to some estimates, the illicit trade in cultural objects is one of the most profitable forms of transnational organised crime and generates billions of dollars in revenue. The black market in antiquities can end up financing corruption, terrorism and violence and include tax offences, money laundering, document forgery, etc. The removal of cultural and archaeological objects from their place or country of origin is an act against national identity and collective memory and involves the destruction of historical knowledge for all of humanity.

Illicit trafficking in cultural property has a significant impact on culture and tourism. Many countries have experienced the theft of archaeological finds, parts of monuments or pieces from collections that have then been transported to other countries. One of the main causes of the international illicit trade in cultural objects is the lack of transparency, monitoring and control – criminal laws provide for light penalties and, as a result, have little deterrent effect and are not harmonised owing to the incorrect or only partial implementation of existing international legal instruments. Consequently, the lack of an international instrument making cultural property offences subject to the criminal law increases the risk of the destruction of, damage to and trafficking in cultural property and the financing of corruption, terrorism, violence and other crimes.

Support can be given to the relevant authorities in Tunisia to promote understanding of the Nicosia Convention in this area in order to combat organised crime groups.

Overall objective: to combat offences relating to cultural property

- **Expected outcome:** The stakeholders concerned are made more aware of the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property (Nicosia Convention), in particular through the sharing of experience on these matters.

Main national partners: Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, Assembly of People's Representatives, civil society.

Combating corruption, money laundering and terrorism

Combating corruption

In November 2017, Tunisia was the first Arab country to be invited by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CM) to join the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO). This move reflects the country's desire to deepen the process of convergence of anti-corruption standards and do more to embrace international obligations in this area. The Council of Europe has continued supporting the efforts of the Tunisian Government and the National Anti-Corruption Authority (INLUCC) in the process of accession to GRECO. Ratification is expected to take place under the present Neighbourhood Partnership, as issues relating to both the impact of accession to this Enlarged Agreement and to the *modus operandi* have been clarified and Tunisia has been able to assess, at national level, the implications and benefits of accession.

The adoption of the institutional law establishing the Independent Constitutional Body for Good Governance and the Fight against Corruption (IBOGOLUCC) by the Assembly of People's Representatives (ARP) on 24 August 2017 marked an important step forward in consolidating the institutional framework for combating corruption in the country. The Council of Europe supported the legislative transition from the INLUCC³⁶, established in 2011, to the new authority but this constitutional body has not yet been established owing to the lack of agreement within the ARP on the election of its members.

Through co-operation projects, the Neighbourhood Partnership has supported Tunisia in its efforts to gradually harmonise its anti-corruption and anti-money laundering legislation. In addition to raising awareness of European and international standards, which triggered the GRECO accession process, work has focused on building the capacities of the INLUCC to enable it to exercise its powers independently and more effectively.

The issues addressed, which have enabled Tunisia to benefit from the Council of Europe's expertise, including through specialised training, include corruption proofing and the control of corruption risks when legislation is drafted or revised, as well as illicit enrichment and the management of conflicts of interest in the public sector. Concrete INLUCC initiatives resulting from Council of Europe support include the development of an online training course on basic anti-corruption concepts for Tunisian civil servants, the preparation of a manual for practitioners on illicit enrichment and the development of a guide on the management of conflicts of interest together with an educational video and awareness-raising spots, and the development of a methodology on the corruption proofing of legislation. This partnership will continue to focus on these areas and further explore co-operation to build the capacities of relevant professionals with regard to the management of corruption risks.

As in other areas, effectively combating corruption requires inter-institutional co-operation involving all relevant national players, so this Neighbourhood Partnership will continue to support the anti-corruption authority efforts to set up appropriate and effective internal co-ordination mechanisms at national level. It is also essential to establish lasting and effective international co-operation. Tunisia's accession to the Šibenik Network of Corruption Prevention Agencies (NCPA) was an important step in this respect.

³⁶ In the context of developments in Tunisia since 25 July 2021, the National Anti-Corruption Authority was closed on 20 August 2021 by decision of the minister responsible for matters relating to the interior.

As it is essential to raise the general public's awareness to fight the scourge of corruption, the anti-corruption authority launched Radio Nazaha ("Integrity") in December 2019, with Council of Europe support, in order to draw attention to anti-corruption issues and initiatives in Tunisia³⁷. This is the first dedicated radio station and it now broadcasts daily. In order to teach future generations about combating corruption, awareness-raising programmes will be specifically targeted at young people.

The INLUCC had launched an extensive citizen consultation on the National Strategy for Good Governance and the Fight against Corruption. The survey will enable it to fine-tune the Strategy and take steps to better address citizens' concerns.

The authorities responsible for preventing and combating corruption will have to be helped under this Neighbourhood Partnership to enhance their capacities, their role and their efforts at co-ordination in this area in accordance with the strategic priorities agreed.

Money laundering and the fight against terrorism

Tunisia has made significant efforts and remains committed to reinforcing its system for preventing and combating money laundering and terrorist financing (AML/CTT system). This partnership will also provide expertise and technical assistance on tightening up the effectiveness and the compliance of the AML/CTT framework with the requirements of the standards of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and its monitoring activities.

The Council of Europe's expertise may indeed prove useful for Tunisia and will be drawn on in the case of priority measures under this partnership concerning the introduction of suitable tools, building the capacities of members of the specialised units to analyse data and any risks emerging in this area, and enhancing the skills of professionals to respond to the FATF Recommendations.

Priority areas where co-operation and assistance should be concentrated are the strengthening of relevant preventive measures and the oversight of reporting entities, improving the transparency of beneficial owners, the framework for preventing and prosecuting terrorist financing as well as targeted financial sanctions for terrorist financing.

Overall objective: to prevent and combat corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** Tunisia is supported in the process of accession to GRECO and the revision and effective implementation of the national legislative framework for preventing and combating corruption;
- **Expected outcome 2:** The capacities of the authorities responsible for preventing and combating corruption, including of law enforcement officials are strengthened through priority targeted measures.
- **Expected outcome 3:** More effective inter-institutional co-operation is promoted at national level with regard to preventing and combating economic crime;
- **Expected outcome 4:** The relevant authorities' abilities to prevent and combat money laundering and terrorist financing , including of law enforcement officials ,are further strengthened.

³⁷ Since the closure of the INLUCC on 20 August 2021, Radio Nazaha has not broadcasted.

Main national partners: *anti-corruption authority, Presidency of the Government, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Finance, Tunisian Financial Analysis Commission (CTAF), private sector, civil society.*

International Co-operation Group on drugs and addictions (Pompidou Group)

Tunisia was invited by the Committee of Ministers of Council of Europe (CM) to join the International Co-operation Group on drugs and addictions (Pompidou Group) in December 2017. Membership will pave the way for increased co-operation on the promotion of public health and the implementation of a human rights compliant drugs policy.

Tunisia has chaired the Pompidou Group's Mediterranean network for co-operation on drugs and addictions (MedNET) for two years, since November 2019, and has been a member since its creation in 2006.

Since 2011, the Faculty of Medicine in Tunis has benefited from the Pompidou Group's support and expertise through the organisation of training sessions in addictology for general practitioners, school doctors, university doctors, doctors working at detention centres, psychiatry students, psychiatrists and psychologists. The degree in addictology also includes a module on prevention and the care and treatment of women drug users. Co-operation with the Tunisian Addictology Association (STADT) has also been strengthened since the end of 2020 through the organisation by a Paris-based agency of online training sessions on motivational interviewing for psychiatrists and psychologists. The aim of this initiative is to improve the therapist-patient relationship through patient support, and it has become essential in the care provision process.

As a member of the Committee of the Mediterranean School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (MedSPAD), Tunisia benefits from the expertise of a Euro-Mediterranean network to further improve its expertise in gathering and analysing data and interpreting the results, as well as, ultimately, using the latter in national prevention policies, including the gender dimension and the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The period 2022-2025 will enable the co-operation in this area to be continued, especially through the MedNET network and the MedSPAD Committee, by building the capacities of health professionals in the fight against drug abuse and other addictive substances.

Overall objective: to strengthen the human rights approach in addiction policies

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** Tunisia is supported in the process of joining the Pompidou Group, and its legislative framework is revised to take into account the Pompidou Group's remit to make human rights the focus of drug policies;
- **Expected outcome 2:** The national drugs and addiction strategy is implemented with MedNET and Pompidou Group support;
- **Expected outcome 3:** Tunisia participates in the stakeholder survey on the use of MedSPAD/ESPAD surveys in drawing up prevention policies.

Main national partners: *Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Finance (Customs), parliament, doctors and health professionals, faculties of medicine, civil society.*

3.3 DEMOCRACY

The European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission)'s support for the National Constituent Assembly (ANC) in the drafting of the 2014 Constitution and the preparation of a legal opinion on the final draft Constitution of the Republic of Tunisia in October 2013³⁸ marked a key moment in the Council of Europe's support for the advancement of democracy in the country. Subsequent collaboration with the legislative instance has continued in various forms, especially with a view to raising awareness of certain Council of Europe standards among its members. However, the political context characterised by successive electoral processes, fragmentation and instability has been an obstacle to continuous and sustainable support for the ARP, which is now necessary for the consolidation of the reforms initiated by Tunisia and will thus constitute one of the present Neighbourhood Partnership's main objectives.

The Council of Europe has also supported reforms aimed at strengthening local democracy in Tunisia, through the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress). This support has in particular included assistance with the development of a legislative framework in line with European standards as well as help with the first local elections, and it culminated in Tunisia being granted Partner for Local Democracy status with the Congress.

Civil society in Tunisia is very active and has played a key role since the revolution as a partner in the country's democratic transition. The Neighbourhood Partnership has supported this involvement through unique initiatives such as the creation of the Tunis School of Politics (TSoP), which has enabled young people to be taught European values since 2013, and the Lisbon Forum, which brings together representatives of the "quadrilogue"³⁹ every year to hold exchanges of views on issues of common interest and agree on action agendas that include civil society. In addition, representatives of Tunisian civil society are systematically involved in co-operation projects (see Part IV, section 4.1).

³⁸ [https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2013\)032-e](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2013)032-e)

³⁹ The unique "quadrilogue" approach established by the North-South Centre brings together Government representatives, parliamentarians, regional and local representatives and representatives of civil society and promotes regular exchanges between them.

This Neighbourhood Partnership will continue efforts to raise awareness and involve civil society, with a particular focus on the new generations, whose ownership of European values remains crucial for the success of the democratic reforms.

This work will contribute to achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goals 4,⁴⁰ 5,⁴¹ 11⁴² and 16.⁴³

3.3.1 LOCAL AND REGIONAL DEMOCRACY

In recent years, Tunisia has moved towards decentralisation in accordance with Chapter VII of the 2014 Constitution, which provides for decentralisation throughout the country and, consequently, the reorganisation of the country's administration. Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress) has played an important role in this process and contributed to an example of good co-ordination between international partners, in particular by providing the authorities with its expertise in the drafting of the Code of Local Authorities, which is one of the main steps towards decentralisation and was adopted in April 2018. The first municipal elections since the revolution were held in May 2018.

In October 2019, Tunisia was granted Partner for Local Democracy status, which enables a Tunisian delegation to participate regularly in sessions of the Congress and meetings of its committees, as well as engage in exchanges of views with their European and Moroccan colleagues in the context of the Congress's South-Med Partnership.

In addition to the provision of support on legislative issues, co-operation between the Council of Europe and Tunisia has aimed to build the capacity of local elected officials, in particular through the National Federation of Tunisian Municipalities (FNCT), which plays a key role in supporting and representing local authorities. With Neighbourhood Partnership support, the FNCT has been able to devote more resources to advocacy, communication and relations with its members. Its political leadership has been strengthened following the successful FNCT General Assembly in September 2020, at which a new statute was adopted, and its president and new political bodies were elected. Both developments have helped to strengthen the FNCT's legitimacy in the eyes of the Government and local authorities, as well as its effectiveness in its role as a provider of services for local elected representatives. With the support of the Congress, the FNCT launched a broad consultation of local councillors and their administrations to take stock of decentralisation as seen by the municipalities, and this identified a number of gaps, challenges and priorities. The results of this consultation served as a basis for dialogue with central government. The strengthening of the local authorities and the consideration of their interests is a positive development from the point of view of creating a platform for dialogue and consultation that involves the Government, local authorities and their representative association.

In this context, efforts have been made to promote inclusive democracy and the meaningful participation of women and young people in local affairs – principles enshrined in the 2014 Constitution and the Code of Local Authorities – as well as youth representation in local government.

⁴⁰ Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

⁴¹ Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

⁴² Goal 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

⁴³ Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

A training manual on conflict prevention at the local level between the municipal council (mayors and councillors) and all relevant stakeholders (municipal administration, citizens, civil society, businesses, media, trade unions) was completed in 2020, in partnership with the Centre for Training and Decentralisation Support (CFAD). This tool will help prevent internal and external conflicts within municipalities and thus limit the risks of resignations, instability and malfunctions within local councils.

In addition, the promotion of public ethics and the fight against corruption at local level have been identified as priorities for this co-operation. In this connection, co-operation with the National Anti-Corruption Authority (INLUCC) had been initiated to raise awareness among local councillors and share with them the principles of good governance. The Tunisian representatives have expressed an interest in developing training courses based on the Congress's recommendations on public ethics, open government and combating corruption.

The consultations with the High Authority of Local Finance, which is responsible for contributing to the examination and consolidation of local finances, have identified priority measures that will assist the national efforts to strengthen and ensure the sustainability of the financing of Tunisian local authorities.

This Neighbourhood Partnership will give further attention to the above-mentioned issues already initiated. It will aim to complement the legislative framework, including the implementing provisions of the Code of Local Authorities, and provide assistance for implementing the decentralisation strategy and carrying out regional decentralisation, taking as a benchmark the Congress's work in this area. For example, the transfer of responsibilities for vocational training to the regions, a matter under discussion in Tunisia, could be discussed in connection with sharing good practices on the basis of certain member States' experiences of increasing vocational training in response to high unemployment rates.

Overall objective: to support the decentralisation process, increased involvement of local and, where appropriate, regional authorities, and the development of mechanisms for citizen participation at local and regional levels

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** The decentralisation process continues, including at regional level, in line with European standards and following an inclusive approach targeting women and young people;
- **Expected outcome 2:** The capacities of local and regional elected representatives are strengthened through training programmes set up by various players, notably the FNCT and CFAD, enabling them to become recognised partners in the dialogue with the central authorities;
- **Expected outcome 3:** Tunisian authorities, at both central and local levels, have sound understanding of European best practices of good democratic governance and are able to apply modern methods of human resource management and responsible local financial management.

Main national partners: Local authorities, Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment, Ministry for Women, the Family and Senior Citizens, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Youth, Sport and Vocational Integration, Authority for Forward Planning and Support for the Decentralisation Process (IPAPD), National Federation of Tunisian Municipalities (FNCT), Centre for Training and Decentralisation Support (CFAD), parliament, anti-corruption authority, Higher Independent Authority for Elections (ISIE), High Authority of Local Finance, media, civil society.

3.3.2 DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Co-operation with the parliament

The Assembly of People's Representatives (ARP) was a key player in the present Neighbourhood Partnership's areas of action, and it is hoped that in the future, the legislative institution will remain as important. In addition to playing a key role in the adoption of legislative frameworks relating to the authorities as well as in setting up those authorities and appointing members of some of their councils, in 2021 it organised exchanges of views with their chairs to discuss their operation and the reforms underway.

The collaboration between the Council of Europe and the National Constituent Assembly (ANC) enabled the Venice Commission to support the drafting of the 2014 Constitution and subsequently made it possible for the ARP to consult the Council of Europe on the implementation of constitutional provisions and the drafting of various laws. In addition, the ARP regularly participates in the plenary sessions of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE).

This Neighbourhood Partnership will seek to further strengthen the relationship between the Council of Europe and the parliament on several levels, including facilitating exchanges with the PACE, which regularly invites members of the parliament to its plenary sessions by virtue of the 2008 PACE resolution on co-operation with the Maghreb countries. This co-operation also takes place with the parliamentary administration, based on the successful work of the parliaments of member States to support, among other things, capacity building for certain parliamentary committees and to make the parliament more open towards civil society, including in the context of the Open Parliament initiatives. This collaboration should lead to the development of more advanced co-operation between the ARP and the PACE within the scope of the possibilities provided for by the PACE statute, either through the Partnership for Democracy status or through other arrangements.

This enhanced co-operation with the ARP will also aim to promote and consolidate the common legal area. Increased collaboration between the ARP and the Venice Commission is thus called for in the field of legislation.

Overall objective: to strengthen the co-operation of the Venice Commission and the PACE with the parliament

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** Members of parliament are made more aware of European standards, thus facilitating the extension and consolidation of the common legal area;
- **Expected outcome 2:** The operation of the parliamentary administration and some parliamentary committees are given support.

Main national partners: *parliament, especially committees in charge of legislative matters, of external relations and of rights and freedoms, constitutional and independent bodies.*

3.3.3 DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION

Since the 2011 revolution, the voluntary sector in Tunisia has played a key role as a partner for democratic change. Like its predecessors, this Neighbourhood Partnership pays special attention to collaboration with civil society, emphasising the need to attach great importance to the consolidation of the partnership between the various public sector, private sector and civil society players in order to promote human rights, the rule of law and democracy in Tunisia.

The involvement of civil society organisations is vital with a view to promoting democratic participation. Actions carried out through the Council of Europe's European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre) and the Tunis School of Politics (TSoP) contribute to this objective. In addition, several of the measures described in this document take into account the particular situation of young people, in a country where 15-29-year-olds make up about a third of the total population. Human rights education for young people remains a priority for Tunisia and for the Council of Europe in order to ensure the success and sustainability of the ongoing democratic reforms.

Education for democracy

Education plays a key role in promoting the fundamental values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law, as well as in preventing human rights violations. It is also a means of combating the rise of violence, racism, extremism, xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance. Tunisia is committed to these values through the ongoing reforms and wishes to ensure they are taken on board as widely as possible at all levels, with the emphasis on the education of children and young people. In this context, the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education serves as a basis for everyone engaged in activities relating to citizenship and human rights education. Its implementation encourages the adoption of measures in this area, the dissemination of good practices and improvements in the quality of education. The Reference Framework of Competences for a Democratic Culture (RFCDC) is also a useful tool in this connection.

Similarly, the North-South Centre, through its expertise on intercultural dialogue and learning and taking as a benchmark the RFCDC and its explicit links to global challenges, will continue to build the capacities of formal and non-formal sector educators, who have, through snowballing, raised public awareness of human rights and the need to refrain from any discrimination, hate speech or xenophobia, while promoting tolerance and equality.

Under the Neighbourhood Partnership, the Council of Europe will begin working with the Ministry of Education to build the capacities of education professionals to teach the culture of human rights and democratic citizenship. The Council of Europe will also contribute to the quality of education in Tunisia by assisting the relevant authorities in applying the principles of ethics, transparency and integrity in educational policies and practice.

Overall objective: to promote education for democratic citizenship and human rights education

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** The staff of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Vocational Integration have increased capacities for developing and implementing the political framework and methodological guidelines on human rights and democratic citizenship, in accordance with the standards of the Council of Europe;
- **Expected outcome 2:** Tunisia's education policy-makers have better understanding of the Council of Europe's principles with regard to ethics, transparency and integrity in education;
- **Expected outcome 3:** Head teachers, teachers (formal and non-formal sector) and students in Tunisia's pilot schools have better understanding of the principles of democratic school governance.

Main national partners: *Ministry of Education, Ministry for Women, the Family, Children and Senior Citizens, Ministry of Youth, Sport and Vocational Integration, future Authority for Sustainable Development and the Rights of Future Generations, civil society.*

Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre)

Tunisia has been a member of the Council of Europe's European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre) since 2016. Over the years, various Tunisian actors have actively contributed to the activities of the North-South Centre and the Centre has developed close cooperation and relations with civil society actors in Tunisia in its three priority areas of action:

- *Global citizenship education:* through its participation in the different editions of the Mediterranean University on Youth and Global Citizenship (MedUni), which has been taking place in Tunisia since its first pilot edition in 2012. Since the health crisis linked to Covid-19, a Meta-University combining MedUni and the University on Youth and Development has been virtually created. In this framework, the Centre contributes to the capacity building of civil society actors, particularly young people and youth organisations, who are at the centre of the current vision of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- *Youth cooperation:* Tunisian youth and civil society organisations are regularly involved in the North-South Centre's regional and international networking initiatives, including the annual Lisbon Forum, which promotes exchanges between governments, parliaments, local and regional authorities and civil society on issues such as civic engagement and democratic participation. But also through its participation in the different editions of the University on Youth and Development and in the multilateral initiatives implemented in the framework of the projects "Euro-Mediterranean Youth Cooperation" and "Global Youth - Interregional Cooperation for Youth Participation and Global Citizenship".

- *Women's empowerment*: through its participation in various multilateral initiatives implemented by the North-South Centre in the framework of the women's empowerment process covering issues such as political participation, protection of women and girls victims of violence or the fight against discrimination against women and girls. It is also worth mentioning that the 2019 North-South Prize, which rewards two people each year for their exceptional defence of human rights and pluralist democracy, was awarded to Nabila Hamza, a Tunisian sociologist, feminist activist and expert in gender issues, social development and good governance.

As a platform for intercultural dialogue with a mission to raise awareness of inequalities, the North-South Centre contributes to the fight against intersectional forms of discrimination against women and girls, by deconstructing prejudices, stereotypes and misrepresentations. To this end, an awareness-raising course on gender equality and the media has been set up for Tunisian journalists.

In the same spirit, the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, through activities based on dialogue and intercultural learning, has contributed to building the capacity of members of Tunisian civil society organisations, as well as educators from the formal and non-formal sectors, who, through multiplication, have raised awareness of human rights and the need to refrain from discrimination, hate speech and xenophobia, while promoting tolerance and equality.

Within the framework of this Neighbourhood Partnership, the North-South Centre will build on these relationships and the progress made so far, in order to continue to support civil society actors in Tunisia by strengthening their capacity to participate in Tunisia's public and political life.

School of Politics, youth

The capacities of young Tunisian leaders involved in the dynamics of democratic and civic development have been strengthened through the Council of Europe's continuous support since 2013 for the courses run by the Tunisian School of Politics (TSoP), which have helped to build the capacities and skills of young representatives of civil society organisations and political parties on such issues as the democratic transition, the rule of law, the protection of rights and freedoms and inter-association communication. The Council of Europe will continue to encourage the participation of Tunisian TSoP students in networking opportunities and exchanges of good practice with peers from the Southern Mediterranean region by supporting the organisation of regional seminars and their participation in the World Democracy Forum.

This Neighbourhood Partnership will pay special attention to the situation of young people in Tunisia through various projects. In addition to specific initiatives such as the development of tools adapted to the situation of minors in detention, education for democratic citizenship, North-South Centre measures in support of young people and the commitment to the TSoP, the Council of Europe will work to combat discriminatory approaches among young Tunisians, with the emphasis on combating hate speech.

Overall objective: to promote human rights education and the participation of civil society stakeholders, in particular young people and women, in public and political life

Expected outcomes:

- **Expected outcome 1:** The capacities of relevant civil society stakeholders are strengthened in line with European standards on the basis of tools developed by the Council of Europe and made available to them.
- **Expected outcome 2:** Human rights education is strengthened, particularly among young people, who are thus better able to play an active role in defending human rights, the rule of law and democracy.
- **Expected outcome 3:** Young people are made more aware of hate speech through the tools of the Council of Europe.

Main national partners: *Tunis School of Politics, civil society, youth organisations, Ministry of Youth, Sport and Vocational Integration, Tunisian National Youth Observatory.*

PART IV - IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 METHODOLOGY

The overall co-ordination of technical co-operation carried out by the Council of Europe falls within the remit of the Office of the Directorate General of Programmes (ODGP) which steers programming of and fund-raising for co-operation actions whilst ensuring the proper functioning of Council of Europe Offices in the field.

The Neighbourhood Partnership projects are implemented by the Council of Europe's major administrative entity responsible for the relevant area of expertise. In line with the Organisation's decentralised process of technical assistance and co-operation, the Council of Europe's Tunisia office, based in Tunis, plays a key role in co-ordinating and supporting the implementation of projects in the field. As of 12 October 2021, 23 people were working for that office, which is also responsible for the co-ordination of several regional programmes implemented in the Southern Mediterranean.

The implementation of Neighbourhood Partnership projects involves, as necessary, needs assessments, legislative expertise, capacity-building, awareness-raising, peer-to-peer reviews and gender analyses. Implementation methodology, in line with the **Council of Europe Project Management Methodology** (PMM), aims to reinforce ownership by national stakeholders and to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes. The PMM, which became mandatory as of 2017, helps enhance the quality of project implementation in terms of planning and monitoring, cost efficiency and effectiveness. It allows also improved risk assessment, incorporation of a human rights approach and greater attention to the gender dimension.

In addition, the co-operation designed by the Council of Europe follows an "inter-institutional approach", which enables the different Council of Europe bodies and institutions to target governmental stakeholders, parliaments, civil society, independent governance bodies such as the Ombudsman's Office, and local and regional authorities, in order to generate unique leverage for comprehensive, inclusive, successful and lasting reforms.

The Council of Europe applies a human rights approach at all levels and stages of its activities. Its *acquis*, including Council of Europe legal instruments and institutions, combined with the principles of participation and inclusion (including gender balanced participation and engagement with civil society), equality and non-discrimination, accountability, and transparency and access to information, brings further added value to the Council of Europe activities. The Council of Europe's Human Rights Approach Practical Guide for Co-operation Projects is expected to contribute to improved application of a human rights approach in project management and co-operation activities.

As a component of this human rights approach, the Council of Europe emphasises gender mainstreaming throughout its project activities in line with its Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023. Tunisian representatives have participated in the work of the Gender Equality Commission (GEC) and in regional events organised by the Council of Europe, in particular on women's participation in public life. The Council of Europe's Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit for Co-operation Projects should help to strengthen the implementation of gender mainstreaming in co-operation activities within the Organisation and also by national partners and other stakeholders. This approach to gender mainstreaming will be set out in detail when the Neighbourhood Partnership activities are developed. At this stage, the approach will be applied to activities irrespective of the area of co-operation. For

example, standards relating to gender equality and women's rights will be taken into account when various national laws and regulations are revised in the light of European standards. The issue of gender equality will also be included in training activities and programmes and the gender impact will be analysed when designing and implementing projects. In addition to gender mainstreaming, specific measures will be envisaged to promote gender equality.

Similarly, the Council of Europe promotes the active participation of civil society in project activities in accordance with the Guidelines on civil society organisations' participation in Council of Europe's co-operation activities.

This Neighbourhood Partnership with Tunisia will continue to address the specific needs of vulnerable people through the implementation of projects to strengthen their rights and improve their living conditions. These projects will target, inter alia, women, children and young people and help to combat discrimination and hate speech, as well as to promote integration and diversity, especially through education. Particular attention will be paid to ensuring the cross-cutting nature of the inclusion by providing for balanced gender participation and by targeting all regions of the country.

In addition, the participation of civil society will be ensured by various means throughout the Neighbourhood Partnership, with the aim of strengthening its role in the country by promoting dialogue between it and the authorities and developing its capacities. Accordingly, it is planned, for example, to involve civil society stakeholders in the relevant activities of certain projects and to implement projects that specifically target them.

The Organisation is committed to protecting children from harm and ensuring that children's right to protection is fully realised in line with its Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2022-2027. The scope of the existing Child Safeguarding policy is being extended and the reporting mechanism is being revised with a view to bringing it in line with the Council of Europe Speak Up Policy.

Another cross-cutting dimension to be mentioned is the protection of the climate and the environment. Development co-operation for human rights, the rule of law and democracy makes an inherent contribution to the resolution of many political, legal and social issues that aggravate climate change. The Council of Europe has carried out a simplified environmental assessment to help highlight the main opportunities for positive impacts and the risks of environmental vulnerabilities, as well as any follow-up actions. Preliminary conclusions have shown that Council of Europe co-operation has an indirect positive impact on the environment through its support to countries in strengthening their good governance structures and thus enabling them to deal more effectively with their environmental challenges and goals. Nonetheless, there is still a need for the Council of Europe co-operation sector to increase its focus towards climate-neutral technical assistance. Follow-up steps are now being discussed within the Organisation.

This Neighbourhood Partnership also takes into account the lessons learned from the implementation of the co-operation established since 2012 with Tunisia, and relevant recommendations from the external evaluation of the Neighbourhood partnership 2018-2021:

- The Neighbourhood Partnerships have helped to reaffirm the relationship of trust between the Council of Europe and the Tunisian authorities based on the results obtained through co-operation and political dialogue since 2012.

- The Council of Europe's technical support is essential in Tunisia's efforts to honour its commitments after acceding to Council of Europe conventions in order to ensure the compliance of national legislation with the standards deriving from them, as well as their implementation at national level.
- The use of monitoring mechanism methodologies has provided a solid basis for the design and implementation of measures and has prepared the ground for future accession to certain Council of Europe instruments, such as the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO).
- Capacity-building activities, including training, help to ensure that European standards are taken on board. The Tunisian partners have expressed a growing interest in using and adapting to the Tunisian context Council of Europe methodologies and tools, such as those developed by the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) or by the European Human Rights Training Programme for Legal Professionals (HELP).
- Co-ordination and the complementarity of measures with those of other national and international partners are important to strengthen the implementation of common objectives, especially in Tunisia, where many international agencies have a presence.
- The strengthening of peer exchanges at regional level, especially through networks set up by the Council of Europe, such as the University for Democracy (UniDem Med),⁴⁴ with the aim of supporting administrative reforms, the activities of the joint CoE/EU South Programme and the interregional initiatives of the Council of Europe's European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre), has proved useful both in raising awareness of Council of Europe standards among Tunisian stakeholders in many of the partnership's areas of action and in developing responses to common challenges, such as combating violence against women and girls and the fight against corruption.
- The Council of Europe's presence in Tunisia, through its office, is crucial to ensure the relevance and coherence of the support provided and the regular dialogue with the beneficiaries and national partners.

During the period of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Neighbourhood Partnership's flexibility enabled working methods and plans to be adapted, and the Council of Europe was able to respond positively to the specific requests of its Tunisian partners to address the pandemic while complying with the Partnership's objectives. **The following initiatives were carried out:**

- The use of the HELP online platform by Tunisian beneficiaries and the general public was encouraged in order to contribute to capacity-building efforts during the pandemic. Increasing the availability of Council of Europe resources in Arabic and developing communication tools such as awareness-raising videos were important ways of helping to achieve the Neighbourhood Partnership objectives in the context of the pandemic.
- Support continued for national stakeholders' efforts to draw the attention of target groups, especially the general public and presumed victims, to domestic, sexual and gender-based violence, against a background of a rising number of cases of violence and the need to protect victims in connection with the lockdown measures in place.
- Discussions were held and experience was shared to promote the exchange of good practices between the Tunisian partners and their European counterparts on various issues related to the pandemic, especially possible local and regional responses, the holding of remote trials and the monitoring of places of deprivation of liberty in times of crisis.

⁴⁴ Two regional UniDem Med seminars were held online in October and December 2020, with the participation of 70 and 170 officials from the region respectively for three days each.

- Support for the continuity of the work of specific national players, especially the Ministry of Justice and 15 community radio stations, in the context of the pandemic and the national measures introduced, especially through the provision of equipment to facilitate remote working.
- Financial assistance to support selected national partners in their efforts to respond to the health crisis. For example, a grant to the National Authority for the Prevention of Torture (INPT) helped equip two major prisons in Tunisia with disinfection tunnels to limit the spread of the virus there. Similarly, a grant to the Amal Association for Families and Children helped to boost the assistance available for trafficked women during the lockdown, especially pregnant women and those with children.

Due to the nature of its mandate, the Council of Europe has to operate at times in complex and unstable environments which expose it to risks. The analysis of risks relevant to the implementation of the Neighbourhood Partnership as well as possible mitigation strategies are identified in Appendix II of the present Neighbourhood Partnership on the basis of the Council of Europe Risk Management Guidelines and its Risk Management Policy approved in June 2016. All projects implemented within the Neighbourhood Partnership have their own risk assessment and mitigation strategies. In 2021, a risk management exercise was launched by ODGP to feed into the Organisational Risk Register, which is periodically brought to the attention of the Secretary General and the Senior Management Group. Internal audit, external audit and the Oversight Advisory Committee will be analysing the results.

4.2 CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Neighbourhood Partnership will support the Tunisian authorities' efforts to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular Goals 3, 4, 5, 8, 11 and 16.

Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Action to strengthen the human rights approach to policies on drugs and addictive behaviours contributes directly to achieving SDG 3, in particular target 5.⁴⁵ In addition, the promotion of Tunisia's implementation of European standards in the fight against the counterfeiting of medical products, especially through the invitation to accede to the Council of Europe Convention on counterfeiting of medical products and similar crimes involving threats to public health (MEDICRIME Convention) and the Council of Europe's help to complete this process and the revision of the national legislative framework in this area, contributes to the protection of public health and to combating organised crime in this area.

Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

One of the Neighbourhood Partnership's objectives is to strengthen the capacities of legal professionals, public institutions and members of civil society to implement human rights in their daily work, which will contribute directly to achieving SDG 4, target 7.⁴⁶ To this end, the provision of the methodology and thematic courses developed by the European Human Rights Training Programme for Legal Professionals (HELP), in particular, will contribute to this effort, as will the various technical and tailor-made training

⁴⁵ SDG 3, target 5: "Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol".

⁴⁶ SDG 4, target 7: "By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development".

activities planned in the different areas covered by the Partnership. Emphasis will also be placed on education for democratic citizenship and human rights education by encouraging a democratic school culture, especially by building the capacities of the players concerned in terms of ethics, transparency and integrity. The interregional measures implemented by the Council of Europe's European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre) and the direct support provided to the Tunis School of Politics (TSoP) will help, in particular, to build the capacities of young people and civil society and thus to achieve SDG 4.

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

The Neighbourhood Partnership with Tunisia will contribute to SDG 5, especially targets 1⁴⁷ and 2.⁴⁸ This will be achieved in a cross-cutting way through the implementation of a human rights approach with the emphasis on gender mainstreaming throughout the life cycle of the projects,⁴⁹ as well as through specific projects in the fields of preventing and combating violence against women, human trafficking and the protection of children's rights.

A number of Council of Europe instruments, including the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) and the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention), aim to promote gender equality and combat violence against women and children. Tunisia already acceded to the Lanzarote Convention in October 2019 and was invited to accede to the Istanbul Convention in April 2020. The process of acceding to the latter will be supported by the Council of Europe, as will strengthening the legislative and institutional frameworks and structures for the protection of children's rights and bringing them into line with the provisions of the Lanzarote Convention.

In general, the technical co-operation implemented in these areas will take inspiration from the guiding principles of these two conventions in order to contribute to awareness and implementation of these standards at national level. The support given to the INLTP in preventing and combating human trafficking is contributing to the more effective protection of women and girls from sexual exploitation and violence.

The Council of Europe will help to further increase the use and dissemination of the appropriate Council of Europe tools and methodologies, such as the relevant HELP thematic courses, in particular on combating violence against women and domestic violence and human trafficking, of which the contextualisation for Tunisia was completed under the previous Partnership. In the area of promoting freedom of expression and media pluralism, public and media awareness will be raised regarding the issue and the measures taken to combat violence against women.

In addition, the ability of media professionals and representatives of journalists' unions to combat gender stereotypes in the media and improve media coverage of gender-based violence will be enhanced. Support will be given to the development of mechanisms to promote women's civic participation at all levels in the context of strengthening the democratic process in Tunisia, in particular through co-operation with the Congress. The various multilateral initiatives implemented by the North-South Centre covering such issues as political participation, the protection of women and girls

⁴⁷ SDG 5, target 1: "End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere".

⁴⁸ SDG 5, target 2: "Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation".

⁴⁹ See Part 4.1 Methodology.

who are victims of violence and combating discrimination against women and girls will strengthen the Partnership's contribution to SDG 5.

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Combating human trafficking is one of the policy areas covered by the Neighbourhood Partnership. Tunisia was invited to accede to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings in 2018 and the Council of Europe will continue to support the completion of the ongoing accession process. In addition, helping the country in its efforts to prevent and combat human trafficking and put the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims into operation will directly contribute to achieving SDG 8, target 7.⁵⁰ It will be crucial in this process to build the capacities of the various national players involved and promote networking and regional co-operation to ensure co-ordinated action.

Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

The Neighbourhood Partnership's contribution to combating discrimination and hate speech will support the Tunisian authorities' efforts to achieve SDG 10, target 3.⁵¹ By improving the ability of legal professionals to effectively and systematically apply standards of fundamental rights in their daily work, the HELP programme enables them to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to promote appropriate anti-discrimination legislation, policies and measures. The implementation of measures to strengthen the rights of vulnerable people and improve their living conditions, as well as to promote integration and diversity at the local level, including through education, will also contribute to these efforts.

Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Activities to promote good democratic governance, civil participation and local self-government will contribute to achieving SDG 11, target 3.⁵² Particular emphasis will be placed on the promotion of sustainable and participatory democracy as well as on the development and strengthening of mechanisms for the participation of citizens, especially young people and women, and civil society players at local, regional and national levels. The above-mentioned measures to combat discrimination and promote integration will also contribute to achieving this SDG.

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

The nature of the Council of Europe's remit means that all the technical co-operation activities implemented under this Partnership, especially the institutional support provided to the Tunisian public authorities and bodies, will make a major contribution to achieving SDG 16. Co-operation with Tunisia covers a wide range of support areas related to the achievement of this goal and several of its targets, including but not limited to those detailed below:

⁵⁰ SDG 8, target 7: "Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms".

⁵¹ SDG 10, target 3: "Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard".

⁵² SDG 11, target 3: "By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries".

- Action to promote Tunisia's adherence to European and international standards on the treatment of prisoners and prevention of torture, including support for the National Preventive Mechanism against torture (NPM) in the exercise of its remit, is linked to target 1;⁵³
- The prevention and combating of human trafficking, through support for putting into operation the National Referral Mechanism for victims of trafficking, as well as the promotion of children's rights and their protection against all forms of violence are priority areas of this Neighbourhood Partnership. As Tunisia acceded to the Lanzarote Convention in October 2019, strengthening and bringing the legislative and institutional frameworks and bodies for the protection of children's rights into line with the provisions of the Convention, as well as raising awareness of these issues among the target groups, will also be priorities of this new Neighbourhood Partnership. These measures contribute directly to achieving target 2;⁵⁴
- Efforts will be made to improve citizens' access to justice, in particular by improving the quality and efficiency of the day-to-day operation of the public justice service provided by the courts, thus contributing to achieving target 3;⁵⁵
- Continued support for bringing Tunisia's legislative framework and practices into line with the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention), to which Tunisia was invited to accede in February 2018, and building the capacities of public institutions specialised in combating money laundering and terrorist financing, as well as those of the judiciary contribute to achieving target 4;⁵⁶
- Similarly, the Council of Europe is helping Tunisia in its efforts to fight corruption by supporting in particular the completion of the process of joining Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) and the revision and effective implementation of the national legislative framework in this area, as well as its efforts to raise the awareness of young people and the general public, thus contributing to achieving target 5;⁵⁷
- The Neighbourhood Partnership aims to build the capacities of the independent bodies and judicial authorities, including those provided for by the Constitution, to enable them to function more effectively and in accordance with their remit. Strengthening the capacities of members and staff of these institutions to implement reforms through improved skills and, where necessary, appropriate co-ordination, will contribute to achieving target 6;⁵⁸
- Measures to reinforce local and regional democracy, increase civil participation at all levels and facilitate dialogue between the central and local authorities and civil society contribute directly to achieving target 7;⁵⁹
- Freedom of expression, ensuring a pluralistic media landscape and citizens' access to information, as well as the protection of personal data, are priority areas of this Partnership. Improving the regulatory framework and practices in these areas will contribute to achieving target 10;⁶⁰
- Measures aimed at strengthening the capacities and skills of the relevant national players in the fight against various forms of crime and discrimination in Tunisia contribute directly to achieving target a.⁶¹

⁵³ SDG 16, target 1: "Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere".

⁵⁴ SDG 16, target 2: "End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children".

⁵⁵ SDG 16, target 3 "Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all".

⁵⁶ SDG 16, target 4: "By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organised crime".

⁵⁷ SDG 16, target 5: "Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms".

⁵⁸ SDG 16, target 6: "Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels".

⁵⁹ SDG 16, target 7: "Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels."

⁶⁰ SDG 16, target 10: "Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements".

⁶¹ SDG 16, target a: "Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international co-operation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime".

4.3 CO-ORDINATION

Co-ordination to ensure the efficient use of resources and the relevance of the Council of Europe's action is carried out at different levels and in different forums, including the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers (CM).

The Council of Europe designs and carries out measures in areas in which it has strong expertise and produces real added value. Joint co-operation with the Tunisian authorities is developed on the basis of an in-depth analysis of the objectives pursued by other international organisations and players in the field and of their activities, implemented and/or planned, to achieve these objectives.

To ensure the relevance of its action, the Council of Europe works in close co-ordination with relevant international partners, including the European Union (EU), especially the EU Delegation in Tunisia.

There is also co-ordination with other organisations, including some UN agencies. The Organisation has developed synergies with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), for example in the area of torture prevention with the aim of strengthening the capacities of the National Authority for the Prevention of Torture (INPT). In addition, in the area of combating violence against women, an issue that brings together many stakeholders, dialogue is encouraged, in particular with the EU and UN Women. As regards combating human trafficking and economic crime at regional level, there is co-ordination with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). In the field of justice, work is co-ordinated with the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF), Lawyers Without Borders (LWB), The International Legal Foundation (ILF), the International Development Law Organisation (IDLO) and the International Legal Assistance Consortium (ILAC).

For its part, the Venice Commission works closely with the UNDP and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) on the issue of elections.

To ensure efficiency and avoid duplication of activities, the Organisation also co-ordinates its activities with the development agencies of its member States.

4.4 FUNDING

The overall budget of the Neighbourhood Partnership is estimated at €15.1 million. Funding amounting to €3.1 million (20.5% of the total budget) has been secured.

The Neighbourhood Partnership projects have multiple sources of funding. They will mainly be financed through voluntary contributions from donor countries and international organisations, including joint regional programmes between the European Union and the Council of Europe, such as the South Programme⁶² and CyberSouth,⁶³ as well as bilateral programmes like the joint "Project to Support Independent Bodies in Tunisia" (PAII-T)⁶⁴ and "Improving the functioning, performance and access to justice in Tunisia" (AP-JUST).⁶⁵

⁶² The South Programme is now in its fourth phase. A fifth phase is being negotiated.

⁶³ "Co-operation on Cybercrime in the Southern Neighbourhood Region", total budget: €5.005 million (EU: 89.91%, CoE: 10.09%), July 2017-December 2021.

⁶⁴ "Project to Support Independent Bodies in Tunisia" (PAII-T), total budget: €5.556 million (EU 90%, CoE 10%) January 2019-December 2021.

⁶⁵ "Improving the functioning, performance and access to justice in Tunisia" (AP-JUST), total budget: €5 million (EU 90%, CoE 10%) January 2019-December 2021.

The co-ordination required for implementing the Neighbourhood Partnership will incur general management costs up to a maximum of 7% of the Partnership's direct costs.

In line with the Council of Europe's resource mobilisation strategy, fundraising efforts co-ordinated by the Office of the Directorate General of Programmes (ODGP) are focused on the Neighbourhood Partnership as a whole. Neighbourhood Partnership funding particularly provides flexibility, with funds allocated to those projects most in need and most likely to contribute to the long-term implementation of major policy and institutional reforms.

The structure of the Neighbourhood Partnership 2022-2025 is aligned with that of the Council of Europe's Programme and Budget and harmonised with its two biennial budget cycles in order to enhance coherence, complementarity and co-ordination.

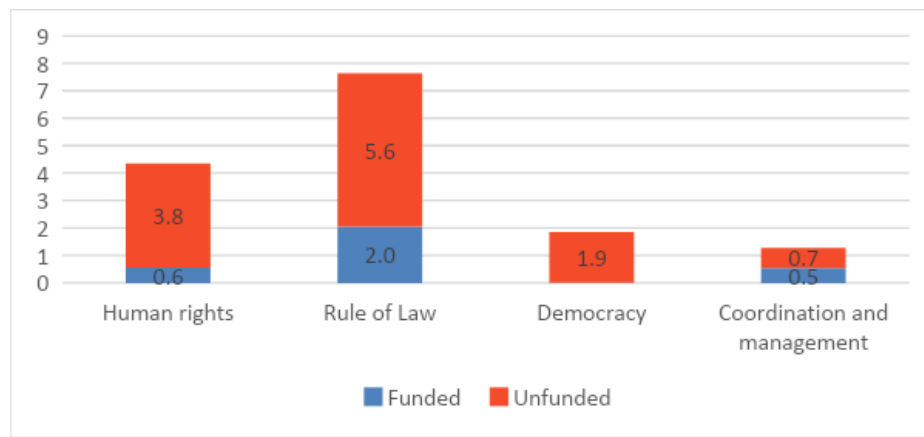


Figure 2: Estimated budget per sector of the Neighbourhood Partnership with Tunisia 2022-2025 (in € million)

4.5 GOVERNANCE

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CM) assesses the overall results of the Neighbourhood Partnership implementation through its Rapporteur Group on External Relations (GR-EXT).

The Council of Europe will provide regular updates on the progress and outcomes of the Neighbourhood Partnership. To this end, the Office of the Directorate General for Programmes (ODGP) will submit interim and final reports to the CM, as follows:

- oral report – 12 months and 36 months after the adoption of the Neighbourhood Partnership, to present the state of progress after the Neighbourhood Partnership's official launch;
- a comprehensive mid-term progress review report, 24 months after the adoption of the Neighbourhood Partnership;
- a final progress review report at the end of the Neighbourhood Partnership implementation period.

Progress made under the Neighbourhood Partnership will also be jointly assessed by the Council of Europe and the Tunisian authorities. For this purpose, a Neighbourhood Partnership Steering Committee has been set up, consisting of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other national stakeholders, including civil society, involved in implementing the Neighbourhood Partnership,

as well as representatives of the Council of Europe. Balanced gender participation should be ensured here, subject to limitations justified by the necessary sectoral knowledge and experience.

The Steering Committee will assess progress in the implementation of approved projects, discuss proposals for future co-operation and challenges and recommend any measures needed to improve the effectiveness of the Neighbourhood Partnership. Regular meetings will be held after the adoption of the Neighbourhood Partnership to assess its mid-term implementation and, before the end of the period, its overall implementation.

In addition, ODGP will address annual Neighbourhood Partnership reports to those donors contributing to the funding at the level of the Neighbourhood Partnership, in line with reporting requirements.

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APPENDIX I: LOGFRAME

Transversal dimensions such as **gender equality, gender mainstreaming and civil society's participation** are key components of the Council of Europe's human rights approach.

Overall goal: human rights, the rule of law and democracy in Tunisia are enhanced in accordance with European and other international standards.

Human rights	
Thematic outcome: contribution to strengthening human rights in Tunisia by supporting the harmonisation of legislation, institutions and practices with European and international standards	
Action in this area will contribute to the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially 4 (target 7) ⁶⁶ , 5 (targets 1 and 2) ⁶⁷ , 10 (target 3) ⁶⁸ and 16 (targets 1, 2, 6, 10 and a) ⁶⁹	
Outcomes	Indicators
1.1 PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS <i>Capacities of the national authorities, legal professionals, and civil society to better protect and promote human rights</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increased number of legal professionals, members and staff of constitutional and independent bodies and law students have improved 	<i>Capacities of the national authorities, legal professionals, and civil society to better protect and promote human rights</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of legal professionals, members and staff of constitutional and independent bodies, students and members

⁶⁶ SDG 4, target 7: "By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development".

⁶⁷ SDG 5, target 1: "End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere". Target 2: "Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation".

⁶⁸ SDG 10, target 3: "Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard".

⁶⁹ SDG 16, target 1: "Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere". Target 2: "End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children". Target 6: "Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels". Target 10: "Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements". Target a: "Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international co-operation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime".

their knowledge of European and international human rights standards and thus acquired the necessary skills to implement national human rights legislation.

- An increased number of representatives of civil society have familiarised themselves with European and international human rights standards and acquired sufficient knowledge to promote and protect human rights in their field of work.

Prevention of torture and ill-treatment in prisons and other places of deprivation of liberty and prevention of radicalisation in prisons in Tunisia

- The INPT's ability to exercise its powers under the OPCAT is strengthened, including by taking account of European and international standards.
- Prison staff and the professionals involved increase their knowledge of the rights of persons deprived of their liberty (training courses, HELP courses, etc.), apply them in the course of their duties and make effective use of the tools developed with the support of the Council of Europe (Prisoner's Guide, Prison Law Manual, guides on the rights of minors in detention, etc.).
- Prison staff and the professionals involved enhance their skills to better combat radicalisation in prisons, effectively implement appropriate policies and use the tools developed with the support of the Council of Europe.
- Persons deprived of their liberty are better informed about their rights and can assert them through appropriate mechanisms.

Police and human rights

- The capacities of law enforcement agencies to control public gatherings while ensuring respect for human rights before, during and after such events, including when suspects are arrested and questioned by the police, are strengthened and measures are implemented;

of civil society trained in the implementation of human rights in their daily work (disaggregated data).

- Level of ability of legal professionals, members and staff of constitutional and independent bodies, students and members of civil society to apply relevant European and international standards to ensure and promote human rights in their daily work.

Prevention of torture and ill-treatment in prisons and other places of deprivation of liberty and prevention of radicalisation in prisons in Tunisia

- Regularity, quality and scope of activities organised by the INPT to ensure the effective exercise of its remit.
- Level of knowledge of prison staff, relevant professionals and persons deprived of their liberty regarding the rights of persons in detention.
- Number of policies and tools developed to combat radicalisation in prisons.
- Number of prison staff and relevant professionals trained in combating radicalisation in prisons (disaggregated data).
- Number of appeals lodged by persons deprived of their liberty to assert their rights.

Police and human rights

- Number of trained law enforcement personnel (disaggregated data).
- Level of ability of law enforcement agencies to control public gatherings while guaranteeing human rights before, during and after these events.

- The capacities of law enforcement agencies to protect the rights of minors in the first hours of holding them in custody at police stations are strengthened.

Promotion of freedom of expression and media pluralism

- The legislative frameworks with regard to freedom of expression, media freedom and access to information are brought more into line with European and international standards.
- The audiovisual and media sector regulator exercises its powers effectively and independently.
- The work of the National Authority for Access to Information (INAI) is placed on a sound footing and brought more into line with European standards.
- The capacities of the National Press Council (CNP) and the National Union of Tunisian Journalists (SNJT) as well as other civil society players are enhanced as far as the promotion and monitoring of freedom of expression, investigative journalism, the protection of journalists and media ethics and professionalism are concerned.

Protection of personal data

- The legislative and institutional personal data protection framework in Tunisia is brought into line with Convention 108 and Convention 108+.
- The capacities of the institutions involved in protecting personal data and privacy are strengthened, and these institutions possess the necessary skills and tools for their tasks, including those related to international co-operation.
- The knowledge and practices of professionals and players from different private and public sectors with regard to data protection and civil society are enhanced.
- A culture of respect for privacy and personal data protection is fostered and strengthened within Tunisian society through better knowledge of the standards required and of the institutions responsible for dealing with these matters

- Level of ability of law enforcement agencies to protect the rights of minors in police custody.

Promotion of freedom of expression and media pluralism

- Degree to which legislative frameworks for freedom of expression, media freedom and access to information comply with European and international standards.
- Extent to which the audiovisual regulator and the national authority for ensuring access to information exercise their powers effectively and independently.
- Number of members of the National Press Council, the National Union of Tunisian Journalists (SNJT) and civil society players trained in promoting and monitoring freedom of expression, in investigative journalism and in respect for journalists' rights, ethics and media professionalism (disaggregated data).

Protection of personal data

- Degree to which national legislative and institutional frameworks for the protection of personal data comply with Convention 108 and Convention 108+.
- Number of members and staff of independent bodies, private and public sector professionals and members of civil society trained in data protection issues (disaggregated data).
- Extent to which trained members and staff of independent bodies, private and public sector professionals and members of civil society apply relevant European and international standards in their daily work.

1.2 EQUALITY AND HUMAN DIGNITY

Combating violence against women and domestic violence

- Tunisia is assisted in the Istanbul Convention accession process and in the effective implementation of the relevant legislation.
- The National Referral System for women victims of violence is operational, including in the governorates.
- The capacities of members and staff of independent bodies as well as institutions and professionals involved in protecting women victims of violence, including civil society, are strengthened.
- Greater prominence is given to the problem and to measures to combat violence against women through a strategic communication plan to raise media and public awareness of the issue.

Children's rights

- Legislative and institutional frameworks, including the Child Protection Code, and bodies for protecting children from sexual exploitation and abuse are brought into line with the Lanzarote Convention and other relevant Council of Europe standards and guidelines in this area.
- The capacities of institutions, bodies and professionals responsible for assisting child victims of violence are strengthened in line with European best practice.
- The public, parents, children and childcare professionals are made more aware of the efforts to combat the sexual abuse and exploitation of children.

Combating violence against women and domestic violence

- Accession by Tunisia to the Istanbul Convention.
- Establishment and putting into operation of a National Referral System for victims of domestic violence.
- Number of members and staff of independent bodies and institutions and professionals trained in the protection of women victims of violence, including civil society (disaggregated data).
- Extent to which members and staff of independent bodies and institutions and professionals involved in protecting women victims of violence, including civil society, implement applicable national legislation and relevant European and international standards and practices in their daily work.
- Extent to which the general public and the media are aware of the issue of violence against women in Tunisia and of measures to combat it.

Children's rights

- Degree to which the legislative and institutional frameworks and bodies for the protection of children from sexual exploitation and abuse comply with international and European standards, in particular the Lanzarote Convention.
- Number of members of institutions and bodies, as well as professionals, that are responsible for assisting child victims of violence and are trained in accordance with European best practices (disaggregated data).
- Extent to which members of institutions and bodies, as well as professionals, responsible for assisting child victims of violence

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The media are made more aware of issues related to child sexual exploitation and abuse and are taking steps to monitor their coverage to protect victims. 	<p>apply the relevant European standards and practices in their daily work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the general public, parents, children, childcare professionals and the media are aware of the issue of combating the sexual abuse and exploitation of children in Tunisia. • Number of media safeguards in place to monitor media coverage of the sexual abuse and exploitation of children.
<p>1.3 GUARANTEEING SOCIAL RIGHTS</p> <p><i>European social charter</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives of the Government, the parliament and civil society are made more aware of the main Council of Europe social rights standards with a view to gradually bringing Tunisian legislation into line with European standards. 	<p><i>European social charter</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of representatives of the Government, the parliament and civil society aware of the Council of Europe's principal social rights standards. • Level of compliance of Tunisian legislation with European social rights standards.

Rule of law	
Thematic outcome: contribution to strengthening the rule of law in Tunisia by supporting the harmonisation of legislation, institutions and practices with European and international standards and practices.	
Action in this area will contribute to the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially 3 (target 5) ⁷⁰ , 4 (target 7) ⁷¹ , 5 (target 2) ⁷² , 8 (target 7) ⁷³ and 16 (targets 3, 4, 5, 6 and a) ⁷⁴ .	
Outcomes	Indicators
<p>2.1 RULE OF LAW-BASED INSTITUTIONS</p> <p><i>European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the authorities' request, the Venice Commission provides expertise on draft legislation, where appropriate in co-ordination with other specialised Council of Europe bodies. • The establishment and proper functioning of constitutional and independent bodies – including the Constitutional Court and the Human Rights Authority (IDH) – is supported, including through capacity building for members and staff and increased co-ordination between bodies. • The Constitutional Court and other constitutional governance bodies have established a network of relations with similar bodies in Council of Europe member States and other regions, especially the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). • Through seminars of the University for Democracy (UniDem Med), an increased number of senior officials of the Tunisian administration, have improved their knowledge of European and international standards 	<p><i>European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of expert opinions on draft laws provided by the Venice Commission and/or other specialised Council of Europe bodies. • Establishment and extent of the operation of constitutional and independent bodies, especially the Constitutional Court and the Human Rights Authority (IDH). • Number of trained members and staff of constitutional and independent bodies (disaggregated data). • Regularity and scope of co-ordination measures between Tunisian constitutional and independent bodies. • Degree of co-operation and networking between the Constitutional Court and other Tunisian constitutional governance bodies with counterpart bodies in Europe and the MENA region.

⁷⁰ SDG 3, target 5: "Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol".

⁷¹ SDG 4, target 7: "By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development".

⁷² SDG 5, target 2: "Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation".

⁷³ SDG 8, target 7: "Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms".

⁷⁴ SDG 16, target 3 "Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all". Target 4: "By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organised crime". Target 5: "Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms". Target 6: "Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels". Target a: "Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international co-operation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime".

relating to the rule of law and have acquired the necessary skills to implement legislation in this area.

Independence and efficiency of justice

- At the authorities' request, the CEPEJ, the Venice Commission and/or the CCJE/CCPE provide expertise on draft laws on the operation of the justice system.
- Justice stakeholders improve their professional qualifications and knowledge of modern court management methods through training (training cycle, field visits), various activities (provision of tools for measuring and assessing the operation of the justice system, the courts and the work of judges) and the sharing of European good practices on these matters.
- Justice stakeholders strengthen their capacity for statistical collection and analysis and take steps to plan, evaluate and improve the operation, organisation and governance of the justice system.
- Tunisia participates in the CEPEJ's evaluation of judicial systems

Common standards and policies

- Tunisia completes the ongoing processes of ratifying Council of Europe conventions and asks to be invited to accede to other instruments in the priority areas covered by the Neighbourhood Partnership.
- National legislation in priority areas is brought into line with European and international standards and effectively implemented.
- The relevant authorities, such as ministries, governance bodies and civil society, have improved their knowledge of Council of Europe conventions and partial agreements in their respective areas of responsibility.

- Number of senior officials from the Tunisian administration who have participated in UniDem Med seminars (disaggregated data).
- Extent to which senior officials in the Tunisian administration apply European and international rule of law standards and practices in their daily work and in the implementation of legislation in this area.

Independence and efficiency of justice

- Number and nature of expert opinions provided by experts from Council of Europe bodies, such as the Venice Commission, the CEPEJ and/or the CCJE/CCPE.
- Number of CEPEJ court management tools adopted by justice stakeholders, and extent to which they are implemented in the daily work of the courts.
- Number of justice stakeholders trained in modern court management and European best practices (disaggregated data).
- Level of equal access to justice for women and men.
- Participation in the CEPEJ's evaluation of judicial systems.

Common standards and policies

- Number of invitations to accede to Council of Europe conventions and other instruments.
- Number of Council of Europe conventions and other instruments to which Tunisia has acceded.
- Degree to which national legislation in the Partnership's priority areas complies with European and international standards.
- Level of awareness and knowledge of the relevant authorities, governance bodies and civil society of Council of Europe conventions and partial agreements relating to their respective areas of responsibility

2.2. ACTION ON CRIME, SECURITY AND PROTECTION OF CITIZENS

Combating human trafficking

- Tunisia is supported in the process of acceding to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings as well as with regard to completing the revision of the legislative framework in this area and its effective implementation.
- The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims of trafficking is in operation in all Tunisian governorates.
- A secure system for collecting and processing data on victims of trafficking is in place.
- A national training strategy is adopted and allows the strengthening of awareness and the development of skills of all stakeholders on the Tunisian territory.
- The INLTP is networked with other relevant bodies and players in the Southern Mediterranean region in order to promote initiatives to combat trafficking at regional level.

Combating terrorism

- Representatives of the Government, the parliament and civil society are made more aware of the Council of Europe's principal standards for combating terrorism with a view to gradually bringing Tunisian legislation into line with them.

Combating cybercrime

- Tunisia is supported in the process of acceding to the Budapest Convention and helped to complete and effectively implement the revision of the national legislative framework in this area.
- The dialogue between criminal justice and the cybersecurity sector, including the private sector, is strengthened.

Combating human trafficking

- Accession by Tunisia to the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.
- Extent to which the national legislative framework, bodies and practices comply with the relevant European and international standards and practices.
- Number of Tunisian governorates for which the NRM for victims of human trafficking is operational.
- Establishment of a data collection system for victims of trafficking.
- Number of trained representatives of anti-trafficking stakeholders in Tunisia (data disaggregated by gender and category).
- Scope, frequency and number of INLTP networking activities with other bodies and players in the region and Europe.

Combating terrorism

- Extent to which the legislative framework complies with the relevant European standards.
- Number of representatives of the Government, the parliament and civil society aware of the Council of Europe's standards in the fight against terrorism.

Combating cybercrime

- Accession by Tunisia to the Budapest Convention.
- Extent to which the national legislative framework, bodies and practices comply with the relevant European and international standards and practices.

- Standard operating procedures for law enforcement and first responders with regard to the collection and analysis of electronic evidence are approved and implemented.
- Stakeholders' capacities for combating cybercrime and handling electronic evidence are enhanced, with the focus on the judiciary and law enforcement officers.

Combating the counterfeiting of medical products

- Tunisia is supported in the process of accession to the MEDICRIME Convention and helped to complete and effectively implement the revision of the national legislative framework in this area.
- The skills of stakeholders in combating the counterfeiting of medical products and other, similar offences are enhanced, with the focus on the judiciary and law enforcement officers.
- The dialogue between criminal justice and law enforcement agencies is strengthened through a 24/7 network to combat such illegal activities and promote international co-operation in criminal matters.

Combating offences relating to cultural property

- The stakeholders concerned are made more aware of the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property (Nicosia Convention), in particular through the sharing of experience on these matters.

Combating corruption, money-laundering and terrorism

- Tunisia is supported in the process of accession to GRECO and the revision and effective implementation of the national legislative framework for preventing and combating corruption.
- The capacities of the authorities responsible for preventing and combating corruption are strengthened through priority targeted measures.
- More effective inter-institutional co-operation is promoted at national level with regard to preventing and combating economic crime.

- Degree of co-operation between the criminal justice and cybersecurity sectors.
- Development of standard operating procedures by national authorities and stakeholders responsible for preventing and combating cybercrime.
- Number of representatives of stakeholders trained in combating cybercrime and handling electronic evidence (data disaggregated by gender and category).

Combating the counterfeiting of medical products

- Ratification by Tunisia of the MEDICRIME Convention.
- Extent to which the legislation against the counterfeiting of medical products and other similar offences complies with the standards of the MEDICRIME Convention.
- Establishment of a 24/7 network that facilitates the immediate sharing of police and judicial information and promotes international co-operation in criminal matters.

Combating offences related to cultural property

- Extent to which the national legislative framework, bodies and practices comply with the relevant European and international standards.

Combating corruption, money-laundering and terrorism

- Accession by Tunisia to GRECO.
- Extent to which existing legislative and institutional frameworks and practices for preventing and combating corruption, economic crime, money laundering and terrorist financing comply with European and international standards.
- Degree of national inter-institutional co-operation on preventing and combating economic crime.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relevant authorities' abilities to prevent and combat money laundering and terrorist financing are further strengthened. <p><i>International Co-operation Group on drugs and addictions (Pompidou Group)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tunisia is supported in the process of joining the Pompidou Group, and its legislative framework is revised to take into account the Pompidou Group's remit to make human rights the focus of drug policies. • Its national drugs and addiction strategy is implemented with MedNET and Pompidou Group support. • Tunisia participates in the major stakeholder survey on the use of MedSPAD/ESPAD surveys in drawing up prevention policies. 	<p><i>International Co-operation Group on drugs and addictions (Pompidou Group)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accession by Tunisia to the Pompidou Group. • Nature of the measures to implement the National Strategy on Drugs and Addictions. • Number of surveys on addiction conducted among the population, in particular in schools.
<p>Democracy Thematic outcome: contribution to strengthening democracy in Tunisia by supporting the harmonisation of legislation, institutions and practices with European and international standards and practices.</p>	
<p>Action in this area will contribute to the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially 4 (target 7)⁷⁵, 5 (targets 1 and 5)⁷⁶, 11 (target 3)⁷⁷ and 16 (targets 6 and 7)⁷⁸</p>	
<p>Outcomes</p>	<p>Indicators</p>
<p>3.1. LOCAL AND REGIONAL DEMOCRACY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The decentralisation process continues, including at regional level, in line with European standards and following an inclusive approach targeting women and young people. • The capacities of local and regional elected representatives are strengthened through training programmes set up by various players, notably the FNCT and CFAD, enabling them to become recognised partners in the dialogue with the central authorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which decentralisation regulations and practices, at both central and local government levels, reflect European standards and good practices. • Degree of involvement and inclusiveness of citizens, especially women and young people, in local decision-making. • Number of trained local and regional elected representatives (disaggregated data).

⁷⁵ SDG 4, target 7: "By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development".

⁷⁶ SDG 5, target 1: "End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere". Target 5: "Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life".

⁷⁷ SDG 11, target 3: "By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries".

⁷⁸ SDG 16, target 6: "Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels". Target 7: "Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels".

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tunisian authorities, at both central and local levels, have sound understanding of European best practices of good democratic governance and are able to apply modern methods of human resource management and responsible local financial management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of knowledge and implementation by the Tunisian authorities, at both central and local levels, of European good practices regarding good democratic governance, modern human resources management methods and responsible local financial management.
<p>3.2. DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE</p> <p><i>Co-operation with the parliament</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of parliament are made more aware of European standards, thus facilitating the extension and consolidation of the common legal area. • The operation of the parliamentary administration and some parliamentary committees are given support. 	<p><i>Co-operation with the parliament</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Parliamentarians aware of the European standards (disaggregated data). • Nature, frequency and scope of Council of Europe support for the parliamentary administration and committees.
<p>3.3. DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION</p> <p><i>Education for democracy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The staff of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Vocational Integration have increased capacities for developing and implementing the political framework and methodological guidelines on human rights and democratic citizenship, in accordance with the standards of the Council of Europe. • Tunisia's education policy-makers have better understanding of the Council of Europe's principles with regard to ethics, transparency and integrity in education. • Head teachers, teachers (formal and non-formal sector) and students in Tunisia's pilot schools have better understanding of the principles of democratic school governance. 	<p><i>Education for democracy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the staff of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Vocational Integration are able to develop and implement the policy framework and methodological guidelines on human rights and democratic citizenship, in accordance with Council of Europe standards. • Extent to which Tunisia's education policymakers are aware of the Council of Europe's principles of ethics, transparency and integrity in education. • Number of pilot schools.

North-South Centre, School of Politics, youth

- The capacities of relevant civil society stakeholders are strengthened in line with European standards on the basis of tools developed by the Council of Europe and made available to them.
- Human rights education is strengthened, particularly among young people, who are thus better able to play an active role in defending human rights, the rule of law and democracy.
- Young people are made more aware of hate speech through the tools of the Council of Europe.

- Extent to which head teachers, teachers and students in the pilot schools are aware of the principles of democratic school governance.

North-South Centre, School of Politics, youth

- Extent to which the capacities of civil society players are strengthened on the basis of European and international standards and practices.
- Number of tools developed by the Council of Europe and made available to civil society players and young people.
- Level of awareness and knowledge of young people regarding human rights, the rule of law and democracy, and the extent to which this knowledge enables them to play a role in defending these principles in Tunisia.
- Level of awareness of hate speech among young people.

APPENDIX II: RISK REGISTER

Descriptions of risks	Mitigation measures
Risks associated with the political and institutional context	
<p>Continued state of emergency, continued freezing of parliament</p> <p>Constitutional review, institutional changes, closure of independent authorities</p> <p>Slowdown or interruption of legislative processes</p> <p>Political instability</p> <p>Social instability</p> <p>Military conflict</p>	<p>Continue political dialogue, including at very high level.</p> <p>Continue dialogue with the EU in particular and with other international partners and actors, including with a view to discussing risk mitigation strategies.</p> <p>Strengthen dialogue with authorities, parliamentarians and civil society.</p> <p>Raise awareness among target groups of the Council of Europe's values, principles and standards of human rights, rule of law and democracy and their link to democratic security.</p> <p>Adapt work programmes, diversify beneficiaries in order to make further progress in achieving the objectives of the Neighbourhood Partnership.</p>
<p>Lack of sufficient political will and/or consensus among national actors to carry out legislative and/or institutional reforms, especially with regard to constitutional and independent bodies</p>	<p>Continue to raise awareness of the values and principles of the Council of Europe and the benefits of harmonising legislation and practice with European standards.</p> <p>Promote a constant dialogue with the authorities, institutional partners, parliamentarians and civil society.</p> <p>Facilitate contacts and cooperation between reform advocates in the different branches of government and within civil society.</p>

	<p>To create spaces for dialogue and exchange at national and international level, in particular between independent and constitutional bodies. Build the capacities of relevant national players to contribute proactively to the reform process</p> <p>Encourage and further support national institutional partners working to promote European standards and raise public awareness. Build the capacity of relevant national actors to contribute proactively to reform processes.</p> <p>Encourage and further support national institutional partners to promote European standards and raise awareness.</p>
<p>Change of political context or direction, decreasing interest of authorities in implementing the Neighbourhood Partnership, reluctance of authorities to undertake concrete and specific activities.</p>	<p>Promote a constant dialogue with the authorities, institutional partners, parliamentarians and civil society.</p> <p>Ensure close collaboration with national authorities and institutional partners and their administrative staff in order to ensure institutional memory, strengthen ownership of the achievements, and to guarantee their sustainability.</p> <p>Raise awareness among target groups of the benefits of Council of Europe standards in the field of human rights, rule of law and democracy and the importance of their implementation.</p>
<p>Democratic decline leading to a weakening of some institutional actors and a deterioration of fundamental rights.</p>	<p>Explore mitigation strategies with international partners (the EU in particular).</p> <p>Strengthen work to protect the rights of vulnerable groups where necessary with non-institutional actors.</p> <p>Awareness-raising campaigns.</p>

Risks associated with the planning and implementation of projects/programmes	
Lack of funding available to ensure implementation of the Neighbourhood Partnership.	<p>Allocate funds to projects with the greatest added value.</p> <p>Intensify efforts to mobilise resources in a co-ordinated manner.</p> <p>Continue to use partner and donor feedback to improve project design and implementation, as well as results-based monitoring and reporting practices, in order to retain donors and attract new ones.</p> <p>Strengthen and improve the communication of the results of past and ongoing activities in the country.</p>
Lack of co-ordination with other international organisations present on the ground, resulting in duplication of activities.	<p>Establish contact with international organisations present in the field and set up coordination mechanisms to ensure an effective exchange of information on planned and ongoing activities and synergies between actions.</p> <p>Organise activities in collaboration with other organisations and actors active in certain areas.</p>
High staff turnover in partner institutions leading to difficulties in implementing planned measures.	<p>Maintain a permanent dialogue with partner institutions and organise meetings with newly appointed staff, in particular the chairs of constitutional and independent bodies.</p> <p>Implement procedures for supporting long-term institutional memory for partner institutions.</p> <p>Ensure the sustainability of the knowledge acquired by the partner institutions by providing appropriate tools.</p>

<p>Among national partners and project teams, there is a lack of knowledge and skills to analyse gender issues and conduct gender mainstreaming</p>	<p>Support capacity building for national partners to gather, analyse and utilise relevant information.</p> <p>Implement awareness-raising measures on gender inequality and gender mainstreaming among stakeholders.</p> <p>Strengthen civil society organisations working in the areas of gender equality and women's rights.</p> <p>Strengthen the capacities of human rights defenders.</p>
<p>Lack of gender balance among decision-makers and target groups.</p>	<p>Encourage the participation of the under-represented gender in Neighbourhood Partnership Steering Committee meetings and in project meetings and activities.</p> <p>Increase awareness of gender equality issues among national partners and the population.</p> <p>Ensure the inclusion of the gender dimension and the human rights approach at all stages of the project life cycle in order to guarantee positive results for the population as a whole.</p>
<p>Risks associated with communication</p>	
<p>Lack of awareness among the main national and international partners, target groups and the general public of the Council of Europe's contribution to the reforms underway in the country.</p>	<p>Widen the scope of communication activities in order to provide the various national and international partners, target groups and the general public with better information about the contribution of the Organisation and donors to democratic reforms, in particular by regularly updating the website and the Tunis office's Facebook page.</p> <p>Increase the dissemination of information and documentation in Arabic.</p>

Confusion between the Council of Europe and the European Union.	Ensure the application of the visibility rules agreed between the European Union and the Council of Europe in the implementation of the joint programmes.
Health risks	
Inability to organise face-to-face events due to physical distancing rules and restrictions on gatherings and travel.	<p>Employ alternative methods for conducting meetings, consultancy and training: video-conferencing, webinars, online monitoring of beneficiaries' learning progress, development of specific online training and support materials, etc.</p> <p>Organise online communication campaigns/events (social networks, websites, newsletters, etc.), strengthen the dissemination and production of relevant content and resources (Organisation's documentation, audiovisual awareness-raising tools, etc.), and promote the use of online tools, in particular distance learning tools (HELP platform).</p> <p>Encourage the use of evaluations and satisfaction questionnaires on new working methods in order to improve their effectiveness.</p> <p>Focus on activities that can be carried out remotely (production of studies/documentary work and expert analyses, translations, etc.) until the restrictions are lifted.</p> <p>Closely monitor the situation in the country and adapt work programmes.</p>
Changing priorities of national authorities and partners in response to an unprecedented health situation.	<p>Maintain close communication with national authorities and partners in order to analyse their priorities and respond to their evolving needs without losing sight of the Organisation's core values and the Neighbourhood Partnership's objectives.</p> <p>Adapt work programmes.</p>
Risks associated with security and logistics	

<p>Deterioration in the security situation in the country leading to limited accessibility of certain areas and hindering the implementation of the planned measures.</p>	<p>Regular monitoring of security risk management measures in co-ordination with other international organisations operating in these areas.</p> <p>A security plan has been developed for the Tunis office and ensures continuity in the implementation of the Neighbourhood Partnership and the security of Council of Europe staff and experts.</p>
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APPENDIX III: FINANCIAL TABLE
(All amounts in euros)

Sectors	Total budget
Human rights	4 353 083
1. Protecting human rights	3 266 416
2. Equality and human dignity	713 334
3. Guaranteeing social rights	373 333
Rule of Law	7 631 834
1. Rule of law-based Institutions	3 478 167
2. Action on crime, security and protection of citizens	4 153 667
Democracy	1 859 000
1. Local and regional democracy	855 000
2. Democratic governance and participation	1 004 000
Co-ordination, management and reserves	1 273 964
1. EU/CoE programmes Co-ordination - Reserve	545 334
2. General management costs	728 630
TOTAL	15 117 880

APPENDIX IV: SITUATION OF THE ACCESSIONS OF TUNISIA TO THE RELEVANT CONVENTIONS AND PARTIAL AGREEMENTS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

1. Participation in conventions

Accession		
ETS 027	European Agreement concerning Programme Exchanges by means of Television Films	23/01/1969
ETS 104	Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats	12/01/1996
ETS 108	Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data	18/07/2017
ETS 181	Additional Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data, regarding supervisory authorities and transborder data flows	18/07/2017
ETS 127	Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters as amended by the 2010 Protocol (CETS No 208)	31/10/2013
ETS 135	Anti-Doping Convention	26/02/2004
ETS 188	Additional Protocol to the Anti-Doping Convention	26/02/2004
CETS 201	Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention)	15/10/2019
Signature		
CETS 223	Protocol amending the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data	24/05/2019
Invitations to accede		
CETS 197	Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings	1306 th CM meeting 07/02/2018
ETS 185	Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention)	1306 th CM meeting 07/02/2018
ETS 189	Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime, concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems	1306 th CM meeting 07/02/2018
CETS 210	Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention)	1375 th CM meeting 22/04/2020

Invitations to sign		
CETS 211	Council of Europe Convention on the counterfeiting of medical products and similar crimes involving threats to public health (MEDICRIME Convention)	1306 th CM meeting 07/02/2018

2. Participation in Partial Agreements

Title	Status
European Pharmacopoeia	Observer 07/11/1997

3. Participation in Enlarged Partial Agreements

Title	Status
European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre)	Member 16/12/2016
International Co-operation Group on drugs and addictions (Pompidou Group)	Invited to accede 1302 nd CM meeting 13/12/2017

4. Participation in Enlarged Agreements

Title	Status
European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission)	Member 01/04/2010
Group of States against Corruption (GRECO)	Invited to accede 1299 th CM meeting 08/11/2017

5. Participation in committees established by Resolution of the Committee of Ministers

Title	Status
European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ)	Observer April 2015

• **Council of Europe**
• **Office of the Directorate General of Programmes (ODGP)**

• E-mail : odgp@coe.int
• www.coe.int/programmes

• **Council of Europe Office in Tunisia**

• E-mail : tunisie@coe.int
• www.coe.int/tunis

www.coe.int

• The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It
• comprises 46 member states, 27 of which are members of the European
• Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European
• Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights,
• democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights
• oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.