

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Information Documents
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Quarterly report of Council of Europe Offices

April-June 2019

A. LIAISON OFFICES

Introduction

The Council of Europe Offices in charge of liaison with one or more international organisations or institutions:

- represent the Secretary General vis-à-vis international organisation(s) or institution(s);
- follow the activities carried out by the relevant international organisation(s) or institution(s) and report on developments relevant to the Council of Europe activities and policies;
- provide support for the organisation of and follow-up to high level co-ordination meetings and other meetings or events between the Council of Europe and the relevant international organisation(s) or institution(s);
- promote effective co-operation between the Council of Europe and the relevant international organisation(s) or institution(s);
- identify opportunities for joint activities and provide advice and support in planning, negotiation, implementation and reporting on these activities;
- conduct a proactive media policy in order to raise the visibility of the Organisation.

The present document covers the reporting period April-June 2019. Following decision [CM/Del/Dec\(2013\)1175/1.6E](#) of 3 July 2013, activity reports have been published every three months, starting with July-September 2013.

Brussels - Council of Europe Office in charge of liaison with the European Union

Meetings involving the Office

The Head of Office, Zoltan Taubner, had regular informal contacts with his EU counterparts and represented the Office in various events. He met his counterparts in the EEAS and the Commission. He met the EU's new Special Representative for Human Rights, Eamon Gilmore, 2 May, in an introductory visit, also in view of the latter's participation in the CoE's Ministerial Session in Helsinki on 16-17 May. He also met several interlocutors on the CoE-EU co-operation on the rule of law, such as the Advisor of the First VP Timmermans and the Director General of the General Secretariat of the EU Council. He represented the Organisation in a high-level hearing organised by the Commission on this topic. He represented the Council of Europe in the annual gathering of world-wide national focal points on "R2P" – Responsibility to Protect, organised by the EEAS and chaired by the EEAS DSG, Christian Leffler.

Diplomatic contacts were kept with representatives from Moldova, Montenegro, Ukraine and Belarus. Bilateral meetings were organised with various parts of the EU institutions and with civil society organisations, notably Amnesty International and the Open Society Foundation.

The Office welcomed, assisted in the organisation of or participated in the following meetings and events:

- Bilateral meetings for Director Gruden and his DGII colleagues.
- Secretariat of the Congress for an internal expert group meeting.
- Public presentation of the 2018 prison statistics ("SPACE report") in the Office.
- Participation in an EEAS event on cultural routes in the Western Balkans.
- Participation in the launch of the child-friendly justice network.
- DGII (Secretary of GREVIO) participation in the EU Council Working Party on fundamental rights, citizens' rights and free movement of persons ("FREMP") on the Istanbul Convention and GREVIO, 9 April.
- DGI (Secretary of T-Cy) participation in the EU Council Working Party on Co-operation in criminal matters (COPEN), 9 April.
- Civil society event on "rescaled" prison policies, in the Office, with the participation of the Belgian Minister of Justice, Mr Koen Geens, 11 April.
- DGI (Secretary of GRECO) participation in the Eastern Partnership Panel on the Rule of Law, 30 April.
- High-level Conference marking the 10th anniversary of the Eastern Partnership, 14 May.
- Conference on the smuggling of migrants, organised by the EU Romanian Presidency, 15 May.
- Exchange organised by the EP DROI Sub-committee with representatives of civil society ("Human rights and democracy network - HRDN").
- Conference on inclusive growth, 20 May, and presentation of the work of the European Social Charter.
- Informal co-ordination meeting of donors on Belarus.
- Horizontal facility Steering Committee meeting, with DG Near.
- Opening of the HELP training session on preventing radicalisation, 27 May.
- Participation in the debriefing of the COHOM meeting (EU Council Working Party on Human Rights), 28 May.
- Meeting with civil society on human rights ("international partners for human rights") in EaP countries, 28 May.
- Presentation of the enlargement package at EP AFET by Commissioner Johannes Hahn, 29 May.

- Meeting with incoming Finnish EU Presidency representative on CoE work in the Eastern Partnership.
- Participation in a closing panel of the annual conference of the “age platform” together with EU and UN representatives, 13 June.
- Presentation of a CoE publication in the EU Committee of the Regions.
- Exchanges with the EEAS on the situation of human rights in Belarus.

The Office attended and reported in particular from events such as the “Security Summit”, conferences on European integration of Albania and North Macedonia, a conference on Russian and Chinese influence strategies and a conference on the Kremlin’s attacks against the rule of law in the West.

In terms of **programmes**, the Office had and/or accompanied colleagues to meetings with various Commission DGs, for instance DG EAC, as mentioned above, DG Near on Turkey, the EEAS on Kazakhstan. It also had meetings with various Commission DGs, for instance DG Just, DG Near and SRSS.

The Office also welcomed a group of visitors from Russia and presented the CoE.

The EU-CoE **youth partnership**

- held two expert group meetings in the Office, with representatives from the European Commission.
- held an exhibition stand at the European Parliament during the European Youth Week which was under the title Democracy and Me, in close co-operation with the Commission.
- co-organised a conference on the power of Learning Mobility, 1-4 April, where the new publication, developed by the EU-CoE youth partnership on Quality Indicators in Learning Mobility, was launched.
- held an expert group meeting on preparing the contents for a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on youth work.

The Brussels-based Secretariat of the **Pompidou Group** organised on 16 May the 7th meeting of the International Liaison Officers network (ILO). They welcomed 37 members for a visit to the “Training centre on clandestine drug laboratories” of the Belgian Federal Police. It also met with DEVCO on “Security on future co-operation in the field of General Aviation”, an EU-funded project “Colibri”. It welcomed on 8 May the newly-appointed Customs Counsellor for New Zealand in Brussels.

The Office further **reported** on major events and developments in and around the EU as well as from debates and hearings in the European Parliament and its Committees (LIBE and AFET primarily), events organised by think tanks and foundations on matters such as: EU-Turkey relations, developments in the fields of Roma, migration, Brexit, financing of terrorism, higher education in the Western Balkans, priorities for the next Commission 2019-2024, informal EU summit in Sibiu, security in the EU, enlargement policies and accession of Montenegro, fight against disinformation, minority issues, results of the elections in Ukraine, asylum and trafficking, far right extremism, propaganda in radicalisation, the future of EU defence, re-elections in Istanbul, disinformation and online harm and populism.

Key features and statistics

Some 426 information messages and documents, as well as 13 weekly reports were prepared and sent to Strasbourg by the Information Officer. 59 notes for the file were sent from the Office in addition to the information messages sent by the Head of Office directly.

Thirty-eight Council of Europe representatives visited the Office during the period, including:

- Deputy Secretary General, Ms Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, 2 April, for the European Forum on the Rights of Children, and a meeting with the Director General of the European Commission's Structural Reforms Support Service (SRSS).
- PACE rapporteur, Mr Tiny Kox, 4 April, for bilateral meetings in EU institutions, including with the Commission President, Mr Jean-Claude Juncker.
- Belgian Minister of Justice, Mr Koen Geens, for an event in the Office on prisons.
- The Secretary to the Committee of Ministers, Mr Bjorn Berge, 3 May, at COSCE (EU Council Working Party on the OSCE and the CoE).
- The CoE Legal Adviser and Director of DLAPIL, Mr Jorg Polakiewicz, 6-7 May, for bilateral consultations with the EU.
- ODGP for meetings with the Eastern Partnership national co-ordinators, 7 May, in the presence of EU Officials, and for exchanges with the Permanent Representatives of the EaP countries to the CoE and to the EU.
- CPT Chair, Vice-Chair and Executive Secretary: bureau meeting and bilateral meetings with the EU, 7 June.
- GRECO Chair and Executive Secretary: presentation of the annual report to the public and the press, 25 June.
- Congress President and Congress SG: 25th anniversary of the Congress and the Committee of the Regions.

Fourteen other CoE Secretariat members were in Brussels during the period. The Office hosted 46 events and visits, welcoming 346 external visitors.

Media and visibility

The Spokesperson/Media Officer co-ordinated communications work around: the Brussels presentation of the Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics (SPACE report), the annual report on the execution of judgments from the European Court of Human Rights, the participation of the ECRI Vice-chair in the plenary session of the EU Committee of Regions, the extension of the Partnership for Good Governance from 2019 to 2021, the Council of Europe's participation in the Annual Convention for Inclusive Growth, the presentation of the GRECO annual report and the June meeting of the Committee of Ministers on the execution of judgments from the European Court of Human Rights.

He also maintained his regular contacts with Brussels-based media and carried out social media work on numerous issues including: the annual report from the Secretary General, the April and June PACE session, the monitoring of the local elections in Turkey by the Congress, the CPT's annual report and various judgments and decisions from the European Court of Human Rights, the Committee of Ministers session in Helsinki, statements from the Secretary General and the Congress on the municipal elections in Istanbul, the Commissioner's report on Hungary and statements on Poland and Syria, the draft PACE report on Malta, the CPT report on Germany and its visit to Turkey, the GRETA annual report, the SPACE II report on probation across Europe, Europe Day and the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe, World Press Freedom Day, IDAHOT day, the election of the new Secretary General, the Commissioner's

report on Poland, monitoring by the Congress of the mayoral election in Istanbul, the 25th anniversary of the Congress and the EU Committee of the Regions in Brussels, the latest batch of ECRI reports and conclusions, the FCNM report on Ireland, GRECO's 20th anniversary conference in Strasbourg and GRECO reports on Switzerland and Turkey.

He also carried out preparatory work related to the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe as well as working on the on-going communications project to highlight the impact of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Geneva - Council of Europe Office/Permanent Delegation to the United Nations Office and other international organisations in Geneva

The United Nations Office in Geneva has been informed that Mr Jean Claus will act as Chargé d’Affaires a.i. of the Permanent Delegation of the Council of Europe to the United Nations Office and other International Organisations at Geneva.

On 14 June, Ambassador Andranik Hovhannisyan, the newly-appointed Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations Office and other International Organisations at Geneva, paid a courtesy visit to the Mr Claus. The Ambassador took this opportunity to inform about the Side Event “Armenia: A Year of Democratic Transition” foreseen on 24 June in the margins of the 41st session of the Human Rights Council, with the participation of Mr Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Armenia, Mr Clément Nyaletsossi Voule, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, and Mr Arman Tatoyan, Human Rights Defender (Ombudsman) of Armenia.

Vienna - Council of Europe Office in charge of liaison with the OSCE, United Nations Office and other international organisations in Vienna

Participation in OSCE Permanent Council Meetings

- OSCE Permanent Council with the Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine and in the Trilateral Contact Group and the Chief Monitor of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, 4 April.
- OSCE Permanent Council on Scales of Contribution and the OSCE Unified Budget, 11 April.
- OSCE, Permanent Council, with the Presentation by the Chairperson of the Security Committee, Ambassador Luis Cuesta Civis, 2 May.
- OSCE, Permanent Council, meeting on current issues and celebration of Europe Day, 9 May.
- OSCE, Permanent Council, Report by the OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Uzbekistan, Ambassador John MacGregor, 16 May.
- OSCE, Permanent Council, Presentation by the High Commissioner on National Minorities, Ambassador Lamberto Zannier, a spot report has been submitted, 23 May
- OSCE, Permanent Council, farewell meeting with Ambassador Ertugrul Apakan, Head of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, a spot report has been submitted, 29 May
- OSCE, Permanent Council, Report by the Head of the OSCE Mission to Moldova, Ambassador Claus Neukirch, 30 May.
- OSCE, Permanent Council with the Head of the OSCE Center in Bishkek and the Director of the OSCE Academy in Bishkek, 6 June.
- OSCE, Permanent Council with the Chief Observer of the OSCE Observer Mission at two Russian checkpoints on the Ukrainian Border, 13 June.
- OSCE, Permanent Council with the Project Coordinator in Ukraine, 20 June.

Participation in expert committees and conferences

- Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting on Upholding the Principles of Tolerance and Non-Discrimination, including the Promotion and Protection of Freedom of Religion or Belief with presentation by the HoO on CoE and ECRI's strategies, mechanisms and activities, 1-2 April.
- 19th Alliance Against Trafficking in Persons with the active participation of Petya Nestorova (DG2), 8-9 April.
- Human Dimension Committee Meeting on Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media with the HoO as key introductory speaker of the opening panel, 10 April.
- OSCE Spring Recess, 15-26 April Symposium at the Diplomatic Academy of Austria, dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the CoE with former SG Walter Schwimmer as principal speaker, 8 May.
- Meeting on the OSCE's Security Sector Governance and Reform, 13 May.
- Preparatory Committee Meeting on the OSCE-CoE cooperation, 16 May.
- UNODC 28th Session of the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, 20-24 May.
- Events on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Vienna International Centre with UN-SG Antonio Guterres as guest of honor, 27 May.
- Joint security days OSCE/UN; a spot report has been submitted, 4 June.
- Special session of the Austrian Parliament to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the CoE with President of PACE Ms Liliane Maury Pasquier as invited speaker; a spot report has been submitted, 13 June.

- Annual Security Review Conference of the OSCE, 25-27 June.
- Presentation of the CND's Annual Drug Report by Mr Yuriy Fedotov, Under Secretary General of the UN and Executive Director of UNOV; a spot report has been submitted, 26 June.

Bilateral dialogues

- Handing over of credentials by Amb. Rudolf Lennkh to Amb. Thomas Greminger, Secretary General of the OSCE, a spot report has been submitted, 3 May.
- Meeting with the Chief of Protocol of UNOV, 9 May.
- Handing over of letter of accreditation to Mr Yuriy Fedotov, Undersecretary General of the UN and Executive Director of UNOV; a spot report has been submitted, 11 June.
- Meeting with Amb. Paul Bekkers, Head of the Office of the SG of OSCE, 24 June.
- Meeting with Mr. Ilias Chatzis, Head of the Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Section, UNODC; a spot report has been submitted, 25 June.

Warsaw - Council of Europe Office in charge of liaison with international organisations or institutions in Warsaw, in particular with OSCE/ODIHR and the Community of Democracies

High level visits/meetings

14 June – HoO meeting with the representatives of the Governing Council of the Community of Democracies (CoD) in the margins of the 30th session of the Council.

27 June – meeting with the First Deputy Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), Ms Katarzyna Gardapkhadze.

Activities of the Office

Enhancing the co-operation with OSCE ODIHR – Following the high-level meeting between the CoE SG and the OSCE ODIHR Director and the decision to conclude the Exchange of Letters to ensure closer co-operation between two organisations, works were undertaken to draft and negotiate the document. Apart from the high-level meetings mentioned above, the HoO continued to maintain close working relations with ODIHR experts. The Office took part in the trilateral CoE – ODIHR – UNHCR Poland event on good practices in migrant integration at local level held in the margins of Warsaw Humanitarian Expo. A presentation of the activities of three international organisations in relation to migrant integration was followed by a discussion on good practices implemented by Polish cities. The CoE was also invited to participate in the Roundtable Discussion – Political Corruption in the XXI Century organised by ODIHR and Transparency International where Mr Gianluca Esposito, Executive Secretary of the CoE Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), briefed the participants on GRECO's activities.

The HoO attended numerous meetings organised by ODIHR during which he presented the CoE activities and perspective. These meetings included i.a. the conference on the impact of new technologies on the quality of the political system organised by ODIHR, the Warsaw School of Economics and the e-Państwo foundation under the auspices of the Commissioner for Human Rights of Poland.

The Office closely followed ODIHR's activities in relation to election observation and the discussions concerning the preparations of two major human rights meetings organised in Warsaw by ODIHR (Human Dimension Implementation Meeting and Human Dimension Seminar).

Continuation of the co-operation with the Community of Democracies – The HoO was invited to address member states of the Governing Council of the CoD during its 30th session in Warsaw (14 June) and participated in the panel discussion on youth participation in public life alongside representatives from ODIHR and civil society. The HoO presented the CoE's model to work with and for youth.

Regular working relations were maintained with the Permanent Secretariat staff. The prospects for the CoD's engagement in the 2019 edition of the World Forum for Democracy (November, Strasbourg) were discussed.

Ensuring the visibility of the Council of Europe – Apart from the events organised by ODIHR and the CoD, the HoO regularly attended seminars and conferences on issues pertinent to CoE activities. These included i.a. the debate on the mechanisms for enhancing the Rule of

Law framework for the European Union, organised by the European Commission Representation in Poland, and the panel discussion on people with PTSD located in guarded centers for foreigners, organised by the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner of Poland.

B. FIELD AND PROGRAMME OFFICES

Introduction

On the basis of Resolution [CM/Res\(2010\)5](#) Council of Europe offices in member States and non-member states

- represent the Secretary General vis-à-vis the national authorities of the host country;
- promote and support the policies and activities of national authorities, as well as those of the Council of Europe bodies, related to membership of the Council of Europe;
- provide advice, support and overall *in situ* co-ordination with national authorities in planning, negotiation and timely implementation of targeted Council of Europe co-operation activities, including Joint Programmes with the European Union and other donors;
- facilitate the identification of needs for capacity-building, in co-operation with national authorities;
- conduct fundraising activities for specific projects;
- co-ordinate activities in the country with other international organisations and institutions (EU, OSCE, UN), as well as other international and local partners active in the country;
- in close cooperation with the Directorate of Communication, conduct a proactive media policy, in order to raise the visibility of the Organisation, its values and activities among the general public.

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Baku**Situation of the Office**

Core staff - 4, Project staff - 6, Total staff - 10.

During the reporting period the Office implemented 4 projects, 2 of which are jointly funded with the EU, along with one funded by the US Department of State and one funded 100% by the CoE, and assisted with the preparation for the launch of a further project also listed below.

State of implementation of projects/programmes/Action Plans/co-operation documents

- VC U.S.A. "Support to justice sector reform initiatives in Azerbaijan": Twenty-seven judges were trained on Article 3 (Prohibition of torture) of the ECHR and 29 defence attorneys successfully completed a 10-week HELP distance course on "Introduction to the ECHR". The road map document for improvement of the criminal justice system in Azerbaijan was presented at a conference organised on 13 June with the participation of representatives of state authorities, legal professionals, international and non-governmental organisations (in total up to 65 participants). The document provides analysis and recommendations to modify the national criminal procedure legislation and practice in light of the case-law of the ECtHR.
- AP "Gender equality and media freedom": The Curriculum for a new course on "Gender equality and media freedom" was finalised and printed in 2000 copies. The new course will be introduced as of the next academic year at the Journalism faculty of Baku State University. The Guide on "Gender equality and media" for Azerbaijani journalists has been developed and printed in 2000 copies. Both the Curriculum and the Guide are available online. About 130 journalists and representatives of civil society took part in 6 information/training sessions on CoE standards on gender equality and media organised on 25-26 April in Shaki, 30-31 May in Mingachevir and on 20-21 June in Lankaran. More than 80 state officials, representatives of academia, civil society and media participated in the conference on "Gender equality and media" on 13 May and took an active part in the round table / closing conference of the Project on 18 June. An introductory film dedicated to the results of the Project was edited and made available online.
- EU/CoE - PGG "Strengthening Anti-Money Laundering in Azerbaijan": The Project held its first Steering Committee Meeting on 30 May. The meeting brought together representatives from 15 key beneficiary institutions to present the activities to be implemented under the project and discuss the expected results and timelines of the activities. The Steering Committee members endorsed the project work plan, which will be the guiding document for implementation of the project.
- EU/CoE - PGG "Further Support to the Penitentiary Reform in Azerbaijan-2" (SPERA 2): On 8 May 2019, the CoE organised a conference in Baku to launch a new EU/CoE Joint Programme "Further Support to the Penitentiary Reform in Azerbaijan-2" (SPERA 2). This 24-month Project is being implemented in cooperation with the project's main partners – the Penitentiary Service and Main Medical Department of the Ministry of Justice. The aim of the conference was to present the Project and its expected results to local partners, stakeholders and civil society representatives. The project team presented the activity plan of the Project and its expected main outcomes. This was followed by discussions during which the participants exchanged their views on the proposed interventions, shared feedback and provided recommendations on the activity plan.
- EU/CoE - PGG "Strengthening the efficiency and quality of the judicial system in Azerbaijan": The inception mission took place in Baku on 3-4 April with the aim of discussing with national stakeholders the specific objectives and expected results of the project. The

inception mission also provided the opportunity to meet with the EUD in order to ensure the coordination during the implementation phase and to fine-tune the logframe and prepare the work plan.

Other relevant activities

- 1 April: HoO met with Head of Operations of the European Union Delegation to Azerbaijan, Simona Gatti;
- 29 April: HoO met with MFA Deputy Head of Department, PGG National Coordinator, Farah Ajalova;
- 30 April: HoO, as co-chair, attended a donor coordination preparatory meeting organised by the USAID representation office;
- 2 May: HoO attended the 5th Baku World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue;
- 5 May: The Office organised an Open Day on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the CoE;
- 8 May: HoO addressed and chaired the launching event of the "Support to the Penitentiary Reform in Azerbaijan (SPERA-2)" project;
- 8 May: HoO, as co-chair, attended the meeting of the working group on Democracy and Good Governance organised by the USAID Office;
- 10 May: HoO attended the Development Partners (Donor Coordination) plenary meeting organised by the UN;
- 13 May: HoO addressed and moderated the first session of the conference to mark the 70th anniversary of the CoE and 100th anniversary of granting the right to vote to women in Azerbaijan within the Gender Equality and Media Freedom project;
- 30 May: Action Plan was launched by the Mahmud Ahmed oglu Mammad-Guliyev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Verena Taylor, Director of ODGP.

Belgrade

Situation of the Office

Core staff - 6, Project staff – 22, Total – 28.

During the reporting period, the Office implemented 8 projects, of which 7 are jointly-funded with the EU including 4 under the Horizontal Facility (HF), and one by the Human Rights Trust Fund (HRTF).

State of implementation of projects

- EU/CoE - HF "Enhancing human rights protection for detained and sentenced persons in Serbia": The Protocol on medical services in prisons has been finalised. Four Offender Behaviour Programmes (OBPs) have been completed, 2 piloted and their Handbooks printed. The Mental Health Strategy and accompanying AP are in the 2nd cycle of official endorsement. Three cascade trainings for police officers on prevention of torture were conducted; 60 senior management police officers were trained. Training material for the National Employment Service (NES) was completed and training of all counsellors working with ex-offenders organised. A pilot pre-release course for prisoners serving 5+ years was finalised. More than 200 medical staff and social workers were trained on model individual treatment plans for psychiatric patients.
- EU/CoE HF "Supporting effective remedies and mutual legal assistance (SEMA) in Serbia": Forty-seven misdemeanour judges/assistants acquired knowledge on fair trial standards, with a focus on well-reasoned judgments. Thirty-five participants from judicial training centres, Councils and/or Supreme Courts from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo*¹ participated in a regional round table on "Assessing human rights training for legal professionals: challenges and good practices". Twenty-four Serbian judges, prosecutors and staff of the Judicial Academy participated in a study visit to Strasbourg. The conference "International Co-operation in Criminal Matters: human rights perspective" marked the completion of the HELP online course on International Co-operation in Criminal Matters for 53 prosecutors/deputy prosecutors. The Project ended on 23 May.
- EU/CoE - HF "Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in Serbia": In the framework of further capacity building activities for legal professionals, 22 lawyers enhanced their knowledge on how to effectively claim compensation on behalf of trafficking victims within the existing legal system during a workshop on 4 April, which was organised in co-operation with the NGO Astra, in Belgrade. The Final Conference and the 6th Steering Committee meeting gathered all key anti-trafficking stakeholders in Belgrade on 15 April. The participants reflected on the action's achievements, challenges encountered and recommendations for the future HF phase II.
- EU/CoE - HF "Strengthening the protection of national minorities": Guidelines with model acts on financial business for National Councils of National Minorities were finalised and shared with partners on 15 May. The presentation of the Guidelines for the appropriate presentation of national minorities in educational content was organised on 10 April. During the final Steering committee meeting, research agency "Demostat" presented the results and comparative analysis of both surveys to project partners and stakeholders. Small grants were finalised successfully, and the results were presented by LSGs on 16 April.

¹ *All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

- EU/CoE JP Reinforcing Judicial Expertise on Freedom of Expression and the Media in South-East Europe (JUFREX): A Dictionary of Media and Legal Terms was prepared and presented in Belgrade on 17 April. The publication "Media regulatory authorities and protection of minors" was prepared both in English and Serbian. On 5 April, the final JUFREX conference took place in Sarajevo. During 3 years of project implementation; nearly 250 activities were implemented, reaching out to more than 4000 beneficiaries. More than 2000 judges, prosecutors and lawyers have been trained and more than 1500 media actors attended JUFREX events.
- EU/CoE JP "ROMACTED: Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level": The Project organised the Second Steering Committee in Skopje on 18 June. The First Advisory Group Meeting at beneficiary level was held in Belgrade on 30 May, with the participation of the Coordination Body of the Republic of Serbia for Monitoring Roma National Strategy, representatives of 11 local authorities and Roma communities, the French Embassy and EUD to Serbia. At local level, short and long-term priorities identified by Roma communities have been continuously addressed to local decision makers, followed by activities for their realisation.
- VC HRTF "HELP in the Western Balkans": Five HELP online courses (on child-friendly justice, introduction to the European Convention on Human Rights, violence against women and domestic violence, property rights) were launched while 3HELP online courses (on international cooperation in criminal matters, introduction to the ECHR, violence against women and domestic violence) were successfully completed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. The HELP course on Introduction to the ECHR was launched for law students of Belgrade University as per the HELP mandate deriving from the CM/Rec(2004)4 on university education and professional training.
- EU/CoE JP "Human Resources Management in Local Self-Government": The Programme Management Unit became fully operational in the first week of April, with all its team members on board. Since then, the PMU organised a planning workshop with key partners/beneficiaries and held a number of meetings to fine-tune the work plan according to actual needs. The first draft of the Inception Report was submitted on 19 June. Various project activities started during this period, including a high-level round table on professional trainings for LSGs on 28 June.

Follow-up action

- Horizontal Facility Phase 2 was initiated and the inception phase for certain projects is on-going;
- Continue with Council of Europe 70th anniversary activities and visibility events;
- Project proposal following an assessment mission by the Economic Crime and Cooperation Division.

Other relevant activities

- HF 1 Regional Closing Conference was held in Tirana on 3 April, gathering all beneficiaries and TAPA coordinators;
- A CoE library was opened in one of the pilot schools in Turija on 10 April, as part of the activities to mark the CoE's 70th anniversary;
- International Roma Day was marked with a series of activities within Roma Week, including a public lecture by Calin Rus on 11 April in Belgrade, organised in cooperation with the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts;
- The Ministry of Culture and Information of Serbia marked the CoE's 70th anniversary with an international media conference organised in cooperation with the CoE Office in Belgrade on 24 May, opened by DHoO;

- The Regional Youth Knowledge Forum was organised in Novi Sad by the EU/CoE Youth Partnership on 19 June, opened by the HoO;
- HF Phase 2 started on 24 May.

Bucharest

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 0.5, Project staff – 29, Total – 29.5

C-PROC is responsible for the implementation of 5 cybercrime capacity building projects with a combined budget of over 31 million EUR. Three projects are jointly funded with the European Union (EU), one is funded by voluntary contributions and another one “Ending Violence Against Children (EVAC)” by the United Kingdom.

State of implementation of projects

- VC “Cybercrime@Octopus”: The project supported the organisation of Protocol Drafting Group meetings to facilitate progress in the negotiation of the second Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime. The adoption of domestic legislation and accession to the Budapest Convention in 14 Pacific Island States was promoted in cooperation with Australia at the 3rd meeting of the Cybercrime Working Group of the Pacific Island Law Officers Network (PILON) in Vanuatu. In-country visits of the Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY) supported by this project led to an invitation to Benin to accede to the Convention, a political decision to accede by the Government of Cote d’Ivoire and recommendations for legislative reform in Guinea. A workshop on the review of the legislation of Qatar in Doha led to a series of recommendations for reform of the cybercrime law of Qatar in line with rule of law and human rights safeguards. Visibility of the Budapest Convention was ensured by supporting the organisation of the South Eastern European Dialogue on Internet Governance (SEEDIG) in Bucharest and the participation in the EU Working Party of Human Rights (COHOM) in Iași, Romania. Updates on the work on cybercrime, including in relation to the 2nd Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention were provided at the 6th Annual Meeting of the Working Group on Drugs Online of the Pompidou Group in Vienna, Austria, the European Dialogue on Internet Governance Conference in The Hague, Netherlands, and the Internet and Jurisdiction Conference in Berlin, Germany.
- EU/CoE JP “iPROCEEDS”: The project facilitated the establishment of a pool of new national trainers in North Macedonia and Turkey by conducting a training of trainers course on Cybercrime, Electronic Evidence and Online Crime Proceeds. Moreover, more than 100 magistrates from Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro and Turkey increased their skills and knowledge on matters related to prosecution and adjudication of cybercrime and online money-laundering through the organisation of introductory judicial training on cybercrime and online crime proceeds. The investigative capacities of the project countries were reinforced through the demonstration of the FREETOOL and facilitating access to these open source tools for cybercrime investigations and digital forensics. The project supported the strengthening of the inter-agency and international cooperation in the search, seizure and confiscation of online crime proceeds through the national delivery of the cybercrime and financial investigation simulation exercise involving investigations related to virtual currencies and Darknet. Capabilities for international cooperation in cybercrime investigations and proceedings of criminal justice authorities from the project countries were reinforced through a table-top exercise.
- EU/CoE JP “GLACY+”: The project aimed at strengthening criminal justice capacities worldwide in the fight against cybercrime and in the proper use of electronic evidence, with a particular focus on its 12 priority countries and their respective regions. The visibility of the Budapest Convention was ensured through several initiatives including the co-organisation of the First African Region Data Protection and Privacy Conference, held in Ghana and attended by 1000+ people, including representatives from more than 15 African countries. The drafting

process of cybercrime legislation was supported in Namibia, through a joint mission with the World Bank and the Commonwealth Secretariat. Furthermore, the consolidation of procedural legislation of Costa Rica was supported. Synergies with other international organisations and programmes were reinforced including policy dialogue through participation in the EU Cyber Forum for all GLACY+ priority countries, the co-chairing of the Second Expert Meeting on the joint Council of Europe (CoE) - Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) Handbook on Cybercrime and Fundamental Rights, GFCE (Global Forum on Cybercrime Expertise) Cybercrime Working Group meeting, the ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers) Policy Meeting and the launching event of the CoE HELP online course on Data Protection. Three international events focusing on Cybercrime policies were organised in the Dominican Republic with the participation of all the Caribbean countries, in Cape Verde, with the participation of the Prosecutors' Offices of all Portuguese-speaking countries, and in Chile, which hosted a meeting of the Ibero American Network of Cyber Prosecutors, "Ciber Red". The definition of a national cyber security and cybercrime strategy was supported in the Philippines. Moreover, the drafting of a national Data Protection Policy was supported in Gambia. Law enforcement capacities were reinforced through successful workshops/trainings on cybercrime investigations, electronic evidence and international cooperation in Singapore (participation of all Glacy+ countries and countries from the region), Dominican Republic, Philippines, Senegal, Tonga and Bucharest (workshop to facilitate access to the investigative and forensic tools developed by the University College Dublin). The increase of the capacities of judicial and prosecution authorities to prosecute and adjudicate cybercrime cases was supported by courses in Cape Verde, Chile, Costa Rica. In the Dominican Republic, the definition of the national judicial training strategy and streamlining MLA procedures in cybercrime investigations were reinforced. Authorities in the Philippines and Mauritius were provided with advice regarding the reporting of cybercrime and collection of relevant statistics.

- EU/CoE JP "CyberSouth": The project organised the first regional meeting on the elaboration of cyberthreat reports at national level in April, in Morocco, aiming to bring together relevant institutions on cybercrime and electronic evidence. As a result of this meeting countries agreed on the relevance of national strategies and policies on cybercrime and instruments for the collection of criminal justice statistics on cybercrime. The reports are expected to feed national strategies and policies on cybercrime to develop institutional capacities. Local judicial training courses on cybercrime and electronic evidence in Algeria and Tunisia were developed with the support of the project. The capacities of the law enforcement authorities from project countries were reinforced by specific training on online open source investigations and malware analyses. Access of countries to the E-FIRST course developed by the European Cybercrime Training Education Group was facilitated through the translation of the course into Arabic.

- VC (multi-lateral) "EndOCSEA@Europe": The participation of civil society in the implementation and monitoring of the Lanzarote Convention was strengthened by the organisation of an international event on 8-9 April in Strasbourg. The launching conference of the project was held on 16-17 May, in Strasbourg to promote the objectives of the project as well as to strengthen effective responses to prevent and combat online child sexual exploitation through multi-sectorial co-operation. A grant competition procedure was opened for civil society and public institutions to facilitate the implementation of awareness activities on online child sexual exploitation at multiple levels. Grant applications that have been received will be evaluated within the next period. In order to identify ways to reinforce current legislation, policies and practices to better prevent and combat online child sexual exploitation the first fact-finding visit of the project took place in Baku, Azerbaijan, 18-21 June.

Follow up action

- Implementation of the project work plans as agreed upon for the third quarter of 2019;
- Preparations for the launching conference of the new CyberEast project for the Eastern Partnership region.

Other relevant activities

- Benin has been invited to accede to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime;
- The new CyberEast project jointly funded by the European Commission and the CoE was signed and formally started on 20 June;
- The non-cost extension of the IPROCEEDS project was signed and therefore the project will continue until December 2019;
- C-PROC hosted visits of the delegation from Ministry of Interior from Ukraine, one representative from the European Commission and one representative from the Ministry of Justice of Taiwan to discuss about the challenges of international cooperation on cybercrime and the impact of cybercrime capacity building projects implemented by the office in Bucharest.

Chisinau**Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 5, Project staff – 13, Total staff – 18.

The Deputy Head of Office ended her duties on 7 March.

The Office implemented 5 projects, of which 2 are jointly funded with the EU and 3 are funded by VC/Donor.

State of implementation of projects/programmes/Action Plans/co-operation documents

- AP "Promoting a human rights compliant criminal justice system in the Republic of Moldova": Component 1 - On 4 June, an International Conference on Article 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights "Right to liberty and security" was organised for participants from 8 countries and served as a high-level forum for an exchange of opinions on the topic. In addition, the Programme held 2 workshops for judges and penitentiary staff to support the effective implementation of the newly-enacted national remedy to address poor detention conditions, as well as 2 trainings for prosecutors on policy development, monitoring and evaluation. The National Preventive Mechanism was supported, inter alia, in developing its annual report. Lastly, the Programme hosted a justice sector donor coordination meeting to ensure synergies and avoid overlaps between activities in the field. Component 2 - Under the auspices of the Programme a draft revised Curriculum for induction training of prison staff and a draft Curriculum for the training of probation officers on drafting presentence reports were developed. Moreover, a risk and needs assessment tool for prisoners, targeting conditionally and early released persons, as well as those under the execution of split-sentences, is being prepared for piloting in 2019-2020. A concept note on the reorganisation of probation in view of increasing its efficiency along with proposals to amend the legal framework aimed at strengthening the status of probation employees were drafted. The regulation on releasing seriously-ill persons serving a sentence was revised.
- EU/CoE JP "Controlling Corruption through Law Enforcement and Prevention (CLEP)": The Project increased the skills of Moldovan financial institutions to identify and analyse Anti-Money Laundering (AML), suspicious transactions and avoid defensive reporting. At the same time, banks' compliance officers learned about AML compliance standards and good training techniques for bank front office staff. The project also supported the creation of a pool of AML trainers within the Moldovan Lawyers Training Centre who will carry out AML capacity building for legal professionals in the future. Moldovan prosecutors and investigators were equipped with techniques to present court evidence in economic and financial crime cases while representatives of the Moldovan Asset Recovery Office visited the Irish Criminal Assets Bureau in Dublin and increased their cooperation experience. The project also supported investigative journalists from Chisinau and the regions to discuss the reporting of corruption cases and learn from good international practices and examples. Lastly, guidance was provided to the National Anti-Corruption Centre on delivering anti-corruption compliance training to private companies and implementing effective mentorship techniques.
- VC Switzerland "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova": Key CoE concepts, standards and approaches to citizenship education and the ways in which these can be applied in the on-going curriculum reform process in the Republic of Moldova were the main topics of the national conference "Promoting Democratic Values through Education in the Republic of Moldova" organised on 16 May by the CoE in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research of the Republic of Moldova. The conference was attended by

over 150 education decision makers and professionals, schoolchildren, civil society organisations and development partners.

- VC (multi-lateral) "Protecting children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in the Republic of Moldova: The participation of Moldovan civil society in protecting children from sexual exploitation and abuse was strengthened through an international conference organised in April in Strasbourg. Judges, prosecutors and students of the Law Faculty were trained on Child friendly justice through the HELP online course, and relevant stakeholders and CoE experts explored ways to strengthen the coordination and implementation mechanisms of the Lanzarote Convention in the Republic of Moldova during a workshop organised in May.
- EU/CoE - PGG (Regional) "Strengthening access to justice through non-judiciary redress mechanisms for victims of discrimination, hate crime and hate speech in Eastern Partnership countries": An assessment mission on data collection on discrimination, hate crime and hate speech, and bilateral meetings with Field Office staff and project stakeholders was organised on 3-4 June. The meeting on 3 June aimed at exploring the value of disaggregated data collection with relevant national stakeholders and identified activities which could support them to improve the methods already in place. Following the working groups organised during the meeting, it was identified as useful that the project proceeds with a national mapping study to identify in detail what methods are used for disaggregated data collection, followed by guidelines for improvement developed for different professionals and finally training. Awareness-raising and information campaigns need to complement this work. The bilateral meetings aimed at connecting with relevant thematic partners (OSCE), and reviewing the current state of play of the project (EUD, Field Office) and of the regional comparative baseline study. The baseline study for assessing the national non-discrimination mechanism in EP countries is being developed and will need to be consolidated by an international consultant. One of the aims of the study is to assess the effectiveness of access to justice for victims of discrimination, hate crime and hate speech through non-judiciary redress mechanisms in the 6 countries and provide recommendations for improvements.
- EU/CoE - PGG "Strengthening the capacities of the justice sector actors to deliver justice in line with European standards, in particular to fight discrimination": An inception phase mission for meeting the main partners (Equality Council, Lawyers Training Center and EUD) was organised on 5 June. The aims of the meetings were to present the project's planned activities until the end of 2019 and to discuss the period 2020-21; presentation of priority areas by the beneficiaries; agreement on project's activities.

Follow up action

- In the context of the discussions with the Moldovan authorities on the ratification of the Istanbul Convention, a conference will be organised with the French Embassy on 3 October.

Other relevant activities

- An Exhibition was organised on 8 April together with the National Library on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the CoE. The State Secretary for Foreign Affairs and European Integration, the French Ambassador, the Director of the National Library and the HoO opened the exhibition. The event was attended by the EU, Russian and Romanian ambassadors, as well as the UN Resident Representative and other members of the diplomatic corps. The office translated into Romanian and Russian the 14 panels exhibited in CoE HQ to mark the 70th anniversary. The event benefited from wide media coverage and positive feedback from partners and national stakeholders.

Kyiv**Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 10, Project staff –34, Total staff - 44.

In the framework of the CoE Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2021, the Office implemented 14 projects, including 12 projects funded by voluntary contributions, one funded under the CoE/EU PGG and one project funded by HRTF.

State of implementation of projects/programmes

- VC HRTF “Supporting Ukraine in execution of judgments of the ECtHR”: The Project supported the Supreme Court (SC) in monitoring its decisions on the review proceeding based on the ECtHR judgments (cases “Bochan v Ukraine (no. 2)”, “Yaremenko v. Ukraine (no.2)” and “Shabelnyk v Ukraine (no 2)”). Further presentation of the results of this analysis was carried out and possible solutions to ensure the uniformity of judicial practice were identified at the annual conference, which was jointly organised by the Project and the SC on 21 June. Also, the Project supported the work of the High Council of Justice (HCJ) on guaranteeing the independence of the judiciary through carrying out the analysis and conducting the public discussion on the 2018 HCJ’s Annual Report. Finally, at the initiative and with the assistance of the Project, new procedural codes of Ukraine were examined in the context of their impact on the length of judicial proceedings and compliance with the requirements of the Art.6 (1) of the ECtHR. In June, the Project jointly with the SC gathered representatives of all 3 branches of power to present and discuss the analysis of the new procedural legislation of Ukraine.
- AP “Support to the implementation of the judicial reform in Ukraine”: On 14 May the Project co-hosted the 5-day orientation course for the 128 newly appointed judges of the Supreme Court. On 21 June, the Project, in synergy with the above mentioned CoE/HRTF-funded project, contributed to the expert discussion among judges and legal professionals on issues of the independence of the judiciary in Ukraine, and also organised the presentation of the Report on Results of the Survey on Ukrainian Citizens’ Attitudes to Judiciary conducted by the Ukrainian Center for Economic and Political Studies, named after Oleksandr Razumkov
- VC Denmark “Continued Support to the Criminal Justice Reform in Ukraine”: The final report containing the assessments, conclusions and recommendations of the functional review of the prosecutorial service management setting, which was conducted by Price Waterhouse Coopers, was presented to the Prosecutor General's Office. The final report on the assessment of the human rights training was also presented to the National Academy of Prosecutors of Ukraine. Expert comments on the Criminal Procedure Code in light of Article 6 of the ECHR were discussed with national stakeholders and presented at a round table in early June. Furthermore, 13 staff members of the Coordination Centre for Legal Aid Provision (CCLAP) developed their own training programmes, 30 staff members of CCLAP acquired skills for conducting sociological surveys, and 9 representatives of CCLAP, Bar and civil society learned about the quality assurance mechanism in England and Wales during the study visit. Finally, the closing conference of the Project took place in Kyiv on 13 June. The Project ended on 30 June.
- AP “Decentralisation and local government reform in Ukraine”: The Project issued 2 legal opinions on the proposed amendments to the Law on local self-government in Ukraine, on changes of territorial boundaries and grounds for early termination of powers at local level. Also, a consultative bottom-up approach to debate on and design the territorial reform at sub-regional level was introduced in cooperation with the national association of districts and regions and the Ministry of Regional development. Furthermore, on 16-17 May, the Programme organised an international peer review to discuss the organisation and functioning of local

government and public services within the agglomeration area of Kyiv. Finally, a national capacity and training needs analysis for local civil servants and amalgamated communities was prepared and presented to the National Agency on Civil Service on 23 May.

- AP "Strengthening democracy and building trust at local level in Ukraine": Twenty-five trainers from all over Ukraine expanded their knowledge and skills in relation to HRs education, conflict transformation, and hate speech in the frame of a thematic ToT, which was organised by the Project in cooperation with the Ombudsperson's Office. On 18-20 June in Odessa, the Project, in partnership with the Association of Ukrainian Cities contributed to the XV Municipal Forum for 400 mayors, through organisation of a thematic Day of the Congress on 19 June covering issues of open government, public ethics and gender mainstreaming at local level. As a result, Ukrainian mayors unanimously adopted a Forum Declaration which outlined their commitment to addressing citizens' needs and introducing mechanisms for citizens' engagement in local decision-making processes. This also created an additional opportunity for Ukrainian mayors who participated in a study visit to the 6th Open Government Partnership Global Summit in Canada from 28 -31 May to showcase global experiences on the role of local governments that can be replicated in Ukraine.
- AP "Promoting civil participation in democratic decision-making in Ukraine": The capacities and expertise of NGOs and public officials in participatory policymaking techniques were strengthened through tailored training initiatives, namely the Academy of civil participation and experience exchange in Kyiv in June, a series of trainings for Roma NGOs in May in Donetsk oblast, and strategic sessions and coaching for the Kyiv NGO Platform. The Zhytomyr municipal framework for civil participation was adopted to provide local citizens with a variety of effective civil participation tools. The Project provided an expert opinion to the Parliament on the draft law on amending legislation on direct participation of citizens in the management of local affairs and statutory rulemaking.
- AP "Supporting constitutional and legal reforms, constitutional justice and assisting the Parliament in conducting reforms aimed at enhancing its efficiency": In April, CoE experts, jointly with the Central Election Commission, developed 2 manuals for members of district and precinct election commissions with legal advice on the decisions and actions of members of the election commissions. Manuals were printed in 34,000 copies and sent to members of the election commissions. As part of the PACE observation mission for the Presidential elections, member of the Venice Commission, Rafael Rubio Nuñez (Spain), took part in the PACE delegation, which provided legal assistance to the work of the mission and prepared a general opinion on the results of the election observation. In April, a working expert group was set up to develop a handbook (methodological analysis) "Rule of law Checklist implementation in law-making process and legal practice". In May, a working group on problem analysis and the development of new electoral legislation for local elections was established at the Ministry of Regional Development with the participation of CoE experts in developing a concept of legislative changes.
- AP "Supporting the transparency, inclusiveness and integrity of electoral practice in Ukraine": 3rd interim and final reports on media coverage of Presidential elections publicly presented and discussed. Thirteen decisions were released by the Commission on Journalism Ethics on non-compliance with the requirements for impartial and balanced media coverage of the election process. A handbook for journalists with recommendations on media coverage of elections was prepared and presented to national stakeholders. A workshop for first-time voters on electoral systems and procedures was held in Lviv. Four meetings with experts were held with regard to developing legislative amendments on ensuring the principle of proportional representation of local communities in oblast and rayon local councils.
- AP "Strengthening freedom of media and establishing a public broadcasting system in Ukraine": The results, conclusions and recommendations of the independent public monitoring of media coverage of the presidential election campaign for the period of 14 January – 21 April were discussed with the key stakeholders at a round table in early May. Following the initiative

of the Ministry of Information Policy on 6 June the key stakeholders discussed main challenges and priorities in the media sphere for the next 5 years. On 28 May, a workshop on “Effective interaction of the law enforcement and journalists during peaceful assemblies” was organised for national police officers from the Kyiv region. In addition, the Project supported the production of 1000 identification vests emblazoned with the word “PRESS,” which were distributed among journalists from all over Ukraine. With the aim to support the public broadcasting reform, on 10 April a CoE expert report on the system of financing of the Ukrainian Public Broadcaster UA:PBC in light of CoE standards was discussed at two thematic events with the participation of key stakeholders in the government and media sphere.

- AP “The Istanbul Convention: The project supported the printing and dissemination among key stakeholders of a leaflet “The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention): Questions and answers”. Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)1 of the Committee of Ministers on combating sexism was also translated into Ukrainian and expected to be published at the end of July. With the aim to strengthen capacities of legal professionals who are in charge of protecting victims of violence, a thematic ToT was carried out on 22-24 April for 14 trainers followed by 3 cascade trainings for 76 regional attorneys from different regions of Ukraine.

- AP “Enhancing Implementation of the European Human Rights Standards”: Further to a request by the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI), the Project initiated a training needs assessment to identify the current training needs and gaps of the SBI staff, the first fact-finding mission took place in May. Furthermore, the Project piloted 5 draft versions of the methodological recommendations on how to implement the National Prevention Mechanism in the framework of 3 regional monitoring visits to different places of deprivation of liberty. Human rights-based guide for professional staff of psychiatric institutions “Ensuring good quality treatment and care for impatience in mental health care establishments in Ukraine” was finalised and prepared for introduction for relevant medical staff in November 2019. Finally, the Project jointly with the Ukrainian National Bar Association launched the HELP online course on “Admissibility criteria” for a group of 30 lawyers representing the victims of the military conflict in the East of Ukraine as well as the course on “Key human rights principles in biomedicine” that was piloted in Lviv and Kharkiv underlining the actuality of the medical law issues for Ukraine.

- AP “Protection of national minorities, including Roma, and minority languages in Ukraine”: The awareness of the national authorities on coordination mechanisms protecting national minorities was raised. The Project supported key stakeholders in the organisation of the 2nd stage peer-to-peer meeting in Serbia on 22-23 May in order to promote experience exchange and networking. Ukrainian teachers through Ukraine will use the newly translated publication ‘European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages’. The CoE Report “Strengthening the protection of national minorities in Ukraine: Executive structures and specialised dialogue mechanisms in an international perspective” prepared by the Project experts was printed and disseminated among representatives of government, civil society and national minority groups. A new body dealing with national minority issues in Ukraine – State Service on Ethnical Policy and Freedom of Conscience was established by the Government in June following the CoE’s recommendations.

Gender mainstreaming

- The Recommendation on preventing and combating sexism and the leaflet addressing misconceptions about the Istanbul Convention have been distributed. The Office participated in the meeting on gender equality convened by the VPM Klympush-Tsintsadze for donors and partners. The Office was invited to become a member of the working group on gender established by the Kyiv State City Administration. The gender adviser continued to support

projects in gender mainstreaming in their activities. A gender mainstreaming training for staff was carried out.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- 13-15 May: Regis Brillat, SASG
- 18 June: Verena Taylor, Director of ODGP
- 18-20 June: Andreas Kiefer, Congress Secretary General took part in the XV Ukrainian Municipal Forum in Odessa

Pristina

Situation of the Office

Core staff - 5, Project staff -16, Total - 21.

The Office implements 9 projects, of which 5 are jointly funded with the EU including 2 regional joint programmes, and 4 are funded by voluntary contributions (VC) from Norway, Switzerland, and also the CoE. It should be added that another regional joint project is also implemented in Kosovo*, by the Council of Europe Bucharest Office for Cybercrime "iPROCEEDS").

State of implementation of projects

- EU/CoE - HF "Strengthening the Quality and Efficiency of Justice (KoSEJ)": The court coaching reports were finalised, identifying deficiencies in the daily functioning of courts and providing recommendations. In May, the 2 CEPEJ coordinators in the Ministry of Justice started the data collection process for 2018 to assess the efficiency of the judicial system since 2017. Two CEPEJ experts expressed concerns regarding the CMIS project which aims at introducing a case management system in the courts while replacing paper files with electronic files – this is a particularly complex operation, which only a few countries, particularly advanced in this field, have managed to do.
- EU/CoE JP "Project against Economic Crime in Kosovo*": PECK organised a workshop on the Model Regulation on the mandate of authorities in charge of implementing the Law on conflict of interest and 2 awareness raising activities. It presented the technical paper on beneficial ownership, held a working group meeting on amending the legislation related to AML/CFT, and also supported a round table with non-profit organisations on their obligations related to AML/CFT Law. The 6th Steering Committee meeting was held as well as a series of meetings with relevant authorities on the next phases of PECK (PECK II extension and PECK III).
- VC Switzerland/Norway/AP "Strengthening the National Preventive Mechanism in Kosovo* – SNPM": The closing conference, also marking the CoE's 70th anniversary, was held in Pristina with participation of the CPT President. The project ended with a rate of implementation of 130%; some 50 international and local experts took part. The NPM increased its operational capacity up to 133% and its annual number of visits up to 400%. More than 100 professionals from the rule of law and health sectors were trained. Awareness raising activities reached some 1200 detained persons and 400 sectorial professionals. The project facilitated the signature of a MoU between the Kosovo* National Preventive Mechanism and the Swiss National Commission for Prevention of Torture.
- VC Norway "Improving the Protection of European Human Rights Standards by the Constitutional Court": An on-site mentoring scheme assigning international experts for one week to the Court started. The baseline assessment of training needs of judges and legal advisors was carried out and preparations were made for their placements at the ECtHR in Strasbourg - it will involve 8 judges (all but the President) for one month and 3 legal advisors for 2 months. The first thematic workshop on European Standards on Reasonable Time of Proceedings was held. The project also selected 17 international experts who will cover capacity building activities during the implementation period.
- VC Norway/AP "Fostering rapprochement through education for democracy and language learning (FRED)": FRED assisted the pilot schools in developing school-based activities, it identified local trainers and organised activities based on the Competences for Democratic Culture, and helped schools to develop projects promoting democratic culture and

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

plurilingualism. It held a conference gathering over 120 participants including the Deputy Minister of Education and the Language Commissioner, with a view to presenting a baseline study on the linguistic perceptions of young people and an in-depth assessment with policy recommendations on language rights in education.

- VC Norway/AP "Reinforcing the fight against violence against women and domestic violence in Kosovo*": A series of meetings with relevant stakeholders was held to introduce the project's objectives. The project was officially launched on 15 May during a workshop gathering some 60 participants from all relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions, local and international non-governmental institutions and intergovernmental organisations. The Academy of Justice endorsed the HELP course and 'Training of Trainers' in the field of combating violence against women and domestic violence. The project held its first steering committee, and endorsed the project's annual work plan.
- EU/CoE - HF "Enhancing human rights policing": The Action completed the training sessions on human rights and investigations of ill-treatment cases. Overall, some 1500 persons including 29 % of women, 6 % of people from the minorities, and 12% of the police staff benefited from the project, and 63 % of the Police Inspectorate staff were trained. A visibility and information campaign produced 500 posters on the rights of persons in police custody, 800 copies of CoE handbooks on human rights and policing, and investigative interviewing, along with 2000 accompanying leaflets, were distributed to the Kosovo Police and the Police Inspectorate.
- EU/CoE regional JP "Reinforcing Judicial Expertise on Freedom of Expression and the Media in South-East Europe (JUFREX)": Three attorneys from Pristina out of 26 from all JUFREX beneficiaries took part in a study visit to the CoE in Strasbourg with a view to receiving relevant information pertinent to the freedom of expression. The participants also attended an ECtHR grand chamber hearing. The CoE handbook "Protecting the right to Freedom of Expression under the European Convention of Human Rights" and the publication "Media regulatory authorities and protection of minors" have been translated into the official languages of Kosovo* and disseminated to legal professionals and journalists.
- EU/CoE regional JP "ROMACTED: Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level": ROMACTED held trainings with all beneficiary municipalities, on the 'Principles and Tools for Roma inclusion' and on 'Project Cycle Management'. As a result, 9 community project proposals were presented. In addition, several projects were engaged: the Obiliq/Obilič municipality initiated 3 infrastructural projects in a Roma settlement, and 'Radio Gračanica' started broadcasting its programmes in the Roma language. The first Advisory Committee was organised in Pristina between the beneficiary municipalities and the Roma community.
- EU/CoE regional JP "Project on targeting crime proceeds on the Internet in South-eastern Europe and Turkey (iPROCEEDS)": Participants from various Kosovo* institutions (prosecutors, police, ministry of justice) took part in a number of activities such as: an International conference on digital forensics and digital evidence, a table-top exercise on international cooperation on cybercrime, a meeting on Free Forensic Tools for the Law Enforcement Community (FREETOOL) in cooperation with UCD, a workshop on channels and avenues for international cooperation in cybercrime in cooperation with INTERPOL and the fourth annual Symposium on Cybersecurity Awareness organised by the Anti-Phishing Working Group.

Follow up action

- HF phase 1 closing: holding of the third and last steering committee at beneficiary level concluding 3 years of cooperation and the implementation of 5 successful actions;
- Preparation of HF phase 2 with 3 Kosovo* specific actions and 6 regional actions including Kosovo*;

- PECK II: production of a short-televised announcement to raise awareness on the Financial Intelligence Unit's mandate;
- KoSEJ: start of KoSEJ-phase II under HF II, without an inception phase as of 24 May for three years;
- HF II Action on media: inception phase started on 24 May directly following the end of JUFREX;
- SNPM: publication of NPM annual report and Handbook on basic competences of correctional officers to be further used by NPM in communication with authorities;
- FRED: develop success stories from the school-based activities implemented by the pilot school;
- Meetings with EU Office on project proposals for HF II, IPA-funding (rule of law and education fields), and potential donors for funding projects based on the updated 'Overview' document.

Other relevant activities

- The Office together with relevant CoE project staff continue to attend the exercise on the Functional Review of the Rule of Law Sector;
- The Office provided substance and logistics assistance to the induction phases of the two newly started projects on violence against women, and for the Constitutional Court, and for HF II actions;
- The Office took part in local and international events (conference, round tables, workshops, panels) promoting human rights and rule of law issues, media, anti-discrimination, efficiency of justice, minorities' rights;
- The Office continues to participate in donor and activities coordination mechanisms with a view to promoting CoE's work, ensuring efficiency of activities implementation and avoiding duplication. HoO also took part in the annual CoE-EC consultations on the 2019 EU enlargement package.

Sarajevo

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 6, Project staff - 16, Total staff – 22.

The Office implements 9 projects, of which 5 projects are funded within the EU/CoE Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey, and 1 VC project funded by the UK and US, and 1 VC funded by the government of Norway. Two other projects are funded by voluntary contributions to the CoE Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021. In addition, the Office contributes to the implementation of 2 regional projects, Joint Programmes with the EU on freedom of expression and media, and on Roma empowerment at local level.

State of implementation of projects / the Action Plan

- EU/CoE - HF "Enhancing human rights protection for detained and sentenced persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina": In April, 40 governors and assistant governors highlighted improvements in the application of operational procedures for dealing with persons deprived of liberty following CoE capacity building for prison staff. In April and May, 77 police officers (30% female officers) advanced their knowledge and skills to manage persons deprived of liberty while observing their human rights, based on the CoE Guidelines for dealing with persons deprived of liberty in closed environment. Experience and best practices sharing between homologue officials of prison and law enforcement were facilitated through 2 study visits to Slovenia and Montenegro, in April and May. In April, an assessment report on the level of application of training outcomes in the daily management of forensic offenders recorded positive developments with respect to an improved human rights record in daily procedures such as searches, escorting, risk and needs assessment, etc. In May, the Action's final Steering Committee showed satisfaction with the overall results in terms of normative reform and raising the level of competence and professionalism among prison and police professionals.
- EU/CoE - HF "Strengthening the protection of national minorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina": In April, the Minority Coordination Group (MCG) discussed a policy paper devising further steps to maintain and develop their cultural heritage and language. In April, through a conference on the application of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, organised within the framework of the Action, 46 representatives of different authorities, including the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees, improved their skills in reporting to monitoring bodies of the FCNM. In May, 12 representatives of the MCG learned good practices in inter-institutional co-operation in minority protection and promotion during a study visit to Germany. In May, 16 members of the Council of national minorities and of the Secretariat of the Joint Commission for Human Rights of the Parliament of BiH visited CoE HQ to learn more about the content and good practices of the FCNM, the ECRML, about the work of ECRI and the Anti-discrimination department. A documentary on national minorities and the Action's achievements will be presented at a film festival in Sarajevo. In May, the final Steering Committee expressed its satisfaction with the results of the Action.
- EU/CoE - HF "Quality education in multi-ethnic societies": In April, a detailed policy roadmap outlining specific, concrete actions around 6 overarching objectives was developed through a participatory process involving the Action Advisory Board, the CoE, the EU Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and education experts. The policy roadmap was endorsed by all 13 Ministries of Education in BiH and handed over to the Ministry of Civil Affairs for further adoption by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This action was implemented in close cooperation and partnership with the Ministry of Civil Affairs and all

relevant entity and cantonal Ministries of Education who are represented in the Action Advisory Board.

- EU/CoE - HF "Preventing and combating human trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina": The inception phase of the project started in June. .
- VC UK/US "Structured sentence management for violent and extremist prisoners in Bosnia and Herzegovina": In April-May, expert recommendations on the development of a Case Management System (CMS) for violent extremist prisoners (VEPs) were prepared, and they are being used by the working group for the development of a manual on Case Management Systems. In June, the second Steering Committee discussed the implementation of the project and unanimously adopted the next 6-month work plan. In June, with project support, senior representatives of the Ministries of Justice of BiH, FBiH and RS, as well as prison managers met to define guidelines for drafting a comprehensive Strategy for the selection of prison staff intended to work with VEPs in maximum security prison facilities. In June, the CoE Office in Sarajevo, in co-operation with the Ministries of Justice of BiH, FBiH and RS organised the 2nd Coordination meeting with other project initiatives to provide information on the content of the training manual on CMS for VEPs, including a wide range of issues such as early identification of factors leading to radicalisation, increased awareness of inter-institutional co-operation in preventing violent extremism and radicalisation, and the development of specific programmes for the rehabilitation and reintegration of VEPs.
- VC Norway "Initiative for Legal Certainty and Efficient Judiciary in Bosnia and Herzegovina": In April, representatives of the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina (HJPC), Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Supreme Court of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH), Supreme Court of Republika Srpska and the Appellate Court of Brcko district visited the IT Department of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) and the CoE, in order to gain practical knowledge on the use of different tools for the harmonisation of judicial practice. In April, the project facilitated the meeting between the Execution Department and the competent authorities of the FBiH and its cantons. Training on legal reasoning and legal drafting taking into consideration the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights and decisions of the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina was organised for newly appointed judges and judicial assistants in May, in cooperation with the Judicial and Prosecutorial Training Centres in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In May, the first session of Training of Trainers on human rights for teaching staff of the law faculties was held in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Human Rights Legal Clinic at the Law Faculty of the University of Džemal Bijedić in Mostar was launched in March, and in June a moot court competition was organised. Also in June, 28 law students from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia took part in the Human Rights Summer School "Human Rights in a Digital Era" organised in cooperation with the Action "Strengthening the effective legal remedies to systemic human rights violations in Serbia".
- VC "Raising Bosnia and Herzegovina Institutional Capacity to Prevent and Combat Violence against Women and Domestic Violence": In April-May, an expert report and recommendations were completed to assess the current system of data collection on gender-based violence (GBV) and domestic violence as prescribed by the Article 11 of the Istanbul Convention. The CoE publication "Ensuring data collection and research on violence against women and domestic violence: Article 11 of the Istanbul Convention" was translated into the local language and it will be presented and disseminated together with the data collection assessment report at the final interactive workshop planned for 12 July in Sarajevo. A HELP course on gender-based violence and domestic violence, in cooperation with the Bar Associations of the Republika Srpska and Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was launched through 2 kick-off events in May, in Sarajevo and in Banja Luka. Over 40 solicitors in Sarajevo, and 20 in Banja Luka participated in the launch and expressed their readiness to take part in the HELP online course. By the end of June these 60 solicitors from BiH will undertake 7 online modules with the practical help and guidance of 2 national tutors.

- AP "Reconciliation through cooperation between divided municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina": In May, 34 administrative staff from 22 municipalities divided by administrative borders (divided municipalities) in Bosnia and Herzegovina benefitted from a training seminar on 'Project Cycle Management', which further enabled them to identify and prepare joint projects for reconciliation. The implementation of these projects will be supported through grants administered by the CoE.

Implementation in BiH of regional projects (see also under 'Belgrade Office')

- JP EU/CoE/ HF33 "Reinforcing Judicial Expertise on Freedom of Expression and the Media in South-East Europe" (JUFREX). In April-May, the project prepared the closure of its first phase, completed the outstanding activities in relation to the proofreading and adaptation of the publication "Media Regulatory Authorities and the Protection of Minors". This publication will be printed in the Bosnian language and distributed to partners during the activities of the follow-up project. JUFREX II started on 1 June, under Horizontal Facility II. An expert consultant was hired to conduct a needs assessment during the inception phase of the project.
- JP EU/CoE "Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level" (ROMACTED): During this reporting period, joint Action Plans were finalised in all 10 programme municipalities resulting in detailed plans for the programme's implementation in 2019. Ideas for small grants (up to 10 000 EUR) have been prepared and will be ready for submission as soon as the CoE launches the call. Grants will tackle the major Roma issues in each municipality and ideas were developed jointly with Roma community members. Meetings of Community Action groups were in focus in order to strengthen their capacities and identify needs for improvement. Synergies were established with Care International, REF, OSCE, Caritas and Kali Sara in order to avoid overlapping and achieve a greater impact in the field. Assistant to the minister, MHRR, visited 2 programme municipalities once again confirming support to the programme and she has also participated in the second Steering Committee which took place in Skopje, where the BiH delegation had the opportunity to present its case study on the city of Tuzla.

Other relevant activities

- 5 April: HoO attended and gave speech at the Women in Leadership Summit SEE, Sarajevo;
- 15 April: HoO and Electoral Assistance Division attended and gave a speech at the Conference: "2018 General Elections - challenges of the electoral process in Bosnia and Herzegovina" in Sarajevo;
- 4 June: HoO participated in the Annual Meeting with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- 10-14 June: DHoO attended the Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey TAPA Coordinators meeting in Strasbourg;
- 17-18 June: HoO participated in the Peace Implementation Council Meeting;
- 20 June: HoO met with Mr. Bakir Izetbegovic, Speaker of the House of Peoples of the Parliament of BiH regarding the non-appointment of the BiH delegation to the PA of the CoE;
- 27 June: HoO delivered opening remarks at the Conference "Political Party Finance: Legal Framework and Monitoring Perspectives" in Sarajevo;
- 28 June: HoO gave opening remarks at the OSCE Conference on the prevention of corruption in BiH in Sarajevo;

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- 11-21 June: European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) periodic visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Tbilisi

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 6, Project staff – 17, Total staff - 23.

The Office implemented 8 projects, 7 funded by VC/Donor, and one joint EU/CoE project under PGG.

State of implementation of projects / programmes

- AP “Support to the Judicial Reform in Georgia”: A Working Group on the “4th wave” of judicial reform finalised the draft legal amendments that provide higher standards for judicial appointments, disciplinary proceedings and the functioning of the High Council of Justice. Following GRECO recommendations, an Ethics Commission has been established in Georgia, pending the revision of the Ethics Code; an Independent Inspector provided best practices to address judicial activities on social media, followed by trainings on fair trial standards and a peer-exchange with counterparts in the Promoter’s Office in Spain; Justice School participants now form an Alumni Network that encourages lively discussions and initiatives from court staff; the Georgian Bar Association established a pro-bono network that enables wider access to court guarantees for vulnerable groups.
- EU/CoE – PGG “Programme to support Georgia in view of the 2016 (parliamentary), 2017 (local) and 2018 (presidential) elections”: A grant was awarded to the Central Electoral Commission of Georgia to provide further support to the Election Development Schools Project, aimed at raising awareness of youth on electoral matters and encourage their engagement in electoral processes. A Participatory Gender Audit was elaborated for the the CEC’s use, detailing gender mainstreaming in the CEC and future possible actions in this regard. Further development of an online electronic registration of electoral stakeholders has been supported. A comprehensive upgrade to existing software and websites of the Political Finance Monitoring Department of the State Audit Office of Georgia is underway. The update is aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the SAO and ensuring access for the general public to monitor the legality and transparency of political finances. Research on Electoral Dispute Resolution has also been initiated.
- AP “Improving Mental Health Care of Persons Detained in Georgia”: The second phase of the training of trainers in crises management in prisons was organised for medical and non-medical staff of the special penitentiary agency. Twenty participants enhanced their knowledge during a 6-day training course. The Ministry of Justice received support in revising the Prison healthcare standards document (adopted in 2015). The tool and methodology for the inspection of the implementation of prison standards was developed with the involvement of a local consultant and MoJ staff. Twenty newly employed doctors of temporary detention isolators were trained on documenting injuries, mental health disorders, and transmissible diseases.
- AP “Preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence in Georgia”: Fifteen prosecutors and 5 investigators and staff members of the Ministry of Internal Affairs successfully completed the HELP online course on violence against women and domestic violence. A peer-to peer exchange visit was organised to Stockholm, Sweden, on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence for representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Prosecutor’s Office, Judiciary, Public Defender’s Office, and the State Fund for the Protection and Assistance of Victims of Human Trafficking. A multidisciplinary meeting was organised for legal professionals, social workers and service providers to strengthen multi-agency co-operation in cases of violence against women and domestic violence. Fifteen prosecutors, 10 judges and 3 representatives of the Ministry of

Internal affairs were trained on effective investigation and prosecution of crimes of violence against women and domestic violence.

- AP "Fight against discrimination, hate crimes and hate speech in Georgia": The "I Choose Equality" campaign (under the project) cooperated with Tbilisi Open Air, the biggest music festival in the Caucasus region, to raise awareness about the importance of equality, tolerance and diversity. The fifth anniversary of the adoption of the antidiscrimination law was marked together with Ombudsman's Office and youth representatives. More than 20 police officers and psychologists were trained on effective ways of policing hate crime against the LGBT community. Recommendations and guidelines on establishing an effective hate crime and discrimination data collection system were developed. The project facilitated discussion on the progress of the execution of the ECtHR Group of Cases "Identoba and others v. Georgia". One hundred and forty-nine prosecutors and investigators of the Ministry of Internal Affairs were trained on international and national standards of investigation and prosecution of hate crimes. Two joint seminars for the managers of the General Prosecutor's office and MIA were organised with the aim of improving coordination between investigative and prosecution authorities. Fourteen representatives of the MIA were trained as trainers on the investigation of hate crimes. A comprehensive training module on investigation of crimes committed on discriminatory grounds was developed.
- AP "Strengthening Personal Data Protection in Georgia": The HELP course on Data Protection and Privacy Rights has been finalised and a translation from English into Georgian is underway. The Handbook on European Data Protection Law (a 500 page publication) has been checked by the Office of the Personal Data Protection Inspector in terms of correctness of terminology and is currently under scrutiny by the editor prior to publication.
- JP EU/CoE "Supporting Freedom of Media and Internet in Georgia": Drafting commentaries to the Charter of Journalistic Ethics has been initiated and will also include the input from a round table with the participation of university professors, which preceded this undertaking. A workshop on Media Literacy gathering all national stakeholders as well as international experts was organised. As a result, the creation of a media literacy network is envisaged.
- EU/CoE – PGG "Enhancing the systems of prevention and combatting corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing": The first Steering Committee of the project took stock of the results of the previous phase of the programme (PGG I-GE) and discussed priority actions for 2019. Training on "Efficient monitoring of public officials' asset declarations and prevention of conflict of interest" was organised for staff of the Civil Service Bureau. Training on "Investigation and prosecution of corruption offenses" was organised for Georgian law enforcement agencies and representatives of the High School of Justice.

Other relevant activities

- HoO presented opening remarks at: the round-table discussion "Supporting the criminal justice reforms - tackling criminal aspects of the judicial reform," presentation of Mechanisms of Confidential Counselling in the Judiciary – "European Standards and National Practices," presentation on "Improving Data Collection on Discrimination and Hate Crimes: Future Steps," presentation of "Cultural Routes - Georgia, Europe" official event (28 May), workshop on Participatory Gender Audit for Election Administration, and awarded winners of the essay competition "Imagining the European of the future?" together with the Deputy Minister of Education.
- HoO attended a Political Councillors' meeting upon invitation from EUD, where he presented CoE's work on judicial reforms, and a US embassy-organised meeting with NGOs. HoO attended a working meeting organised by the Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia on Amendments to the Electoral Legislation, the presentation of the 2019-2020 Action Plan of the Parliament of Georgia for the implementation of the EU-Georgia Association Agreement, a

meeting of the Parliament Chairman with diplomatic corps on appointment of supreme court judges, several meetings of the working group on the 4th wave of judicial reform, the President of Georgia for a meeting on an initiative to support reconciliation in the society, the round-table discussion "LGBTQI+ Rights in Georgia: Challenges and Solutions" organised by UNDP, the presentation of the Supreme Court's Annual Report of 2018 – "Condition of Justice in Georgia", the concluding discussion on the issues related to the fourth wave of judicial reforms, the Professional Day of the Employees of the Prosecution Service of Georgia, and a number of briefings organised by the parliamentary opposition.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- 1-2 April: A Venice Commission Delegation paid a visit to Tbilisi upon the request of the Chairman of the Parliament of Georgia to prepare an opinion on the draft legislative provisions concerning the appointment of Supreme Court judges;
- 3 June: the Steering Committee meeting on the implementation of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Georgia 2016-2019 took place in Tbilisi.

Tirana

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 6, Project staff – 13, Total staff - 19.

The Office implements 8 projects, out of which 7 are co-funded by the EU and one by the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC).

State of implementation of projects / programmes / Action Plans / co-operation documents

- VC Switzerland "Strengthening the local government structures in Albania": The new portal named www.administrata.al was launched on 26 April at a national conference. It represents the main achievement of the project and a comprehensive and innovative tool for managing Human Resource processes thus providing for a solid and sustainable contribution towards a professional, effective and modern public administration in Albania.
- EU/CoE – HF "Strengthening the Efficiency of Justice (SEJ II) in Albania": The High Judicial Council was supported in drafting an Action Plan with concrete steps on a new judicial map in Albania, in compliance with CEPEJ guidelines and methodology. A Guide on the Implementation of Selected CEPEJ tools in the Republic of Albania was prepared, providing concrete recommendations for the full implementation of CEPEJ instruments in court activities, as well as in shaping future strategies, policies, legal and sublegal acts. Representatives of the new High Judicial Council, Courts and the School of Magistrates participated in a study visit organised in Strasbourg and Frankfurt to observe good practices in the field of case flow management and court administration.
- EU/CoE – HF "Economic Crime in Albania": Amended legislation "On business registration", "On taxation procedures in Albania", "On measures against the financing of terrorism", "On the prevention of Money laundering" and "On administration of seized and confiscated assets" largely benefited from CoE expertise and recommendations. The High Inspectorate for the Declaration and Audit of Assets and Conflicts of Interest (HIDAACI) launched the electronic system for the declaration and publication of private interests of elected officials and some public officials, which made possible for the first time in Albania the electronic declaration, processing and publication of assets of elected and public officials, thus addressing relevant GRECO recommendations, in supporting the implementation of key institutional reforms in the country, as well as in increasing citizens' scrutiny and confidence in their institutions.
- EU/CoE – HF "Supporting effective domestic remedies and facilitating the execution of judgments (D-REX)": Over 500 Albanian students of Tirana and Durrës' law faculties successfully completed the human rights course on application of the European Convention on Human Rights focused on case studies in relation to the right to a fair trial, the right to protection of property and the protection of gender equality. The newly developed courses are integrated in the educational programmes of both universities. About 80 staff of the Agency for Treatment of Property, involving lawyers and engineers, were capacitated on the practical application of the commentary on the Law no. 133/2015 "On the treatment of property and finalization of the process of compensation of property". Two lawyers from the State Advocate were seconded for one month each to the Department for the Execution of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights.
- EU/CoE – HF "Fighting Bullying and extremism in the Education System in Albania": The exhibition "A voice against bullying" was organised in cooperation with the Centre for Openness and Dialogue at the Prime Minister's Office, displaying drawings and handicrafts with messages against bullying from students of 21 pilot schools of the project.

- EU/CoE regional JP "ROMACTED: Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level": Local Plans for the Social Inclusion of Roma 2019-2022 have been prepared and budgeted in 7 municipalities and adapted by the city councils of Fier and Roskovec. Forty-eight meetings of community groups in 7 municipalities, involving over 600 Roma participants, have taken place to discuss issues of common concern. Furthermore, 17 meetings of institutional groups and 46 meetings of the task force groups in 7 municipalities have taken place to address the problems identified by community groups. Finally, 21 Roma families from the Fier municipality were assisted in the legalisation of agricultural land, and 49 Roma have registered in labour offices and professional education centres.

Follow up action

- Follow up the inception and launching of the Horizontal Facility II Actions in coordination with EUD and relevant domestic stakeholders;
- Follow up discussions with the Swiss Embassy in Tirana in view of finalising the no-cost extension of the project "Strengthening the local government structures in Albania" till December 2019;
- Follow up discussions with Swedish Sida in the finalisation of the proposal on democratic competencies in the education system;
- Follow up discussions with the UK Embassy in Tirana in view of identifying potential actions, in particular in the sectors of human rights and rule of law.

Yerevan**Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 6, Project staff –14, Total staff - 20.

The Office implements 6 projects, of which 2 projects are funded by the EU under the Partnership for Good Governance (PGG), 1 project is funded by the Government of the United Kingdom, 1 project funded by the Government of Switzerland, 1 project funded by the Government of Austria and 1 project funded by donors' Action Plan-level voluntary contributions.

State of implementation of projects/programmes/Action Plans/co-operation documents

- EU/CoE – PGG "Support to the judicial reform – enhancing the independence and professionalism of the judiciary in Armenia" (Component 1): The Project supported the organisation of meetings of the high-level delegation of the CoE with Armenian officials held on 30-31 May. During the mission, the main scope of the CoE's support to the implementation of the new judicial reform agenda of the Government of Armenia was outlined. The Project is in the process of revising its activities and the Work Plan to better meet the needs and the main strategic directions of the new judicial reform agenda announced by the Prime Minister of Armenia on 20 May. The Project ensured the participation of 3 judges at the Second Regional Conference of the International Association of Women Judges on "Justice with gender perspective", which took place on 25-26 April in Madrid. Armenian participants came up with follow-up actions to ensure that the principles of judging with gender perspective are better applied in Armenia. In April, the Project supported the participation of the Self-regulating Organisation of Mediators of Armenia in ARMLEGAL EXPO' 2019, held in Yerevan, during which the mediators informed the public about mediation and its benefits. In addition, the Project ensured the participation of two focal points (representing the Civil Court of Appeal and the Court of Cassation) of the Superior Courts Network in the Forum of the Superior Courts Network held in June in Strasbourg. Based on the formal request of the Ministry of Justice, the Project started the final revision of the draft Code of Administrative Offences and the first round-table discussion aimed at cross-checking the regulations of the draft Code of Administrative Offences and the draft Criminal Code and abolishing internal conflicts amongst these 2 draft codes, which was held in June.
- EU/CoE – PGG "Support to the judicial reform - supporting the criminal justice reform and harmonising the application of European standards in Armenia" (Component 2): On 25 April, the project was officially launched with the participation of high-level officials. The project partners acknowledged the importance of enhancing criminal justice reform and emphasised the significance of receiving CoE support in this process through legislative, methodological and capacity-building assistance. In May, the needs-assessment report aimed at improving the uniform application of European standards in Armenia and developing new courses for the curricula of criminal law judges and judicial servants in the Justice Academy was finalised based on comments from partner institutions. On 7 June, a group of judicial servants acquired new skills and knowledge at the seminar on fair trial and presumption of innocence in the context of criminal justice. On 22-23 June, a meeting of the working groups to elaborate and finalise the draft Criminal Procedure and Criminal Codes of Armenia was organised. The meeting aimed at harmonising contradictory provisions of the codes to avoid omissions and gaps. An assessment of the concept of criminal liability of legal entities based on the best practices of CoE member States was prepared upon the request of the Ministry of Justice and was discussed at the meeting of the working groups as well.

- EU/CoE – PGG “Strengthening institutional capacities to fight and prevent corruption in Armenia”: In preparation for the implementation of the project, inception phase consultations were held between a CoE delegation consisting of a staff member of the Economic Crime and Cooperation Division, supported by two consultants with expertise on fighting corruption and fighting money laundering and terrorist financing, along with representatives of the Armenian Government, civil society and the EUD on 3-4 April in Yerevan. The purpose of the meetings was to collect up-to-date information on the current developments in Armenia, and government priorities in the fight against corruption, which were used to set baseline indicators for the implementation of the project. All stakeholders had an opportunity to provide their input and comments to the initial work plan of activities and suggest priority activities for implementation. These priorities were further streamlined during the visit of high-level CoE delegation in May. To address one of these priorities – drafting of the civil asset forfeiture legislation, on 28 June the project organised a round table on “Non-conviction based confiscation of illegally obtained property”, which was attended by the Minister of Justice, members of the working group drafting civil asset forfeiture legislation, as well as international partners active in this field. Two CoE experts presented a review of the above-mentioned draft law, providing recommendations for its strengthening in line with international standards and good practices. The experts provided recommendations for additional elements to be considered by the Armenian authorities in the process of establishing a fully functional asset recovery and management agency to return stolen assets to the people of Armenia. The Project team plans to prepare and present an updated project work plan to the Steering (Technical) Committee which is expected to meet in late September 2019.
- VC Switzerland “Institutional Support to Communities Association of Armenia (CAA)”: The Project was extended from 1 April to 30 June. As agreed with the Project donor, the extension period was to ensure a smooth transition to the new Project “Strengthening the Communities Association of Armenia and Transparent, Participatory Local Governance in Armenia”, which is expected to start on 1 July. In the non-cost extension period, the final proposal and budget of the new Project was revised and submitted to SDC, the final narrative report of the Project summarising its key achievements and results was developed, an activity plan for 2019 for the implementation of the new Project was drafted, as well as tender files for the provision of local and international consultancy services in the framework of the forthcoming Project that have been prepared by the Project team and approved by the Tenders Board, and are ready to be announced once the new Project agreement has been signed.
- VC Austria “Democratic development, decentralisation and good governance in Armenia”: The Project was officially launched on 3 April. On the same day the first Steering Committee meeting took place, during which the SC adopted the Project work plan for 2019. The SC meeting was followed by the first workshop on the Best Practice Programme (BPP) for Consolidated Communities in Armenia that was organised for project officers of consolidated communities so as to alert them to the sub-granting component of the project and the launching of this component by the Project. The BPP methodology of the Centre of Expertise toolkit was adapted to the forward-facing approach, and a complete application package, including a scoring matrix, was developed for the small grant component. In order to strengthen the capacities of financial staff of consolidated and large communities of Armenia, 5 2-day trainings on procurement and 5 2-day trainings on public accounting were organised between 17-30 June. Overall, these trainings covered about 85 communities. Within the legal and policy component, the Project initiated legislative mechanisms on how to make people’s voices heard during the community consolidation; legal analysis of the current state of the decentralisation, as well as mandatory funding of decentralised powers in Armenia; a study of the impact of community consolidation on development and implementation of investment projects and master plans in consolidated communities; and an impact assessment on the competences to be decentralised in consolidated communities (gender, youth and disadvantaged/vulnerable groups).

- VC UK "Strengthening the Application of European Human Rights standards in the armed forces in Armenia". The project was completed on 31 March. During the April-June period, reporting activities, both financial and content-related were implemented. In May-June, the project team supported the mission of Nelly Dolidze, an independent external evaluator. In June, the evaluation report was finalised and submitted for the attention of the Head of the CoE Office in Yerevan and the Head of Human Rights Policy and Co-operation Department.
- VC UK "Human rights and women in the armed forces": The project officially started on 1 June. On 25 June the first meeting of the steering committee took place. The work plan and terms of reference of the Steering Committee were adopted. On 25-26 June, the Project team held bilateral meetings with the main stakeholders: Gabriel Balayan, Deputy Minister of Defence, Alik Avetisyan, Head of the Human Rights and Integrity Center", Yeghishe Kirakosyan, Government Agent before the European Court of Human Rights, representatives of the Human Rights Defender's office, Chair of the Standing Committee on Defence and Security. During the meetings the modalities of the activities envisaged by the work plan were worked out in detail.
- AP "Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Armenia: Continuing the Path towards Ratification of the Istanbul Convention": In May, the Project started implementation by completing the team and communicating with the main partners on co-operation areas. On 8 May, the HoO and team met with Zaruhi Batoyan, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of Armenia to present the project and discuss some of its activities, in relation to the Ministry such as the provision of advice to the MoLSA, capacity building for social workers, fostering multi-agency co-operation and research on violence against women, building public awareness on violence against women and domestic violence, etc. The official launch of the Project and the establishment of the Project Steering Committee are planned in early July.

Other relevant activities

- 19 April: HoO met with the Chair of the Court of Cassation;
- 23 April: HoO met with the Chair of the Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs of the National Assembly;
- 24 April: HoO participated in the commemoration day of Armenian Genocide;
- 25 April: HoO chaired the launching of PGG II and Component 2 of the Project on Implementation of Judicial Reform;
- 25 April: Within the framework of the visit of the Head of the Human Rights Policy and Co-operation Department DGI, HoO participated in meetings with the Prosecutor General, Deputy Minister of Justice;
- 6 May: HoO participated in the Development Partners Coordination Forum Meeting;
- 7 May: HoO made a welcome speech during the open day for all students interested in the values, programmes and activities of the organisation organised to mark the 70th anniversary of the organisation;
- 30-31 May: Within the framework of the visit of the high-level delegation to discuss with the authorities and different partners the independence and the integrity of the judiciary, the respect of the right to a fair trial, the fight against corruption, recovery of assets acquired illegally, HoO participated in meetings with the Prime Minister, Minister of Justice, Head of the EU Delegation, President of the National Assembly, opposition political parties represented in the National Assembly, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chairman of the Court of Cassation, a.i. Chairman of the Supreme Judicial Council, Asset Recovery Working Group, Government Agent before the ECHR, President of the Constitutional Court, Prosecutor General, Human Rights Defender, as well as with the donors of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019-2022;

- 7 June: HoO met with the UN Country Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative;
- 11 June: HoO participated in informal donor coordination meeting on justice reform;
- 12 June: HoO met with the Chair of the Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs of the National Assembly;
- 12 June: HoO made a welcome speech in TAIEX workshop on strengthening the social service response to victims of Gender Based Violence;
- 14 June: HoO met with the Head of Operations of EU Delegation;
- 17 June: Launch of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019-2022 and cancellation of the stamp dedicated to the 70th Anniversary of the Council of Europe. In the context of the visit of the Deputy Secretary General, Director of Political Affairs and Director of Programmes, HoO participated in the meetings with the President of Armenia, Prime Minister of Armenia, Deputy Minister of Justice and the Ombudsman to discuss cooperation;
- 24 June: HoO met with the newly appointed Minister of Justice;
- 27 June: HoO approved the candidacy of the winner in essay writing competition to mark the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe which was also submitted to the protocol of the Council of Europe by the Permanent Representation of Armenia to the CoE.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- 30-31 May: Visit of the high level delegation of the Council of Europe to discuss issues on independence and integrity of the judiciary;
- 15-17 June: Official visit of the Deputy Secretary General, Director of Political Affairs and Director of Programmes to officially launch the Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019-2022.

Rabat**Situation of the office**

Core staff - 2, Project staff - 3, Total staff: 5.

The Office mainly co-ordinates the implementation in Morocco of the joint EU/CoE regional programme "Ensuring Sustainable Democratic Governance and Human Rights in the Southern Mediterranean" (South Programme 3) 2018 – 2020. It also provides ad hoc logistical support for the implementation in Morocco of the joint EU/CoE regional programme "CyberSouth – Cooperation on cybercrime in the Southern Neighbourhood Region" (2017-2020), for the joint EU/CoE regional project "Global Action on Cybercrime Action Extended (GLACY+)" (2016-2021) and for other projects run under the Neighbourhood Partnership with Morocco 2018-2021.

State of implementation of programmes

EU/CoE programme "Ensuring Sustainable Democratic Governance and Human Rights in the Southern Mediterranean"

- As part of the SNAC 3 project, a training workshop was held on 9 and 10 April at the Public Prosecutor's Office in Rabat with the aim of strengthening the capacities of agencies specialised in fighting corruption and economic crime, including judicial and law enforcement authorities.
- On 16 and 17 April, the CoE, in partnership with the Beni Mellal Faculty and the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative, held a seminar on the legal and institutional framework for combating human trafficking and protecting the victims, as set out in Law No. 27-14.
- From 12 to 14 June, the Venice Commission, in co-operation with the Kingdom of Morocco's Ministry for Reform of the Administration and the Public Service, held in Marrakech the 9th UniDem Med regional seminar entitled "Towards a public service closer to citizens: models and good practices".

Other programmes

- From 8 to 10 April, as part of the CyberSouth programme, a regional meeting was held in Rabat by the Council of Europe's Bucharest Office. The subject of the meeting was "Towards drafting national reports on the assessment of cyber threats".

Other relevant activities

- 4-5 April: Christophe Poirer visited Rabat to suggest co-operation activities that could be carried out with different partners working on human rights;
- 12 April: the National Human Rights Council held a meeting in Rabat around the plans to set up a national mechanism for the prevention of torture;
- 25-26 April: visit to Rabat to identify potential areas of future work and activities with the different partners working on combating discrimination in Morocco;

- 29 April-4 May: needs assessment visit to Rabat as part of the new project "Promoting freedom of expression and media pluralism in Morocco";
- 25 June: Presentation of the information system of the Kingdom's Ombudsman Institution in Rabat;
- 27 June: Meeting of the Steering Committee of the programme to support reform of the justice system held by the EUD;
- 28 June: Annual donors' meeting – Justice, held by the Ministry of Justice.

Tunis

Situation of the Office

Core staff - 3, Project staff - 12, Total – 15.

The Office implements country-related activities of 2 regional joint EU/CoE programmes: Ensuring sustainable democratic governance and human rights in the Southern Mediterranean ("South Programme III", 2018-20) and the CyberSouth Programme 2017-20; 2 CoE/EU joint programmes (JPs) "Improving the functioning, performance and access to justice in Tunisia - AP-JUST" and "Project to support independent bodies in Tunisia - PAII-T (2019-21)" and a total of 6 projects funded from Voluntary Contributions from France, Malta, Monaco, Norway, Portugal and Spain.

State of implementation of programmes

- JP EU/CoE "Improving the functioning, performance and access to justice in Tunisia - AP-JUST": Coordination - the International Assistant Coordinator joined the main International Community coordination forum in the field of justice sector reform (PTF). Institutional support – following an earlier needs assessment mission conducted by the CEPEJ, intervention proposals were developed with key beneficiaries and then reviewed at the inaugural AP-JUST project steering Committee (COFIL) meeting on 17 June, at which activity proposals till the end of 2019 and the wider APJUST working methodology were validated. E-justice – CoE procurement procedures were completed for the supply of computers to Ministry of Justice regional training centres and to the Institut Supérieur de la Magistrature. Access to justice/Support to civil society - in close cooperation with beneficiaries and technical representatives from the overarching EU-Tunisia Justice Reform Programme (PARJ, of which APJUST is a component), the CoE commenced its support to the indexing of the Cour de Cassation's case law; conducted a feasibility study to identify priority needs, both geographical and thematic, to strengthen access to justice through CSOs; and undertook an assessment of the functioning of commercial jurisdictions.
- JP EU/CoE "Project to support independent bodies in Tunisia - PAII-T": Coordination – the International Coordinator took part in PTF coordination meetings and in ad hoc coordination meetings in the areas of torture and corruption. At the request of the EUD, and in consultation with the MAEs, the Office also developed a preliminary road map identifying cooperation areas and planned activities until the end of 2019. Cross-cutting support/legal basis – following its previous needs assessment mission, the Venice Commission Secretariat developed an action plan to support those institutions, the Independent High Authority for Audio-visual Communication (HAICA) and Independent High Authority for Elections (ISIE), most directly implicated by the upcoming elections and began an assessment of the legal basis of all the independent institutions covered by the JP to identify lacunae and possible improvements. Human trafficking body – support continued to the development of a National Referral Mechanism (NRM), with a pool of national and international consultants being established; a first meeting of the technical oversight committee and a workshop for representatives from law enforcement agencies and labour inspectors, inter alia, on the identification of victims of human trafficking. Anti-corruption body – training and capacity-building activities for staff of the body included whistle-blower protection and asset declaration training seminars, and an inaugural meeting of a technical committee involving key stakeholders reviewed and validated 2019 activities of the action plan. Anti-torture body - interventions focused on promoting compliance with prisoners' rights in close coordination with other international actors, and preliminary discussions with the body and other stakeholders, including CSOs, explored possibilities for further cooperation. (See also activities under South

Programme III, below.) Data protection body - members of the body participated in a workshop to map out training needs as well as to define necessary tools and procedures, with a consequent training seminar taking place in June. Media body – in June, the project supported the organisation of a seminar organised by the body, in partnership with the ISIE, on media, social media and misinformation during the election process, during which participants discussed inter alia the creation of a Tunisian participatory digital platform for the verification of information and the fight against misinformation campaigns, misinformation or malicious information and hate speech via the internet. Access to information body – priority needs were identified with the body with a view to agreeing specific actions till the end of 2019.

South Programme III

- Violence against women – the project continued, on a pilot basis, to reinforce the capacities of front-line professionals in the Ben Arous Centre of Psychological Assistance, established under the National Office of Family and Population (Ministry of Health), by organising quarterly workshops addressing implementation of the VAW law, with the June session dealing with justice aspects, in particular the issuing of protection orders for women victims of violence.
- Child Protection – the project provided technical assistance to the multi-sectoral steering committee, which meets periodically (2 May and 24 June, during this reporting period) under the aegis of the Ministry of Justice to oversee implementation and monitoring of the delivery of child friendly justice for child victims of sexual violence. On 3 May, it also organised, together with the Ministry of Justice, a technical workshop on investigative interviewing of children victims of sexual violence in Tunisia, based on best practice and shared experiences from Europe, notably the NICHDT Protocol (International Evidence-Based Investigative Interviewing of Children).
- Prevention of Torture – the first reports on the 3 Preventive Visits of the National Body for the Prevention of Torture (INPT) undertaken since the beginning of its mandate 3 years ago have been completed, covering visits of several days each, undertaken jointly by an INPT team, accompanied by European counterparts, in the prisons of Madhia, Bizerte and Beja. The publication of these reports has yet to be authorised by the INPT plenum. Drafting of the Tunisian Prison Law Manual and the Tunisian Prisoner's Guide, undertaken by a team of Tunisian editors supported by CoE experts, and under the responsibility of the INPT and the Ministry of Justice/Prison Administration (DGPR), has entered its final phase. (It should be noted that these activities now draw on resources of both SPII and PAII-T – see above.)
- HELP – is morphing from a purely SPIII activity to one that cuts across PAII-T and AP-JUST as well. Regional Training of Trainers training activities, including on 24-25 March in Strasbourg, on the HELP platform took place within the framework of SPIII, resulting in the certification of 7 Tunisian participants as HELP trainers, but further training will continue bilaterally under PAII-T. A pool of trainers has been constituted to fine-tune for the Tunisian context 2 national courses: Violence against women and Human trafficking. Additionally, on 4-5 July in Strasbourg, a Tunisian delegation, including high level officials, participated in the HELP annual conference.

CyberSouth

- On 10-14 June, a joint Ministry of Justice/Institut Supérieur de la Magistrature working party considered judicial curriculum modifications. On 17-21 June, at the National Guard HQ at El Aouina, Tunis, and in association with CT Mena, a seminar on the use of open source intelligence (OSINT) in investigations for intermediate level investigators and prosecutors from the region took place. One week later, 24-28 June, at the National Police Academy, Carthage and this time in association with Euromed Police, the project brought together law enforcement

professionals from the region for specialised malware analysis training. The HoO addressed participants at both training events.

Follow up action

- The Inception Report of the two CoE/EU joint programmes (JPs) "Improving the functioning, performance and access to justice in Tunisia - AP-JUST" and "Project to support independent bodies in Tunisia - PAII-T (2019-21), due initially at the end of May, is to be completed;
- In May, the Tunisian Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment and the National Federation of Tunisian Cities (FNVT) forwarded a formal request for Partner for local democracy status with the Congress. The Bureau of the Congress, meeting on 28 June, agreed that this request would be placed on the agenda of the October Session of the Congress.

Other Relevant activities

- 5 April: the HoO attended the Annual Conference of the National Independent Bodies;
- 30 April: with the gracious support and generosity of the Ambassador of Finland, and within the context of Finland's Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, the Office organised an event at the Residence of the Finnish Embassy in Tunisia to mark the 70th anniversary of the CoE. The HoO, the Ambassador of Finland, and the Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs had the pleasure of welcoming senior representatives of the Tunisian authorities and institutions and of the diplomatic community, as well as of civil society and the media;
- 24 May: in Strasbourg, Tunisia signed the Protocol amending the Convention for the Protection of Individuals on the Processing of Personal Data (the '108+');
- 10 June: in Hammamet, the HoO welcomed participants to the 7th Mediterranean University, organised by the North-South Centre in association with the Tunisian Ministry of Youth and Sport and the National Youth Observatory. Following a request from the Tunisian authorities and an in situ preparatory mission in April by experts, at its June plenary meeting, the Venice Commission adopted an Opinion on the Tunisian draft Law on the Instance on sustainable development and the rights of future generations;
- 20 June: At a broadly-mediatised event, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Deputy Secretary General and the representative of the EU Delegation (EUD) to Tunisia, formally launched the two EU-CoE JPs "Improving the functioning, performance and access to justice in Tunisia - AP-JUST" and "Project to support independent bodies in Tunisia - PAII-T (2019-21)".

Council of Europe high-level visits and other official delegations

- 11-12 June: The Human Rights Commissioner made presentations at RightsCon Tunis;
- 20 June: Official visit of the Deputy Secretary General to Tunis in connection with the JP Launch event (see above), which included exchanges with the Ministers of Foreign Affairs.