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**CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL
OF EUROPEAN PROSECUTORS
(CCPE)**

CCPE Opinion No. 21 (2026)

**on providing support and safeguards for prosecutors
in order to enable an efficient prosecution service**

I. Introduction

1. In accordance with the mandate given to it by the Committee of Ministers, the Consultative Council of European Prosecutors (CCPE) has prepared this Opinion on providing support and safeguards for prosecutors in order to enable an efficient prosecution service. The support and safeguards required for prosecutors are not a prerogative or privilege granted in their own interest, but in the interest of the rule of law and of anyone seeking and expecting justice. Such support and safeguards are necessary for prosecutors to be able to carry out their work efficiently and to serve the public interest.
2. This is all the more important in view of the proximity and complementary nature of the missions of judges and prosecutors and similar requirements and guarantees regarding their status and conditions of service.¹
3. The CCPE already emphasised in the past the ever-increasing demands on prosecutors. The overall legal, organisational and technical framework as well as the necessary financial and human resources provided to prosecution services are therefore of paramount importance.² In view of the growing workload pressure on prosecutors, this is all the truer nowadays.
4. The work of prosecutors is rigorous and demanding, requiring them to demonstrate utmost precision, accuracy and consistency when carrying out their duties under constant pressure. Moreover, they have to respond to the challenges of evolving criminality and its new forms, globalisation, proliferation of transborder crimes, and other contemporary challenges. There are increasing security concerns on prosecutors, including cybersecurity and digital privacy, which should be taken into account, as they require appropriate measures for their protection.
5. The CCPE also underlined that, in a growing number of member states of the Council of Europe, justice systems, not least prosecution services, are under mounting scrutiny from the public, politicians and media.³ The increasing attention to the work of individual prosecutors and collectively to the prosecution services as institutions within the justice system may lead to acute external pressure, safety concerns and other challenges which in turn can affect the good functioning, effectiveness and independence of prosecution services, as well as the public confidence in justice systems.
6. Against this background, the topic of this Opinion was considered important and directly relevant by the CCPE. The Opinion examines and highlights fundamental principles, actions and measures that provide support and safeguards for prosecutors in present-day conditions, facilitating them to fulfil their duties effectively and to serve the public interest. The Opinion also takes into account the different legal systems, models and methodologies existing across Europe.

¹ Joint Opinion of the CCPE and the CCJE (No. 4 (2009) for the CCPE and No. 12 (2009) for the CCJE) on relations between judges and prosecutors in a democratic society, Explanatory Note, para 37.

² CCPE Opinion No. 11 (2016) on the quality and efficiency of the work of prosecutors, including when fighting terrorism and serious and organised crime, para 4.

³ CCPE Opinion No. 11 (2016) on the quality and efficiency of the work of prosecutors, including when fighting terrorism and serious and organised crime, para 2.

7. The Opinion takes into consideration a wide spectrum of previous standards articulated, *inter alia*, by the CCPE in its previously adopted Opinions:

- Opinion No. 7 (2012) on the management of the means of prosecution services;
- Opinion No. 8 (2013) on relations between prosecutors and the media;
- Opinion No. 9 (2014) on European norms and principles concerning prosecutors, including the Rome Charter;
- Opinion No. 11 (2016) on the quality and efficiency of the work of prosecutors, including when fighting terrorism and serious and organised crime;
- Opinion No. 13 (2018) on the independence, accountability and ethics of prosecutors;
- Opinion No. 16 (2021) on the implications of the decisions of international courts and treaty bodies as regards the practical independence of prosecutors;
- Opinion No. 18 (2023) on Councils of Prosecutors as key bodies of prosecutorial self-governance;
- Opinion No. 19 (2024) on managing prosecution services to ensure their independence and impartiality.

8. The Opinion also takes into account the following instruments:

- Recommendation CM/Rec(2000)19 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the role of public prosecution in the criminal justice system;
- Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)11 of the Committee of Ministers on the role of public prosecutors outside the criminal justice system;
- relevant case law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR);⁴
- relevant case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU);
- reports of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission);
- legal tools of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ);
- instruments of European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ);
- reports of the Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption (GRECO);
- standard-setting documents of the International Association of Prosecutors (IAP);
- documents of other bodies and institutions within and outside of the Council of Europe.⁵

9. Furthermore, the Opinion is guided by the responses of CCPE members to a questionnaire on support and safeguards provided for prosecutors in order to enable an efficient prosecution service.

⁴ For example, ECtHR *Grzęda v. Poland* (Grand Chamber), No. 43572/18, 15/03/2022; *Kövesi v. Romania*, No. 3594/19, 05/05/2020; *Harabin v. Slovakia*, No. 58688/11, 20/11/2012; *Kolevi v. Bulgaria*, No. 1108/02, 05/02/2010; *Guja v. Moldova* (Grand Chamber), No. 14277/04, 12/02/2008; *Pantea v. Romania*, No. 33343/96, 03/09/2003; *Vasilescu v. Romania*, No. 53/1997/837/1043, 22/05/1998.

⁵ Such as, for example, the Ibero-American Association of Public Prosecutors (AIAMP) Good Practice Guide on the Protection and Security of Prosecutors, Officials and Civil Servants of Public Prosecution Services (2025) and its Charter of Ethical Principles for Ibero-American Public Prosecution Services (2022).

10. The CCPE wishes to thank the members of the Bureau and the Working Group of the CCPE for their continuous advice and direction, as well as drafting input and suggestions throughout the process of preparation of this Opinion.

II. Purpose and scope of the Opinion

11. The purpose of this Opinion is to provide standards and guidance on support and safeguards for prosecutors to ensure the efficiency of prosecution services in present-day conditions. The Opinion underlines the member states' duties towards prosecution services and individual prosecutors. It aims to assemble and consolidate in one document otherwise fragmented standards from various sources.
12. The Opinion also seeks to update those standards, to meet and to overcome current challenges. The Opinion introduces new standards on topics not previously addressed by the CCPE but which have arisen from recent challenges faced by prosecutors in the member states.
13. In order to capture the support and safeguards which prosecutors need to carry out their role efficiently in present-day conditions, the Opinion focuses upon the following seven core areas:
- the protection and security of prosecutors;
 - the well-being of prosecutors;
 - the working conditions of prosecutors, including remuneration and workload management;
 - the efficient management of prosecution services;
 - the regulation of relations between prosecutors and the media, including social media;
 - the availability of modern technologies for prosecutors;
 - specialised training for prosecutors in a constantly evolving legal environment.
14. While acknowledging the diversity of legal systems and models existing across Europe, the CCPE considers what they all have in common is that in order for justice systems to be efficient, to respond to contemporary challenges and to meet public expectations, they need efficient, independent, impartial prosecutors. Furthermore, as the CCPE already underlined, the efficiency and quality of the work of prosecutors depend not only on their competence and skills, but are also significantly affected by external factors which are outside the control of prosecutors.⁶
15. Against this background, the Opinion examines what support and safeguards are expected for prosecutors to fulfil their role. The Opinion is built around the aforementioned areas, describing how they have a significant impact on the work of prosecutors, identifying and updating available standards as well as setting out new standards where necessary. Finally, the Opinion, without intending to be an exhaustive list of all possible actions and measures, concludes with formulating relevant recommendations with a view to providing clear guidance to member states. All findings and recommendations are based on best European practices, as reported by the members of the CCPE.

⁶ CCPE Opinion No. 11 (2016) on the quality and efficiency of the work of prosecutors, including when fighting terrorism and serious and organised crime, para 11.

III. Supporting the efficient work of prosecutors

A. Ensuring protection and security of prosecutors

1. Existing standards

16. This issue has always been high on the agenda of the Council of Europe, as well as of other stakeholders. The Committee of Ministers has emphasised that member states should take measures to ensure that public prosecutors, together with their families, are physically protected by the authorities when their personal safety is threatened as a result of the proper discharge of their functions.⁷
17. The CCPE has taken up this recommendation,⁸ reflecting, *inter alia*, the recommendations of the International Association of Prosecutors (IAP), adding that the requirement for the protection of prosecutors applies whether they are carrying out their functions in the criminal law field or outside of it.⁹
18. The CCPE has further stressed, in line with, *inter alia*, UN recommendations, that when prosecutors or their families are subject to violence or threats of violence, or to any form of intimidation, coercion or inappropriate undue surveillance, a thorough investigation of such incidents should be carried out and steps should be taken to prevent their future recurrence. Where required, prosecutors and their families should be provided with the necessary counselling or psychological support.¹⁰
19. The CCPE also wishes to refer to another UN recommendation, namely that states must ensure that prosecutors are able to perform their functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment, improper interference or unjustified exposure to civil, penal or other liability.¹¹
20. In the context of ensuring the quality of prosecutors' work, the CCPE underlined the benefits and indeed the necessity for guarantees to be provided for the personal safety of prosecutors and their families. In particular, when prosecutors are involved in cases of terrorism as well as serious and organised crime, prosecution services should take proactive measures for the protection of their lives, health, freedom, physical integrity

⁷ Recommendation CM/Rec(2000)19 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the role of public prosecution in the criminal justice system, para 5, item g.

⁸ CCPE Opinion No. 9 (2014) on European norms and principles concerning prosecutors, including the Rome Charter, clause XI.

⁹ CCPE Opinion No. 7 (2012) on the management of the means of prosecution services, para 22. See also IAP Declaration of Minimum Standards Concerning the Security and Protection of Public Prosecutors and their Families (2008).

¹⁰ CCPE Opinion No. 9 (2014) on European norms and principles concerning prosecutors, including the Rome Charter, para 91. See also UN Human Rights Council, Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Gabriela Knaul, A/HRC/20/19, 7 June 2012, paras 76-78 and 118.

¹¹ Guidelines on the Role of Prosecutors adopted by the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, Havana, Cuba (1990), para 4.

and property.¹² In the light of contemporary challenges, the issue of digital security for prosecutors has also become increasingly important.

21. The CCPE agrees with the CEPEJ recommendation that, at the very least, court buildings should be installed with adequate levels of security, which may be heightened as needs require during hearings on particularly high-profile matters or in times of crisis.¹³
22. The CCPE also emphasised that the personal security of prosecutors should not be undermined in the context of information provided to media.¹⁴

2. Present-day situation and challenges

23. The responses of the CCPE members to the questionnaire for this Opinion demonstrate that, globally, member states pay due attention to ensuring protection and security of prosecutors, however with different institutional and operational frameworks and mechanisms. One of the purposes of the Opinion is to produce a cohesive document summarising this information and the CCPE's respective views.¹⁵
24. In the majority of member states, this issue is regulated at legislative level, typically in the legislation governing the organisation and functioning of the prosecution service. Yet in others, it is regulated by executive regulations established by governmental or ministerial decrees and orders, and by other sub-legislative acts. In some member states, it is subject to directives adopted by the prosecutorial self-governing bodies. The CCPE considers it good practice to establish the protection of prosecutors at legislative level, to acknowledge the importance of the issue and to give it a stronger legal basis, with the possibility of further regulation of more specific issues related to it at various sub-legislative levels.
25. In the majority of member states, special protective mechanisms exist for this purpose, which the CCPE fully supports, and which are initiated at the request of the prosecutor concerned with his/her security and/or that of his/her family. Most member states also have general protection measures designated for prosecutors which do not require a request by the prosecutor concerned. Member states also provide specialised training on this matter or at least incorporate safety and security measures in general training sessions during the prosecutors' professional career.
26. In this context, the CCPE considers that, in particular, provision should be made for prosecutors, in clearly defined circumstances, to have the possibility of directly approaching the head of the prosecution authority or a specially designated unit responsible for matters relating to the security of prosecutors, with a view to conducting an urgent risk assessment and, where necessary, promptly implementing appropriate protection measures. Such a mechanism should ensure an appropriate level of confidentiality with regard to the information concerning threat and security measures taken.

¹² CCPE Opinion No. 11 (2016) on the quality and efficiency of the work of prosecutors, including when fighting terrorism and serious and organised crime, Recommendation 5.

¹³ CEPEJ Guidelines on the organisation and accessibility of court premises (2014), Section 4.4.1.

¹⁴ As regards existing standards in this area, see for more details the sub-chapter E. Regulating relations between prosecutors and the media including social media.

¹⁵ The same approach is applied in this Opinion as regards other areas highlighted in sub-chapters B – G of chapter III.

27. Whilst respecting the right of the media to report on criminal justice and the importance of public debate, the CCPE expresses concerns about the malicious targeting of individual prosecutors in media reports as well as the potential for resulting personal criticisms and biased information being publicised, particularly on social media. This may become problematic and potentially dangerous, in the case of prosecutors involved in “high-profile” cases, attracting increased public attention, including terrorism, organised crime, corruption (in particular, cases involving political figures), as well as other serious crimes (see also para 41 of this Opinion).
28. In this regard, the CCPE fully supports the practice in those member states where relations of the prosecution service with outside actors, including the media, are impersonalised as much as possible, with the prosecution service acting as an institutional actor and being represented by a specially appointed prosecutor or staff member of the service, or in cases of special importance, by the top management of the service. In this way, any unnecessary interaction with individual prosecutors is avoided and their names and other data are not disclosed.
29. Furthermore, following some concerns that prosecutors involved in “high-profile” cases are not sufficiently protected, the CCPE considers that, while there must be uniform protection mechanisms for all prosecutors, there should also be specific reinforced, robust measures in the case of prosecutors working on such sensitive cases. The CCPE notes the benefits of having an efficient prosecution service able to assess risks and provide protective measures, where required, for prosecutors and members of their families.¹⁶
30. The CCPE takes note of the concerns reported by members such as:
- the application of protective measures in a non-discriminatory way, sufficiently independent of political and corporate interests;
 - various types of threatening behaviour, verbal or other abuse, both inside and outside the courtroom, including that of defendants or their relatives;
 - adequate security at the work premises and other problematic aspects.
31. In this regard, the CCPE notes that the overarching requirements for member states to have and actively exhibit the political will to protect prosecutors, to develop a culture of zero tolerance towards maliciously targeting individual prosecutors in any way, including through media, as well as to provide sufficient protective measures established by law, designating sufficient resources in addition to the engagement of appropriate regulatory bodies in charge, for this purpose.

B. Supporting the well-being of prosecutors

1. Context

32. While the well-being of prosecutors has so far not been examined by the CCPE, it is an issue which has a direct impact on both the quality and efficiency of their work and consequently on the good functioning of justice systems. It is concerned exclusively with professional well-being connected with prosecutors discharging their functions

¹⁶ Including comprehensive risk analysis on the protection and security of prosecutors in specific types of cases, particularly relevant for cases with an international dimension.

effectively. The prosecutorial profession presents unique challenges which must be addressed through a variety of measures and defined safeguards.

33. In this context, the CCPE recalls that high levels of occupational stress within judiciaries globally were reported, and the absolute majority of judges and members of the judiciary did not have sufficient time to maintain optimal physical and mental well-being,¹⁷ while acknowledging that it was crucial for promoting their competence and due diligence.¹⁸ In view of the proximity and complementary nature of the missions of judges and prosecutors, such concerns are most likely to be applicable also in the case of prosecutors.
34. The CCPE notes that the well-being of prosecutors is a cross-cutting issue which is dependent on other issues addressed in different parts of this Opinion, especially on improving the working conditions of prosecutors and managing their workload.¹⁹

2. Present-day situation and challenges

35. The responses of the CCPE members to the questionnaire for this Opinion demonstrate that in the absolute majority of member states, the well-being of prosecutors is recognised as being of fundamental importance for the quality and efficiency of their work, acting as a contributing factor to the efficiency of justice.
36. They refer first of all to the overall legislative and institutional guarantees for independent and impartial functioning of prosecution services. The responses highlight that funding, status, career opportunities for prosecutors, their working conditions, remuneration, security, technical equipment, sufficient administrative capacities and other objective aspects, when taken together, are all designed to facilitate an effective criminal justice system and by extension, the individual well-being of prosecutors.
37. Many member states, however, also apply more subjective measures of support including:
 - psychological assistance;
 - peer support and networking;
 - team building;
 - training sessions dedicated to prioritising tasks and time management, mental health and coping with stress,²⁰ recognising overload and burnout prevention, managing conflicts and emotions, and other topics as needed.
38. In the majority of member states, there is a combination of both objective and subjective measures, to different extents, an approach which the CCPE considers most appropriate to deal with the well-being of prosecutors. As mentioned above, the CCPE considers the well-being of prosecutors as a cross-cutting issue which is influenced by all aspects of

¹⁷ Report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) entitled “Exploring Linkages between Judicial Well-Being and Judicial Integrity” on the global survey conducted by the judicial integrity network (March 2022), under key findings and takeaways.

¹⁸ Nauru Declaration on Judicial Well-Being adopted on 25 July 2024 at the Regional Judicial Conference on Integrity and Judicial Well-Being organised by UNODC; see also the Commentary on the Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct (2018), para 194.

¹⁹ As regards existing standards on the workload of prosecutors, see for more details the sub-chapter C. Improving work conditions of prosecutors, including remuneration and workload management.

²⁰ Including the right to disconnect when not on active duty.

prosecutorial work, therefore it supports a holistic approach on how it should be maintained and protected.

39. The CCPE also agrees with major concerns expressed by most members, namely that the rapidly increasing workload of prosecutors, in parallel with the growing complexity of cases and ever more demanding legal environment, as well as prosecutors' exposure to highly disturbing contents and emotionally charged situations, contribute to heightened stress and professional burnouts, therefore constituting the most serious threats to their well-being.²¹ This is all the more important given the accountability of prosecutors for any possible mistakes, which may have serious consequences for the course of justice. It is important in this context, to promote the reporting of issues in order to foster a learning environment.
40. In the context of the above-mentioned concerns, the CCPE underlines in particular prosecutors' exposure, often on a repeated basis, to traumatic materials.²² It considers that mental health or psychological support should be readily available to prosecutors to support them in dealing with such situations, where needed.²³ They should be able to access independent professional support on a confidential, anonymous and free of charge basis.²⁴
41. Furthermore, prosecutors are increasingly subjected to external pressure, including of a political nature as well as linked to media and social media coverage. This can lead to negative reports in formal and informal media, naming explicitly prosecutors, as well as online harassment through social media, including threats to their person or their relatives; these situations are often interconnected as well as cumulative, resulting in significant pressure on prosecutors. This can be heightened in cases concerning high-profile individuals, companies, and politicians. Such occurrences can have serious detrimental effects on the well-being of prosecutors which may affect their work. According to the CCPE, prosecutors should therefore be provided with adequate support to help them face the challenges posed by such situations. Such measures include an institutional response to negative reports and online harassment and, where necessary, security procedures to protect their person (see also paras 27-29).
42. Linked to the need for a global strategy connected with working conditions, the CCPE notes other concerns expressed by members including:
 - shortages of prosecutors and staff, their turnover;
 - unbalanced distribution of tasks among them;
 - inadequate infrastructure, working premises and equipment;
 - exposure to public criticism;

²¹ For family related measures of support including parental leave, remote working and others, see the CCPE Opinion No. 20 (2025) on diversity and inclusivity within prosecution services.

²² For example, images resulting from terrorism, violent crimes, child pornography, sexual abuse and exploitation, autopsy materials and so on. The exhaustive list of traumatic materials may be very long, and all prosecutors are exposed to them.

²³ Taking into account the proximity of the professions of judges and prosecutors, see also the CCJE Opinion No. 28 (2025) on the importance of judicial well-being for the delivery of justice, para 17; see also the CEPEJ document entitled "Breaking up judges' isolation. Guidelines to improve the judge's skills and competences, strengthen knowledge sharing and collaboration, and move beyond a culture of judicial isolation" (2019), paras 101, 102, 104.

²⁴ It should be mentioned in this context that clinical records should be kept separate from personnel and appraisal records.

- reduced attractiveness of the profession of prosecutor;
 - insufficient social guarantees;
 - difficulties in reconciling professional, personal and family life, particularly the necessity of providing on-call service out of hours, as well as when prosecutors are assigned away from their place of residence;
 - lack of strategy and systematised approach for supporting well-being;
 - requirements related to the use of IT and new digital systems.
43. An unsustainable workload can seriously and negatively impact the working conditions of prosecutors. In this context, the CCPE considers that an overarching strategy should be in place to assist prosecutors in maintaining a healthy work-life balance.²⁵ It should include reconciling professional, personal and family life, while protecting personal life from the potentially negative influence of their professional life. This should be seen as a way of preventing situations where prosecutors are at real risk of burnout or similar negative impacts, which, in addition to being damaging on an individual level, is disruptive for the effective functioning of prosecution services.
44. Such a strategy may include, *inter alia*, family related leave, flexible working arrangements and, where compatible with the needs of the service, remote working as well as support for prosecutors assigned away from the place of residence. The recourse to such measures should not adversely affect the prosecutors' careers.
45. Similarly, to alleviate workload pressure, support should be provided to prosecutors by prosecution services to further their professional capacities, for example, through time management strategies, prioritising tasks, peer support and networking, team building, mobility etc. The CCPE considers that such measures, when combined, offer a comprehensive approach to managing work-related stress.
46. Furthermore, according to the CCPE, the human resources of prosecution services should have an internal policy for dealing with the professional well-being of prosecutors to address the specific challenges faced by the profession.
47. The CCPE encourages prosecution services to establish dedicated well-being and support units for prosecutors experiencing burnout, work-related stress or other professional difficulties, with a view to maintaining and enhancing their professional effectiveness and resilience. Such services should guarantee strict confidentiality and provide clear safeguards, ensuring that any personal disclosures made by the prosecutors concerned in this context are not used to their detriment in their professional careers. By ensuring a safe and supportive environment, prosecution services should enable prosecutors to seek assistance without fear of adverse consequences.

²⁵ A recent CEPEJ survey, to which nearly 4600 judges and judicial staff responded, identified a number of difficulties encountered by judges in maintaining a satisfactory work-life balance, see at <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cepej/-/cepej-workshop-on-improving-work-life-balance-for-judges>.

C. Improving work conditions of prosecutors, including remuneration and workload management

1. Existing standards

48. The work conditions of prosecutors, especially their remuneration, have been dealt with regularly by the Council of Europe and other international organisations, highlighting the importance of this matter.
49. The Committee of Ministers and the CCPE have underlined that member states should take measures to ensure that public prosecutors have reasonable conditions of service such as remuneration, security of tenure, pension commensurate with their crucial role, as well as an appropriate age of retirement²⁶ and that these conditions are governed by law.²⁷
50. Moreover, the conditions of service should reflect the importance and dignity of the prosecution office, and the required respect attached to it. The appropriate remuneration of prosecutors also implies recognition of their important function and role, while potentially reducing the risk of corruption.²⁸ The CCPE also stressed this issue in several other Opinions.²⁹
51. In this context, the CCPE has endorsed the proximity and complementary nature of the missions of both judges and prosecutors. There is direct parallel that exists between them in terms of similar requirements and guarantees for their status and conditions of service, including their remuneration.³⁰
52. The Venice Commission has also underlined the importance of the tasks performed by prosecutors and that sufficient remuneration is necessary to reduce the danger of corruption.³¹ GRECO has also stressed the importance of adequate remuneration for prosecutors, by encouraging that such remuneration be based on transparent and objective criteria.³²

²⁶ In this context, the CCPE notes the concerns of members as regards possible manipulations with the age of retirement as a pretext for replacing prosecutors in a targeted way, and importance of having a certainty about the term of office of prosecutors.

²⁷ Recommendation CM/Rec(2000)19 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the role of public prosecution in the criminal justice system, para 5, item d. See also CCPE Opinion No. 9 (2014) on European norms and principles concerning prosecutors, including the Rome Charter, para 75.

²⁸ CCPE Opinion No. 9 (2014) on European norms and principles concerning prosecutors, including the Rome Charter, para 76.

²⁹ CCPE Opinion No. 13 (2018) on independence, accountability and ethics of prosecutors, Recommendation XI, see also CCPE Opinion No. 16 (2021) on implications of the decisions of international courts and treaty bodies as regards the practical independence of prosecutors, Conclusions, Section A(1).

³⁰ Joint Opinion of the CCPE and the CCJE (No. 4 (2009) for the CCPE and No. 12 (2009) for the CCJE) on relations between judges and prosecutors in a democratic society, Explanatory Note, para 37.

³¹ Venice Commission Report on European Standards as regards the Independence of the Judicial System: Part II – the Prosecution Service (2010), para 69.

³² GRECO's Fourth Evaluation Round: Corruption Prevention in respect of Members of Parliament, Judges and Prosecutors, Evaluation Report concerning Estonia adopted by GRECO at its 58th plenary meeting (Strasbourg, 3-7 December 2012), para 172.

53. The importance of the work conditions of prosecutors, particularly of their remuneration, was also underlined by the UN, its treaty bodies as well as by other international organisations.³³
54. Prosecution services should provide for transparent and objective appointment and career development systems,³⁴ which may differ according to their legal traditions. Where the performance of prosecutorial duties requires relocation, particularly in sensitive fields such as counterterrorism, prosecution services should ensure that the prosecutors concerned are afforded adequate protection and appropriate living conditions.
55. The CCPE has already emphasised that a system for calculating the workload of prosecutors must be designed in order to identify their evolving needs. This system should also be able to measure those factors that influence or affect the execution of their tasks, so that those tasks are carried out properly.³⁵
56. As the CCPE has stated in relation to corruption cases, which can also apply to other types of crime, that as a general rule, the allocation of cases and regulation of workload should follow an objective system of distribution in accordance with the complexity and potential difficulty of the cases, as well as the knowledge, abilities and skills of the prosecutors. Furthermore, prosecutors should receive the necessary support and be allocated sufficient time corresponding to their complexity.³⁶
57. The CCPE also considers it important to reiterate its standards on the funding of prosecution services. Prosecutors must have at their disposal sufficient means in order to fulfil their various tasks in the situation of new national and international dangers and challenges, including those brought by the development of technologies and globalisation processes. Prosecution services must be enabled to estimate their needs, negotiate their budgets and decide how to use the allocated funds.³⁷ The CCPE also fully recognises the need to continuously update training programmes in response to current and emerging challenges.

2. Present-day situation and challenges

58. The responses of the CCPE members to the questionnaire for this Opinion show that in member states, prosecutors' remuneration is generally competitive and comparable to other positions in the public legal sector which the CCPE welcomes. In most cases, it is

³³ For example, UN Guidelines on the Role of Prosecutors adopted by the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (1990), paras 3 and 6. See also Human Rights Committee (treaty body under the ICCPR), consideration of reports submitted by States Parties under Article 40 of the ICCPR, concluding observations, CCPR/C/79/Add.79 (1997), para 18. See also Standards of the International Association of Prosecutors (IAP) of Professional Responsibility and Statement of the Essential Duties and Rights of Prosecutors (1999), Article 6(3).

³⁴ CCPE Opinion No. 9 (2014) on European norms and principles concerning prosecutors, including the Rome Charter, clause XII; see also Venice Commission Report on European Standards as regards the Independence of the Judicial System: Part II – the Prosecution Service (2010), para 18; see also GRECO's Fourth Evaluation Round: corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors, Evaluation Report on Ukraine (2017), para 223.

³⁵ CCPE Opinion No. 7 (2012) on the management of the means of prosecution services, para 38.

³⁶ CCPE Opinion No. 14 (2019) on the role of prosecutors in fighting corruption and related economic and financial crime, para 34.

³⁷ CCPE Opinion No. 7 (2012) on the management of the means of prosecution services, Chapter IV. Recommendations, paras (i) and (ii).

comparable to the remuneration of judges. In some member states, judges and prosecutors follow the same career path, therefore having the same pay levels. In some member states, the prosecutorial salaries are comparable to those of civil servants, while in others, they are higher.

59. At the same time, the salary levels of prosecutors are mostly the same throughout the territory of member states, therefore they do not reflect the existing disparities of the living costs between the big cities and elsewhere in the country. Therefore, the CCPE considers that, taking into account the varying regional and socio-economic conditions in regions within member states, in particular the increasing cost of living in major urban centres, they should provide appropriate financial balancing mechanisms to compensate the significant discrepancies between areas. This may include accommodation supports. Such measures would contribute to strengthening the social and economic well-being of prosecutors, while also enhancing the efficiency, stability and overall functioning of prosecution services.
60. Furthermore, it is mentioned that in some member states, while remuneration is generally aligned with the judicial system, questions remain as to its overall competitiveness compared to the private sector, especially lawyers (defence attorneys), which can impact negatively upon the attractiveness of the profession.
61. The most reported concerns regarding work conditions include:
 - the heavy workload, constant pressure and burnout syndrome experienced by prosecutors; need of improvement of the case management systems;³⁸
 - increasing complexity of cases;
 - insufficient number of prosecutors and chronic shortage of support staff, assistants, investigators, IT professionals, which increases the burden on prosecutors.
62. The unique position of prosecutors within the criminal justice chain, often involving sole responsibility for complex proceedings that may extend over prolonged periods, renders the justice system particularly vulnerable to factors affecting the individual prosecutor's capacity to effectively discharge his or her duties. In such circumstances, any impairment of the prosecutor's ability to perform his or her functions may have a direct impact on the efficiency and proper functioning of the justice system as a whole.
63. The CCPE also underlines the importance of defining the principles for effective case management and setting out a system based on them. The system should take into account the number, in addition to the complexity of cases, as well as the requirement for corresponding levels of skills and experience for the prosecutors in charge.
64. In this context, the CCPE welcomes contingency and emergency planning (including possible successions) to alleviate stress, in particular in specialised areas of law, in smaller jurisdictions where a disproportionate level of responsibility may be placed upon prosecutors, at the same time as opportunities for mobility are being reduced.
65. The CCPE is also of the view that the benefits of promoting mobility within the prosecution services, particularly in relation to prosecutors serving in more stressful and

³⁸ See also paras 43-45 of Chapter III.

emotionally challenging legal areas, possibly after a set period of time, should be encouraged.

66. The CCPE underlines that proper work conditions for prosecutors should include support staff, including paralegals, clerical/statistical officers, professional managerial support as well as specialised staff as required by the complexity and sensitivity of the cases dealt with.
67. The availability and combination of these elements are necessary, not only for the efficiency of the work of prosecutors, but also for enhancing respect for the prosecutorial profession while reinforcing public trust in the justice system, which is a vital element of the rule of law.

D. Ensuring efficient management of prosecution services

1. Existing standards

68. The CCPE underlined that, given that a common feature of most prosecution services is their hierarchical structure, it is all the more important that their management be fully independent and impartial themselves, and also be seen as such, in order to ensure the independence and autonomy of the services they manage. Therefore, the management of the prosecution service should be completely non-political.³⁹
69. The CCPE has acknowledged that, due to factors such as the workload and the size of the prosecution service, prosecutors general may need to delegate some functions and tasks to their deputies or other high-ranking officials within the service. Even if management functions are carried out by these officials instead of the prosecutor general⁴⁰, the relevant CCPE standards for their independent and impartial status and functioning apply *mutatis mutandis*.⁴¹
70. Thus, the CCPE concludes that high-ranking officials within the prosecution service, who have been entrusted with management functions related to the prosecution service, should be provided with the same guarantees and safeguards for their efficient work as the prosecutors general.
71. The CCPE considers this standard very important for the proper management of prosecution services in member states and thus ensuring their efficient operation in line with applicable international standards.
72. In this context, as the CCPE has already underlined, relationships between the different layers of the hierarchy in the prosecution services must be governed by clear and unambiguous rules so that personal or other considerations do not play an unwarranted role, and that prosecution services are managed transparently, impartially, effectively and based on strict compliance with law.⁴²

³⁹ CCPE Opinion No. 19 (2024) on managing prosecution services to ensure their independence and impartiality, para 13.

⁴⁰ While taking into account other systems existing in Europe.

⁴¹ CCPE Opinion No. 19 (2024) on managing prosecution services to ensure their independence and impartiality, para 19.

⁴² CCPE Opinion No. 19 (2024) on managing prosecution services to ensure their independence and impartiality, Recommendation 13.

73. There must be clear division of lines of responsibility among the high-level prosecutors responsible for management of the prosecution service based on the principles of objectivity and fair balance among them, fair allocation of work in terms of quality and quantity, fair treatment and equality. This will provide for clear, objective and transparent decision making as well as the accountability of the top level of the prosecution service.
74. The CCPE has also stated that all prosecutors, including top management, should adhere to the highest ethical and professional standards, always behaving impartially and with objectivity. They should thus strive to be, and also be seen as, independent and impartial, should abstain from political activities incompatible with the principle of impartiality, and should not act in cases where their personal interests or their relations with the persons interested in the case could hamper their full impartiality.⁴³

2. Present-day situation and challenges

75. The responses of the CCPE members to the questionnaire for this Opinion demonstrate that in member states, division of responsibilities within the prosecution service is established by law and/or other legal acts. Responsibilities are generally based on a hierarchical structure of the whole system, where the head of the service plays a decisive role, holding the necessary competence, authority and powers to regulate all issues related to the work of prosecutors.
76. The CCPE takes note of the following concerns reported by members:
- insufficient number of prosecutors and support staff, especially at regional and specialised levels;
 - difficult budgetary situation;
 - uneven workload in certain specialised areas (e.g. serious financial, economic and organised crime, cybercrime, criminal offences with cross-border elements);
 - increasing demands on professional specialisation and coordination between the various levels of the prosecutorial system;
 - high administrative burden on the heads of prosecution services;
 - the adequate distribution of resources in a decentralised prosecution service.
77. The CCPE underlines that it is preferable to establish a division of responsibilities amongst prosecutors with a management role responsible for the prosecution service (not only the head of the service alone) by law, typically through the legislation on the organisation and functioning of the service. This is important given the importance of their tasks. At the same time, the division of responsibilities at lower levels within the prosecution service may be brought into effect through other legal acts, including internal orders and regulations within the service.
78. Such a law may, in the CCPE's opinion, pursue several aims, including avoiding possible disproportionate levels of responsibility, ensuring fair distribution of work amongst prosecutors with a management role responsible for the prosecution service, as well as making sure that they are not subjected to any kind of pressure during fulfilment of their tasks.

⁴³ CCPE Opinion No. 9 (2014) on European norms and principles concerning prosecutors, including the Rome Charter, clause VI.

79. In most, if not all, member states, there are ethical and professional rules for the work and conduct of all prosecutors, including those with a management role. Furthermore, these rules place appropriate restrictions on prosecutors as regards taking part in political activities, as well as exhibiting and disseminating political views. The CCPE fully supports such an approach as it ensures prosecutors' independence, impartiality and objectivity.

E. Regulating relations between prosecutors and the media including social media

1. Existing standards

80. The CCPE underlines that efficiency and transparency in the functioning of the prosecution services are key components of the rule of law and are important factors for a fair trial. This includes the independence of prosecution services from all external actors, including the safeguards against influence by the media.
81. Prosecutors need communication support in their interactions and relations with the media. In this context, providing guidelines on public relations and training on the use of social media to prosecutors is important. This can facilitate better communications while enhancing the safety and security of prosecutors.
82. Institutional support is also very important, in particular, establishing communication or press offices within prosecution services that will not only provide relevant information to the media but also support prosecutors, while highlighting any areas of concern which may arise.
83. Moreover, the CCPE underlined that when prosecutors are subjected to false information or intimidation through the media or through social media, they are entrusted with the right of having the contested information rectified or other legal remedies according to the national law. In the event of the dissemination of false or abusive information, the position must be rectified and in the event of intimidation, the prosecutor must be supported. Any reaction should preferably come from the top management or a spokesperson of the prosecution service. Such institutional reaction minimises the need for the individual prosecutors concerned to make use of their right of reply and the risk of an excessive "personalisation" of the conflict.⁴⁴ If further legal action is required, prosecutors must receive adequate legal support (see also para 28).
84. When information is provided by prosecutors to the media, it should not undermine their personal security, and it should not refer to individual prosecutors, but impersonally to the action of the prosecution service.⁴⁵
85. The CCPE also recognised that prosecutors enjoy the right to freedom of expression, including in connection with their membership of professional associations and trade unions where applicable, while having to respect professional secrecy, the duty of confidentiality, the duty of discretion and objectivity. When prosecutors appear in the

⁴⁴ CCPE Opinion No. 9 (2014) on European norms and principles concerning prosecutors, including the Rome Charter, para 111. See also CCPE Opinion No. 8 (2013) on relations between prosecutors and the media, para 45.

⁴⁵ CCPE Opinion No.10 (2015) on the role of prosecutors in criminal investigations, para 53.

media in any capacity, they should be aware of the risks that may arise to the perceived impartiality and integrity of the prosecution service.⁴⁶

86. At the same time, the CCPE notes that restrictions on political activities and public expression must be prescribed by law, pursue a legitimate aim and be necessary and proportionate. They should not prevent prosecutors from contributing to public debate on the administration of justice, legislative reform, prosecutorial independence and the rule of law, subject to their duties of confidentiality, discretion and impartiality.⁴⁷

2. Present-day situation and challenges

87. The responses of the CCPE members to the questionnaire for this Opinion demonstrate that in member states, relations between prosecutors and the media, including social media, are regulated by law or regulations. Typically, this includes the legislation on the organisation and functioning of the prosecution services, in addition to codes of ethics and conduct.
88. In the absolute majority of member states, there are either spokespersons for this purpose (either specially trained prosecutors or media professionals who are not prosecutors), or press offices or even Public Relations Departments in some cases. This may include both central and territorial prosecution offices or only central ones depending on the organisation of the service.
89. The CCPE supports such practice and further encourages member states to regulate relations between prosecutors and the media.
90. The head of the prosecution service and heads of its territorial or specialised subdivisions usually bear full responsibility for their offices, which consequently includes the overall responsibility for media communications and the public image and visibility of prosecutors. They provide an overall coordination for the work of press offices and may interact with the media directly in more sensitive cases attracting increased public attention. Ordinarily, prosecutors are not supposed to respond or to interact with the media. However, in some member states, they are not prohibited from doing so, if this is done in line with applicable rules and regulations and in co-ordination with the press office.
91. The CCPE fully supports institutional responses to the media being provided by the top management of the prosecution service in particularly sensitive cases, or when there are malicious criticisms of prosecutors in the media. Therefore, the CCPE notes that its previous recommendation (see para 28 above) has become even more pressing nowadays. In such cases, the press office of the prosecution service must respond quickly and informatively, dispelling any doubts in the objectivity of prosecution, while maintaining public trust in the justice system.
92. In this context, the CCPE wishes to reiterate that the names and personal data related to prosecutors should be kept confidential as far as possible, avoiding the unnecessary identification of individual prosecutors (see also para 28).

⁴⁶ CCPE Opinion No. 8 (2013) on relations between prosecutors and the media, para 19.

⁴⁷ In this context, the CCPE takes note of the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in the case of *Kövesi v. Romania*, No. 3594/19, 05/05/2020.

93. In today's societies, social media and informal online reporting play an increasingly strong role in the coverage of cases, in particular high-profile cases⁴⁸ which can lead to additional pressure on prosecutors in the performance of their work. The CCPE therefore considers that what was said above regarding traditional media is also applicable to social media as well as informal online reporting (see also para 41).
94. In member states, the codes or rules of ethics and conduct usually provide regulations governing prosecutors' conduct on media including social media. Such conduct is also guided by general principles of good practice and by internal rules of the prosecution service. Prosecutors are required to exercise caution and restraint in all their public communications, including on social media.⁴⁹
95. As regards social media, additional risks arise from the information and disclosures regarding prosecutors' personal lives and alleged conflicts of interest. It is mentioned that prosecutors are often unable to respond appropriately to malicious criticisms on social media in light of disciplinary and professional ethics, particularly given the confidentiality obligations incumbent upon them.
96. The CCPE agrees that, in order to address these challenges, prosecution services must strengthen their co-ordination of communication activities, provide specialised training, ensure that codes of ethics and conduct are available to prosecutors thereby providing clear and practical guidance.⁵⁰ These factors promote a uniform, professional and responsible approach to all interactions with the media, including social media.
97. This is especially important since the public, political debate and the media environment (including social media) can sometimes contribute to misconceptions as regards the role of prosecution services. The CCPE agrees that prosecution services should therefore focus on transparent communication with the public, including through media, aiming at strengthening both the public's understanding as well as confidence in the work of prosecutors.

F. Providing modern technologies for prosecutors

1. Existing standards

98. The CCPE has emphasised that prosecutors should have the necessary and appropriate means, including the use of modern technologies, to exercise effectively their mission, which is fundamental to the rule of law.⁵¹ Digital technologies have become an established part of the investigation and prosecution of crimes, including transborder crimes.⁵²
99. The CCPE agrees that the understanding and the use of new technologies and expeditious, cost-effective and simplified mechanisms should facilitate the work of

⁴⁸ High-profile cases are understood as those attracting a heightened degree of attention on the part of the public.

⁴⁹ CCPE Opinion No. 8 (2013) on relations between prosecutors and the media.

⁵⁰ Specialised ethics and advisory bodies within prosecution services, able to issue non-binding guidance, can also be a useful tool in this regard.

⁵¹ CCPE Opinion No. 9 (2014) on European norms and principles concerning prosecutors, including the Rome Charter, clause XVIII.

⁵² CCPE thematic study on digitalisation in the work of prosecution services and international co-operation (2023), para 3.

prosecutors, assisting them to respect procedural timetables. Such use must conform to the rule of law principles, be in line with the requirements of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR),⁵³ as well as to take into account the findings and recommendations of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ)⁵⁴ and other bodies and institutions of the Council of Europe and beyond.

100. The CCPE agrees with the CEPEJ about the importance of developing and using technology in ways that maintain and enhance judicial autonomy, independence, impartiality, as well as the rule of law.⁵⁵
101. Since the understanding and the use of new technologies is inseparable from the use of artificial intelligence (AI), the CCPE further notes the recent adoption of the Council of Europe Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law, and endorses its previous intention to dedicate one of its future Opinions to this topic, namely the use of new technologies and AI in the work of prosecutors, which will require a detailed insight and distinct recommendations, taking due account of the need to develop such technologies in member states based on digital sovereignty.⁵⁶
102. The capture digitally of relevant data is increasingly seen as a fundamental requirement for compliance with the terms of the Council of Europe institutions⁵⁷ and beyond.⁵⁸ In order to function efficiently in the modern world, prosecutors should have access to and the support of sufficiently resourced information, communications, technology officers (ICT officers), within the infrastructure of the prosecution services.
103. Additionally, an efficient digital case management system⁵⁹ is becoming fundamentally important to fully support prosecutors in their work. There are increasing demands for the prosecution services' digital working systems to have the ability to communicate digitally and to be compatible with other related systems in the member states criminal justice systems (interoperability), whether for the courts services, probation services and/or the police and judiciary.

⁵³ CCPE thematic study on digitalisation in the work of prosecution services and international co-operation (2023), paras 17-18.

⁵⁴ CEPEJ European Ethical Charter on the Use of Artificial Intelligence in Judicial Systems and their Environment (2018) and in particular its fifth Principle 'under user control' and the CEPEJ Guidelines on Electronic Court Filing (e-filing) and Digitalisation of Courts (2021).

⁵⁵ CEPEJ Guidelines on Electronic Court Filing (e-filing) and Digitalisation of Courts (2021). The CCPE also takes note of the EU Regulation 2024/1689 of the European Parliament and of the Council of the European Union of 13 June 2024 laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence.

⁵⁶ Examples of such technologies include electronic files and procedures, digital case management systems, data storage and access systems, tools for data analysis and processing, videoconference facilities, innovative technologies including the AI, various platforms, like E-Edes which is a platform made available by the European Commission for member states of the European Union for the secure digital transmission of European Investigation Orders, mutual recognition tools and mutual legal assistance requests, as well as other relevant technologies.

⁵⁷ Such as the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ), European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ), Venice Commission, Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA), Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL) and others.

⁵⁸ Such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

⁵⁹ To be backed up with paper-based approach where needed in order to preserve the totality of data.

104. In this context, the CCPE also welcomes the indicators developed by the CEPEJ for the management of prosecutorial work time, and which include the use of an electronic case management systems and other electronic tools.⁶⁰

2. Present-day situation and challenges.

105. The responses of the CCPE members to the questionnaire for this Opinion show a growing prevalence of electronic files, digitalised facilities and diverse data tools available to prosecutors. They suggest a strong intent to further amplify the digitalisation process in progressive stages, gradually moving away from conventional paper-based workflows, with the ultimate goal of achieving a fully digitalised system which has, *inter alia*, already been achieved in some member states. Additionally, strategies are adopted by member states to address specific challenges posed by digitalisation.
106. Digitalisation⁶¹ is expected to impact positively the work of prosecutors in member states resulting in:
- digital case management systems;
 - saving time and resources;
 - quick and facilitated access to files;
 - faster data processing and collection, user-friendliness, ease of searching and consulting files, improved statistics;
 - identification of uniform legal practices;
 - enhanced communication and electronic exchange of documents with courts and other authorities;
 - promotion of information-based decision making, the use of the AI being in particular of fundamental significance to the prosecution services.
107. The CCPE fully supports these developments, cautioning at the same time to keep in mind data protection issues, ensuring that sufficient security is attached to the digitalisation, including any specific risks related to the use of AI. The CCPE highlights the need to protect the confidentiality of information and proceedings, while supporting the overarching principles of prosecutorial independence and impartiality.
108. At the same time, members indicate substantial concerns and challenges regarding the use of modern technologies:
- sometimes incomplete digitalisation of processes results in the continued use of parallel paper-based and electronic systems;
 - there is also a need for further development and integration of IT systems and technical issues of compatibility among different systems;
 - the possible lack of funding and investment. In this context, efficient problem-solving mechanisms including availability of experienced and capable IT professionals require substantial investment, resources and flexibility in pay scales;
 - the need for legislative amendments to accommodate digitalisation;
 - the need for enhancing data protection and cybersecurity measures;
 - the possible excessive workload of prosecutors owing to the need to adapt to the new systems or due to a lack of proper planning;

⁶⁰ CEPEJ Time Management Checklist for Public Prosecution Services (2024).

⁶¹ Including the use of AI, where appropriate.

- potential failures of case management systems and the need of contingency planning;
- electronic systems must be accessible to all prosecutors and staff;
- the absence of data transfer platforms which will allow to transfer data securely between member states;
- the lack of supporting all prosecutors' ability to adapt, taking into account the potential health implications of prolonged use of modern technologies and their practicability;
- the specific difficulties faced by prosecution services in member states with a territorially decentralised organisation of the administration of justice, where the fragmentation of technological systems among sub-national authorities may hinder interoperability and generate disparities between prosecution offices.

109. The CCPE considers that continuous specialised training, guidance and good practices must be provided to prosecutors on how to use modern technologies, including specifically on the use of AI, in the most efficient way, while maintaining protection of data and confidential information (see also chapter G). The support and training provided to prosecutors as regards the use of modern technologies should include references to respect of fundamental rights, rule of law, data protection, confidentiality, privacy as well as other relevant principles and requirements.

G. Providing specialised training for prosecutors in a constantly evolving legal environment

1. Existing standards

110. In general, training is a cross-cutting issue mentioned in many of the CCPE Opinions, whether in thematic contexts such as combatting specific forms of crime, or in organisational aspects such as training on management, financial regulations, public relations and technological advances.
111. The Committee of Ministers has underlined that training is both a duty and a right for all prosecutors, before their appointment as well as on a permanent basis. States should take effective measures, among others, to provide for additional training on specific issues or in specific sectors, in the light of present-day conditions, taking into account in particular the types and the development of criminality, as well as international co-operation on criminal matters.⁶²
112. The CCPE has also recommended that the training of prosecutors engaged in international co-operation is strongly developed. Improved professional training on international co-operation should take account not only of existing conventions on the subject, but also of the operational information collated by existing organisations and systems.⁶³
113. The evolving criminal challenges as well as the growing complexity of certain types of criminality are primarily the result of the development of new technologies, the increasing

⁶² Recommendation CM/Rec(2000)19 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on the role of public prosecution in the criminal justice system, para 7. For a list of possible topics for specialised training, see its Section on Commentaries on Individual Recommendations, para 7.

⁶³ CCPE Opinion No. 1 (2007) on ways of improving international co-operation in the criminal justice field, para 27.

international integration, together with the expansion of international trade and data flow. This reality has enabled new ways to commit crimes, which reinforces the need to co-operate, including internationally, in their detection and the prosecution of criminals.⁶⁴ Specialised training for prosecutors acts as an enabler for efficiently meeting these challenges.

114. In the context of increasing international co-operation, the CCPE notes the significant training contributions of institutions such as European Judicial Training Network (EJTN) and others⁶⁵ in facilitating international co-operation which includes a significant training component. Such training must be encouraged⁶⁶ and must include the issuance/execution of mutual legal assistance (MLA) requests, European Investigation Orders (EIOs) and other measures between member states.⁶⁷
115. The CCPE specifically referred to the importance of management training regularly and objectively evaluated for its effectiveness.⁶⁸ Where appropriate, joint training for prosecutors, judges and lawyers on themes of common interest can also contribute to the efficiency of the criminal justice system.⁶⁹

2. Present-day situation and challenges

116. The responses of the CCPE members to the questionnaire for this Opinion demonstrate that all member states provide for training of prosecutors, this is usually done by Justice Academies, Judicial or Prosecutorial Schools or other specialised institutions. It includes both mandatory and optional training courses held periodically, including both general and specialised issues.
117. Members refer to a very wide spectrum of topics addressed by training courses depending on the needs, varying from combatting specific forms of crime to training on management, international co-operation, public and media relations, communication skills, use of modern technologies and data protection, psychological well-being, teamwork and team building, conflict resolution and others.
118. Positive feedback from the responses to the questionnaire indicates that the training of prosecutors responds to their needs, the training programmes are regularly updated to reflect contemporary challenges and emerging trends. Very often, the training sessions are rated by the participating prosecutors and are therefore continuously evaluated. The prosecution services and training institutions remain attentive to their feedback in order to adapt and strengthen these educational efforts, which the CCPE fully supports.
119. Members however indicate that prosecutors are not always able to take advantage of continuing education opportunities due to their heavy workloads, whereby less training

⁶⁴ CCPE Opinion No. 7 (2012) on the management of the means of prosecution services, para 19.

⁶⁵ Including, *inter alia*, also the national training institutions, the European Judicial Network (EJN) and the practical role played by the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust) including its operational guidance.

⁶⁶ CCPE Opinion No. 4 (2009) on relations between judges and prosecutors, including the Bordeaux Declaration, para 46.

⁶⁷ CCPE thematic study on digitalisation in the work of prosecution services and international co-operation (2023), Chapter V(B).

⁶⁸ CCPE Opinion No. 4 (2009) on relations between judges and prosecutors, including the Bordeaux Declaration, para 10.

⁶⁹ CCPE Opinion No. 4 (2009) on relations between judges and prosecutors, including the Bordeaux Declaration, para 45.

opportunities become available for prosecutors. In fact, there is an inverse relationship between the heavy workload of prosecutors and career development. In addition, due to the difficult budgetary situations, there is a risk that continuing education may be scaled back ultimately resulting in a lack of future productivity.

120. Furthermore, in member states with a territorially decentralised administration of justice, differences of unequal distribution of competences among sub-national authorities may generate disparities in access to training depending on the place of assignment of prosecutors. Hybrid in-person/online training formats have proved useful in mitigating this difficulty.
121. Members also mention that it is desirable to continuously update training programmes in response to developments in the legal environment, legislative changes and international standards, to ensure a high level of professional competence of prosecutors in the long term.
122. In this context, the CCPE notes the importance of the pragmatic ongoing training for prosecutors anticipating future challenges so that prosecutors are prepared in advance. Training may also be retrospective, covering the issues and problems which have already come forward. In all cases, training must be properly resourced, relevant for individual prosecutors and in line with the modern pedagogical research.
123. Prosecutors should be allocated sufficient time to fully participate in training opportunities. The prosecution services should also actively consider mandatory training for core legal subjects and important developments, as well as resilience and stress management for prosecutors. A coherent and structured system of continuous training should be encouraged with a particular focus on evaluating the quality of the training provided and the benefits of train-the-trainers (ToT) programmes which in particular may be more resource effective.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

Whereas:

- the support and safeguards required for prosecutors are not a prerogative or privilege granted in their own interest, but are fundamental in promoting the rule of law and of anyone seeking and expecting justice;
- the work of prosecutors is rigorous and demanding, requiring them to demonstrate utmost precision, accuracy and consistency when carrying out their duties under constant pressure;
- prosecutors have to respond to the challenges of evolving criminality and its new forms, globalisation, proliferation of transborder crimes, and other contemporary challenges;

The CCPE accordingly agreed on the following conclusions and recommendations:

A. In general

1. First of all, the CCPE fully endorses the existing standards and recommendations in seven key areas of prosecutorial work assembled and consolidated in this Opinion from various sources.

2. At the same time, the CCPE consider that an update of some of those standards is necessary to respond to the evolving nature of challenges, and that new standards should be set out to deal with new matters arising in the work of prosecutors, in order to provide the support and safeguards which they need to carry out their role efficiently in present-day conditions.
3. Therefore, the recommendations below focus exclusively on updated and new standards. However, the CCPE stresses the logical link between existing and updated/new standards.

B. Concerning the protection and security of prosecutors

4. The CCPE considers it good practice to establish the protection of prosecutors at legislative level, in order to acknowledge the importance of the issue and to give it a stronger legal basis, with the possibility of further regulation of more specific issues at various sub-legislative levels.
5. The CCPE also supports the introduction of adequately funded efficient protective mechanisms to guarantee the security of prosecutors, as well as the provision of specialised training on this matter or at least incorporating safety and security measures in general training sessions during the prosecutors' professional career.
6. Protective measures should be based on individual and periodically reviewed risk assessments⁷⁰ and should be available proactively where necessary. Prosecutors should have access to a prompt review of decisions refusing, reducing or withdrawing protection. Protective measures should also be made available, where required, for family members of prosecutors.

C. Concerning the well-being of prosecutors

7. The CCPE takes note of the rapidly increasing workload of prosecutors, in parallel with the growing complexity of cases and increasingly demanding legal environment, and prosecutors' exposure to traumatic materials and emotionally charged situations, which contribute to heightened stress and professional burnouts and constitute the most serious threats to their well-being.
8. It therefore considers that psychological support services should be readily available to prosecutors to support them where needed and should be accessible on a confidential, anonymous as well as free of charge basis.
9. Prosecutors should also be provided with training on time management, prioritising tasks, coping with stress, recognising overload, burnout prevention and other topics as needed.
10. The CCPE encourages prosecution services to establish dedicated well-being and support units for prosecutors experiencing burnout, work-related stress or other professional difficulties, with a view to maintaining and enhancing their professional effectiveness and resilience.

⁷⁰ Including comprehensive risk analysis on the protection and security of prosecutors in specific types of cases, particularly relevant for cases with an international dimension.

11. The CCPE considers healthy work-life balance to be an integral part of the well-being of prosecutors. Prosecution services should therefore adopt concrete measures to reconcile the professional, personal and family life of prosecutors. Such measures should include family related leave, flexible working arrangements and, where compatible with the needs of the service, remote working, ensuring that the recourse to such measures does not adversely affect the prosecutors' careers.

D. Concerning the working conditions of prosecutors, including remuneration and workload management

12. The CCPE welcomes member states having introduced remuneration of prosecutors in line with the importance of their mission and dignity of their office, and being comparable to the remuneration of judges.
13. At the same time, the salary levels which are mostly the same throughout the territory of member states may not always reflect the existing disparities of the living costs between the big cities and elsewhere in the country. Therefore, the CCPE considers that appropriate financial balancing mechanisms should be available to compensate any existing, significant discrepancies.
14. In the context of sustaining a heavy workload, the CCPE underlines the importance of defining the principles for case management and setting out a system based on them, taking into account the number, in addition to the complexity of cases assigned, as well as the corresponding skills and experience required for the prosecutors in charge.
15. In this context, the CCPE welcomes contingency and emergency planning (including possible successions) to alleviate stress, focusing in particular upon specialised areas of law, in smaller jurisdictions where a disproportionate level of responsibility may be placed upon prosecutors, at the same time as opportunities for mobility are reduced.
16. The proper work conditions for prosecutors should also include sufficient support staff dealing with legal, administrative, financial, IT and other relevant issues, including specialised staff as required by the complexity and sensitivity of the cases dealt with.

E. Concerning the efficient management of prosecution services

17. The CCPE underlines that it is preferable to establish division of responsibilities amongst prosecutors with a management role responsible for the prosecution service by law in order to avoid possible disproportionate levels of responsibility, to ensure fair distribution of work and to promote effective responses to challenges faced by the prosecution service.
18. The CCPE welcomes the practices in member states having established ethical and professional rules for the work and conduct of all prosecutors, including those with a management role. These rules place appropriate restrictions on prosecutors as regards taking part in political activities, as well as exhibiting and disseminating political views in compliance with the case law of the European Court of Human Rights. Such an approach ensures prosecutors' independence, impartiality and objectivity.

F. Concerning the regulation of relations between prosecutors and the media, including social media

19. The CCPE supports practices in member states whereby spokespersons or press/public relations offices are in charge. It encourages enhancing the transparency of prosecutorial activities, with due respect to certain professional limitations already highlighted by the CCPE.
20. In this context, and while fully respecting the right of the public to be informed of developments in the criminal justice area, the CCPE takes note of the potential for unfounded malicious criticisms of individual prosecutors in the media, including via social media.
21. It therefore supports the existing practices in member states of institutional responses by the prosecution services to the media, including establishment of a specialised press/public relations office and response by the top management of the prosecution service in particularly sensitive cases, where necessary. Such institutional responses shield prosecutors from external influence and pressure, protect them from public exposure and consequently are important both for their security and well-being.

G. Concerning the availability of modern technologies for prosecutors

22. The CCPE reiterates once again many positive effects of digitalisation in the work of prosecution services.
23. At the same time, the CCPE considers that data protection issues, the confidentiality of proceedings, together with the need to respect the overarching principles of prosecutorial independence and impartiality, should be highlighted. It also advocates the training of prosecutors on the effective use of modern technologies.
24. The CCPE emphasises the need to have in place continuous training, practical guidance and well-resourced change management processes, to obtain the full benefits of modern technologies and in particular, the use of AI.

H. Concerning specialised training for prosecutors in a constantly evolving legal environment

25. The CCPE welcomes continued efforts made by member states to positively adapt to the challenges presented by an evolving legal landscape, through facilitating prosecutors' continued attendance at a variety of training institutions, with a wide spectrum of topics being addressed in those training courses, including national and international training institutions such as the EJTN. In particular, the CCPE recognises the benefits of in-house training for prosecutors.
26. At the same time, the CCPE encourages member states to step up training opportunities for prosecutors in view of the fast-evolving criminality and its new forms, along with the increase of transborder crimes, the exponential rise of the use of modern technologies by criminals (such as cybercrime), and consequently the pressing need for reinforcing international co-operation.
27. It has also become imperative to continuously update existing training programmes in response to developments in the legal environment, legislative changes and international standards, which all seek to address emerging forms of criminality, in order to ensure a

high level of professional competence for prosecutors throughout their careers. In this context, the CCPE notes the importance of practically focused ongoing training for prosecutors, anticipating future challenges, so that prosecutors are prepared in advance.