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Directorate II – Inclusive and Sustainable Societies and Co-operation

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Bureau of the Assembly

Parliamentary and electoral co-operation activities

Overview of PACE cooperation work and work plan 2026

1. Parliamentary and electoral cooperation: executive summary and strategic framework

1. The 2026 Work Plan of the **Parliamentary and Electoral Co-operation Division** (PECD) continues to implement the priorities set out in the Reykjavik Declaration, reaffirming the Council of Europe's mission to safeguard democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Within this strategic framework, the Division translates the commitments of the New Democratic Pact for Europe and the objectives of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) into concrete and co-ordinated actions. Its work supports parliaments and electoral institutions in ensuring that democratic systems remain representative, transparent, inclusive and resilient.

2. Aligned with the Council of Europe Programme and Budget 2024-2027, this Work Plan defines the Division's priorities and operational approach for 2026. It aims to reinforce democratic institutions, uphold electoral integrity, and deepen co-operation with member States and partner regions. Activities planned for 2026 (see Appendix 1) combine parliamentary conferences, regional exchanges and targeted electoral initiatives, aiming at supporting parliaments and electoral bodies to respond to evolving challenges, including digital transformation, information integrity, declining public trust and the application of democratic standards across diverse political contexts.

2. Achievements in 2025

3. In 2025, the Division delivered tangible results across its parliamentary and electoral support programmes. On the parliamentary side, it contributed to follow-up of PACE reports and resolutions on democratic participation, equality and social rights. It supported key Assembly events, including the Parliamentary Conference on the Cost-of-Living Crisis (Paris, December 2025), which examined the role of parliaments in protecting social rights, and a roundtable on "Seen, heard, and in charge – our role in actively empowering young people" (Malta, May 2025), which generated proposals to enhance youth participation in legislative processes. In Moldova, it organised a roundtable on implementing the Istanbul Convention, highlighting the role of parliaments in combating violence against women. The Division also supported PACE's presence at EuroDIG 2025 and prepared the Parliamentary Conference on Artificial Intelligence (London, December 2026). Co-operation with the Parliament of Morocco advanced through initiatives to modernise parliamentary practices and strengthen media outreach.

4. On the electoral side, the Division promoted inclusion and integrity through more than 70 activities, including trainings, workshops, roundtables, conferences, seminars and the development of practical tools. These initiatives covered all stages of the electoral process

before, during and after elections. They included activities such as professionalisation of electoral administration; political party and campaign financing; balanced and unbiased media coverage; gender equality and women's political empowerment; training of judges on electoral dispute resolution; preventing electoral corruption, mis/disinformation, hate speech and misuse of administrative resources; supporting secure digitalisation; fostering participation of national minorities, young and first-time voters and persons with disabilities; and improving voter education and outreach to vulnerable groups.

5. Representative examples include: support for women, youth and persons with disabilities in Georgia; assistance to the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina in establishing its permanent Centre for Education and Training and launching a women's academy; training of judges and work on sexism and hate speech in Moldova; development of digital tools for transparency and complaints-tracking in Albania; and facilitation of High-Level Dialogue on post-war electoral preparedness in Ukraine. The Division continues to implement electoral co-operation projects in five beneficiary countries amounting to €7.238 million, demonstrating PACE's sustained commitment to democratic institutions and credible elections.

3. Priorities for 2026

6. In 2026, the Division will pursue three interconnected priorities designed to reinforce democratic institutions, ensure credible and inclusive electoral processes, and enhance co-ordination across governance structures. Some of the specific activities linked to these priorities are listed in Appendix 1 and include:

1. Parliamentary co-operation activities, such as the PACE Annual Thematic Conference on the New Democratic Pact and other parliamentary thematic events with PACE Committees and other CoE entities.
2. Electoral co-operation initiatives such as the High-Level Dialogue on Good Democratic Governance in Ukraine, establishment of a Centre for Education and Training within the CEC of BiH. the Post-Electoral Review Conference in Moldova, and the establishment of an electoral Training Centre and launch of new digital and training tools within the Albanian CEC;
3. Strengthened integration of electoral and parliamentary support across the Electoral Cycle, ensuring that post-election follow-up events contribute to long-term institutional development.

7. The Division will also seek to continue and reinforce cooperation in the framework of the partnerships for democracy through continued engagement with the Parliament of Morocco and other interested partner parliaments.

4. Flagship Initiatives and Parliamentary Outreach

8. The 2026 programme will feature several flagship initiatives to promote peer exchange, enhance visibility, and reinforce coherence across activities. In line with Appendix 1, key events will include the PACE Annual Thematic Conference on the New Democratic Pact and the Parliamentary Conference on Global Student Mobility. These events will be complemented by side events organised with national delegations on the occasion of PACE Standing Committee meetings (e.g. Monaco, May 2026, and Podgorica, November 2026) and regional roundtables, such as the planned elections-focused meeting in Rabat.

9. The Division will also continue to promote inclusion and democratic innovation through the organisation of exchanges of good practices and co-operation with PACE networks and alliances. The focus of these joint initiatives will be to contribute to the preparation of PACE reports and to support the implementation of its resolutions, recommendations, and more broadly, Council of Europe conventions and other standards.

5. Resources and Funding Framework

10. The Division's work in 2026 will be financed primarily through the Ordinary Budget (OB), complemented by Voluntary Contributions (VC) and Joint Programmes (JP). These sources will fund parliamentary events (such as the Annual Thematic Conference and thematic side events) and electoral initiatives (notably in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, and Ukraine). Joint Programmes will play a key role in supporting ICT-based reforms of electoral administrations and capacity-building of election management bodies and election administration at all levels. Efforts will continue to align donor support with Council of Europe priorities and ensure sustainable implementation of activities.

6. Communication

11. Communication will remain an integral part of the Division's strategy. In 2026, emphasis will be placed on increasing visibility, promoting understanding of results, and reinforcing ownership among national partners. Communication milestones will include the High-Level Dialogue on Good Democratic Governance in Ukraine, the Post-Electoral Review Conference in Moldova, and the PACE Annual Thematic Conference. The Division will use the Council of Europe and PACE websites, LinkedIn, and targeted communication with national partners to disseminate outcomes and success stories.

7. The Way Forward

12. Guided by the Reykjavik Declaration and the New Democratic Pact, the Division will continue in 2026 to bring together the parliamentary and electoral dimensions of democracy. Alongside Electoral Cycle activities, such as support to the Albania CEC, the post-electoral conference in Moldova, and the high-level dialogue in Ukraine, the Division will also

contribute to PACE's work by supporting its committees and networks and by following up on Assembly priorities under the New Democratic Pact. Close coordination with the Venice Commission, the Congress, PACE and other Council of Europe bodies will help member States strengthen democratic institutions that are transparent, inclusive and trusted.

Appendix 1
Thematic overview of activities to be organised in 2026

ORGANISING ENTITY	ACTIVITY	TENTATIVE DATE	TENTATIVE VENUE	SOURCE OF FUNDING
Parliamentary Conferences / Round Tables/ Exchanges				
PECD in cooperation with other PACE Committees/CoE entities	*PACE Annual Thematic Conference (New Democratic Pact)*	tbd		**OB**
Promoting the role of the Ukrainian Parliament in upholding and strengthening democratic institutions				
PECD in cooperation with other PACE Committees/CoE entities	*Activities to develop the exchange of information and joint actions between the Assembly structures and the Ukrainian delegation*	All year	Strasbourg/Paris /Kyiv/other MS	**OB + VC**
Thematic events at the level of PACE Standing Committee Meetings and Conferences				
PECD in cooperation with PACE SC	*Side event to be organised in cooperation with Monaco delegation PACE (tbc)*	22 May	Monaco	**OB**
	Side event to be organised in cooperation with Montenegro delegation PACE (tbc)	27 November	Podgorica, Montenegro	**OB**
PACE Information Seminars for the Secretaries of national delegations				
PACE in cooperation with TO	*Half day information seminar*	December	Paris	**OB**
Promoting PACE recommendations, resolutions, work and activities				
PECD in cooperation with other PACE Committees/Networks/ Alliances & CoE bodies/entities	*Activities in the framework of PACE contribution to the New Democratic Pact*	tbd		**OB**
	Round Tables/ Exchange of good practices on PACE reports, resolutions and recommendations	tbd		**OB**
Implementation of the partnership for democracy: Activities with the Parliament of Morocco (and other countries)				
PECD in cooperation with other CoE bodies/entities	*Round table on Elections*	1st trimester	Rabat	**OB+VC**
	Training Seminar on the functioning of PACE	tbd		

Election Related Events				
PECD in cooperation with field offices & other CoE bodies /entities	*High-Level Dialogue IV "GOOD DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN UKRAINE: ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES AND THE WAY FORWARD IN POST-WAR PERIOD in collaboration with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and Venice Commission*	2nd trimester	Central Election Commission/ National Assembly of Ukraine	**VC**
	Conference on role of Electoral Training in improving electoral processes and elections	2nd semester		
	Post-electoral review conference following 2025 Parliamentary election, Moldova	19-20 February 2026	Chișinău, Moldova	**VC+ OB**
	Signing of the Memoranda of Understanding between the CEC – CSOs - media organisations and launching the e-consultation mechanism (SECA)	1st trimester	Tirana, Albania	**JP**
	Other activities: *Conferences, trainings, workshops, development of tools and expert support to Election Administrations and key electoral stakeholders focusing in particular on need assessment, elaboration of structure and standard operation procedures of the new CEC Training and Education Centre towards professionalisation of electoral administration; evaluation of the CEC regulatory framework to addresses use of ICT-backed solutions and developing/upgrading IT tools in electoral administration (e-consultation module for CSOs, e-learning module, e-register for electoral trainers, political finance monitoring and reporting platform); designing the education strategy and tools for reaching out different focus groups in particular the vulnerable ones, combating hate speech and disinformation, strengthening the role of the media in elections and electoral campaigns through tailored capacity development programs, including through grant schemes support for the CSO and media organisations, modules for tracking complaints etc.*	Throughout the year		**VC+ JP + OB**