

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 2021

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 2021. 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

Highlights

- **Secretary General** speaks at a Brussels Think Tank, CEPS, 27 April, on the Human Rights impact of anti-pandemic measures.
- **PACE** welcomes European Parliament President **Sassoli**, 21 April.
- **Secretary General** contributes, by video, to the inaugural session of the EU Conference on the future of Europe, 19 June, Strasbourg.
- **Secretary General** meets with HR/VP Borrell, EVP Vestager, VP Suica, Strasbourg, 7-8 June.
- **PACE President** meets with EP President Sassoli, Strasbourg, 8 June.
- The Office followed and reported on major EU developments, such as:
 - European Council President Michel, and Commission President von der Leyen, meet President **Erdogan** in Ankara, 7 April.
 - Commission presents its Strategies on fight against organised crime and on trafficking in human beings (14 April) and on **Artificial Intelligence** (21 April).
 - EU Council holds its second **Rule of Law** on 5 countries (FR, DE, HE, IE, ES), 20 April.
 - Several events on the 10th anniversary of the **Istanbul convention**.
 - European Council/Summit, 24-25 May and 24-25 June, focusing notably on EU relations with Turkey, with Russia, sanctions against Belarus, discrimination (LGBT+) in Hungary, and migration.

Key features and statistics

Some 620 information messages and documents and 14 weekly reports were prepared and sent to Strasbourg by the Information Officer. 107 notes for the files were sent from the Office in addition to the information messages sent by the Head of Office directly.

Meetings involving the Office

The Office facilitated the participation of the **Secretary General in** the event organised by **CEPS** (Centre for European Policies Studies – Brussels based think tank) on 27 April on: *Covid-19 policies and their impacts on Human Rights*.

The Office closely followed the participation of the **President of the European Parliament, Mr David Sassoli**, in the Spring Session of the Parliamentary Assembly, 21 April.

The Office also facilitated the organisation of a **consultation** day (virtual) between the Commission (DG NEAR) and the CoE Secretariat on the EU's **enlargement countries** (27 May), as well as an exchange, also with DG NEAR, on recent developments in Turkey.

The Office was actively engaged in the preparations for the high-level meetings which took place between the **Secretary General** and the EU Leadership. Secretary General discussed with HR/VP Borrell, by video, on 7 June. She welcomed EVP Vestager in her Office on 7 June and did the same with VP Suica on 8 June. On 8 June too, the EP President, Mr Sassoli, received **PACE President**, Mr Daems, in his Office in Strasbourg as well.

The Office facilitated the participation of the commission vice President, Ms **Suica**, to the event organised on 29 June in the framework of the **World Forum for Democracy**.

In addition, the Head of Office and the colleagues in the Office held consultations with the European Union on many aspects of co-operation, including, in particular, the following:

- **On general aspects of co-operation**

The Office maintained its contacts with the **Portuguese Presidency** of the EU, notably the Chairs of some Council configurations of key Council of Europe interest, where co-operation is envisaged. It initiated contacts with the **incoming Slovenian Presidency** and held a first meeting on possible priorities of its Presidency and opportunities for co-operation.

The office reported on the developments as regards the "**Conference on the future of Europe**", in particular the launch, on 19 April, of the digital multilingual platform, and the inaugural session of the Conference, on 19 June 2021 and to which the Secretary General contributed by video.

The Office reported on the digital green certificate (or "vaccine passport").

- **On developments of political nature**

The office had several bilateral contacts with the EEAS and with DG NEAR on the most relevant developments in countries such as Armenia-Azerbaijan, Moldova, Turkey, Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.

The Office reported on the meetings of the Foreign Affairs Council, and General Affairs Council meetings which notably prepared for the **European Council meetings** in May and in June 2021. The June Council covered important issues of CoE relevance, including notably: the EU relations with **Turkey**, the EU relations with **Russia**, on the basis of the Communication prepared by the EEAS and the Commission, 16 June, new sanctions-restrictive measures against **Belarus**, the new law in **Hungary**, discriminatory to LGBT+, and the external aspects of **migration**.

The Office also reported on the EU-**Kazakhstan** Co-operation Council (10 May), on the visit of Prime Minister of **North Macedonia** Zoran Zaev to Brussels (11 May), on the visit by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of **Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine** (the "Association trio") to the EU in Brussels on 24 June.

The Office also reported on discussions held in the European Parliament on **Belarus** (plenary, 8 June) and the **Western Balkans** (AFET), as well as discussions organised by Think Tanks on the elections in **Armenia** and on developments in **Ukraine**. Reports also covered the **EU-US** summit (15 June, Brussels) and the participation of Presidents Michel and von der Leyen in the **G7 summit** (11-13 June, Cornwall, the UK).

- **On Human Rights**

The Office extensively covered and reported about the EU-**Turkey** relations and the follow-up to the withdrawal, by Turkey, from the **Istanbul convention**, notably in the framework of the European Council President, Mr Michel, and the Commission President, Ms von der Leyen, visit to Turkey, on 7th April 2021. In addition, the Office facilitated the participation of CoE representatives in various Brussels-based events celebrating the **10th anniversary** of the Istanbul Convention, and reported on these events. In particular GREVIO member and former Chair, Ms Naudi, participated in the event organised by the European Parliament (LIBE

Committee) on 25 May. The Office remained in regular contacts with the DG JUST on its work related to **violence against women**.

The Office facilitated co-operation with the Council Working Group on Fundamental Rights ("**FREMP**"), in particular on **children rights**, notably through the participation of Ms Jensdottir – DGII, who focused her presentation on Council of Europe work on child participation.

It also reported about the High-Level Conference on the International **Roma** Day (14 April). The Office liaised with the Commission (DG Connect) on its initiative to prepare a set of guiding principles on digital issues ("**digital principles**"), in order to facilitate a potential contribution by the CoE Secretariat. It followed the participation by the European Commission (Directors respectively from DG Just and DG Connect) to the TC-Inf, in Strasbourg, by video, on **Artificial Intelligence** (15 June).

Several contacts have been taken with the Commission (DGJUST), including with the Cabinet of Commissioner Dalli, to discuss matters linked to the implementation of the EU Action Plans on **anti-racism** and non-discrimination. The Office held meetings with the newly appointed EU **Anti-racism** coordinator (Ms Moua).

The Office organised a discussion between the Secretariat of the **European Social Charter** (DGI) and the Commission (DG Emploi), on 25 June.

The Office closely followed the 10th round of negotiations on the EU's **accession** to the ECHR (Strasbourg, 29/6-2/7).

- **On Rule of Law**

The Office reported on the "**RoL dialogue**" that the General Affairs Council organised on 20 April, where the RoL situation in five EU countries (Germany, Ireland, Greece, Spain and France) was discussed. The Office reported on the publication, by the Commission of two new strategies, dealing respectively with the **fight against organised crime** and combatting **trafficking in human beings** (14 April).

The Office facilitated the participation of:

- the CoE Secretariat (DGI, Ms Juncher) in the EU "**COPEN**" meeting, 7 May (co-operation in criminal matters – WG of the EU Council), where the Secretariat presented the **Medicrime** Convention.
- the **GRECO** and the **Venice Commission** in the meeting of the Rule of Law contact points, organised by the Commission (DGJust) on 25 May.
- the **GRECO** Secretariat in an exchange on "corruption and human rights" organised by the EP LIBE Committee on 17 June.

The Office facilitated the organisation of and participated in the CoE-EU (**CATS** Chair) meeting on 18 June, covering recent developments and co-operation in the criminal law area.

- **On Democracy**

The office continued following and reporting on EU initiatives on **media freedom and pluralism**, and liaising with Cabinet Jourová, DG JUST and DG CONNECT in the field of media and protection of journalists (safety of journalists and SLAPPs).

- **On migration**

The Commission adopted its new **Communication on voluntary return and reintegration** (27 April). The Office reported on this strategy, as well as on discussions in the European Parliament on the role of Frontex in alleged push-back situations, and on the drowning of 130 people off the coast of Libya on 22 April.

The Office facilitated the organisation of an information meeting, on 19 May, gathering representatives from the Commission (DG HOME) and the CoE Secretariat, under the lead of the SRSG's Office. It also organised a meeting to exchange information on recent developments in the respective Organisations, 22 June.

- **On co-operation through programmes:**

The Office explored new possibility of programmatic co-operation on issues as **health** in relation to Covid, **migration** and **anti-racism and LGBT+** issues, in particular with DG SANTE, HOME and JUST. It also liaised with DG EAC as regards the continuation and update of the programmatic co-operation.

The Office, in close contacts with the competent Services in Strasbourg, participated in the **Steering Committee** meetings organised on the **Central Asia** programme and on the **Horizontal Facility** (4 June). It also participated in discussions in the framework of the programming of the future activities under the **Horizontal Facility** with Serbia and with Kosovo. It further discussed with the competent Services in DG EAC and in Strasbourg on possible cooperation with the Commission in the fields of **education and culture** and with DG SANTE on the CoE "**Health**" project. Further contacts with the Commission - "**Reform**" were maintained in view of new call for project 2021, as well as with DG HOME for cooperation on **migration**.

Activities of the Brussels based Secretariat of the CoE-EU Youth Partnership

April 2021

- Expert group meeting on 14 April on participatory policy-making, development of a publication (T-kit) on this topic, and expert group meeting on youth work in South eastern Europe on 28 April.
- Presentation of the outcomes of our [COVID-19 Knowledge Hub](#), showing good practice on youth sector responses to the pandemic, on 14 April. A survey to Member States on the impact of COVID-19 on the youth sector was launched at the end of April. The work on youth participation in the context of COVID-19 pandemic was also presented at a course organised by the Tampere University on 16 April.
- Steering group for the Peer Learning on competence based education and training of youth workers, on 14 April.
- Consultative meeting on 27 April with the representatives of youth organisations in order to develop a sustainability checklist.
- 27 April, launch editorial work on a new youth knowledge book on COVID-19 implications for youth transitions.
- First meeting of the Steering Group of the European Platform on learning mobility, on 29 April.
- Webinar on 29 April, within the scope of Edu4Europe project, on the role of education in citizenship and critical thinking.

- [Youth Knowledge Book 27](#) on digitalisation and social inclusion of young people. A new episode of *Under 30' podcast* series focusing on [young people's mental health and well-being was launched](#).

May 2021

- [Webinar on Digital youth work](#) in the context of its [Perspectives on youth](#) series on 4 May, and a [webinar](#) within the [Edu4europe project](#), presenting the CoE Framework for the Competences for Democratic Culture.
- [Youth Knowledge book on young people, social inclusion and digitalisation](#) was launched and presented on 11 May, together with [podcasts](#) and visual materials.
- Co-ordination of the European Platform on Learning Mobility in the youth field (EPLM) on 20 May, with a focus on sustainability.
- [COVID-19 Knowledge Hub](#) was updated. 2nd edition of the MOOC on youth work essentials on 17 May.
- The youth partnership maintained regular close communication with DG EAC on the the signature of the 2021 contribution agreement.

June 2021

- Consultative meetings with EKCYP-PEYR on 8 June, the youth sector on 10 June and an expert meeting on youth work on 17 June, in order to share views on the future workplan of the youth partnership.
- 28 June, the partner institutions discussed the signature of the contribution agreement for 2021 and the preparation of the next workplan for 2022-23.
- Presentation of the sustainability check-list on greening the youth sector at the [World Forum for Democracy](#) (youth month) on 15 June.
- Participation in two peer learning events: one under the Portuguese Presidency of the EU, presenting its research and findings on the rights-based approach to youth policy, and one on validation of learning gained in non-formal contexts, held under the future French Presidency of the EU. The findings from the study "mapping the educational and career pathways of youth workers" were presented.
- Two consultative meetings on 25th and 28th of June in SEE and Eastern Europe on the impact of Covid-19 on the youth sector and the related policy responses.
- New episodes of Under 30' podcasts were produced on the results of the Youth Knowledge Book on digitalisation and social inclusion of young people.

Activities of the Brussels based Secretariat of the Pompidou Group

Most of the work focused on the organisation of the 36th annual meeting of the Co-operation Group of Drug Control Services at **European Airports**, which took place on 15th June. It highlighted the challenges related to drug trafficking through airports. It was attended 137 by law enforcement official and other professionals from 37 countries and 8 international organisations.

In parallel, the Secretariat prepared the 5th annual meeting of the Expert Working Group on **General Aviation**, 16th June, which provided an international platform for the exchange between Law Enforcement Authorities. Participants discussed notably intelligence gathering and dissemination, aircraft ramp inspections, international co-operation and information sharing. It was attended by 138 participants from 36 countries and 9 international organisations.

The Pompidou Group secretariat in Brussels also completed its **Resource Bank on Controlled Deliveries**. This resource bank is available to LE officers; it collects all the legal information necessary to guarantee fast and efficient controlled deliveries between different countries. The Pompidou Group is the leader in this project and works together with Europol, Eurojust, Selec, Interpol, and the OSCE to ultimately achieve global coverage.

Liaison - reporting work

The Office ensured continuity in its **liaison** mandate with the EU Brussels-based institutions. In parallel to the work described above, the Office remain in close contacts with DG NEAR on Moldova, Turkey, with DG JUST, on violence against women – Istanbul Convention, children rights, freedom of expression/media and on the EU's anti-racism policies, with DG Near on various aspects of the implementation of the joint programmes/facilities, with DG Emploi (social rights), with DG Connect (Artificial Intelligence, media) and the General Secretariat on the CoE's Health Project in the context of the pandemic, as well as with the EEAS, on the CoE-EU cooperation in general and on developments in non-EU MS. It liaised also with the EU Presidency (Portugal), with the Council Secretariat, and with the Secretariat of the EP (LIBE, DROI committees).

The Office **reported** on important EU developments, of direct interest to the Organisation, such as the May and June European Council meetings, as well as the preceding Foreign Affairs Council and General Affairs Council meetings.

Reports covered also, in particular:

- European Council President Michel, and Commission President von der Leyen meet President **Erdogan** in Ankara, 7 April.
- Commission presents its Strategies on fight against organised crime and on trafficking in human beings (14 April) and on **Artificial Intelligence** (21 April).
- EU Council holds its second **RoL dialogue**, on 5 countries (FR, DE, HE, IE, ES), 20 April.
- Several events on the 10th anniversary of the Istanbul convention in May.
- The Social Summit held in Porto on 6-7 May.
- Multiple visits, meetings and statements of the EU Leadership on developments in CoE member States (see also above, under "developments of political nature").

Reports also covered: **EEAS SG**, Mr Sannino's exchange in the European Parliament (12 April), the MEPs' exchanges with the **Tunisian** Minister of Foreign Affairs (13 April) and the Prime Minister of **Palestine**¹ (22 April), discussions around the 6th anniversary of the **Minsk Agreement**, political developments in **Georgia, Russia** and **Turkey**, the **US** policy in the **Middle East** and the place for the EU. Other discussions in the EP that were also reported concerned the Commission' Strategy on trafficking in Human Beings and the role of education in preventing violence against women, FRA, Cybercrime, women in politics, online abuse, Western Balkans.

Additional reports covered events organised by Brussels-based Think Tanks on: Artificial Intelligence, social rights, Ukraine, the D. Caruana Galizia Prize of Journalism, disinformation, gender-based and racial discrimination, the situation of Youth in the Balkans and trafficking in human beings in the digital era.

¹ This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of Council of Europe member States on this issue.

Visibility and relations with media

The Spokesperson/Media Officer maintained regular contacts with journalists and carried out online and social media work on topics including:

April 2021

The PACE session, the Secretary General's keynote speech to the Centre for European Policy Studies on COVID-19 and human rights, the annual SPACE report on prison populations, the annual report on the Council of Europe's media freedom platform, the new thematic factsheet on the execution of ECHR judgments, the launch of the HELP course on the environment and human rights and online events on the execution of ECHR judgments and the recent Committee of Ministers Recommendation on National Human Rights Institutions, as well as various judgments and decisions from the European Court of Human Rights.

May 2021

The Committee of Ministers session, the 10th anniversary of the Istanbul Convention, the annual reports from the Secretary General and the CPT, the latest ECRI conclusions, the World Forum for Democracy event on environmental activists, the Commissioner's statement on environmental human rights defenders and her letter to Greece on pushbacks, the GRECO compliance report on the UK, Europe Day, World Press Freedom Day, IDAHOT day, the Politico Artificial Intelligence Summit, the German presidency event on human trafficking and the international conference and German presidency events on the death penalty, as well as various judgments and decisions from the European Court of Human Rights.

June 2021

The Ministerial conference on artificial intelligence and free speech, the June PACE session, the Secretary General's meetings with senior EU representatives and her speech to the OSCE Permanent Council, the Human Rights Commissioner's memo on Slovenia, the opinion article by the Nordic Foreign Ministers on the Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights, the SPACE II report on the use of probation across Europe, the CPT report on France, Liechtenstein's ratification of the Istanbul Convention, the expert report for Lanzarote Committee on the use of automated technology to identify child sexual abuse online and various judgments and decisions from the European Court of Human Rights.

The Spokesperson/Media Officer coordinated communications work around the meeting of the Committee of Ministers on the execution of judgments from the European Court of Human Rights, as well as the publication of a new series of country factsheets on the execution of ECHR judgments and a thematic factsheet on conditions of detention.

Furthermore, he represented the Council of Europe at the latest meetings of the "C-9" group of communications professionals from different international organisations working on human rights and continued to work on on-going communications projects on the impact of the ECHR system and the environment and human rights.

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

The Chargée d'affaires of the Permanent Delegation of the Council of Europe to the United Nations Office and other international organisations in Geneva ensured the liaison between the Geneva based organisations and the relevant MAEs of the Council of Europe.

Furthermore, she participated online in:

- the Human Rights Council (HRC) Intersessional seminar on Youth and Human Rights on 12 April.
- the 38th session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (3 to 14 May).
- the Briefing for member states on the proposed OHCHR Programme plan for 2022 on 1 June 2021.
- the Informal exchange of views on the 2021-26 review of the status of the HRC (9 June).
- the launch of the OHCHR Annual Report 2020 on 10 June.
- the informal Briefing on the 2021 High Level Political Forum (SDGs) on 24 June.

She informed the relevant departments of the results/conclusions of the meetings.

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

Participation in the OSCE Permanent Council Meetings

- OSCE Permanent Council with the Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Mr Matteo Mecacci, 15 April.
- OSCE Permanent Council dedicated to the update by Ambassador Heidi Grau (Trilateral Contact Group), and the report by Ambassador Yaşar Halit Çevik (Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine), 22 April.
- OSCE Permanent Council dedicated to the report by the Head of the OSCE Programme Office in Dushanbe, 29 April.
- OSCE Permanent Council dedicated to the escalation of tensions at the Kyrgyz-Tajik border, 6 May.
- OSCE Permanent Council dedicated to the presentation by the UN Women Deputy Executive Director, 20 May.
- Special OSCE Permanent Council meeting dedicated to the address by the Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan and a Current Issue raised by the EU on the forced landing of the Ryanair flight in Minsk, 25 May.
- OSCE Permanent Council dedicated to the Report by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Mr Kairat Abdrakhmanov, 3 June.
- OSCE Permanent Council with the address of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe Marija Pejčinović Burić, 10 June.
- OSCE Permanent Council dedicated to the Report of the OSCE Border Observation Mission at two Russian checkpoints on the Russian-Ukrainian border, and to the Report by the Head of the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat, 17 June.

Participation in expert committees and conferences

- The 64th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs organized by UNODC, 12-16 April.
- The OSCE-Wide Counter-Terrorism Conference 2021, a two-day event gathering participants and anti-terrorism experts from the areas adjacent to the OSCE participating States, 20-21 April.
- The second 2021 OSCE Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting "Democratic Law-Making and Ensuring Participation", 26-27 April.
- The 33rd Co-ordination Group Meeting between the CoE and the OSCE held in an online format, 30 April.
- The 2021 OSCE-Wide Cyber/ICT Security Conference "Building confidence and trust in an interconnected cyberspace", 4 May.
- A special session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, 7 May.
- Stockholm Conference on Media Freedom in the OSCE Region convened by the OSCE 2021 Swedish Chairpersonship and the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, 18-19 May.
- Head of the Council of Europe Office in Vienna, Ambassador Rudolf Lennkh participated as a panellist in an Ambassadorial Retreat on the topic of Tolerance and Non-Discrimination, 14 June.
- 21st OSCE High-level Alliance against Trafficking in Persons Conference, 14-16 June.
- 13th meeting of the OSCE Informal Working Group Structured Dialogue in Capitals Format, 17-18 June.

Visit of the Secretary General of the CoE to Austria on 10-11 June 2021

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe Marija Pejčinović Burić paid a visit to Austria on 10-11 June. The SG visited the Council of Europe Office in Vienna and addressed the Permanent Council of the OSCE. She also had meetings with the President of the European Law Institute (ELI), Christiane Wendehorst, the Director of the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency, Michael O'Flaherty, the Federal Minister for Justice of Austria, Ms Alma Zadić, the Federal Minister for the EU and Constitution in the Federal Chancellery of Austria, Ms Karoline Edtstadler and the Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria, Mr Alexander Schallenberg. While in Vienna, she also took part in an online format in the conference about artificial intelligence, organized by the CoE and the government of Cyprus. On 11 June, the SG participated in the Europa-Forum Wachau, an annual conference held in the Göttweig Abbey in Austria (see Monthly Report - May).

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 – meeting between Mr Alan Mitchell, the President of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and Mr Fabrice Leggeri, Frontex Executive Director.

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

Activities of the Office

a) Enhancing the co-operation with OSCE ODIHR – Apart from the high-level meetings mentioned above, the HoO maintained close working relations with ODIHR experts; these included i.e. meetings with Mr Jacob A. Bonnevie, ODIHR Legal Officer in the ODIHR Legislative Support Unit, Ms Kateřina Šimonová, Human Rights Adviser in HR Department and Ms Carolyn Hammer, Rule of Law Expert in Democratization Department. HoO worked closely with the Office of the ODIHR's Director to identify opportunities for a bilateral meeting between the Secretary General of the CoE and the ODIHR Director and to plan the visit of the ODIHR Director to Strasbourg in the third quarter of 2021. Furthermore, the HoO and CoE experts attended numerous meetings and consultations convened or facilitated by ODIHR. These included i.a. (i) OSCE Second Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting of 2021 devoted to Democratic Law-Making and Ensuring Participation, (ii) ODIHR event on Strengthening Roma and Sinti Civic Movements and Representation in Public Life, on the occasion of International Roma Day and (iii) the meeting on the role of judicial associations in protecting and promoting the rule of law in Poland.

b) Continuation of the co-operation with the Community of Democracies – In the context of the meeting scheduled for early July between the Secretaries-General of the two organisations, the HoO met with Mr Robert Drzazga, Executive Director in the Permanent Secretariat of the CoD. HoO regularly took part in meetings and discussions organized by the PS, including in the online event Towards a Summit for Democracy.

c) Establishment of closer co-operation with Frontex – In addition to the high-level meeting mentioned above, the CPT delegation met with the newly appointed Frontex Fundamental Rights Officer (FRO), Mr. Jonas Grimheden. Separate meetings with FRO were also held by the HoO to discuss the opportunities for cooperation between the FRO Office and the CoE, including a possible visit of the FRO to Strasbourg. The HoO was also in contact with Frontex International and European Cooperation Division to discuss wider cooperation between CoE and the Agency, including in the areas related to cross-border crimes.

d) Ensuring the visibility of the Council of Europe – Apart from the events organized by ODIHR and CoD, the HoO regularly attended seminars and conferences on issues pertinent to CoE activities. These included i.a. (i) "Spring with the Rule of Law in CEE – The Court of Justice to the rescue of the Rule of Law" – online discussion organized by the Commissioner for Human Rights of Poland, Mr Adam Bodnar; (ii) "Election campaigns on social networks. What needs to change" – a discussion organised in the framework of Personal Democracy Forum CEE 2021 and (iii) "On the Agenda of the Council of Europe: The Role of Towns and Regions in Guaranteeing LGBTI Rights" – online discussion organized by the German Embassy

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in Warsaw and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the CoE as a part of German Chairmanship in the CoE Committee of Ministers.

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.

The present document covers the reporting period April - June 2021. Following decision [CM/Del/Dec\(2013\)1175/1.6E](#) of 3 July 2013, activity reports will be published every three months, starting with July-September 2013.

Working methods and staff presence in the Council of Europe external offices have had to be adapted to the pandemic situation in their host countries and are subject to change. Nevertheless, the offices work at capacity and continue to achieve results. This covers all offices and is therefore not mentioned in individual reports. Where new projects have been launched during the pandemic this is pointed out in the activity report of the office concerned.

Baku**Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 5, Project staff – 7, Total staff – 12.

The Office implemented five projects, three in the framework of the EU/CoE regional Joint Programme “Partnership for Good Governance”, one country-specific EU/CoE Joint Programme, and one project funded through a voluntary contribution from Sweden.

State of implementation of projects:

- EU/CoE - PGG “Strengthening the efficiency and quality of the judicial system in Azerbaijan”: The Project provided expertise on European good practices in the area of enforcement of judicial decisions during an online seminar on “Challenges in enforcement of court decisions”, in which 25 enforcement agents participated. Through a three-day online training of trainers, the Project strengthened the capacity of 15 court chairmen, judges, and court staff on CEPEJ tools on statistical data collection, analysis and reporting, evaluation of court performance, case and time management, and measuring the quality of justice. Five training modules on court management have also been developed to support the training methodology and curricula for judges.
- EU/CoE - PGG “Strengthening Anti-Money Laundering and Asset Recovery in Azerbaijan”: Azerbaijani authorities were substantially supported in their efforts to enhance the national framework for beneficial ownership and asset recovery in Azerbaijan, and to better identify and assess money laundering and terrorism financing threats and risks. Furthermore, the Project presented its handbooks on “Anti-Corruption and Ethics in Public Service” (developed under the Project) to the Scientific-Advisory Council under the General Prosecutor in the context of the establishment of the new Anti-Corruption Training Centre of the Scientific-Advisory Council.
- EU/CoE - PGG “Raising Awareness on the IC and other Gender Equality Standards in Azerbaijan: During the reporting period, the knowledge and skills of legal professionals (lawyers, prosecutors, judges and law professors) were strengthened through the Azerbaijani adaptation of the HELP course on VAW/DV with the Academy of Justice and the Faculty of Law at Baku State University. The piloting of the Twinning methodology in the field of VAW/DV with relevant state authorities allowed for its amendment and finalisation, a pioneering tool to promote peer-exchanges in this field. The second webinar on Article 13 of the Istanbul Convention was also livestreamed through Facebook (531 views) and raised awareness on the Istanbul Convention among the general public, and media engagement increased through co-operation on the visibility of the convention at national level. Three video testimonials from participants in the first webinar on Article 12 were published, highlighting the value of the webinar in raising their awareness. Two papers on Articles 12 and 13 of the Istanbul Convention were translated into Azerbaijani and presented through the Baku website in Azerbaijani.
- EU/CoE JP “Further Support to the Penitentiary Reform in Azerbaijan-2” (“SPERA-2”): (i) A new mental health screening tool has been developed and will be put into use after its translation. (ii) A draft concept paper on Risk and Needs Assessment was developed and reviewed by a Working Group. It is expected to assist the Penitentiary Service in introducing structured risk assessment and sentence planning. (iii) A Training of Trainers (ToT) was organised for senior prison managers aimed at enhancing their capacity and skills in carrying out an accurate assessment of prisoners' mental health, assessing risks and needs, preventing and handling aggression, as well as in facilitating rehabilitation and reintegration. (iv) All four

sub-grants for the rehabilitation and reintegration component of the project have now been registered and are being implemented.

- VC Sweden "Reinforcing gender equality and media freedom in Azerbaijan": (i) In May, a two-day online training workshop was held for 20 Azerbaijani journalists and social media activists on Ethical Standards for the Media when Reporting on Gender-based Violence Cases. (ii) In June, another two-day training workshop was delivered by an international expert, together with a national expert, for 20 Azerbaijani journalists and media representatives. The online workshop enabled local journalists to improve their knowledge and practical skills on principles and ethical standards related to conflict-sensitive reporting. Additionally, the experts developed a Handbook on Conflict Sensitive Journalism, which will be available in Azerbaijani for the use of local journalists involved in conflict reporting.

Other relevant activities

- 12 April: The HoO participated in the Joint Stakeholder Meeting to present and discuss the Asset Recovery Assessment Report;
- 23 April: The HoO met with Ambassador Kestutis Jankauskas, Head of the EU Delegation;
- 28 April: The HoO attended the "Early Bird Breakfast" event organised by the German chairmanship of CM on the topic - Significance of Azerbaijan's Council of Europe Membership for Political Prisoners;
- 4 May: The HoO opened the launch event of HELP course in VAW/DV;
- 31 May: The DHoO attended the UN Migration Network Coordination Meeting;
- 31 May: The HoO opened a webinar on Twinning methodology in the field of VAW, DV and gender equality;
- 17 June: The HoO presented handbooks on "Anti-Corruption and Ethics in Public Service" (developed under PGGI-AZ Project) to the Scientific-Advisory Council under the Prosecutor General, in the context of the establishment of a new Anti-Corruption Training Centre of the Scientific-Advisory Council and met with Kamran Aliyev, Prosecutor General;
- 21 June: the HoO co-chaired the Development Partners' "Good Governance, just and inclusive society" sub-group meeting;

Belgrade

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 7, Project staff – 27, Total staff – 34.

The Office implemented 12 projects, nine in the framework of the EU/CoE regional Joint Programme “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey”, two EU/CoE Joint Programmes, and one project funded through voluntary contributions.

State of implementation of projects

- EU/CoE - HF “Quality Education for All (Quality ED-Serbia)”: The third workshop for the policy working group connecting the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture (RFCDC) and national curricula was organised in May. One regional democratic chatroom for 40 pupils from Serbia, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina was organised in April. The first Peer Learning events for 200 education specialists were organised in June and July. Online coordination and training sessions were organised in May with the mentor schools in relation to First Peer Learning. An online film festival of the mentor schools’ testimonials was organised on Facebook in May and June.
- EU/CoE - HF “Promotion of Diversity and Equality in Serbia”: The Project managed to improve the inclusion of anti-discrimination principles in the reform agenda of Serbia and harmonise the anti-discrimination framework across the country, in line with European standards. It further raised awareness on discrimination issues, rights of national minorities and combating hate speech by civil servants at national level, while remaining engaged with authorities at local level on promoting and protecting the rights of LGBTI persons. A total of nine grants were provided to CSOs and selected LSG Units, and mainly focused on promoting diversity and intercultural dialogue at local level.
- EU/CoE - HF “Independence & Accountability of the Judiciary”: The High Judicial Council and the State Prosecutorial Council revised their Rules of Procedure, and appointed one peer-elected member to be responsible for receiving and processing claims of undue influence. The Rules allow judges/prosecutors to report political influence, and also influence from the media, businesses, or lawyers. The SPC adopted a new Code of Ethics with implementing guidelines. The Analysis on mechanisms of confidential counselling on ethical matters and the Analysis on comparative practices regarding the criteria for assessing the complexity of cases in relation to the work of public prosecutors were finalised.
- EU/CoE - HF “Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in Serbia”: A regional online conference on protecting children from trafficking and exploitation was held on 22-23 June and was attended by 120 participants from Europe and the SEE region. Indicators on the preliminary identification of child victims of trafficking are currently under revision by the multi-sector WG established by the Ministry of Education. A further 30 law students participated in the HELP online course on combating THB, and two videos on child trafficking prevention, produced by children themselves through grants awarded to NGOs, were shared through various channels. The 10th anniversary of the Istanbul Convention was marked with an event on 10 May in Belgrade.
- EU/CoE - HF “Enhancing penitentiary capacities in addressing radicalisation in prisons in the Western Balkans”: The online HELP course “Radicalisation Prevention” for 25 trainees from the prison and probation system in Serbia was completed with a success rate of 50%, and average grade of 72.82/100 on 19 May. Multi-sectoral prison staff from the two detention facilities in Serbia participated in the ToT on assessment and management of VEPs on 20-21 and 27-28 May and were prepared for the piloting of the VEP-specific instruments and rehabilitation programme as of September.

- EU/CoE - HF "Enhancing human rights protection for detained and sentenced persons": The Action supported MoI task forces with a mandate to improve the custody regime and interviewing practices of police officers. Support to the WG tasked with drafting the new 2021-2027 Prison Strategy continued. Following public scrutiny, the WG has been revising the draft and writing up the Action Plan. With the Action's support, a mentoring programme implemented by the CSO Network for post-release assistance to former prisoners was revised and adjusted. The National Preventive Mechanism was assisted in redrafting the Methodology for visiting places of detention and questionnaires for conducting visits are being revised.
- EU/CoE - HF "Strengthening the effective legal remedies to human rights violations in Serbia": A working group, tasked with the development of the HELP online course on the reasoning of judicial decisions in civil and criminal proceedings, held two meetings aimed at finalising the course modules. At the 4th Steering Committee meeting, representatives of beneficiaries adopted the six-month activity plan, which envisages inter alia the updating of two websites, of the Constitutional Court and of the Government Agent. Representatives of faculties of law and national judicial institutions welcomed findings and recommendations from the Analysis of education on human rights, at the faculties of law in Serbia, which was developed in co-operation with law faculties in Belgrade, Kragujevac, Nis and Novi Sad.
- EU/CoE - HF "HELP in the Western Balkans": Fifteen HELP online courses (on Anti-discrimination, Bioethics, Child-friendly justice, Family law, Introduction to the ECHR and the ECtHR, Procedural safeguards, Reasoning of judgments) were launched and/or completed in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia. With the aim of making the HELP methodology more accessible, the HELP Methodology Guidebook on Human Rights Training for Legal Professionals was translated into all the local languages.
- EU/CoE - HF "Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media in South-East Europe (JUFREX)": The [online course on Protection and Safety of Journalists](#) developed by the CoE's Information Society Department, in cooperation with HELP, has been launched in Western Balkans languages. In May, the [2nd E-bulletin on Latest developments in the case-law on Freedom of Expression](#) was finalised and published in English and Western Balkans languages. The regional publication on [Media Regulatory Authorities and Media Pluralism](#) was made publicly available in English on 16 June.
- EU/CoE HF "Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media in Serbia (JUFREX)": The [Training for lawyers "Freedom of expression and freedom of the media"](#) was organised on 27-28 April. On 3 May, a [Press release on World Press Freedom Day](#) was published, while on 4 May the Project released a [Serbian version of the Guide to Article 10](#), prepared by the ECtHR. Two [training courses for judges and prosecutors on protection and safety of journalists](#) were organised (10-11 May and 21-22 June). A [Workshop on the CoE Platform for Safety of Journalists](#) for the Ombudsman's office and Journalists' Associations in Serbia took place on 9 June.
- EU/CoE JP "Human Resources Management in Local Self-Government - phase 2": The Programme prepared the Analysis on HRM performance in 50 MSP pilot LSGs and an additional 20 from the control group; organised a hybrid conference on the impact of COVID-19 on the training process in Serbia with high-level representatives from EUD, MPALSG and CoE on 27 April; launched a call for grants for implementation of Special Training Programmes for LSGs on 17 June; and organised five online training courses for sport inspectors at local level in June.
- EU/CoE regional JP "ROMACTED - Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level" Phase II: The implementation phase officially started on 1 May. The selection of the Support Organisations for all the Beneficiaries in the Western Balkans and Turkey was finalised prior to the submission of the inception report. The Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence was granted to provide support to the CoE in the implementation of the Programme in Serbia. The pool of thematic consultants and facilitators was set up in mid-June.

Institutional support was ensured with the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue, and Minister Gordana Comic as the National Roma Contact Point in Serbia. Furthermore, the Ministry distributed letters of support to the 14 partner municipalities to commit to the implementation of the Programme. In line with this, several field visits to municipalities have been taking place since 15 May and will be finalised by mid-July.

- VC Sweden "Preventing money laundering and terrorist financing in Serbia": The Project provided expert advice to the Working Group for the development of the new ML/TF National Risk Assessment of Serbia, particularly in the area of Terrorist Financing and Virtual Assets. A compliance training on AML/CFT requirements of the gaming sector has been delivered to the staff of the Serbian Gaming Authority, as well as training on the use of software for data analysis to the Agency for Prevention of Corruption. A review of the Beneficial Ownership disclosure system has been conducted and recommendations for improvement shared with national stakeholders.

Follow up action

- Within the HF cooperation programme and upon the request of the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue of Serbia, the CoE provided an expert opinion on the amendments to the Anti-Discrimination Law, the new Gender Equality Law (both adopted by the Parliament) and still pending draft Law on Same-sex Unions. The Ministry also expects active CoE involvement in developing the corresponding bylaws;
- In cooperation with the EUD and state authorities, the CoE is exploring the possibility to expand the scope of its action in the field of the judiciary, with the aim of addressing all the needs of the ongoing judiciary reform in Serbia.

Other relevant activities

- 8 April: The Office marked International Roma Day with a conference "Overcoming Antigypsyism in Europe". The keynote speech was delivered by the Executive Director of the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERAC);
- 7 May: The 10th anniversary of the Istanbul Convention was marked by the Office with an event that gathered some 30 participants from the Government, the Parliament, international organisations, the diplomatic community, civil sector, and academia;
- The Office continues celebrating its 20th anniversary with a series of activities. On 18 May, a symposium was held at the National Assembly of Serbia named "Promoting Equality and Diversity in Serbia: 20 years of cooperation for multiple diversity governance", in co-operation with the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue.

Bucharest

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 0.5, Project staff – 31, Total staff – 31.5.

The office implemented six capacity building projects on cybercrime, four EU/CoE Joint Programmes, one funded by voluntary contributions (currently Canada, Japan, Hungary, UK, and USA) and one by End of Violence Against Children (EVAC) of the UK.

State of implementation of projects

- VC “Cybercrime@Octopus”: The Octopus Project focused on supporting the Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY) in the finalisation of the [2nd Additional Protocol](#) to the Budapest Convention leading to the adoption of the protocol. The reinforcement of the legislation and capacities on cybercrime and e-evidence, was supported in [Guyana, Suriname and Barbados](#), as well as in [the African Region](#). The legal framework and capacities to fight against online child exploitation of eight additional countries were assessed and are to be published on the [Octopus platform](#). The translation of [training materials](#) was ensured to support further training initiatives. Further progress was made towards the development of a dedicated global platform for online training on cybercrime and e-evidence.
- EU/CoE JP “iPROCEEDS-2”: The capabilities of magistrates were enhanced through deliveries of the International Cooperation Judicial Training Course for [North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), Kosovo*² and Montenegro. The Montenegrin authorities were also supported in drafting a new cybersecurity strategy through an advisory [workshop](#). The capabilities of iPROCEEDS-2 countries/area on the Mutual Legal Assistance procedure were further increased through a regional workshop. The [Third Steering Committee Meeting](#) held in June confirmed the validity of the action and the support of Project beneficiaries.
- EU/CoE JP “GLACY+”: The legislative reforms aiming to align domestic legislation with the Budapest Convention were supported in Sierra Leone, Mauritius, Kiribati, [Maldives](#), and [Papua New Guinea](#). The capacities of African countries to fight against cybercrime were strengthened through the Second continent-wide African Forum on Cybercrime organised jointly with the African Union Commission, the EU, and other international organisations. The promotion of the Second Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention was ensured through a series of webinars in partnership with the International Association of Prosecutors. The capacities of Law Enforcement Agencies were strengthened through technical training (e.g. [Data Protection and Global Policing Capabilities](#) for Colombia and Peru, [Technical Webinar on crypto for law enforcement](#)). The knowledge of magistrates on cybercrime and e-evidence were reinforced through the [first series of thematic practitioners to practitioners workshops](#) organised under the framework of the [International Network of National Judicial Trainers](#). Additionally, the [first coordination call of the advisory board of the International Network](#) agreed on the workplan of the network and future potential activities.
- EU/CoE JP “CyberSouth”: The legislative frameworks on data protection from the priority countries were assessed and further recommendations provided through the organisation of in-country workshops. Judicial training was mainstreamed, and the development of domestic judicial training materials was supported in Lebanon. The capacities of the priority countries to enhance police-to-police cooperation and judicial cooperation on cybercrime and e-evidence were reinforced.

² *This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

- EU/CoE JP "CyberEast": The capacities of criminal justice authorities of priority countries were reinforced through a series of online activities addressing the development of [Standard Operating Procedures](#) for cooperation between CSIRTs and law enforcement and training of prosecutors and judges. Reforms of criminal procedure legislation and [strategies/action plans](#) on cybercrime have been assessed within the region's countries. The capacities on international cooperation were strengthened by the [Development of Mutual Legal Assistance Guidelines](#) together with Eurojust, as well as on [Combating Online Child Sexual Abuse](#) in cooperation with the *EndOCSEA@Europe project*.
- EU/CoE JP "EndOCSEA@Europe": The knowledge and capacities of criminal justice authorities were increased through the [Pilot training on online child sexual abuse and exploitation for judges, prosecutors and the national police in the Republic of Moldova](#). The [Regional Conference: improving operational capacities to tackle online child sexual exploitation and abuse \(OCSEA\)](#) on 3-4 June, presented the training module for law enforcement, judges and prosecutors, translated into 11 languages and available upon request. The [Closing Conference of the EndOCSEA@Europe project](#) on 17 June outlined the main achievements of the project, including the updated Baseline Mapping Report on policies, practices and legislation in member States concerning OCSEA. The final Steering Committee was held on 18 June, officially closing the EndOCSEA@Europe project.

Follow up action

- Adaptation and implementation of the project workplans for Q3 2021;
- Support T-CY activities related to the adoption of the 2nd Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention by the CoE and its further opening for signature;
- Preparatory activities for the celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the Budapest Convention, as well as an Octopus Conference (16-18 November 2021);
- Provide support to the establishment of a regional training centre on cybercrime and electronic evidence and a certification programme for criminal justice authorities in Latin America (Argentina);
- Start the series of regional webinars to Promote Universality and Implementation of the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, supported by Octopus and GLACY+, in partnership with Parliamentarians for Global Action.

Other relevant activities

- [Sweden](#) joined the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, as well as its Additional Protocol on Xenophobia and Racism committed through computer systems;
- Furthermore, the [7th anniversary of C-PROC](#), organised with project support, demonstrated the impact of 7 years of capacity building worldwide.

Chisinau**Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 7, Project staff –23, Total staff – 30.

The Office implemented ten projects, two in the framework of the EU/CoE regional Joint Programme “Partnership for Good Governance”, two funded through voluntary contributions from the USA and Switzerland, as well as six funded through voluntary contributions at Action Plan level. One project was finalised on 30 June.

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

- VC USA “Action Against Corruption in the Republic of Moldova”: Three workshops were organised with justice sector institutions and civil society organisations to present the findings and recommendations of the assessments carried out by the project: a) the review of the framework on the composition and operation of the Superior Council of Prosecutors, b) the review of the framework on disciplinary liability of prosecutors and c) the review of the mechanisms for integrity risk assessments of judges during selection and promotion procedures. In addition, an expert opinion on draft amendments to the Law on the National Integrity Authority and assets declaration system was delivered to the beneficiaries in June.
- VC Switzerland “Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova”: Strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning the new civic education subject “Education for society” were identified during online discussions with 80 pupils and 80 teachers organised in June. The teachers’ and pupils’ proposals relating to the organisation of the teaching process of this subject have been duly noted by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, which committed to the revision and adoption of a number of policy documents before the start of the school year 2021/2022, with the support of the project.
- EU/CoE - PGG “Strengthening the capacities of the justice sector actors to deliver justice in line with European standards, in particular to fight discrimination, in the Republic of Moldova”: As a result of continued project support, the Equality Council (EC) approved the Monitoring Strategy, its first comprehensive monitoring instrument and a positive step towards increased institutional effectiveness. In April, a dialogue process on equality and non-discrimination was launched, involving judges and EC representatives. The EC also gained substantial knowledge in structuring its decisions, and writing arguments and motivations.
- EU/CoE - PGG “Support to further strengthening the efficiency and quality of the judicial system in the Republic of Moldova”: Following a report proposing a methodology, the Project organised a second seminar on the use of CEPEJ tools when taking decisions with regard to the distribution of judicial resources based on objectively verifiable data. The second edition of the Commentary to the Enforcement Code was delivered. Based on this document, a series of cascade seminars for 140 enforcement agents and 66 judges were organised to ensure a common application of the enforcement law and uniformisation of case-law.
- AP “Strengthening the human rights compliant criminal justice system in the Republic of Moldova”: The launch and the first Steering Committee meeting of the project were organised in April. Thirty-six prosecutors and investigative judges enhanced their knowledge on the relevant ECtHR standards and case-law in the context of the application and interpretation of constraint measures. An online roundtable gathered criminal justice actors of the Republic of Moldova to develop a roadmap for the implementation of the recommendations from the Research Report on the Application of Pre-trial Detention.
- AP “Strengthening the prison and probation reforms, provision of health care and treatment of patients in closed institutions in the Republic of Moldova”: The launch event and the first Steering Committee meeting were held in April. A consultation meeting with prison

governors and the National Administration of Penitentiaries on the revision and further development of the Prison Manual of Procedures was held in June. A mid-term monitoring mission to three pilot prisons on the reorganisation of tasks with a focus on the resocialisation of detainees and dynamic security was also organised remotely in June.

- AP "Promoting European standards in the audiovisual regulation of the Republic of Moldova": A national campaign to promote the Audience Ombudsperson Service from the national public broadcaster "Teleradio-Moldova" was launched on four nation-wide TV and Radio channels in June. The explanatory Commentary of the Audiovisual Media Services Code was developed, presented to the main regulatory authority, and published for wide dissemination among media professionals. A tailored course composed of five online seminars on tackling hate speech in the audiovisual environment was organised for independent journalists and media professionals of the Republic of Moldova.

- AP "Improving Electoral Practice in the Republic of Moldova, Phase II": Seventy administrative judges and dedicated electoral staff increased their knowledge on Electoral Dispute Resolution based on the ECtHR case-law. The Project also organised a roundtable on Combating the Misuse of Administrative Resources in Electoral Campaigns which culminated in the presentation of a Code of Conduct for electoral contestants and the media. Consequently, an online course on this topic was launched. A roundtable on Combating Hate Speech in the Republic of Moldova raised awareness among electoral stakeholders, and two electoral spots for Moldovan Diaspora and voters residing on the left bank of the Nistru river were produced and disseminated.

- AP "Combating violence against children in the Republic of Moldova": The awareness of children and the general public of child sexual abuse was raised thanks to two local events with children marking Children's Day, and one event in the capital to launch a mural staging Kiko, on the International Day of innocent children victims of aggression. More than 170 police officers, prosecutors and judges were trained on investigations of online child sexual abuse, while the HELP course on child-friendly justice was launched and successfully implemented for 41 students of the Police Academy and 29 police officers. Several meetings with relevant authorities and partners laid the foundations for drafting the Methodology on psychological evaluation of children victims of abuse.

- AP "Reinforcing the culture of dialogue and consultation of local authorities in the Republic of Moldova": The Administrative Council of the Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova (CALM) adopted on 10 June its Strategic Plan for 2021-2027, prepared with the support of the project. The Plan involved extensive consultations with around 200 CALM members across the country. A Concept for local government reform developed by CALM was fine-tuned with the support of two members of the Group of Independent Experts on the European Charter of Local Self-Government. Furthermore, a draft concept for a platform for dialogue was developed by CALM, as a proposal to central authorities for enhancing dialogue and consultation.

Follow up action

- The organisation of Steering Committee meetings for the projects: "Education for Society" and "Improving Electoral Practice in the Republic of Moldova, Phase II".

Other relevant activities

- The launching of the projects "Strengthening the human rights compliant criminal justice system in the Republic of Moldova" and "Strengthening the prison and probation reforms, provision of health care and the treatment of patients in closed institutions in the Republic of Moldova", which were both followed by their respective first steering committee meetings;

- 19 April: The new CoE Action Plan for the Republic of Moldova 2021-2024 was officially launched in Strasbourg by the President of the Republic of Moldova, Maia Sandu, and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Marija Pejčinović Burić. The Moldovan President also had meetings with the leadership of PACE, Congress, the ECtHR, and the Human Rights Commissioner;
- 11 May: The Office, together with the CoE project "Awareness-raising activities on the Istanbul Convention in the Republic of Moldova", organised the online event "Istanbul Convention 10th anniversary: Voices of practitioners working in the area of violence against women". The activity aimed at raising awareness on the reality of violence against women and domestic violence in the Republic of Moldova and ways to address it. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection, police, judges and prosecutors, social assistants and doctors, civil society and local multidisciplinary teams exchanged good practices and discussed challenges. The event was organised in partnership with the German Embassy in Chisinau in the framework of the German Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the CoE and with the national NGO "La Strada Moldova".

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- 10-11 June: A pre-electoral PACE delegation visited Chisinau to assess the ongoing electoral campaign and the preparations for the early parliamentary elections to be held on 11 July 2021.

Kyiv**Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 11, Project staff – 51, Total staff - 62.

The Office implemented 19 projects, one in the framework of the EU/CoE regional Joint Programme “Partnership for Good Governance”, three EU/CoE Joint Programmes, fourteen funded by voluntary contributions at Action Plan level and one funded by the HRTF.

State of implementation of projects/programmes

- AP “Support to the implementation of the judicial reform in Ukraine”: The Project provided legal expertise on draft Law no. 5107 on simplifying access to and improving the quality of free legal aid. Furthermore, an analysis of the state of financing of the judiciary in Ukraine has been prepared by the project’s national experts and shared with national stakeholders. In June, the Project, jointly with the Supreme Court and the National School of Judges, organised a round table for 53 judges and judges’ assistants on the principles of legal certainty based on CoE standards and existing practices in national courts.
- AP “Human Rights Compliant Criminal Justice System in Ukraine Project”: The Project raised awareness of the main criminal justice actors on the impact of criminal misdemeanours on human rights and criminal justice in Ukraine by organising a thematic discussion in May. Members of the Parliamentary Committee on Law Enforcement and management of the Office of the Prosecutor General increased their knowledge of CoE standards and recommendations regarding the provisions of draft Laws 5157 and 5158 on completing the interim period of the Prosecution Service Reform introduced in 2019. A comparative study on the disciplinary liability of public prosecutors in selected CoE member States including Italy, Slovenia, Spain, and the United Kingdom (with a particular focus on England, Wales and Scotland) have been prepared by the project and shared with the key partners.
- AP “Decentralisation and local government reform in Ukraine”: The [Steering Committee](#) meeting on 1 April approved the project progress report, the final report of the previous project (March 2018-September 2020) and the annual Work Plan for 2021. The Project has provided its legal support to the Ministry of Territorial Development (MinRegion) and other national partners on the issues of legal personality, local state administrations, local government service, metropolitan governance, and training of public servants. In addition, the Project issued an opinion on the draft law on public consultations ([CoE Opinion CEGG/LEX\(2021\)1](#)) and supported two thematic Parliamentary Committee hearings involving more than 350 officials from state and local authorities. The best practices of local self-government 2020 were widely disseminated: 400 participants joined the events via online platforms, with 500 views via social media streams, plus 16000 views of three promotional videos. Professional competences on good governance, human resources management, leadership, and gender equality, of more than 1200 local officials were enhanced as part of the Training Marathon on Good Governance initiated by the Project in co-operation with the MinRegion and National Agency on Civil Service.
- AP “Strengthening democracy and building trust at local level in Ukraine”: The Platform for national – local dialogue on Open Government was established by the Secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers and the Association of Ukrainian Cities, with the support of the Congress, and its first meeting was held in April. The experience of 20 municipalities in fostering open government was promoted at the online marathon organised as part of the 2021 edition of the Open Gov Week. The consultation process on the legal status of associations of local and regional authorities was supported with the contribution of Gunn-Marit Helgesen (Norway, EPP/CCE), Vice-President of the Congress, and Nikolaos-Komninos Chlepas, member of the

[Group of Independent Experts on the European Charter of Local Self-Government](#), at the round table held with the Parliament in June. An e-learning module based on the Guide for women and men in local politics on preventing and combatting sexism at local level was developed to complement the e-course on gender mainstreaming at local level.

- AP "Promoting civil participation in democratic decision-making in Ukraine": Citizens and public officials of Stryi, Khmelnytsky and Chernivtsi municipalities developed their public space projects. As a result of the CivicLab pilot Certification course, ten representatives of Lviv Regional State Administration gained knowledge and practical skills on integrating CivicLab methodology at a regional level. Thanks to the project's expert support, the Kyiv City Council approved the amendments to the Regulation on e-petitions. Further methodological support on School participatory budgeting (PB) was provided to eleven pilot communities, one more municipality has successfully implemented the Regulation on School PB based on the CoE toolkit. Policy and expert support was provided to the Ministry of Digital Transformation in the development of the online platform Vzaiemodiia.
- AP "Supporting constitutional and legal reforms, constitutional justice and assisting the Parliament in conducting reforms aimed at enhancing its efficiency": The Project focused its work on consultations between experts of the Venice Commission with stakeholders on the preparation of the opinions on the Draft Law of Ukraine on amending provisions of the code of administrative offences and the criminal code regarding the liability of public officials for inaccurate asset declaration and on the draft Law on amendments to certain legislative acts concerning the procedure for electing members of the High Council of Justice (HCJ) and the activities of disciplinary inspectors of the HCJ (draft law #5068). In addition, the Project provided expert assistance for improving electoral legislation after the local elections in Ukraine and strengthening the capacity of the Parliament and Supreme Court.
- AP "Supporting the transparency, inclusiveness and integrity of electoral practice in Ukraine": A concept for an online training course for official observers was elaborated and discussed with representatives of the CEC, civil society and political parties. A study on national court practice as regards gender quota compliance at the 2020 local elections, which was produced by the project, identified legislative gaps and the main challenges, which were shared with key national stakeholders. The selection process of communities for piloting the [toolkit](#) on enhancing the political participation of young women from disadvantaged groups was launched.
- AP "Internal displacement in Ukraine: building solutions": Through an open competition, five local communities were selected to pilot a series of tools to strengthen the human rights protection of IDPs and conflict-affected people. Furthermore, the Project, in cooperation with the Ministry for Reintegration of the Temporary Occupied Territories and other partners supported a series of seminars for more than 500 representatives of amalgamated communities on the state subvention to local budgets for solving the housing problems of IDPs. The outcomes of seminars were presented at an all-Ukrainian press conference on housing solutions for IDPs in June (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J1AHmer1OI8&feature=emb_imp_woyt). Finally, best corporate practices to respect human rights in the Ukrainian context, with a special focus on internal displacement and armed conflict, were promoted by the Project through relevant initiatives of the Ombudsperson's Office and the International Lab for Business and Human Rights of the Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xhc7mpX0_60&ab_channel=OlenaUvarova).
- AP "Promoting social human rights as a key factor of sustainable democracy in Ukraine": More than 50 representatives of civil society strengthened their skills on the application of the European Social Charter (ESC) in Ukraine. A training programme for lawyers on the ESC and case law of the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR) was made available to Bar Associations. The first spring school on ESC and ECSR case law brought together students from ten higher educational institutions of Ukraine. The Barrier-Free

Employment Pilot Project was presented bringing together 140 employers and employees with disabilities. A pool of trainers from different universities in Ukraine was established to teach the ESC and its mechanism to students.

- AP "The Istanbul Convention: a tool to advance in fighting violence against women (VAW) and domestic violence (DV) in Ukraine": The Steering Committee meeting in April discussed and adopted the project's description and work plan for 2021. The Project contributed to the government-led information campaign on ratification of the Istanbul Convention by producing a set of information materials for social media. On 14 May, the Project supported a high-level round table dedicated to the 10th anniversary of the IC "Why ratification is important for Ukraine?". In addition, training on the implementation of the IC for 37 MPs and technical staff of the Parliamentary committees was organised by the project on 24 May. Finally, the Project produced a video clip on how the IC would improve assistance for victims of violence against women in Ukraine.
- AP "Supporting institutions to combat ill-treatment in Ukraine": In April, the Project published the Ukrainian version of the book "An Introduction to the ECHR". Furthermore, it was uploaded onto the online training platform for the staff of the State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) and 100 hard copies were handed over to the institution's territorial departments to ensure the access of investigators to human rights self-education tools. In May, 25 representatives of managerial staff of the SBI enhanced their knowledge in the field of prohibition of discrimination and gender equality through training on the prohibition of discrimination pursuant to Art. 14 of the ECHR and Protocol 12 to the ECHR. In June, the Project handed over equipment to support the setting up of the SBI staff-training system.
- AP "Protection of national minorities, including Roma, and minority languages in Ukraine": Five municipalities, Krasnosilka, Turie-Remeta, Lutks, Melitopol and Nizhyn, expressed their commitment to pilot projects on establishing cooperation mechanisms between local authorities and national minority (NMs) groups and integrating them into governance structures at municipal level. The Kyiv International Forum on Roma Inclusion, which was organised with the Project's support in May, gathered over 140 participants from over 20 independent human rights institutions from across Europe and provided space for exchanging best practices on the role of the Ombudsperson offices/ Equality bodies in fighting for Roma inclusion in society. The Project provided logistical support to the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights in organising a series of consultations with more than 150 representatives of various minority groups on the draft law on protection of rights of NMs. More than 100 representatives of NM groups took part in presentation of the Communication Strategy and Communication platform for NMs in Odesa.
- AP "Combating violence against children in Ukraine": The second meeting of the project Steering Committee discussed the project results achieved so far and approved the 2021 work plan. An online methodological seminar on protection of teachers and children was delivered based on the materials of the CoE methodological manual "Kiko and the Hand". The Project organised an online discussion for more than 25 experts on the protection of children from sexual violence, including on the Internet. Finally, the handbook on children's participation «Listen-Act-Change» in [Ukrainian](#) and handbook for policy makers on the rights of the child in the digital environment in [Ukrainian](#) were prepared in Ukrainian and shared with national partners.
- AP "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine": Twenty-four national consultants were trained on effective and meaningful delivery of planning, implementing, and evaluating capacity-building activities in ten local partner communities and 14 youth centres. Staff from fourteen youth centres have been trained to review their approaches based on the needs of young people in line with CoE standards on youth participation and youth work. Moreover, CoE educational resources and policy-setting documents in the field of youth were translated and made available to Ukrainian youth policy and youth work stakeholders.

- EU/CoE JP "EU and CoE working together to support freedom of media in Ukraine": The Project organised independent debates with the candidates for the position of UA:Public Broadcaster's (PBC) Head of Management Board in partnership with civil society organisations. Seven training courses were held on the Tromsø Convention and legislation on access to public information for the central executive authorities and staff of the Ombudsperson's Office. A meeting of the Prosecutor General with representatives of civil society organisations working in the sphere of media, and journalists, was held with the Project's support, thus launching a periodic communication platform under the auspices of the Prosecutor General's Office regarding offences against journalists. More than 40 National Police investigators were trained on the effective investigation of crimes against journalists and other media actors in line with CoE standards during a two-day seminar. The Ukrainian version of the publication "Implementation Guide to Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)4 on the Protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors" was prepared and published. Six webinars, on the introduction of CoE standards and the EU AVMS Directive into Ukrainian media regulations, took place.
- EU/CoE JP "EU and CoE working together to strengthen the Ombudsperson's capacity to protect human rights in Ukraine": The Project prepared an analysis of European models of independent oversight authorities in the field of data protection and access to public information. Jointly with the Parliamentary Committee on human rights, a series of round tables on EU practices in data protection prevention measures were organised for more than 200 public officials and lawyers. The first group of 50 public officials enhanced their awareness on data protection during an online training course on data protection developed and launched by the project. Furthermore, in June, the Project presented a report on rehabilitative mechanisms for victims of torture, providing a basis for supporting the state anti-torture policy.
- EU/CoE JP "EU and CoE working together to support the Prison Reform in Ukraine" (SPERU): The Project issued legal opinions on the 'draft law on penitentiary system' and 'draft law on the disciplinary charter of the penitentiary system'. Methodological recommendations to prevent suicidal behaviour in penitentiary institutions were submitted to the Ministry of Justice for further implementation. A three-day interactive training course on dynamic security was developed and presented to national partners. Furthermore, the Project facilitated the creation of a working group on the development of the Code of Ethics for prison healthcare staff. Finally, six prisons were selected as places to train prison staff on the risk and needs assessment tool and preparing individual sentence plans in 2021.
- EU/CoE - PGG "Strengthening measures to counter money laundering and financing of terrorism in Ukraine": Twenty-three public officials, judges and prosecutors increased their knowledge and skills in effective investigation and prosecution of money laundering as an outcome of an online training course delivered by the Project in May. Furthermore, the Project issued an expert opinion on amendments to the AML/CFT Law regarding the definition of national politically exposed persons. Finally, an e-learning interactive course on ultimate beneficial ownership identification and reporting, and the handbook on money laundering identification, investigation and prosecution, were prepared by the Project.
- EU/CoE - PGG "Strengthening access to justice for victims of discrimination, hate speech and hate crime in the Eastern Partnership": The Project has made progress in the reporting period with regard to combating hate speech, through an inclusive and participatory systemic analysis, in which numerous public institutions and civil society organisations were involved. Following a self-assessment survey, the Project kicked off a training course on combating discrimination for 24 regional staff of the Ombudsperson's office. Two grants were awarded, to a Roma rights organisation and a LGBTI organisation, for capacity building and research. The training course for trainers from the Legal Aid Coordination Centre was successfully finalised, with 12 participants attending the final seminar. A training of trainers for police and prosecutors on hate crime began in June. In May, the manual 'Policing hate crime against LGBTI people' was launched in Ukraine.

- VC HRTF "Further support for the execution by Ukraine of judgments in respect of Article 6 of the ECtHR": In accordance with the request of Ministry of Justice, the Project finalised an expert analysis of the national strategic document, that aims to resolve the structural issue of non-execution of judgments, and developed recommendations on how to ensure an effective and timely implementation of the document. Both analytical documents were presented at the final conference of the project, which highlighted the results achieved in this area and defined the next steps and priorities for CoE support. The project was completed on 30 June.

Gender mainstreaming and gender equality

The office celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Istanbul Convention by arranging, together with the project "*Combatting Violence Against Women in Ukraine*", a high-level roundtable on the importance of the ratification of the Convention in Ukraine. The event took place on 14 May and was attended among others by Bjorn Berge, Deputy Secretary General of the CoE, Olga Stefanishyna, Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration and Iryna Venediktova, the Prosecutor General. A series of gender mainstreaming training courses for the external offices have been organised this year; a session for the Baku and Kyiv offices took place on 25-26 May. The reporting period also included several coordination meetings of gender equality actors: the 1325 Task Force convened twice and the Intersectoral Working Group on Gender Equality once. There was also a meeting on the National Strategy on Equal Rights and Opportunities of Women and Men until 2030 to elaborate the drafting and consultation process of the Strategy.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- 7-8 June: President of the Venice Commission, Gianni Buquicchio, and Secretary of the Venice Commission, Simona Granata-Menghini

Sarajevo

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 7, Project staff – 18, Total staff – 25.

The Office implemented twelve projects, five within the framework of the EU/CoE “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey”, one EU/CoE regional Joint Programme, one funded through voluntary contributions from the UK and the US, and five projects funded through voluntary contributions at Action Plan level.

State of implementation of projects / the Action Plan

- EU/CoE - HF “Strengthening human rights treatment of detained persons based on European standards and best practices in Bosnia and Herzegovina”: The manual on “Human rights of persons deprived of liberty in police custody”, providing for inter-agency cooperation to prevent ill-treatment, was published and distributed to all police agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to positive feedback. Work continued to develop a resource manual on rehabilitation of forensic patients which would harmonise local practices with best European practices, with the multi-disciplinary law enforcement training team providing technical support to this effort. The final testing and fine-tuning of prison software for entity Ministries of Justice and prisons continues; through this process, local prison professionals are given the opportunity to advance their skills for managing the exchange of electronic prison data.
- EU/CoE - HF “Promotion of diversity and equality in BiH”: Two meetings of the Minority Coordination Group were held to discuss best practices and approaches of local councillors elected as representatives of national minorities, as well as obstacles national minorities are facing and possible joint initiatives. Two training sessions, based on a previously developed mechanism, provided 23 stakeholders with the necessary capacities to perform data-gathering in relation to recommendations of the FCNM and the ECRML. The Action supported the CSO Centre for Psychological Support “Sensus” to establish the first dedicated psycho-social centre for the LGBTI community from Mostar and the Herzegovina region, offering, inter alia, professional individual and group psychotherapy.
- EU/CoE - HF “Quality education for all”: At the 4th Advisory Board meeting in April, policy makers agreed on the next steps, including the development of an Implementation Plan, containing a timeline and funding, for the Policy Roadmap. Advisory Board members approved the mapping of existing Geography curricula in May. The review of Religious Education Curricula was carried out by the CoE and experts from proMENTE social research. Through the Chat rooms for students, the Action continues to foster social dialogue, interaction, and cohesion between 29 pilot schools, which are part of the School Network.
- EU/CoE - HF “Preventing and combating human trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina”: The Action held its fourth Steering Committee meeting on 20 April, where the new work plan for the upcoming period was adopted. The capacity of more than 50 professionals in identification and protection of all victims of human trafficking was enhanced through a round table held online on 19 May and two training sessions held on 24 and 25 June. The regional conference “Acting together in the face of crisis: Protecting children from trafficking and exploitation in the Western Balkans”, which gathered more than 130 participants (22 to 23 June), reflected upon the impact of local measures on combating child trafficking, as well as on ways to improve coordination and address root causes of exploitation and trafficking.
- EU/CoE - HF “Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media in Bosnia and Herzegovina – JUFREX 2”: Three online cascade trainings covering general principles of freedom of expression, defamation and hate speech, gathering a total of 70 participants, were held for legal professionals, in cooperation with the grantees, the Centre for judicial and

prosecutorial training of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) and the Bar Association of FBiH. Furthermore, two hybrid inter-professional seminars for representatives of the judiciary and media actors were organised in cooperation with the grantees, the Press Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina and BiH Association of Journalists, gathering a total of 72 participants.

- VC UK/US: "Structured sentence management for violent and extremist prisoners (VEPs) in Bosnia and Herzegovina": The key achievements of the project, which was completed in April, were the "2020–2025 Strategic Guidelines and Action Plan for Management of VEPs in BiH" (the Strategy), the "Guidelines for engagement, education and professional development of staff working with VEPs", the "Case Management System Manual for VEPs" and the "Manual on Assessment and Rehabilitation of VEPs". The Strategy was formally accepted by all three Ministries of Justice, while the main principles related to the practical application of rehabilitation tools and programmes have been incorporated into the legislative framework at State level. The Project implemented a total of 55 activities, and built up the capacity of 124 professionals from 22 institutions.

- AP "Support to sustainable rehabilitation of violent extremist prisoners (VEPs) in Bosnia and Herzegovina": In May, a follow-up 8-month project on de-radicalisation was launched in cooperation with the Ministries of Justice of BiH, FBiH and Republika Srpska, and the respective penitentiary institutions. The project's first Steering Committee meeting was held on 7 June and the Work Plan was endorsed. Advanced-level training was held for the multidisciplinary teams from the newly opened State prison and from Bijeljina and Tuzla Prisons on the application of the VEP-specific screening, risk and needs assessment tools and rehabilitation programme.

- AP "Initiative for Legal Certainty and Efficient Judiciary in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Phase II": Two online training events enhanced the capacity of 78 judges and legal associates on legal reasoning in criminal and civil cases. A report analysing the legal framework governing the protection of the right to trial within a reasonable time was presented to the highest courts, legislators, and other relevant national and international stakeholders. At a round table held for this purpose, fifteen court presidents and judges discussed how to overcome the shortcomings identified in the above-mentioned report. Furthermore, a study on human rights education at law faculties in BiH was completed. The study, which was presented to the main actors in this area, provides an overview of the curriculum, methodologies and gaps in human rights teaching at the law faculties in BiH, along with ten key recommendations for improvement. A round table discussion was organised for staff and members of the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council (HJPC) with a view to formulating guidelines for setting up a harmonised methodology and protocols for publication and exchange of judicial practice in BiH.

- AP "Building Democratic Participation in the City of Mostar": In preparation of the first-ever Citizens' Assembly in Mostar to be held in July, the following progress was made: An online survey was conducted in April, to which 1068 citizens of Mostar responded, resulting in 1826 proposals for the topic for deliberation. After the analysis of the proposed ideas and consultations with several stakeholders (civil society organisations and local councillors), three topics were submitted for the final selection by citizens; 5000 randomly selected households received invitation letters to register to take part in the Citizens' Assembly and vote on the topic for deliberation. As a result, 48 citizens of Mostar were randomly selected to become members of the first Citizens' Assembly in Mostar and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They will deliberate on the cleanliness and proper maintenance of the city. The website for the deliberative process (www.mostargradimo.ba) received more than 8000 individual visits since April. The Oversight team for the deliberative process was established and held its first meeting on 25 June. It is composed of representatives of the City Council, civil society organisations, universities in the City of Mostar, as well as members of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe. In parallel, on 11 and 18 June, Mostar local councillors

engaged in a fruitful exchange with European peers and members of the Congress, during a two-part online workshop "Being a City Councillor in Mostar".

- AP "Support to more integral and inclusive electoral processes in Bosnia and Herzegovina": Two preparatory meetings to discuss upcoming project activities were held in May and June with representatives of the Central Election Commission (CEC). Local experts were identified to perform follow-up research on the topic of violence against women in politics and to work on a baseline study on civil participation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Preparatory meetings with representatives of BiH Journalists and the Journalists' Association of Republika Srpska were held in June regarding the upcoming training seminar on strengthening the capacity of the media to carry out professional and independent reporting on election processes.
- AP "Media and Information Literacy: for human rights and more democracy": The first meeting of the Project's Steering Board took place, and the work plan of activities was endorsed by its members. A series of meetings with relevant stakeholders were held, and experts were engaged to work on a study on "Implementing Media and Information Literacy standards in various institutions". A request for offers for a second study, to cover media habits and attitudes of the adult population, has been sent to potential providers. During the next quarter, the response(s) will be assessed, and a provider will be selected.

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

- JP EU/CoE "ROMACTED - Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level": The reporting period was dedicated to the inception of the programme ROMACTED phase II. The ROMACTED national team was set up, consisting of facilitators, experts, a focal point, and a support organisation. The team will be working in twelve municipalities, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees. The new phase of the programme was presented to major stakeholders, including OSCE, RCC, World Vision, as well as the EUD. Initial visits to Mayors of four out of the twelve municipalities took place, during which agreement was reached as to the next steps, including a memorandum of understanding to be signed in September at the official launch.

Other relevant activities

- 8 April: The HoO addressed participants at the online launching of the HELP course on Radicalisation Prevention;
- 8 April: The HoO attended the presentation of the evaluation of the CoE Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021 by the evaluation team from LSE Consulting;
- 26 April: The HoO delivered opening remarks to participants in the iPROCEEDS-2 BIH International Cooperation Online Course;
- 26 April: The DHoO attended an online presentation of the 2020 National Human Development Report: Social Inclusion in Bosnia and Herzegovina, organised by the Swiss Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina and UNDP in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- 25 May: The HoO addressed participants at the online launch of a new HELP course on refugee and migrant children;
- 26 May: The DHoO took part in the meeting of the EUSR Political Office related to legislation on freedom of assembly;
- 27 May: The HoO took part in the CoE/EC Consultations on the 2021 EU Enlargement Package;
- 11 June: The HoO and DHoO gave input to a needs assessment exercise aimed at designing a project on freedom of expression and of the media in BiH;
- 16 June: The HoO took part in a visit of the international community to Žepče under the banner "From battleground to constructive community: A reconciliation success story", co-organised by the OSCE, the UN in BiH and the Swedish Embassy (in the framework of the

Swedish Chairmanship of OSCE), and involving the UN Special Adviser on Genocide Prevention, Alice Wairimu Nderitu;

- 18 June: The HoO made an opening speech at the Kick-off conference "Strengthening local participation and cooperation through partnership of Public Authorities and CSOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina" organised by the Local Democracy Agency (LDA) Mostar; The HoO addressed the participants at the "Strengthening local participation and cooperation through partnership of Public Authorities and CSOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina" kick-off conference, organised by LDA Mostar and project LINK4cooperation.

Council of Europe high-level visits and other official delegations

- 25-28 May: The Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees, Drahošlav Štefánek, had a series of meetings in Bosnia and Herzegovina (to follow up on his mission in January);

Tbilisi

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 7, Project staff – 21, Total staff – 28.

The Office implemented 11 projects, three in the framework of EU/CoE Partnership for Good Governance (PGG II), one funded through a voluntary contribution from Denmark, and seven funded through voluntary contributions at Action Plan level.

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

- VC Denmark "Fighting Discrimination, hate crimes and hate speech in Georgia": Equality Hackathon gathered more than 120 participants online and in-person to develop data-driven digital products promoting equality and diversity in the country. Four innovative projects were selected, 19 School Resource Officers have been trained to be trainers based on the Human Rights Education Programme, and 26 police managers were trained to better identify hate motives, and specific needs, including the psychological and legal aspects, of those affected by hate crimes. The first Diversity week was organised by Equality Ambassadors in Batumi, and four animated videos on ethnic and religious minorities in Georgia have been produced. Line Institutions had the opportunity to discuss the implementation process of the "Identoba" Group of Cases, its importance, main challenges, and future steps.
- EU/CoE - PGG "Enhancing the Accountability and the Efficiency of the Judicial System and the Professionalism of Lawyers in Georgia": A child-friendly court complaint form, that was developed by the Project, enabled two children to directly address the court, to win a custody case and to stop their separation from their family. The "Justice for All" campaign, launched by the Project, also demonstrated flaws concerning blind people's access to the complaint form, and following which, the High Council of Justice began to adapt the form accordingly. The Independent Inspector's Office's Statute has been developed and adopted to enhance judges' disciplinary proceedings' transparency and efficiency.
- EU/CoE - PGG "Supporting the Criminal Justice Reforms. Tackling Criminal Aspects of the Judicial Reforms in Georgia": In total, 203 legal professionals (judges, prosecutors, and investigators), strengthened their knowledge on ECHR standards and the case-law of the ECtHR on application of pre-trial measures and the fight against ill-treatment through the CoE online HELP training platform.
- EU/CoE - PGG "Enhancing the systems of prevention and combatting corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing": The Project organised capacity-building activities for Georgian law enforcement agencies and judges on financial investigation, as well as the adjudication of money laundering and other economic crime cases, and awareness-raising training for money exchange bureaus on anti-money laundering (AML) compliance. In May, the development of sector-specific Guidance on AML compliance for the sector of accounting/auditing (May 2021) was finalised. The Project also contributed to the sharing of practical experience between the former and current representatives of the Anti-Corruption Council Secretariat with regard to the prevention of corruption in the public sector.
- AP "Promoting an Integrated Approach to End Violence against Women and Enhancing Gender Equality in Georgia": Georgian inspectors were trained as trainers on sexual violence cases. A Training of trainers was organised jointly with the CoE, UN Women and "Equality Now", in partnership with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, on 7-11 May. It will be followed by cascade trainings for MIA investigators. A Manual for Practitioners in Georgia on Effectively Investigating, Prosecuting and Adjudicating Sexual Violence Cases was finalised. The document was prepared together with UN Women and Equality Now, in partnership with

relevant state agencies. The publication will be distributed to prosecutors, investigators, and judges soon.

- AP "Strengthening Freedom of media, Internet governance and Personal Data Protection in Georgia" SMIP-GE: Two online events "Media Talks: How(not) to cover?" were organised, each involving the exchange of experiences between Georgian and European Press Councils on how to cover sensitive issues, such as children and extremism etc. The Project organised a workshop allowing staff of State Inspector's Service to clarify recommendations provided by CoE experts concerning the compatibility of the draft Law on Personal Data Protection with Convention 108+ on the Processing of Personal Data. Furthermore, the HELP course on Personal Data Protection and Privacy Rights was finalised by 30 representatives of law enforcement bodies.
- AP "Support to the Profession of Lawyer in Georgia": An assessment of the operations of the Georgian Bar Association's committees was completed by the project's international expert. The expert will finalise recommendations and provide an analysis of European best practices. The GBA's quarterly newsletter was revised by a national expert and recommendations for improving the website of the Association were developed. The Project started working on the new compilation of decisions by the GBA's Ethics Commission. Through national consultants, the Project initiated the development of electronic case management software for the GBA's Ethics Commission. The Project delivered a two-day training course for the GBA on planning and conducting awareness-raising campaigns.
- AP "Juvenile and Adult Detainees Support (JADES)": The Manual on Psychological and Legal Aspects of the Juvenile Justice System and existing International Standards for police officers and the Investigators of the Ministry of Internal Affairs was published. A comprehensive needs assessment document for the Department of Temporary Detention was developed. Two monitoring instruments, for the National Prevention Mechanism of Georgia on the monitoring of human rights' protection in Temporary Detention Isolators and the delivery of a qualitative health care service in TDIs, were elaborated. The amendments to the Criminal Code of Georgia on issues falling under the mandate of the State Inspector Service was drafted. Training on interview techniques and the provision of qualitative health care services to detainees was conducted for two groups of medical personnel from TDIs. Four awareness-raising meetings between the Service of State Inspector and regional representatives of law-enforcement authorities were organised.
- AP "Enhancement of Human Rights and Health-Care Support to Penitentiary System": The following activities were carried out: A meeting with representatives of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to discuss existing practice in relation to the needs assessments of prisoners with disabilities; an online working meeting with the representatives of the MoJ to discuss the draft Mental Healthcare Standard and its Implementation Plan; an online working meeting with the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) to discuss the training needs assessment methodology for NPM staff; planning of training sessions on professional burnout for penitentiary system personnel; a planning meeting to review the existing NPM monitoring tool and develop recommendations for its improvement, with a focus on studying and addressing drug addiction in penitentiary establishments.
- AP "Supporting Transparency, Inclusiveness and Integrity of Electoral Practice and Process in Georgia": As a follow-up to the Participatory Gender Audit, on 13-14 May, at an online workshop "Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Intersectionality Perspectives with the Election Administration of Georgia", the Chairperson of the CEC and members of its Gender Equality Council identified practical steps and strategies aimed at gender mainstreaming in key areas of their work. To tackle hate speech in electoral processes, in cooperation with the CEC and its Training Centre, the Project designed a course on "Countering Hate Speech in Electoral Processes". On 14-15 June, online pilot training was successfully delivered to election officials. To date, the course has been delivered in all ongoing educational programmes of the election administration, targeting a broad scale of electoral stakeholders and voters. The Project

continues to deliver the course "Electoral Law and Electoral Dispute Resolution". To date, up to 100 acting judges have successfully completed the course and are contributing to the further development of court practice on electoral matters. On 26 June, an online training course was delivered to assistants to judges and secretaries of court hearings. On 30 June, management and staff of the Political Finances Monitoring Department of the State Audit Office, at the online workshop "Political donations and financial disclosure – international standards and good practices" discussed practical steps as to how international good practices could be integrated into the daily work of the agency. The Project continues to publish a periodic electoral journal 'Elections and Democracy' to promote informed choice among citizens.

- AP "Strengthening protection of social and economic rights in Georgia": A comprehensive needs assessment started, and the first online meetings were scheduled with representatives of several relevant international and national organisations.

Follow up action

- The JADES project ended in June and the follow-up project on Human Rights Policing will begin in July.

Other relevant activities

- The Office facilitated the organisation of online meetings in the context of the preparation of the urgent joint opinion of the Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR on the Revised draft amendments to the Electoral Code of Georgia

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- 1-3 June: PACE Co-rapporteurs visited Georgia within a factfinding mission on honouring obligations and commitments by Georgia.

Tirana

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 7, Project staff – 14, Total staff – 21.

The Office implemented eight projects, six in the framework of the EU/CoE regional Joint Programme “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey”, one country-specific EU/CoE Joint Programme and one project funded through a voluntary contribution from Sweden.

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

- EU/CoE - HF “Strengthening the Efficiency of Justice (SEJ III) in Albania”: The module on case management system was prepared. The module on collection of judicial statistics based on CEPEJ standards and tools was updated in view of the High Judicial Council’s approval of the “Guide for the Collection of Judicial Statistics” and the specific needs of relevant judicial administration. The Albanian High Inspectorate of Justice (HJI) and the French General Inspectorate of Justice established institutional cooperation, which will entail peer exchange activities and support to the HJI’s membership of the European Network of Justice Inspection Services (RESIJ).
- EU/CoE - HF “Enhancing the protection of human rights of prisoners in Albania”: The Directorate General of Prisons in Albania (DGPA) was further supported in setting up a sustainable career system for prison police and civil staff by drafting the methodology and questionnaires to collect data for the assessment of the recruitment system. The rehabilitation staff in pilot prisons are fully capable of applying its new tools thanks to extensive capacity-building activities. The draft Strategy and Action Plan for Improving Prisoners’ Education and Employment Opportunities was consulted and supported by all relevant parties.
- EU/CoE - HF “Economic Crime in Albania”: Legislative amendments to strengthen anti-money laundering measures were supported by delivering the second legal opinion on the draft amendments to the Law on Notarial Services, based on international best practices and the Guide of the European Central Bank. Its aim is to strengthen the fit and proper requirements of notary professions and their compliance with the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations. The draft law is expected to be adopted in Parliament in July 2021.
- EU/CoE - HF “Supporting effective domestic remedies and facilitating the execution of judgments (D-REX)”: The Albanian State’s Advocate (ASA) was supported in the execution of the ECtHR decision “Beshiri v. Albania” and 11 other applications regarding property rights, by conducting an assessment of the Constitutional Court decision No. 4/2021 on the unconstitutionality of some provisions with Law No. 133/2015 and consultations with experts from relevant institutions and CSOs. In addition, 59 staff members of the ASA and lawyers improved their knowledge and skills on the newly developed and implemented case-management system. The State Cadastre Agency received the manual and commentary for the registration of agricultural titles, a valuable practical tool in the finalisation of transitional ownership processes. An awareness-raising campaign reached more than 1,500 people in seven municipalities providing information and advice on the registration of agricultural property titles.
- EU/CoE - HF “Promotion of Diversity and Equality in Albania”: Initiatives and awareness-raising activities involving innovative tools, performances, online campaigns, photo exhibitions, podcasts, and flash mobs, reached over 100,000 people during the IDAHOT week (14-25 May). Ahead of 25th April parliamentary elections, the Action supported the No Hate Alliance and the Central Election Commission (CEC) to establish the “Code of Conduct for the

Political Parties" and to monitor its implementation in traditional, online and social media. The findings and recommendations of the monitoring report shall guide the Alliance's and CEC's further work in this area. In addition, the Action improved accessibility through the translation into eight minority languages of the Law on Protection from Discrimination and complaint forms of the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination.

- EU/CoE - HF "Judiciary and Freedom of Expression (JUFREX)": Ethical reporting during the parliamentary elections held on 25 April was promoted via a social media campaign for which the Albanian Media Council (partner and grantee) produced an infographic. Selected judges and prosecutors were supported in their new role as media magistrates, in cooperation with the School of Magistrates (SoM).
- EU/CoE regional JP "ROMACTED - Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level" Phase II: Initial meetings were held with mayors and municipal officials in the targeted municipalities of Elbasan, Permet, Fier, Korca, Pogradec, Roskovec, Vlora, Lushnje, Cerrik and Gjirokastra from 14-24 June. Their aim was to discuss how commitments at European and national level have been broken down at local level during the implementation of the ROMACTED Phase I, as well as building and reconfirming the political commitment of the mayors and the local administrations for a better understanding of Roma inclusion at local level and agreeing on the terms of partnership during ROMACTED Programme Phase II (2021-2024).
- VC Sweden "Strengthening Democratic Citizenship Education in Albania": Fifty-one participants from CSOs, school mentors and school principals were capacitated on the main elements of democratic and inclusive governance and of decision-making policies and practices in school, including on the CoE Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture. Eleven education professionals, designated to support the Network of Democratic and Inclusive Schools in Albania, attended the ToT training on a comprehensive School Development and Improvement Process. On-site visits were organised in 25 pilot schools to establish the schools' development teams and start the school self-assessment exercise based on the School Inclusion Index with a focus on the Culture Component. Concrete recommendations were provided to the Draft Education Sector Strategy 2021-2026 in line with CoE standards.

Yerevan**Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 6, Project staff – 26, Total staff – 32.

The Office implemented 13 projects, four in the framework of the EU/CoE regional Joint Programme “Partnership for Good Governance”, one funded by the UK, one funded by Switzerland, one funded by Austria, and six projects funded through voluntary contributions at Action Plan-level.

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

- EU/CoE - PGG Component 1 “Support to the judicial reform – enhancing the independence and professionalism of the judiciary in Armenia”: The Project contributed to the improvement of the quality of judicial decisions by developing and distributing a Handbook on improving the quality of judicial decisions. The Project significantly contributed to the development and modification of the methodology and procedure for the performance evaluation of judges, with a particular emphasis on the performance evaluation practices of the highest courts’ judges. To contribute to a better representation of women judges in the judiciary, the Project initiated a comprehensive study to identify and find practical solutions to the challenges faced by women judges in their career development. Considerable steps have been taken to promote the development and application of alternative dispute resolution in Armenia.
- EU/CoE - PGG Component 2 “Support to the judicial reform - supporting the criminal justice reform and harmonising the application of European standards in Armenia”: During the reporting period, significant progress was achieved in the field of criminal justice reform. After many years of development in close cooperation with the CoE, the new Criminal Code (CC) and the new Criminal Procedure Code (CPC) were adopted by the National Assembly on 5 May and 30 June respectively. With expert support provided by the Project, 10 legal acts associated with the new CPC and CC were harmonised in line with the principles of the new Codes. The law on regulating the entry into force of the new CC was also prepared and put forward for public consultation. Translation and dissemination of key ECtHR materials, including two ECtHR guides on different Articles of ECHR, the new HELP methodology for adult training and decisions of the Criminal Chamber of the Court of Cassation, were facilitated.
- EU/CoE - PGG “Strengthening institutional capacities to fight and prevent corruption in Armenia”: The Project continues to support the CPC in the practical implementation of its functions, in particular by strengthening capacities for maintaining the registry of Public Officials’ property, income, and interest declarations, the checking and analysing process of these declarations, conducting the verification of the credibility and completeness of the data submitted in the system and the submission process of declarations, in accordance with the adopted methodology that was developed with project support in previous reporting periods. On 13 May, targeted training on the “Public officials’ property, income and interest declarations analysing process” was provided to the new staff members of the CPC who will be directly conducting the verification and analysis of declarations. The process of verification and analyses of the declarations was presented and discussed in detail, enhancing the technical and legislative knowledge of the participants on effective analyses of public officials’ declarations.
- EU/CoE - PGG “Strengthening the profession of lawyer in line with European standards”: The Project finalised the fourth cross-country review on the systems of legal representation in the five participating countries of the project (Armenia, Belarus, Georgia,

Moldova and Ukraine). The review is pending conclusive validation of the project's main stakeholders before publication. The Project commenced the delivery of the next three cross-country reviews on a) access to the profession of advocate, b) codes of ethical standards for lawyers and c) professional standards of interaction of lawyers and judges in courts. The comparative reviews will include the consultants' desk research and fact-finding interviews with relevant institutions in the participating countries for further clarification and validation of their research. The Project also involved international consultants in the assessment of the state of affairs regarding young lawyers and to establish potential grounds for cooperation among their professional associations and networks in the five participating countries.

- AP "Human Rights and Women in the Armed Forces of Armenia – Phase II": On 20 May, the second SC meeting of the Project was held during which the Project Work Plan for 2021 was discussed and approved. On 10-11 May, the third online meeting of the working group for the development of model HELP online course on the protection of human rights in the armed forces was held, during which content-related aspects of the course were discussed and finalised. On 30 April, the Project conducted consultations with the MoD on the development of Visibility and Communication Plans for Women Servicepersons' Councils. During the reporting period, the Project initiated the development of the following documents: 1) a comprehensive methodology for assessing the needs of the social and health system; 2) an awareness-raising toolkit for the civil and political rights of military servicepersons; 3) Tools, procedures, as well as a methodological guide on the internal monitoring of the rights of women servicepersons on gender equality and the prohibition of discrimination in the armed forces and 4) scripts for the final two animation films dedicated to the military service, with a particular focus on women.

- VC Switzerland "Strengthening the Communities Association of Armenia and transparent, participatory local governance in Armenia": In order to support the CAA in sustaining itself as a credible and sustainable body, project experts conducted an assessment of the implementation status of the CAA strategy for 2016-2020. The report on the assessment was finalised. Project experts developed a legal analysis of the current state of local self-government, concentrating on the new electoral system and a study on decentralisation of the powers of state bodies and the equalisation of financial resources. The Project held three of four one-day thematic workshops in a series of Open Government workshops for locally elected representatives. The workshops covered topics on Corruption risk assessment; the Anti-corruption strategy and action plan; and Public Integrity. The last workshop on Tools for Public procurement is planned for 9-10 September. An online training course for members of the Community of practice "Leaders for change" was developed and will be translated into the national language. The course will be available on a digital e-learning platform of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure (MTAI). To support implementation of the RA Anti-corruption strategy and action plan for 2019-2022, the Project initiated the development of an electronic corruption risk self-assessment tool, based on the methodology for tool development, and elaborated within the framework of the project and approved by the MTAI.

- VC Austria "Democratic development, decentralisation and good governance in Armenia": Three-day peer review meetings on increasing fiscal autonomy and fiscal capacity of local authorities in Armenia were organised via videoconference (4-5 May). The Peer Review team, consisting of senior officials from Austria, Albania, Finland, Italy and Ukraine, participated in a roundtable discussion on possible reforms of the equalisation system and measures. On 15 June, findings of the baseline assessment of standard expenditure needs of amalgamated communities in Armenia were presented to state and local officials and relevant stakeholders. On 29 June, relationships between the regional administration and local authorities, as well as amendments to the conceptual framework for local tax administration were discussed at the 4th Consultation initiative meeting. Two advanced two-day online training sessions on the public procurement system were held on 11-14 May for about 50 financial staff from consolidated communities.

- AP "Support the scaling-up of the probation service in Armenia": A group of 14 trainers successfully finalised a training of trainers course on probation. An assessment report on e-probation was finalised and presented during an online workshop on 26 May. A training session was organised on 20-21 April for probation officers to ensure the application of the RNA tool in practice. The RNA tool software was revised, operation and user acceptance testing was completed, and the revised RNA tool was adopted by order of the MoJ. A desk report on rehabilitation programmes for probation beneficiaries in Armenia was developed. A training course for judges and prosecutors of the Academy of Justice was developed and circulated. An online awareness-raising training session was organised on 23 April for around 50 advocates. An information leaflet on the rights and obligations of probation beneficiaries and the functions of the Probation service was developed, and 600 copies were printed.
- AP "Enhancing health care and human rights protection in prisons in Armenia": On 19 April, the 1st WG meeting to present and discuss the Toolkit for Mental Health Screening and Risk and Needs In-depth Assessment was organised. On 28 June, the 1st WG meeting to present and discuss the Toolkit for Suicide and Self-harm Behaviour Screening and Risk and Needs In-depth Assessment in the penitentiary institutions and a roadmap for piloting the toolkit was held. A half-day workshop to present and discuss the findings of an assessment report "On the needs of the prison healthcare services and on the possible introduction of telemedicine and an electronic medical system" was organised on 27 May. The 2nd WG meeting to present and discuss the recommendations on the introduction of telemedicine in the Armenian penitentiary system and the scope of the legal framework to be established was held on 14 June. The HELP course on CPT standards was successfully completed by the first group of professionals from the MoJ, the Prison Medicine Centre and the Human Rights Defender's Office. Guidelines on proper documentation and reporting of indications of ill-treatment were developed and formally adopted by Decree of the MoJ on 21 April. As a result of technical assistance provided by project, the Government of Armenia amended Decision No 825-N "On procedure for organising medical, sanitary and medical-preventive assistance to detained and convicted persons" by introducing a new chapter on requirements for the examination and reporting of allegations of ill-treatment cases. The training methodology, a Manual and an Agenda for specific skill-based training sessions to ensure proper documentation and reporting of indications of ill-treatment, was developed, published and disseminated to prison medical staff. A three-day online ToT session on proper medical examinations and reporting of ill-treatment cases was organised for selected staff from medical units of penitentiary institutions.
- AP "The Path towards Armenia's Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence": The campaign on preventing and combating domestic violence (DV), implemented with the Ministry of Justice, received over 3 million views on social media. Two podcasts and a feature story were developed to facilitate discussion on the issue of DV. Three regional NGOs received grants to promote awareness on combating violence against women (VAW) and DV. Over 160 social workers from different social support centres were trained on prevention of VAW and DV and providing support to victims. Recommendations on the gender sensitivity of sample school subject curricula and materials were provided to the Ministry of Education. A baseline survey on VAW and DV in Armenia, was initiated with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, partners, and consultants of the project.
- AP "Protection of Human Rights in Biomedicine I": The first draft of reports on the analysis of national legislation, with recommendations and suggestions made by a group of local and international experts, was prepared. Based on the official request of the Ministry of Health, the Project is working on the development of the concept of the National Ethics Committee. The initial draft prepared by an international expert is on the table for discussion with the Ministry of Health. On 30 June, the first HELP training session for journalists on Key Principles on Bioethics was held in hybrid format. The training session was the first ever HELP

training session for journalists and aimed to equip journalists covering the healthcare sphere with the necessary skills in relation to the main principles of bioethics and to apply these principles in their daily practice.

- AP "Support for the Execution by Armenia of Judgments in Respect of Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights": In addition to the launching event and its first Steering Committee, the Project initiated three local consultancy works that were delivered on 15 June. Two of these consultancy works concerned the intermediate outcome 1. regarding the activity of the Government Agent in the sphere of execution of judgments, in particular, the national platform for interaction for the Government Agent and the improvement of the legislation concerning the Government Agent. The other one concerned the intermediate outcome 4. of the Project regarding the advisory opinions under Protocol 16 to the ECHR. To summarise the results of these consultancy works, a round table was organised on 26 June and two others will be held on 7 and 9 July, which were scheduled for late June but were postponed due to parliamentary elections.
- EU/CoE - PGG "Strengthening access to justice for victims of discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Eastern Partnership countries": While developing a comprehensive map of hate speech in Armenia, national stakeholders participated in the initial training on hate speech in Armenia in early April. In May, during individual or group interviews with the concerned parties, experts modified the initial map on hate speech in Armenia. On 10 and 11 June, two online workshop sessions were organised with the main stakeholders to discuss the modified map and receive preliminary feedback on its accuracy and relevance. In cooperation with the Justice Academy of the RA, 12 prosecutors and judges successfully passed the HELP course on hate speech. On 24-25 May, around 30 public officials familiarised themselves with the hate speech concept. On 4 June, 15 public officials discussed the disaggregated data collection particularities in Armenia and suggested the continuance of working meetings in the future. In cooperation with the Human Rights Defender's office, three videos on hate speech and guidelines on hate speech for educators are being developed and are soon to be finalised.

Other relevant activities

- On 8-9 April the Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR had online meetings on the on-going electoral reform with representatives of the parliamentary fractions of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia. The final opinion was published on 21 April.
- Within the Quick Response Mechanism of the "Partnership for Good Governance - Phase II" and upon the request of the Minister of Justice, an expert opinion was prepared by the CoE on proposed Amendments to the Law on Mass Media and the Code of Administrative offences. Consultation meetings took place with the Standing Committee on Protection of Human Rights and Public Affairs of the Parliament of Armenia on 20 April, representatives of civil society organisations on 17 May, and the Office of the Ombudsman on 25 May. The final expert opinion of the CoE was sent to the Minister of Justice on 11 June.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- 19-23 May: PACE rapporteur, Paul Gavan (Ireland, UEL), to gather information for his report "Humanitarian Consequences of the Conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan";
- 24-25 May: Verena Taylor, Director of the Office of the Directorate General of Programmes;
- 17-22 June: A 24-member delegation of PACE visited Armenia to observe the early parliamentary elections on 20 June.

Pristina

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 7, Project staff –18, Total staff - 25.

The Deputy Head of Office took up his position on 1 May.

The Office implemented eleven projects, three in the framework of the EU/CoE regional Joint Programme “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey”, one EU/CoE regional Joint Programme (ROMACTED), two EU/CoE Joint Programmes, two funded through a voluntary contribution from Norway, and three funded through non-earmarked voluntary contributions.

State of implementation of projects/programmes

- EU/CoE - HF “Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media (JUFREX2)”: Three cascade and thematic courses on FoE-related topics were organised in cooperation with project partners/beneficiaries. The training courses were dedicated to judges and prosecutors of all court/prosecution instances and for lawyers operating throughout all municipalities. The application of the right to FoE in everyday practice was the focus of two lectures organised for law and journalism students. A set of four webinars on dealing with misinformation and using available public sources while handling whistle-blowers reports was co-organised with the PECK III project.
- EU/CoE - HF “Ensuring Efficiency and Quality of Justice (KOSEJ2)”: The Project is supporting the MoJ in preparing the next assessment report of the justice system with an Excel tool to produce the necessary graphs and tables. The MoJ will establish a statistical unit to make this process sustainable. CEPEJ experts provided recommendations for the development of a new functionality in the CMIS to re-assign cases automatically when a judge leaves the court definitively. The Project proposed concrete steps to be undertaken by the courts and the KJC to increase the quality of statistics, in particular data on the number of hearings held and postponed.
- EU/CoE - HF “Promotion of diversity and equality”: The anti-discrimination reporting framework and discrimination pattern survey was presented at a public high-level conference; A working meeting to finalise the workplan for the next quarter with the advisory committee for the rights of the LGBTI community was organised. The action supported local NGOs in organising the Pride Parade 2021, by actively participating in the activities organised. The concept for the local No Hate Speech campaign was finalised, and with the agreement of the EU Office the launching event will be organised in September.
- EU/CoE JP “Building Capacity for Inclusive Education (INCLUDE)”: The Project launched a video on inclusive education “Quality and inclusive education is a right of every child”. On 18 May, the project on the inclusive and democratic learning community for 25 pilot schools (275 teachers) was officially launched. A six-day Training of Trainers (ToT) was organised for eight local trainers on inclusive education, which will be working with 25 pilot schools on introducing competences for democratic culture in schools. Two documents, a Teacher’s Manual and a Trainer’s Manual prepared by an international expert, were developed for use by the trainers assigned in the pilot schools.
- EU/CoE JP “Project against Economic Crime (PECK III)”: The Project presented the Review of the Legal and Operational Framework of the AMSCA. It delivered a Legal Opinion on the Administrative Instruction on Beneficial Ownership, and follow-up work supported the finalisation of the instruction. An analysis on money laundering prosecution was finalised and presented to the Working Group. The Project organised a three-day hybrid training on effective management of sequestrated assets for the AMSCA and four hybrid training webinars on the

impact of information and protection of whistleblowers. It held the first bilateral meeting with police related to the operationalisation of the whistleblowers channel and procedures.

- EU/CoE Regional JP "ROMACTED - Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level": A commitment to the implementation of ROMACTED II was expressed by 10 municipal mayors and deputy mayors during a field visit by the project team. Consolidation meetings with Community Action Groups (CAGs) in 10 municipalities were initiated. The appointment of Municipal Contact Persons in each beneficiary was requested. Conversely, the (re)appointment of the municipal members for the Institutional Working Group (IWG) was initiated with all beneficiaries.
- VC Norway "Improving the Protection of European Human Rights Standards by the Constitutional Court (IPEHRSCC)": The project officially ended on 30 June, having finalised the upgrade of the electronic case management system of the beneficiary court, the establishment of the E-library supplied with more than 50 E-books of resource materials, the launching of several publications of case-law and methodology of the ECtHR, and the purchase and installation of a back-up server aimed at strengthening the beneficiary's IT infrastructure. The Project facilitated a webinar on the use of electronic tools for effective case processing, and organised a high-visibility conference "Bringing the European Court of Human Rights Closer to Right Holders".
- VC Norway "Reinforcing the fight against violence against women and domestic violence": A HELP Course on VAW and DV with students of the Law Faculty of the University of Pristina was concluded on 25 May. Research on setting up treatment programmes for perpetrators of VAW and DV was initiated; a high-level conference was held and an online video launched to mark the 10th Anniversary of the Istanbul Convention ; two ToT sessions on combating VAW and DV for legal professionals were held. Guidelines for Shelters and Guidelines for Awareness Raising were launched, and the training of professionals on the implementation of both these sets of guidelines was completed. Furthermore, the final Phase II Steering Committee took place online on 28 June.
- VC "Strengthening the Institutions in Fight against Torture, Ill-treatment and Other Degrading Treatment IKOS": The Project launched a training module on Prohibition of Ill-treatment, Combating Impunity, with Justice Academy. A training module on Monitoring Corruption and Preferential Treatment in Places of Deprivation of Liberty purposed for the National Preventive Mechanism against Torture (NPM) was completed. The Project supported the NPM in conducting monitoring visits to eight facilities in five municipalities including police, penitentiary, mental health and social care, and two major psychiatric establishments in Pristina, followed by mentoring sessions on findings with CPT experts.
- VC "Preventing and combatting trafficking in human beings": On 28 April, the Project presented findings and recommendations from the Training Needs Assessment for the Criminal Justice Sector, joined by the Minister and Deputy Minister of internal Affairs. On 10-11 June, the Project delivered a two-day training on "Legislative framework on the prevention and fight against trafficking in human beings". Trainees were provided with information on existing legal instruments, horizontal legislation, as well as recent changes and challenges encountered in prevention, fight and investigation of human trafficking, protection and assistance to victims of trafficking and concrete examples from ECtHR case-law.
- VC "Promoting local democracy": International experts were selected to develop, together with a local expert, capacity building activities and learning events on public ethics, political integrity, and open government.

Follow up action

- KOSEJ II: A conference on e-summonses (September 2021) and presentation of the draft 'Report on the use of IT in the courts in 2020' to the beneficiaries before its finalisation;

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- INCLUDE: Follow-up training for the assessment teams of children with Special Education Needs (SEN) in the municipalities and Resource Centres (RC), will be organised;
- PECK III: Provision of a Legal Opinion to the MOJ on Civil Confiscation Law;
- IKOS: Training of Trainers of the Justice Academy on two training modules under Article 3 of the ECHR;
- Preventing and combatting trafficking in human beings: make progress on the establishment of a database for victims of trafficking.

Rabat

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 3, Project staff – 8, Total staff – 11.

The Office implemented eight projects within the EU/CoE regional joint programme “Regional Support to Reinforce Human Rights, Rule of Law and Democracy in the Southern Mediterranean” (South Programme IV) 2020-2022, the joint EU/CoE project “Support to the National Preventive Mechanism against Torture in Morocco” (2020-2023) and the joint EU/CoE project “Support for the development of the role of parliament in the consolidation of democracy in Morocco”. It is also providing logistical support for a project on combating discrimination in Morocco, a project to promote freedom of expression and media pluralism in Morocco and another in support of personal data protection in Morocco, a project on “Strengthening democratic governance at local and regional levels in Morocco” and a project on “Improving the functioning of justice in Morocco based on the tools of the CEPEJ”, which are funded by voluntary contributions to the “Council of Europe Neighbourhood Partnership with the Kingdom of Morocco 2018-2021”.

State of implementation of projects

EU/CoE joint project: South Programme IV “Regional Support to Reinforce Human Rights, Rule of Law and Democracy in the Southern Mediterranean”

- A human rights capacity-building webinar was held for Moroccan prosecutors on 5 April with the aim of presenting the European system of human rights protection, including some of the conventions and agreements to which the Kingdom of Morocco has acceded. Participants were able to boost their understanding of the historical and legal context of the implementation of human rights, familiarise themselves with landmark judgments of the European Court of Human Rights in their professional field and consider the implications of the right to a fair trial and the right to freedom and security.
- A capacity-building workshop for parents and guardians was held to improve online child protection. The meeting raised awareness among parents about the main problems they face, informing them at length about the tools they can use to help their children browse the Internet in greater safety.
- An awareness-raising campaign on online child protection was also launched as part of the “Morocco Cyberconfidence Space” project. The campaign included five visual aids for parents and children on protecting personal data; false information; social networks; and the reporting portal.
- A workshop aimed at strengthening the role of prosecutors in combating violence against women and domestic violence was held, enabling around 300 prosecutors to improve their understanding of related issues at the level of the justice chain and their knowledge of national and international standards and best practices in this respect. These activities also form part of the implementation of Law No. 103-13 on combating violence against women, Law No 13-2012 regulating conditions for domestic workers, and the efforts of representatives of the Public Prosecutor’s Office in combating child marriage.
- A workshop to present the first annual report of the National Commission for the Protection of Women Victims of Violence (CNFV) was held on 31 May. The report takes stock of CNFV’s activities and proposals to enhance the protection of women victims of violence in Morocco in line with the goals set by Law No. 103.13 on combating violence against women.

EU/CoE joint project: “Support for the development of the role of parliament in the consolidation of democracy in Morocco”

- From April to June 2021, a series of meetings were held to identify the needs of Parliament, donors and civil society. The project's inception phase was completed in May. The first Technical Steering Committee meeting took place on 17 June 2021 with the participation of the Secretaries General of both Houses of Parliament, the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the representatives of the EU delegation. The work plan for the 2021-2023 period was approved. The conceptualisation and production of the project's communication materials was also launched during this period.

Voluntary contributions to the "Council of Europe Neighbourhood Partnership with the Kingdom of Morocco (2018-2021)"

- Project on "Improving the functioning of justice in Morocco based on the tools of the CEPEJ – phase II": in partnership with the Ministry of Justice, an awareness-raising workshop was held in hybrid format in Rabat on 24 June to help court administrative directors drive change towards cyberjustice. Around 30 directors of courts in the Rabat/Casablanca/Kenitra region were able to exchange views with their European peers, learn about specific CEPEJ tools and find out more about the Master Plan for the digital transformation of the Moroccan justice system. In parallel, several videoconference meetings were held to provide technical assistance to the Supervision Unit of the Presidency of the Public Prosecutor's Office: a report including specific recommendations was drawn up to support the Unit's work. Work on optimising work processes is also being carried out with the Public Prosecutor's Offices at the Safi Court of Appeal and the Khemisset Court of First Instance, which are the pilot prosecution offices for the project. After holding meetings to gather information, special reports were produced which also contain tailor-made recommendations for the pilot prosecution offices.
- Project on "Strengthening democratic governance at local and regional levels in Morocco": a webinar on the institutional architecture of decentralisation in Morocco and Europe was held on 23 June. The aim of the webinar was to highlight the institutional architecture of countries with several levels of decentralisation like Morocco and the methods used by local and regional authorities and their national associations to collaborate effectively with each other and to interact with central authorities. On 29 June, another webinar was held on the participation of women in political life at territorial level, with Morocco, Tunisia and Europe sharing their experiences in this respect. The meeting focused on two main topics: gender mainstreaming in local and regional public policy and elected women's experiences and challenges (especially during the electoral campaign and first days in office).

Other relevant activities

- Participation of the Moroccan delegation with the status of Partner for Local Democracy in three online meetings of the Congress, namely those of its Monitoring Committee (28 April), Current Affairs Committee (7 May) and Governance Committee (12 May).

Follow-up action

- With the support of the Council of Europe, the National Commission for the Protection of Women Victims of Violence produced two awareness-raising videos for the presentation of its first annual report, which takes stock of its activities and proposals to enhance the protection of women victims of violence: awareness-raising video about Law No. 103-13 on combating violence against women, <https://youtu.be/l4H6BpwMv1Q>; video on the National Commission for the Protection of Women Victims of Violence, <https://youtu.be/8nYbl6vdZJE>.

Launch of the project "Support for the development of the role of Parliament in the consolidation of democracy in Morocco" at the conference on Women in politics (13 July),

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during the visit of the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (12-14 July).

Tunis

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 4, Project staff - 18, Total staff -22.

As part of the implementation of the Neighbourhood Partnership 2018-2021, the Office continued providing support to the coordination and implementation of the country-specific and regional projects listed below:

- EU/CoE JP « Support to Tunisian independent bodies » (PAII-T)
- EU/CoE JP « Support to justice reform » (AP-JUST)
- Projects funded through voluntary contributions from CoE member States
- EU/CoE JP “Regional Support to Reinforce Human Rights, Rule of Law and Democracy in the Southern Mediterranean” (South Programme IV)
- EU/CoE JP “Cybersouth”

As from April, preliminary consultations on the preparation of the Neighbourhood Partnership for Tunisia 2022-2025 took place between the Head of office ad interim and the Ministry of Foreign affairs. Modalities for closer coordination between the office and the national authorities were also agreed with the MFA (including notably monthly meetings involving different partners).

State of implementation of projects / programmes

Bilateral joint programmes:

EU/CoE Joint Programme « support to Tunisian independent bodies »

➤ Fight against corruption and money laundering, support to the Anti-corruption body (INLUCC):

- a technical document on the development of a national methodology for corruption proofing of legislation was prepared following consultations with relevant stakeholders. This tool will determine the approach to be deployed in the development of this methodology and the means for its implementation and institutionalisation. Tunisia will be the first country in the MENA region to adopt such an approach.
- a capacity-building plan on financial investigation techniques was developed. The plan identifies the priorities of the institutions and organisations involved in detection, investigation, and prosecution of economic crimes to strengthen their capacities in conducting financial investigations and co-operation between different stakeholders. Specialised training sessions will start in the last quarter of 2021.
- a procedures manual for co-operation between the INLUCC and civil society was finalised. It aims to organise the internal management of INLUCC grants in a transparent and efficient manner and to explain the financing process of civil society initiatives to the various parties involved.

➤ Co-operation with the Venice Commission, support to independent elections instance (ISIE):

- Coordination meetings with international technical partners in the field of elections continued, notably with a view to the preparation of the Seminar on referenda that will take place in July 2021.

➤ Freedom of expression, support to media regulatory authority and to national body on access to information:

- The setting-up of an online Resource and Training Centre on Regulation, Self-Regulation and Media and Information Education was launched.

- Data protection, support to the national body on personal data protection:
 - The draft toolkit for data protection in the health sector was submitted for consultations with stakeholders. Recommendations gathered will make it possible to finalise this document and to select thematic tools targeting relevant health actors in Tunisia.
 - The comparative research to develop a toolbox for data protection awareness raising in the youth sector was launched.
- Fight against trafficking in human beings / support to the national body combating human trafficking (INLTP) and HELP programme:
 - 35 new HELP tutors were trained and certified, bringing the total number of tutors in Tunisia to 45.
 - A kit on the protection of victims of human trafficking was presented to relevant partners.
- Support to the National body in charge of combating torture (INPT):
 - The Manual of Prison Law for legal professionals was officially presented a hybrid event held in Tunis, with very good media coverage. In addition, some project outputs were completed, notably the comparative analysis regarding the setting-up of the referral pole within the body. The work to contextualise the HELP course on CPT standards to Tunisia progressed well.

EU/CoE JP « Support to justice reform » (AP-JUST)

- The preparation of training modules on «the investigating judge» and «the judge of the prosecutor's office» continued.
- 100 court auditors benefited from distance training on mediation and artificial intelligence in the field of justice, and 200 lawyers were introduced to civil mediation.
- To improve the internal management of court files during the COVID-19 period, the Department of Justice, magistrates and clerks from across the territory shared experiences and discussed potential solutions.
- 25 clerks from the regions of Tunis, Béja and Bizerte attended in-person training on «Administrative and financial management in the courts and regional justice administrations», which will enable them to introduce financial management by objectives into their departments.

Projects implemented through voluntary contributions *(it should be noted that voluntary contributions have also supported some of the above-mentioned actions)*

- The Congress continued to support the National Federation of Tunisian Communities resulting in a report on the evaluation of the decentralisation process in Tunisia from the viewpoint of municipalities, which was presented during a press conference. This event was widely covered by local media, and the report has been taken into consideration by national authorities in their consultation process on the state of decentralisation.
- Euro-Mediterranean exchanges were promoted in a webinar dedicated to the participation of women in local politics with participants from Tunisia, Morocco and Europe who exchanged experiences and best practices in implementing gender mainstreaming and engaging in politics at local level.
- The capacities of the Higher Authority for Local Finances were reinforced through financial support to strengthen its Secretariat. Furthermore, the Congress is currently working in close cooperation with representatives of the FNCT and the Ministry for Local Affairs on the establishment of a consultation mechanism.
- A campaign to disseminate the Toolkit on the Rights of Women Victims of Violence in Tunisia made it possible to distribute 6,000 copies in June in the country's 24 governorates.

Joint ProgrammesEU/CoE JP "Regional Support to Reinforce Human Rights, Rule of Law and Democracy in the Southern Mediterranean" (South Programme IV)

- A Regional Baseline Study in Tunisia, Morocco, Lebanon and Algeria on media treatment of violence against women in the media in Southern Mediterranean countries continues with monitoring and mapping work, and the final version of the study will be available in September 2021.
- A Child Sexual Abuse Reporting Portal was launched in Tunisia on 10 June with the Internet Watch Foundation and the Ministry of Women, Families and Seniors. This portal will strengthen the reporting dynamics of the Delegate General for Child Protection in Tunisia by making it possible to report cybernetic sexual violence against children with the aim of eliminating it.