



## Adapting to the current Covid-19 crisis

In order to address the unprecedented COVID-19 outbreak and to continue programme implementation under the current circumstances, a number of measures have been taken:

- The Council of Europe Offices and Programme Offices have all continued to operate, mainly through teleworking;
- Close contacts with partners have been maintained;
- Project work plans are continuously being revised in the light of changing circumstances;
- The implementation methodology has changed, with the application of mitigating measures, where necessary, and focusing on activities which are in line with the current restrictions and do not require face-to-face meetings and international/local travel:
  - organising the originally planned activity via videoconference/other means using new information technologies (the Council of Europe now holds more than 400 video-conferences every day);
  - replacing actions by written procedures;
  - replacing an activity by another one (such as desk-studies or expert analysis);
  - promoting distance learning
  - focusing on preparations for upcoming activities (information material, translation, content drafting) to privilege desk work in this context;
  - provision of specific COVID-19 related capacity building where relevant.

## Examples of measures taken to continue project implementation:

- ***Re-scheduling the order of activities***, where desk and research work are pushed forward, while field activities requiring travel and in-person presence will be moved to later stages. This also includes ***initiating legal reviews and advice on draft legislation initially planned for a later period***. For example, reviews and commentaries of Codes as well as legislative review studies are under preparation.
- ***Continuing to support capacity-building through distance learning/online tools, especially HELP training*** For example: new HELP courses are being translated and adapted; Additional HELP online courses made available; online training course and webinars are under preparation in the format of online courses; launch of the HELP courses will be held by videoconference tutored online HELP course will be organised.

- **Questionnaire-based assessments and data collection complemented by consultations through videoconferencing.** For example, reports and data collection and related consultations of stakeholders are underway.
- **Carrying out preparatory work for future activities:** for example, launching preparatory work for regional and larger-scale activities to take place later, such as roundtables, multilateral conferences, seminars; desk research in particular in the light of the new projects recently launched. Procurement processes of equipment, publication of international call for tenders; preparation of mapping and recommendation as a basis for the further work within projects.
- **Replacing face-to-face meetings with electronic exchanges, webinars and video- and skype- conferences.** For example, skype conferences are planned; series of webinars will be organised; Online platforms for remote public discussion are set up; online consultations are being planned.
- **Pursuing or launching work on cross-cutting issues.** For example, preparation of gender analysis in the framework of projects.
- **Developing awareness raising and communication materials.** Printing of publication; Online presence of the projects reinforced through social media postings and newsletters. Translating documents, tools and recommendations into local languages. For example: publication of articles on the website of a Council of Europe Office about the increased specific risk of domestic violence in the context of COVID-19. Preparation of E-bulletins on expertise and ECtHR.

### Specific measures directly related to COVID-19

<b>Fields of intervention/project areas</b>	<b>Example of measures taken</b>
Promotion of diversity and equality; protection of vulnerable groups including Roma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the translation and publication of Covid19 information and healthcare leaflets on COVID-19 in minority languages. This new activity aims at informing national minorities on COVID 19</li> <li>• providing assistance in ensuring adaptation of psycho-social services to the COVID-19 context for the most vulnerable groups;</li> <li>• spreading information on preventive measures and distributing emergency kits for the most vulnerable Roma families.</li> <li>• Videos and leaflets on support to most vulnerable IDPs in situation of COVID 19 pandemic produced.</li> </ul>
Support to the Penitentiary Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provision of protective clothes, masks, products to disinfect the surfaces, infrared contact free thermometers and medical examination gloves.</li> <li>• Translation of CPT statement of principles on treatment of persons deprived of liberty in the context of COVID-19.</li> </ul>

Freedom of expression/Media freedom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Press Councils and/or Association of Journalists response to COVID-19;</li> <li>• Specific communication to promote a more responsible journalism and reporting in times of crisis.</li> <li>• Development of guidelines for journalists on covering COVID-19</li> </ul>
ECHR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Translation of the toolkit "Respecting democracy, rule of law and human rights in the framework of the COVID-19 sanitary crisis", sent by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe Marija Pejčinović Burić to all 47 Council of Europe countries, was translated into local languages. This document serves as guidelines for the government to deal with the present unprecedented and massive scale sanitary crisis in a way that respects the fundamental values of democracy, rule of law and human rights. It aims at ensuring that measures taken by during the current crisis remain proportional to the threat posed by the spread of the virus and are limited in time.</li> </ul>

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