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Quarterly report of Council of Europe Offices

April - June 2022

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

A. LIAISON OFFICES

Introduction

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

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

The present document covers the reporting period April-June 2022. Following decision [CM/Del/Dec\(2013\)1175/1.6E](#) of 3 July 2013, activity reports have been published every three months, starting with July-September 2013.

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

Highlights

The **Secretary General** met Commissioner Johansson (Home affairs) on 4 May and Commission Vice-President Jourová on 7 June, each time in Strasbourg. The Secretary General also exchanged views with the EU's Heads of Mission to the CoE on 21 April in Strasbourg.

Commission Vice-President for democracy and demography **Šuica** participated in the high-level conference to launch the new CoE strategy on the rights of the child, 2022 - 2025, Rome, 7-8 April. Commissioner for Equality **Dalli** participated in the CoE conference on better work-life balance for women on 13 April and Commissioner **Reynders** (Justice) represented the EU in the Ministerial Session of the CM in Turin on 20 May.

ODGP Director Taylor visited the Commission (DG REFORM, DG NEAR) and EEAS, 9-10 June.

GRECO's Chair and Executive Secretary presented GRECO's annual report in the Office on 2 June.

DGI-Media intervened before the Audio-visual and Media Working Party of the Council of the EU on 18 May.

Main features - statistics

Some 514 information messages and documents, 12 weekly reports and 49 notes for the file were sent from the Office to Strasbourg headquarters.

Meetings involving the Office

Over the reporting period, the Office maintained regular contacts with the EU institutions so as to inform them on the decisions and initiatives taken in the CoE as regards the Russian aggression against **Ukraine**, including the visit by the representatives of the CoE's institutions in Ukraine and neighbouring countries. It reported on EU developments on the matter and on discussions held in various fora in Brussels. The Office widely distributed the **annual report by the Secretary General**.

In terms of CoE-EU co-operation, on 5 April, the Deputy Head of the Office attended the discussion in the **GR-EXT** in Strasbourg on the annual report on the CoE-EU co-operation. EEAS Deputy Managing Director Kokkinakis also participated in the discussion. The Office also liaised with the EU and the **PACE** Secretariat in view of the debate in the PACE plenary session (26 April) on the report on the CoE-EU "strategic partnership".

The Deputy Head of the Office also:

- participated in a round table organised by **International IDEA** and by the **Club de Madrid** (Brussels, 7 April) on their report "Democracy at a tipping point".
- participated in the launch of the annual report by the CoEs **Platform on the protection and safety of journalists** (Brussels, 27 April).
- received a delegation from **UN Habitat** headed by its Chief of the Urban Practices Branch, for an online discussion with Congress SG Kiefer.
- met representatives from the incoming **Czech Presidency** of the EU (July-September 2022).

- met Chair of the **Bar of England and Wales** Fenhalls, 16 May.
- participated in the Governing Board of "**Europalia** international", 25 May.

The Office facilitated video meetings between:

- **SRS** on migration and refugees Kayacik and a representative from the French Presidency of the Council of the EU on 4 April.
- **DG Giakoumopoulos** and a member of VP Jourova's Cabinet on the consequences of the war in Ukraine and on rule of law-related matters on 21 April.

The Office:

- welcomed colleagues from **DGII-anti-discrimination** who participated in the closure of a joint programme and held a series of bilateral meetings with the Commission (26-27 April).
- facilitated the organisation of talks between **DG Giakoumopoulos** and the Commission (DG JUST) on the preparation of the Commission's next annual "rule of law" report.
- facilitated the participation by the Commission (DG JUST) in the hearing organised by the **PACE** Committee on legal affairs and human rights on COVID-19 vaccine policies (Paris, 23 May).
- participated in the meeting of CoE **Heads of Office** organised by ODGP (Strasbourg, 10-12 May).
- welcomed the Head of the Yezedi Centre for human rights, based in Armenia, as part of the "EU visitors' programme".
- followed the monitoring visit to Belgium carried out by the **Congress**, 10-12 May.
- facilitated the organisation of the **consultation** between the European Commission (DG NEAR) and the CoE Secretariat on the preparation of the 2022 EU **enlargement** countries package (Strasbourg, 1 June).
- met the EEAS on recent developments in **Armenia** (13 June) at the same time informing about the Secretary General's visit to the country (16-17 June).
- accompanied **ODGP** colleagues in meetings with the Commission, the EEAS and the Norway Grant, 16 June.
- followed the participation of the **Venice Commission's** representative in the hearing organised by the EP-AFCO and LIBE Committees on the rule of law in the EU, 20 June.
- hosted an exchange session between the secretariat of the European **Social Charter**, DGI, and the Commission (DG EMPL), 21 June.
- met the Commission (DG JUST) on assistance to the investigation and prosecution of war crimes and massive human rights violations in **Ukraine**, 22 June.
- hosted the executive board meeting of EPRA - **Audiovisual Observatory** (DGII), 22 June.
- facilitated the organisation of and followed the EU (**CATS**, COM, EEAS) - CoE meeting on 27 June in Strasbourg.
- facilitated the organisation of and followed the **PGG** Steering Committee meeting in Brussels on 28 June.

Liaison and reporting work

The Office liaised with the EU institutions on **normative developments** in the respective organisations on matters such as accession to ECHR, Artificial intelligence, SLAPP's, profession of lawyers, violence against women & Istanbul Convention, rights of the child, migration, media

freedom, etc. The Office also participated in EU institutions events on elections (DG JUST), on the EU's Technical Support (financial) Instrument (DG REF).

The Office maintained regular contacts with the various EU institutions in order to exchange information and to report to Strasbourg, in particular on matters such as: the assistance to Ukraine, the work of the SRSG on migration, including her visits to Ukraine's neighbouring countries, EU/Türkiye relations. The Office also liaised with the EU institutions and reported on normative developments in the respective organisations on matters such as Artificial Intelligence, accession to the ECHR, violence against women, rights of the child, migration, media freedom, etc.

The Office liaised with EEAS and DG NEAR counterparts on Türkiye (the Kavala case), as well as on the **membership candidatures** of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia and developments relating to the Eastern Partnership. It also continued to liaise with DG JUST and the French Presidency on the first discussion on the draft Directive on **violence against women** and EU accession to the Istanbul Convention. Finally, it followed developments with DG NEAR on programmatic co-operation and DG REFORM on the new joint projects.

The Office reported on European Council meetings on 30-31 May (informal) and 23-24 June, as well as on EU Council meetings, in particular Foreign Affairs, General Affairs and Justice and Home Affairs configurations. Substance-wise, this notably includes:

- initiatives with regard to the war in **Ukraine**: 5th and 6th sanction package, reactions to the atrocities in Bucha and the situation in Mariupol, assistance to the investigations into war crimes and extension of the Eurojust mandate, the Commission's questionnaire on the accession of Ukraine to the EU (and, similarly, for Georgia and Moldova).
- developments in **neighbouring** countries and contacts with the leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia; **enlargement** and Western Balkans.
- discussions on a possible new "*Communauté politique européenne*".
- developments in the fields of **human rights** and the **rule of law**: extension of FRA's mandate, strategic lawsuits against journalists (SLAPPs), revision of the EU Directive on sexual abuse of children, digital service Act and the EU's reaction to the Turkish Court's decision to sentence Osman Kavala to aggravated life imprisonment, contrary to ECHR decisions.

CoE-EU Youth Partnership

The Brussels-based staff of the Youth Partnership organised and/or participated in meetings including:

- the 3rd meeting of the Sub-group on youth work of the European Commission on 4-5 April.
- a preparatory meeting for the symposium "Navigating transitions. Adapting policy to young people's changing realities" on 5-6 April in Tirana.
- meetings of the two main networks of the Youth Partnership - Pool of European Youth Researchers (PEYR) and the European Knowledge Centre for Youth Policy (EKYCP), 13 April.
- a co-ordination meeting with the European Youth Forum, 21 April.
- the 2nd inter-institutional informal meeting on the European Year of Youth on 26 April at the European Parliament, with the European Commission (DG EAC), the European

Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC).

- the Council of Europe's Youth Department Programme Conference for 2022-2023, 4-5 May.
- a presentation in the meeting of the Directors General for youth, under the French Presidency of the EU, in Bordeaux, 5-6 May.
- a presentation at a 50/50 training session in Bosnia and Herzegovina on youth participation, 13 May.
- a panel on Berlin Demography Days on young people's aspirations and needs, 17 May.
- the resource group of the European Platform on Learning Mobility (EPLM), 17-18 May.
- DG NEAR and subcontractors on support to the Eastern Partnership region, 11 and 23 May.
- fourth sub-group on youth work of the European Commission, 19-20 May.
- a presentation at the Eurodesk multipliers seminar in Brussels, 23 May.
- a presentation for the "*Bureau International Jeunesse*" of the *Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles*, 24 May.
- technical co-ordination meeting with DG EAC at the Brussels Office, 24 May.
- a presentation at the Conference "Inclusive learning mobility", organised by the European Federation of Intercultural Learning (EFIL), 25 May.
- 5th European Year of Youth (EYY) stakeholder and national co-ordinators meeting, organised by DG EAC, 2 June.
- the first planning meeting for the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on youth research essentials, 7 June.
- panel for the European Economic and Social Committee Public Hearing on the EU Youth Test, 8 June.
- "Pop the Bubble: restarting quality mobility projects" event, 9 June.
- seminar on participation of young people in the European project, Strasbourg, under the French EU Presidency, 9-10 June.
- fourth sub-group on youth work of the European Commission, 13-14 June.
- RAY conference on Youth Work Recovery, Helsinki, 13-15 June.
- expert meeting for the research on mutual recognition of youth worker competencies, 16 June.
- Youth Partnership Symposium "Navigating Transitions. Adapting policy to young people's changing realities", Tirana, 21-23 June.
- annual meeting of the Youth Partnership's two research networks - European Knowledge Centre on Youth Policy (EKCP) and Pool of European Youth Researchers (PEYR), Tirana, 24 June.

The Youth Partnership intensively pursued its publication initiatives (podcasts, videos, campaigns, papers and research)¹.

¹ A new podcast was recorded, another episode was published and a Special episode of the Under 30's podcast series on youth work and the war in Ukraine was issued. A new video was produced (as well as support to a video produced by the EU Delegation to the Council of Europe); other publications: Training-kit 14 on Value-based learning in mobility projects; Podcast episode; two podcast episodes and videos to support the Council of Europe's Youth Action Week (campaign "Democracy Here, Democracy Now"): podcast and video); Young People Revitalising Democracy: podcast and video; Video, podcast, analytical paper and background research on defining and understanding youth transitions; Podcast episode on restarting youth learning mobility; Video promoting the Youth Partnership's COVID-19 Knowledge Hub; About Time! manual (Russian version) and translations of publications into Italian, Romanian and Portuguese.

Brussels-based secretariat of the Pompidou Group

15th meeting on the **control of drug precursors' diversion**, Strasbourg, 12-13 April.

9th annual meeting of the expert group on **Drugs Online**, Strasbourg, 13-14 April.

37th Annual Meeting of the Co-operation Group on Drug Control Services at European **Airports** and the 6th Annual Meeting of the Expert Group on **General Aviation**, Strasbourg, On 1-3 June.

A 2022 update of the online secured **Resource Bank on Controlled Deliveries** is under way (involving co-operation with Europol, Eurojust, Interpol, the OSCE and SELEC).

Visibility and relations with media

The Spokesperson/Media Officer co-ordinated **communications** work around the Irish Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, including several high-level visits to Strasbourg, the June meeting of the Committee of Ministers on the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights and the Brussels/online presentation of the GRECO annual report for 2021.

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

- the April and June 2022 **PACE** sessions and the PACE Standing Committee meeting in Dublin.
- the Council of Europe's annual penal statistics for 2021 (**SPACE**).
- the presentation in Brussels of the latest annual report from the partner organisations of the Council of Europe's **Safety of Journalists Platform**.
- the annual report from the Committee for the Prevention of Torture.
- the Human Rights Commissioner's recommendation to member states on pushbacks and the Commissioner's letter to the UK concerning Julian Assange.
- the Committee of Ministers session in Turin and the launch of Ireland's Presidency.
- the Secretary General's visit to Ukraine.
- the opening for signature of the 2nd Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention.
- the publication of the GRETA guidance note on the risks of trafficking among people fleeing Ukraine.
- the anniversary of the opening for signature of the Istanbul Convention.
- Europe Day, World Press Freedom Day and IDAHOT.
- the Venice Commission's plenary session.
- the GRECO report on Turkey.
- the expert seminar in Strasbourg on anti-Muslim racism and discrimination.
- the publication of a new thematic factsheet on the implementation of ECtHR judgments concerning the protection of property.
- various judgments and decisions of the European Court of Human Rights.

He also continued to work on the ongoing communications project highlighting the impact of the European Convention on Human Rights, as well as participating in the latest regular meeting of the "C-9" group of senior communications staff representing various international organisations and networks working on human rights.

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

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

She participated online in meetings of the IOM to gather information and organise the participation of the SRSG on migration and refugees in the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), New York, 17-20 May. The SRSG however subsequently decided to cancel her participation.

The *Chargée d'Affaires* participated online in the UN Human Rights Council's (HRC) 34th Special Session requested by Ukraine (on 12 May) and in different UNHCR briefings, and informed the relevant departments of the results/conclusions of such meetings.

She participated in meetings convened by the ILO and the Geneva Environment Network to organise the participation of the Council of Europe in the international meeting "Stockholm+50: a healthy planet for the prosperity of all", Stockholm, 2-3 June.

She participated in the presentation of the OHCHR Annual Report 2021 by the High Commissioner (10 June) and in the 50th session of the UNHCR (13 June to 8 July). The impact of the Russian aggression against Ukraine was one of the main topics. A special session dealt with the situation in Mariupol (16 June). The repression of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Russia was also addressed.

The *Chargée d'Affaires* also dealt with the organisation of an in-person meeting of the Platform of Independent Expert Mechanisms on Discrimination and Violence against Women (EDVAW Platform) organised by the GREVIO secretariat at the OHCHR Headquarters in the margins of the HRC on 16-17 June.

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

Participation in OSCE Permanent Council Meetings

- OSCE Special Permanent Council dedicated to crimes committed by the Russian Federation's military in Bucha, Ukraine, 5 April.
- OSCE Permanent Council dedicated to the conflict in Ukraine and to the report by the Head of the OSCE Mission to Skopje, 7 April.
- OSCE Special Permanent Council dedicated to the missile attack in Kramatorsk, Ukraine, 11 April.
- OSCE Special Permanent Council dedicated to the Moscow Mechanism report, 13 April.
- OSCE Special Permanent Council dedicated to the conflict in Ukraine, 22 April.
- OSCE Permanent Council dedicated to the conflict in Ukraine and the report by the Head of Mission to Moldova, 28 April.
- OSCE Permanent Council dedicated to the conflict in Ukraine and the report of the OSCE Head of Mission to Kosovo*, 5 May.
- OSCE Permanent Council dedicated to the conflict in Ukraine and the report of the OSCE Head of Mission to Serbia, 12-13 May.
- OSCE Permanent Council dedicated to the conflict in Ukraine and the report of the OSCE Representative on the Freedom of the Media, 19-20 May.
- OSCE Permanent Council dedicated to the conflict in Ukraine and the report by OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine Villadsen, 26 May.
- OSCE Permanent Council - report by the Head of the OSCE Mission to Montenegro; and the SG's thematic report - "Response to the Implications of Afghanistan for the OSCE Region", 2 June.
- OSCE Permanent Council - address by Secretary General Pejčinović Burić, 9 June.
- OSCE Permanent Council dedicated to the conflict in Ukraine, 16 June.
- OSCE Permanent Council - report by OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine Villadsen; closure of the Office of the Project Coordinator in Ukraine on 30 June, 23 June.

Participation in other meetings including expert committees and conferences

- 22nd OSCE Conference of the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons, 4-6 April.
- UN online screening of "Iraq's Lost Generation" - 25th anniversary of the United Nations Children and Armed Conflict Agenda, 25 April.
- OSCE Economic and Environmental Committee Meeting - Growing risks to security from environmental threats and damage to critical energy infrastructure, 27 April.
- Meetings with Ambassador Florian Raunig, Permanent Representative of Austria to the OSCE, and Ambassador Arad Benkö, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Austria (issues regarding the accommodation of the Office), 28 April.
- Visit of the SRSB on migration and refugees Kayacik and Ms Kinga Jensen-Magyar to Vienna - meetings with OSCE Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Richey, Director of the International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) Spindelegger, Director of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) O'Flaherty and Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities of the OSCE Hasani, 9-10 May.
- 2nd Supplementary Human Dimension Meeting (SHDM) of the OSCE on the topic of the functioning of democratic institutions in times of crisis, 16 -17 May.
- 31st regular session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) of the UNODC, 16-20 April.

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- Visit of Secretary General Marija Pejčinović Burić and her delegation to Vienna, 8-9 June.
- OSCE Asian Conference, 14 June.
- UNODC Commission on Narcotic Drugs Special Event to commemorate the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking and the launch of the 2022 UNODC World Drug Report, 28 June.

From April to June, the Office submitted a total of 13 spot reports about activities and events related to the OSCE and UNODC.

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

High-level visits/meetings

11-12 April - Visit to Strasbourg of three OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Personal Representatives for combating discrimination and promoting tolerance: Rabbi Andrew Baker (Anti-Semitism), Ambassador Mehmet Paçacı (Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims) (online presence) and Associate Professor Dr Regina Polak (Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, including against Christians and Members of Other Religions).

30 May - 3 June - Visit to Poland of SRSG on migration and refugees Kayacik and meetings with Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) Mecacci and First Deputy Director Ryabiko.

17 June - Meeting between ODIHR Director Mecacci and President of the European Court of Human Rights Spano (in the margins of the 131st plenary session of the Venice Commission).

Activities of the Office

a) Enhancing the co-operation with OSCE/ODIHR – Apart from the high-level meetings mentioned above, the HoO remained in regular contact with ODIHR staff members to discuss possible joint activities in the framework of the wider co-operation with the CoE. These discussions included *i.a.* meetings with Andrea Huber, the Head of the Human Rights Department, Carolyn Hammer, Adviser in the Rule of Law Unit in the ODIHR Democratisation Department, and Alice Szczepanikova, Migration and Freedom of Movement Adviser in the ODIHR Democratisation Department. The HoO and CoE experts attended numerous meetings and consultations convened or facilitated by ODIHR. These included *i.a.* an online meeting on judicial independence and the rule of law in Poland and the Conference on Migration, Human Rights and Inclusion: Assessing the Role of Civil Society in the OSCE Region.

In connection with the Russian aggression against Ukraine, the Office reported on the activities undertaken by ODIHR, including ODIHR's monitoring of human rights and international humanitarian law violations and projects and activities concerning refugees and migration, especially migrants' integration. In addition, the Office also followed the developments around the OSCE's Human Dimension flagship events – the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting and Human Dimension Seminar.

b) Continuation of the co-operation with the Community of Democracies (CoD) – The Office maintained regular working relations with the Permanent Secretariat of the CoD and reported on the relevant developments, in particular about the change of the Community's Presidency planned for this year (Canada in place of Romania) and the progress of the CoD's Governing Council membership renewal process.

c) Establishment of closer co-operation with Frontex – The series of meetings on migration in ECtHR case-law, which began in November 2021, continued. Two working meetings were organised between Frontex Fundamental Rights Monitors and ECtHR lawyers. In addition, in the margins of the country visits to Poland, the Office organised separate meetings with the Frontex Fundamental Rights Officer and his team for the CoE delegations. These meetings with the SRSG Kayacik and with GRETA experts were devoted to discussing the practical aspects of further co-operation.

The Office also regularly reported on the internal situation at the Agency, including on the repercussions of the resignation of Executive Director Leggeri following the OLAF investigation into Frontex.

B. FIELD AND PROGRAMME OFFICES

Baku

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 5, Project staff – 6, Total staff – 11.

The Office implements 4 projects, 3 in the framework of the EU/CoE regional Joint Programme “Partnership for Good Governance”, and 1 funded through a voluntary contribution from Sweden.

State of implementation of projects

- **EU/CoE-PGGII “Strengthening the efficiency and quality of the judicial system in Azerbaijan”:** (i) Capacities of eighty-two court presidents, judges and court staff were enhanced in collection and analysis of judicial data and judicial time management based on the CEPEJ guidelines during three online peer-to-peer training sessions. The sessions were facilitated by local trainers who completed the Training of Trainers (ToT) provided by the CEPEJ last year. (ii) The Project Steering Committee discussed the status of project progress and its future plans, as well as received feedback from the project partners on the implementation of project activities and future priorities.
- **EU/CoE-PGGII “Strengthening Anti-Money Laundering and Asset Recovery in Azerbaijan”:** The project was concentrating its efforts on the capacity building activities mostly. National authorities learnt essential techniques on how to seek and provide mutual legal assistance in the investigation or prosecution of criminal offenses and in judicial proceedings, how to better cope with terrorist financing risks and understand the impact of financial flows to and from high-risk jurisdictions on related threats and vulnerabilities, how to use beneficial ownership information in the investigation and prosecution of criminal cases. Banks and investment companies were introduced to key concepts related to virtual assets and virtual asset service providers.
- **EU/CoE-PGGII “Raising Awareness on the IC and other Gender Equality Standards in Azerbaijan”:** (i) The project raised awareness of about 30 state agents, including MPs and staff members of the State Committee on Family, Women and Children’s Affairs (SCFWCA), and more than 250 law students and professors on the Istanbul Convention and other CoE standards on gender equality and the ECtHR’s case law on violence against women and domestic violence (VAW/DV). (ii) 14 representatives of the MoJ, the Ombuds Office, the MoE and the SCFWCA have successfully completed the HELP course on combating VAW and improved their knowledge on CoE and other international standards in the area. (iii) A thematic brochure on children rights under the IC was translated into Azerbaijani and made available online.
- **VC Sweden “Reinforcing gender equality and media freedom in Azerbaijan”:** (i) 20 representatives of the local online and offline media based in the regions of Azerbaijan enhanced their conflict reporting skills through the training sessions on “Conflict Sensitive Journalism” held in Gabala. (iii) 40 representatives of the local online and offline media based in the regions of Azerbaijan enhanced their knowledge and skills through the training sessions on mitigation of hate speech in the media in Gabala and Lankaran. (iv) 55 legal professionals (judges, prosecutors and advocates) enhanced their knowledge on international legal standards on access to information and official documents as a result of the two one-day in-presence trainings delivered by an international expert in Baku. The project was successfully completed on 30 June 2022.

Other relevant activities

- On 5 April, the HoO chaired the Launching event of the CoE Action plan for Azerbaijan 2022-2025 and made the presentation of the Action Plan.
- On 26 April, the HoO opened a training session for heads of the temporary detention centres under the Ministry of Interior on "Standards of processing and respect for detainee's rights, for a better detention service".
- On 19 May, the HoO chaired the event "Role of national Parliaments in preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence" organized within the "Raising awareness of the Istanbul Convention and other gender equality standards in Azerbaijan" project.
- On 20 May, the HoO opened the roundtable event at the Faculty of Law of Baku State University within the "Raising awareness of the Istanbul Convention and other gender equality standards in Azerbaijan" project.
- On 2 June, the HoO opened the 3rd Project Board/SCM meeting of "Raising awareness of the Istanbul Convention and other gender equality standards in Azerbaijan" project.
- On 16 June, the HoO together with the President of the Supreme Court opened the conference for judges and prosecutors on "Implementation of the European Convention of Human Rights in Azerbaijan: Legal aspects and challenges".
- On 16-17 June, the HoO attended the meetings of GR-DEM Ambassadors with the Agency for State Support to NGOs, Minister of Justice, Media Development Agency, the Supreme Court, the State Committee for Family, Women and Children, Commissioner for Human Rights, MFA and NGOs.
- On 28 June, the HoO attended the 3rd PGG Steering Committee meeting.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- SG Marija Pejčinović Burić was visiting Baku on 4-5 April. During her visit she met, inter alia, with President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, the Speaker of Parliament Sahiba Gafarova, the Ministers of Justice and Foreign Affairs and launched the new Action Plan for Azerbaijan 2022-2025.
- CM GR-DEM Ambassadors were visiting Azerbaijan (Aghdam and Baku) on 15-17 June. They met with Minister of Justice, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Prosecutor General of Azerbaijan, Vice-President of the Supreme Court of Azerbaijan, other state officials, as well as with representatives of Azerbaijani NGOs.
- ECRI conducted a monitoring mission in Azerbaijan between 13 and 17 June 2022.

Belgrade

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 7, Project staff – 29, Horizontal Facility Coordination Hub (HFCH) – 1, Regional Finance Officer -1, Total – 38.

The Office is currently implementing 13 (country specific and regional) projects: 12 jointly funded with the EU (9 under the Horizontal Facility Phase II (HF)), Human Resource Management in Local Self-Government (HRM/LSG), ROMACTED, Support for the implementation of judicial reform in Serbia and 1 project through Voluntary Contributions (VC) of the Swedish Foreign Ministry/SIDA on Anti-Money-Laundering and Countering Terrorist Financing (AML/CTF).

State of implementation of projects / programmes

- **EU/CoE HF “Quality Education for All-Serbia”**: Guidelines for Integration of Competences for Democratic Culture in selected subjects of national Curricula distributed to 1500 schools in Serbia by beneficiary. 40 participating schools organised Days of Democratic Culture attended by thousands of people across Serbia, including the EU Ambassador, and with thousands of more being informed of it through both the traditional and online media. 13 high officials, including State Secretary for Education participated in the facilitated peer exchange and learning visit to peers in Andorra with meetings in Barcelona. In May, more than 160 representatives from 60 selected schools, Ministry and key institutions further developed their training skills and devised sustainability measures.
- **EU/CoE HF “Promotion of Diversity and Equality in Serbia”**: In partnership with the Ombudsperson office, Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue, and Ministry of Public Administration and LSG, 9 capacity building workshops were organised for Councils on Inter-Ethnic Relations in several selected municipalities across Serbia. The Action has officially launched the national block the hatred campaign. The campaign “[Block the Hatred. Share the Love!](#)” aims to combat various forms of hate speech targeting certain communities and individuals in Serbia, especially those from vulnerable groups and various minorities. Ambassadors of the campaign against hate speech are prominent public figures in the world of acting: Milena Radulovic, Sandra Siladjev, Milos Timotijevic and Slaven Doslo.
- **EU/CoE HF “Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in Serbia”**: The action launched adapted HELP module on preventing trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation and it will be held until end of June. The action organised training for 30 participants and 6 grants have been awarded to journalist for production of fact-based reports on THB. ECHR case of V.C.L. v. the UK was translated into Serbian and widely shared with beneficiaries and partners. The action awarded IT equipment for Centre for Human Trafficking Victims’ Protection and NGO Atina in total value of 8.350 EUR. Capacity building trainings (2) for educational professionals on early identification and prevention on THB within educational system were held.
- **EU/CoE HF “Enhancing human rights protection for detained and sentenced persons”**: Within the Action’s framework training sessions for treatment officers in prisons on delivering specialised offender programmes were continued. Hence, 40 treatment officers from various prisons were trained. Further, Heads of treatment services from all prisons were gathered to discuss challenges in delivering the programmes in prisons. Grant for mentoring programme issued to CSO Network for post release assistance of former offenders was

finalised, and 65 former offenders have benefited from the programme. In three training sessions, staff from psychiatric clinic and three social care institutions were acquainted with CoE standards on prevention of ill-treatment, latest CPT recommendations, and the work of NPM.

- **EU/CoE HF “Enhancing penitentiary capacities in addressing radicalisation in prisons in Western Balkans”**: The Serbian prison staff participated at the study visit to the penitentiary system in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), and have learned about approaches to VEP management and rehabilitation in BiH, the Case Management System and conditions under which this subset of prisoners serve their sentences. More than 80 prison practitioners, coming from management, security and treatment departments of more than 26 detention facilities across Serbia increased their awareness and knowledge about VEP-specific tools/program developed for use in the context of Serbian penitentiary system and its beneficiaries thanks to three cascade sessions held in Nis, Belgrade and Novi Sad.

- **EU/CoE HF “Independence & Accountability of the Judiciary”**: Guidelines on ethical usage of social media by judges and public prosecutors have been presented to 60 holders of the judicial function to help them find instructions and advice on how to handle social media. Different mechanisms of co-operation between the judiciary and the executive branches were presented to judiciary at the Round Table as possible, desirable, and necessary to address many of the complex issues related to the operation of justice. 63 judges from all four Appellate Jurisdictions were equipped with skills on resisting and reporting undue influence on the work of judges and acquired knowledge on different types of undue influence.

- **EU/CoE HF “Strengthening the effective legal remedies to human rights violations in Serbia”**: 55 prosecutors and prosecutorial assistants from Kragujevac and Nis took part in the working meetings on interpretation and citation of the ECHR and ECtHR case-law. 37 advisors of the Constitutional Court were trained on compensation scheme in the cases of human rights violations from the perspective of the ECtHR. 39 law students from the region participated in the regional school on human rights and new technologies. 16 judges and prosecutors from Serbia took part in the study visit to Strasbourg. Test version of the websites of the Constitutional Court and of the Government Agent have been developed.

- **EU/CoE HF “Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media in Serbia (JUFREX 2)”**: The Project continued to support the capacity building of the Judiciary under the Grant with the Judicial Academy of Serbia, by contributing to the delivery of the 6th Cascade Training Protection of Journalists (16 participants and of the 2nd round of the JUFREX/HELP tutored courses on Freedom of expression and Protection and Safety of Journalists (FoE: 18 enrolled participants – 10 completed; PSoJ: 14 enrolled participants – 12 completed). In two tailored training sessions, the capacities of lawyers to understand and use European standards on freedom of expression (13-14 May, 26 participants) and police officers to better protect the safety of journalists (11-12 May - 25 participants) were enhanced.

- **EU/CoE HF “Freedom of Expression and the Media in South-East Europe (JUFREX 2)”**: At the 2nd Conference for legal professionals on Freedom of Expression (31 May – 1 June, Durres, Albania), 60 judges, prosecutors, lawyers and representatives of the training institutions of legal professionals from the Western Balkans discussed with experts and representatives of the CoE and EU recent developments in the standards and case-law on freedom of expression and the media, as well as in the Region, and future cooperation. The 4th e-bulletin on the latest developments in the case-law of the ECHR on freedom of expression has been prepared in English and translated into all regional languages. It will contribute to

keeping JUFREX trainers and trainees up-to-date on the relevant standards deriving from Article 10 ECHR.

- **EU/CoE HF regional "HELP in the Western Balkans"**: 17 HELP online courses on 11 topics were adapted to domestic legislation and launched in the framework of the regional action in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia. The course on Environment and HR was launched in cooperation with Regional Cooperation Council. The regional HF40 reached 7,200 users from the region in the HELP e-learning platform, increased by 4% in the reporting period. Additionally, a Training of Trainers for a group of nine lawyers from the Serbian Bar Academy was organized that will be followed by implementation of HELP courses and the inclusion of some of those courses into the training of the Academy.

- **EU/CoE JP "Human Resources Management in Local Self-Government - phase 2"**: In co-operation with National Academy for Public Administration, 47 trainings were delivered with more than 850 participants. Monitoring and evaluation of 15 selected webinars was completed. Council's E-learning course on Good Governance was completed by 16 participants and 65 are in progress. Two-day webinar on LAP-Module 1 was completed on 20-21 June with approximately 20 participants from LSGs. On Peer-to-peer workshop (1-3 June), 50 LSGs that were supported by the Programme in strengthening HRM function, were awarded by Certificates for their effort and commitment. Programme delivered ex-post analysis of the law on employees in LSGs, to the main partners and beneficiaries.

- **EU-CoE regional JP "Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level (ROMACTED)-phase 2"**: 13 facilitators in 14 partner Cities and Municipalities carried out activities at local level, including info-sessions on post-COVID-19 recovery; activities with all local-level structures; realising small-scale initiatives; etc. The City of Kragujevac awarded the Programme with a Certificate of Appreciation for special contribution to Roma inclusion. A training session on Roma Responsive Budgeting was carried out in close collaboration with Roma Integration Office/ Regional Cooperation Council and targeted close to 50 participants from the 14 Cities and Municipalities in Serbia.

- **EU/CoE JP "Support for the implementation of judicial reform in Serbia"**: The project held its first SCM on 8 June with the revised calendar of activities unanimously adopted. Facilitation of the process of drafting a new set of judicial and prosecutorial laws is under way, through providing support to dedicated Working Groups established by the MoJ. The conference on the role of prominent lawyers in judicial councils was held on 3 June bringing together more than 80 stakeholders from across the Western Balkans and various European jurisdictions, with key conclusions at disposal to relevant target groups.

- **VC (Swedish MFA) "Preventing money laundering and terrorist financing in Serbia"**: Project provided advice and recommendations for improvement of the methodology of the National Bank of Serbia to strengthen the "fit and proper" procedures for authorisation of banks and other financial institutions and subsequent monitoring of obliged entities. The project also delivered legal and institutional analysis of asset recovery regime. Status of the ML/TF progress in Serbia has been presented at the national conference. In addition, the results of the latest National Risk Assessment were shared with representatives of the judiciary and investigative bodies, as well as with representatives of supervisors and obliged entities.

Follow-up action

- Altogether, six actions have been prepared in close consultation with the beneficiaries and the EUD for the third phase of Horizontal facility in Serbia, expected to start on 1 of January 2023. The actions will continue to assist Serbia in reform process covering the same areas of cooperation.
- The new project on supporting access of young people in Serbia to democracy and human rights education based on the Compass manual and the CoE Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education is under preparation. The project is funded by the MFA of the Kingdom of Belgium, and it will be implemented by the Youth Department, the CoE Office in Belgrade and local partners.

Other relevant activities

- Presidential, parliamentary and local elections were held in Serbia on 3 April. The office supported CoE observers from PACE and CLRA.
- No Hate Speech campaign "Block the Hatred. Share the Love!" was launched in Serbia on 5 May.
- Europe Day was marked on 5 May at the reception held at the new premises of the CoE Office in Belgrade.
- International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOT) was marked on 17 May in co-operation with the Embassy of France.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- PACE delegation headed by Aleksander Pocij (Poland, EPP/CD) observed presidential and early parliamentary elections in Serbia held on 3 April.
- Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, led by Carla Dejonghe (Belgium, ILDG), observed partial local elections held in Serbia on 3 April.
- Verena Taylor, Director of the Office of the Directorate General of Programmes, paid a visit to Serbia from 4 to 6 May where she officially opened "Block the Hatred. Share the Love!" campaign in Serbia and the new premises of Belgrade Office on Europe Day.

Bucharest

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 0.5, Project staff – 35, Total – 35.5

The office was responsible for the implementation of five capacity building projects on cybercrime with a combined budget of over 37 million EUR. Four projects are jointly funded with the European Union (EU) and one is funded by voluntary contributions (currently Canada, Japan, Hungary, Italy, United Kingdom and USA).

In the assessed period 3 Senior Project Officers were recruited under the Glacy +, CyberSouth and CyberEast projects.

State of implementation of projects

- **Octopus Project:** Enhanced co-operation and disclosure of electronic evidence was enabled through [opening for signature of the 2nd Additional Protocol](#) supported by the Octopus project in cooperation with other C-PROC projects. Further dialogue was fostered within the Cybercrime Convention Committee, including the [T-CY plenary](#) and [Working Group on undercover investigations and extension of searches](#). A series of webinars were organised in cooperation with GLACY+ on the 2nd Additional Protocol, including multistakeholder roundtable in Latin America that helped on the further implementation of the protocol. Finalized [report on COVID-19 related cybercrime in Asia](#) will provide the necessary tools and knowledge to countries to prepare and act in similar crises. [HELP course on Cybercrime and Electronic Evidence](#) was launched enabling legal practitioners to increase their knowledge on the topic.
- **iPROCEEDS-2:** The capabilities of law enforcement and judicial authorities were reinforced by the organisation of the specialised training and workshops on cybercrime, digital forensics, financial investigations, virtual currencies, darknet and Train the Trainers programmes on delivery of judicial training. Public/Private cooperation initiatives in the region were promoted by supporting domestic meetings with a focus on partnership between service providers and criminal justice authorities. The 5th Meeting of the Project Steering Committee was held with the aim to assess the achievements from the last six months and shape the future workplan.
- **GLACY+:** The harmonisation of the cyber-related legislation (data protection) was supported in [Chile](#) and [Vanuatu](#). The dialogue between policymakers and practitioners was strengthened in [Colombia](#). Fiji was onboarded as a priority country of the project. Series of workshops on the application of new cybercrime legal frameworks and international standards were organized in [Brazil](#), [Mauritius](#) and Fiji. The Second Additional Protocol was promoted through webinars targeting [criminal justice authorities organised jointly with the Octopus Project and International Association of Prosecutors](#). The capacities on search, seizure, and confiscation of online proceeds of crime were reinforced in Ghana, Nigeria, Chile and Paraguay. Criminal justice authorities capacities were reinforced through several introductory trainings in Senegal, Sierra Leone and [Paraguay](#). The community of national judicial trainers was reinforced by continuing the [new series of practitioners-to-practitioners workshops](#) and [the first 2022 Coordination Call of the Steering Committee of the International Network of Judicial Trainers](#).
- **CyberSouth:** The promotion of the Second Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention was ensured by two workshops for [Algeria](#) and Lebanon. The capacities of law enforcement agencies were reinforced through the delivery of the [specialized courses](#) while support to training institutions and national strategies was ensured through the publishing of the [guide](#)

[on law enforcement training strategies](#). Judicial capacities were strengthened in all priority countries. International co-operation was enhanced by supporting the participation to different regional and international events on cybercrime and data protection, including UN process for drafting a new treaty on cybercrime. The project progress was reviewed at the [8th Steering Committee Meeting](#) and the plan for the remaining period of 2022 was endorsed.

- **CyberEast** – The project supported all five countries of the region with work on accession to the 2nd Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention. Training activities helped develop advanced skills of law enforcement for dealing with electronic evidence, while civil society oversight was reinforced via National Forums on transparency of cybercrime action. The cooperation between cybersecurity community and law enforcement was enhanced through Tabletop Exercise for policy makers in Georgia and Regional Meeting in Bucharest, Romania. A number of *ad hoc* activities for Ukraine targeted urgent needs in terms of improving legislation, investigative procedures and training on ransomware. The invasion of Ukraine by Russian Federation and continued state of emergency in Moldova sustained to have significant impact on project planning and delivery.

Follow up action

- Support T-CY activities and working group on undercover investigations and extension of searches.
- Support of T-CY missions in Argentina and Uruguay.
- Organisation of the 12th Steering Committee Meeting of the Glacy + project.
- An initial assessment will be conducted in view of Peru's incorporation as priority country of the Glacy+ project.
- The preparation of the Underground Economy event in cooperation with Team Cumry (5-8 September 2022)
- Initial needs assessment will be conducted for Trinidad and Tobago in view of its onboarding for capacity building under Octopus project

Other relevant activities

- The organisation of the T-CY Plenary and the subsequent international conference and opening for signature of the 2nd Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime (10-13 of May 2022) was supported by C-PROC. Now 24 states parties to Budapest Convention signed the Second Additional Protocol.
- Government of Japan made a voluntary contribution of 45.000 Euro to the Octopus project.
- T-CY Secretariat facilitated the participation and common positions of the Parties to the Convention in the UN Ad hoc committee to elaborate an international convention on countering the use of ICTs for criminal purposes.
- A Resulted Oriented Mission was initiated by the European Commission with the aim to assess the achievements of the iPROCEEDS 2 project.

Chisinau

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 7, Project staff –22, Total staff – 29.

The Office implemented eleven projects, two in the framework of the EU/CoE regional Joint Programme “Partnership for Good Governance”, two funded through voluntary contributions from Switzerland and the Netherlands respectively and seven funded through voluntary contributions at Action Plan level, as detailed below. One project was launched during the reporting period.

State of implementation of projects / programmes / Action Plans

- **VC Switzerland “Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova”**: about 1000 civic education teachers were trained on how to develop competences for democratic culture in the current social context in the Republic of Moldova, considering the refugee crisis and the conflict in Ukraine. The participants received tailored support to address these events in classrooms and schools in a constructive manner, reinforcing democratic citizenship education.
- **VC The Netherlands “Enhancing diversity and equality in the Republic of Moldova”**: the project trained 27 judicial professionals, including judges and prosecutors on specificities of hate crime through European standards, including the case-law of the ECtHR. The project Steering Committee approved the selection of municipalities for piloting the networks of local services and civil society organizations to combat hate crimes. 24 police officers became facilitators for cascade trainings on equality, non-discrimination and hate crimes to fellow officers in the regions. A legal opinion on the newly adopted amendments to the regulation on hate crimes and hate speech was produced.
- **EU/CoE – PGG “Strengthening the capacities of the justice sector actors to deliver justice in line with European standards, in particular to fight discrimination, in the Republic of Moldova”**: 25 judges and prosecutors strengthened their knowledge on national and international remedies in discrimination cases. The project finalized a study on perceptions and attitudes towards equality, which was presented in June during the national conference dedicated to the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Law on Ensuring Equality. Data of the study show that discrimination is on the 10th place among the most important problems as perceived by Moldovan citizens.
- **EU/CoE - PGG “ Support to further strengthening the efficiency and quality of the judicial system in the Republic of Moldova”**: the project finalized the draft Regulation on the annual contests on court performance and the amendments of the communication policy documents of the judiciary. The report on access to courts for vulnerable groups in the Republic of Moldova was updated in the light of the war in Ukraine, by extending its scope to the category of refugees. Additional activities raised knowledge in the judiciary on necessary improvements of internal and external communication and ways to increase court performance as well as access to justice for vulnerable groups.
- **AP “Strengthening the human rights compliant criminal justice system in the Republic of Moldova”**: the members of the Council for the Prevention of Torture improved their knowledge on their purpose and role in torture prevention. At the request of the Ministry of Justice, an expert opinion was provided to the draft Law on criminal investigation and trial

of criminal cases in absentia. In addition, expert support was provided for the elaboration of the Draft Law on amending the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code aiming at enhancing the application of alternatives to detention and discouraging the excessive application of custodial measures and sentences.

- **AP “Strengthening the prison and probation reforms, provision of health care and treatment of patients in closed institutions in the Republic of Moldova”:** Curricula for the training of prison staff working with children and young people in detention and for the initial training of probation counsellors were developed. The prison and probation systems were provided with a validated Risk and Needs Assessment tool for a more responsive rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders. A pool of 15 trainers in the prison system was prepared to train peers on Motivational Interviewing. The development of a Concept for the psycho-social rehabilitation of patients (including forensic patients) in psychiatric institutions was initiated and WG meetings to develop Policies & SOPs for the prisons system in key areas were held.

- **AP “Support for Media Pluralism and Freedom of Expression in the Republic of Moldova”:** in May, the premiere of three documentaries on human rights, developed with Council of Europe support in 2021, gathered over 150 attendees at the event hosted by the project. Further, in June, the project organized an international conference gathering 90 professionals to discuss the new draft law on access to public information and a policy workshop for the Members of the Audiovisual Council on tackling the regulation of mass-media ownership transparency in view of EU legislation.

- **AP “Improving Electoral Practice in the Republic of Moldova, Phase II”:** the project finalized the Terms of Reference for the future module "Electoral Complaints" of the State Automated Information System, aimed at enhancing the Central Electoral Commission's operational capacity to resolve electoral disputes in a transparent and innovative way. 60 young voters took part in an electoral school preparing them for the local elections held in May 2022 whereas 25 electoral staff improved their skills on cybersecurity and disinformation through the BRIDGE training. Proposals for amendments of the electoral regulations were developed to ensure more accurate voters rolls used in elections.

- **AP “Preventing and protecting children from violence including in the digital environment”:** the expert review of Law 299 on the measures and services provided to children in conflict with the law was presented on 10 May during an online meeting attended by authorities and civil society. The adaptation of the Romanian version of the training module on online child sexual exploitation and abuse investigation to the Moldovan legal context was finalized and shared with the National Institute of Justice. The national mechanism on the Lanzarote Convention was approved through the establishment of a Specialised Commission for the Coordination and Monitoring of its Implementation.

- **AP “Supporting the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in the Republic of Moldova”:** the project launch and the first Steering Committee were organised, where the workplan and communication plan of the project were validated. The HELP course on violence against women and domestic violence was launched in partnership with the National Justice Institute. 70 legal professionals increased their awareness on the victim-centred approach and are now undertaking the course.

- **AP “Reinforcing the culture of dialogue and consultation of local authorities in the Republic of Moldova – Phase II”:** the project signed a grant agreement with the Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova (CALM) aimed at strengthening the institutional

capacity of CALM in evidence-based advocacy, coordination, communication, and monitoring. The grant implementation started on 1 June 2022 and will end on 31 December 2023.

Follow up action

- The project "Reinforcing the culture of dialogue and consultation of local authorities in the Republic of Moldova – Phase II" was operationalized during the reporting period.
- As part of the dialogue between the High-Level Working Group on Justice and the Moldovan authorities, the Venice Commission adopted during its 131st Plenary Session on 17- 18 June a Joint Opinion of the Venice Commission and the Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law on the draft law on amending some normative acts (judiciary). The opinion was requested by the Minister of Justice in March 2022 and was carried out in the frame of the Quick Response Mechanism of the EU/CoE PGG programme.
- At the same Plenary Session, the Venice Commission adopted an Opinion on the draft amendments to the Law on the Public Prosecution Service. These draft amendments were proposed following an Opinion of the Venice Commission CDL-AD(2021)047 on the amendments of 24 August 2021 to the Law on the Prosecution Service. The request for an opinion was made by the Secretary of State of the MoJ in May 2022.

Other relevant activities

- The Head of Office participated in the event "Joint Dialogue on the Istanbul Convention – from ratification to implementation" organised by the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova on the occasion of the entry into force of the Istanbul Convention on 1 May 2022. Council of Europe's awareness raising activities on the Istanbul Convention reached 8740 people through seven social media posts with key stakeholders' quotes.
- Between April and June 2022, the Office's website recorded 28,556 pageviews, out of which 23,455 single-time pageviews and 12,471 new visits. Important CoE documents were among the 34 downloads registered. Owing to the social media campaign "10 for Education for society" on Facebook, the page enjoyed a 274% increase in reach, with 347K people following this activity. The campaign showcased 10 stories of young people and teachers who applied in their communities the competences acquired thanks to the project "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova". The LinkedIn page also enjoyed a substantial increase (60,8%) of pageviews, with 40.9% additional new visitors.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- Between 6-9 June, the Office facilitated the organisation of the fact-finding visit of the PACE co-rapporteurs on the honouring of obligations and commitments by the Republic of Moldova, with a focus on the latest political developments concerning the functioning of democratic institutions, including the impact of the Russian aggression against Ukraine on the country.
- Between 13-15 June, the Office facilitated the fact-finding visit of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees, Leyla Kayacik, focusing on the situation in the country, adopted good practices and remaining challenges and needs for adequate reception and protection as well as the CoE's contribution to the protection of the most vulnerable persons arriving from Ukraine. The SRSG met with national authorities, NGOs and IOs and paid a visit to the Moldovan-Ukraine border point in Palanca and a refugees' placement centre in Chisinau.

- Between 22-24 June, the Office organised meetings with national authorities and representatives of the local public administration for the Director of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, Rafael Benitez, who was visiting the country to introduce to the authorities a new project on the consolidation of local self-governance. The Director also paid a visit to Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia to meet with the regional authorities.

Kyiv

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 11, project staff – 52, total staff – 63.

Following adoption of the Priority Adjustments to the Council of Europe Action Plan for 2018-2022 by the Committee of Ministers in May 2022, 15 projects resumed their implementation and started implementing activities under the administrative and financial management of the Office.

State of implementation of projects/programmes/ action programmes

- **AP CoE Project “Supporting Institutions to Combat Ill-Treatment in Ukraine Phase II Project”** resumed its activities in June as part of the Priority Adjustments to the CoE Ukraine AP 2018-2022. The Project has started the preparation of expert opinion on compliance with European standards of the perspective of creation of forensic entity within the structure of the State Bureau of Investigation (the SBI) that would help ensuring independence of investigations. The opinion will as well contain recommendations on independent functioning of such an entity. Furthermore, the project worked on digitalization of the training course on human rights protection for the SBI staff (e-manual format for trainers and trainees). The training materials were uploaded to the SBI’s internal online portal and helped to ensure SBI staff has access to uninterrupted in-service training at the time of war.

- **AP CoE Project “Combatting violence against women in Ukraine”** provided grants to four local NGOs, namely “La Strada-Ukraine”, “Public Movement “Faith, Hope, Love””, “Ukrainian women lawyers association “JurFem” and “Centre Women’s Perspectives” to ensure that support to protect and promote women’s and girls’ rights is rapid, direct, flexible, needs-based and focused. This also contributed to the sustainability of local organisations and facilitation of a quick provision of necessary information for Ukrainian women and girls in displacement.

- **AP CoE Project “Combating violence against children in Ukraine Phase III”** held a number of consultations with the project partners and stakeholders to assess the immediate needs to be addressed within the current project’s framework [Link to the news item.](#) Furthermore, working level meetings were organised to analyse the process of documenting violations of children's rights, including crimes of sexual violence, and data collection mechanisms for monitoring children's rights in the context of the Russian aggression. Finally, a checklist “Protection of children affected by the refugee crisis from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse” was developed in [Ukrainian](#) [English](#) languages as a practical tool to provide support to child victims of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse and prosecute the perpetrators.

- **AP CoE Project “Enhancing decentralisation and public administration reform in Ukraine”** prepared a policy advice on the roadmap for local self-government recovery from the war consequences in line with the European Charter of Local Self-Government. In addition, the project in coordination with CoE project “Supporting the transparency, inclusiveness and integrity of electoral process in Ukraine – Phase III” and the respective Parliamentary Committee launched a joint initiative on strengthening both the electoral reform and on local authorities and state representation at sub-national levels. Furthermore, the project ensured an access to administrative services for residents of Borodyanka and Bucha communities in Kyiv region, which were heavily damaged by the Russian army during its occupation, though provision of the equipped mobile one-stop shop for administrative services. Furthermore, the

project held a series of consultations with the national stakeholders on developing a concept of Kyiv metropolitan area and provided its expert support to review a plan of action of the association "Kyiv agglomeration".

- **AP CoE Project "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II"** started providing an ongoing operational expert, technical and mentoring support for youth centres, local communities, and youth NGOs, focusing on updating local programs and activities with the participation of young people in the war time. The project is also developing a training course for youth workers on burnout prevention, compassion fatigue and psychological assistance in crisis situations; this is done in co-operation with the project "Internal Displacement in Ukraine: Building Solutions. Phase II" and the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Furthermore, the project contributed to the Plan of Measures for Post-war Reconstruction and Development of Ukraine in the field of youth taking part in a thematic working group which is established based on the Regulation on the National Council for the Recovery of Ukraine from the Consequences of War.

- **AP CoE Project "Supporting the transparency, inclusiveness and integrity of electoral practice in Ukraine – Phase III"**: maintenance and web support to the online platform "CEC: prosvita" continued. The project has launched analytical research on political parties' functioning and gender balanced political participation in war and post-war period. Preliminary results of the needs assessment in the electoral field were presented and discussed with the national authorities. Joint initiative "Good democratic governance in Ukraine: moving forward in post-war context" (developed in synergy with the CoE on-going project "Enhancing de-centralisation and public administration reform in Ukraine") was discussed and agreed on with national partners.

- **AP CoE Project Strengthening local democratic governance in Ukraine:** 200 representatives of local authorities and youth NGOs shared new practices of youth engagement which were developed and introduced in their municipalities during the war in the online workshop organised on 20 May jointly with the Association of Ukrainian Cities (AUC) as part of the Open Government Partnership Week 2022. The grant agreement was signed with the AUC to further strengthen capacities of local authorities of Ukraine in times of war and post-war recovery. The online matchmaking platform, Cities4Cities, was promoted with central and local authorities and at the European level.

- **AP CoE Project "Strengthening civil participation in democratic decision making in Ukraine"** implemented 3-week Academy of Civil Participation "Volunteer and civic initiatives: engaging & partnering during the war". As a result, the participants raised their awareness, acquired new skills, and built the capacity in volunteer work, exchanged experiences, found partners for future projects. The mentoring programme aimed at providing tailored coaching support to volunteers was launched. With the aim to better engage IDPs and people affected by war in local affairs and decision-making, the project started to provide its expert support to the Lviv regional council as regards the development of the regional education programme, engaging IDP teachers, parents and students adapting the programme to their needs. In collaboration with three pilot municipalities the project has been developing a regulation on public consultations, enabling and empowering IDPs to participate in local affairs, facilitating social cohesion and integration, sensitivity of local policies. Moreover, the project has been conducting the nationwide research "How martial law affected civil participation".

- **AP CoE Project "Protecting national minorities, including Roma, and minority languages in Ukraine" – Phase II:** 90 representatives of Roma community discussed via on-line consultations the emergency needs of Roma IDPs/refugees and the ways to address

them within the framework of the project. Thematic reports and recommendations have been prepared. The project has launched the grant competition for minority NGOs to address the emergency needs of minority groups and protect their rights on the ground. Furthermore, the project provided its expertise expert support on protection of the national minorities and antidiscrimination to the working group on Human Rights at the National Council for Reconstruction of Ukraine from the effects of war.

- **AP CoE Project "Human Rights Compliant Criminal Justice System in Ukraine"** contributed to creation of an expert advisory group to the Office of the Prosecutor General (OPG) to provide support in the process of investigating gross human rights violations in the context of the ongoing war. This expert advisory group has developed five documents on various issues, including expert opinion to the draft Law on amending the Criminal Procedural Code regarding activities of joint investigative teams.

Following the Justice Ministry's request, the project issued expert opinion on the draft Law on supporting criminal proceedings and enforcement of punishments, which are precluded because of the armed aggression. 196 prosecutors improved their knowledge and skills on peculiarities of investigation of conflict related sexual violence at a webinar, organised by the project.

- **AP CoE Project "Supporting constitutional and legal reforms, constitutional justice and assisting the Verkhovna Rada in conducting reforms aimed at enhancing its efficiency. Phase 3"**: more than 100 participants, including judges of the Constitutional Court, national and international experts in the field of constitutional law, representatives of constitutional jurisdiction of foreign states and international organisations, representatives of the public sector national security, lawyers, diplomats discussed the role and actions to be done by the Constitutional Court in the implementation of the state's strategy to obtain the EU membership by Ukraine. Furthermore, presentation of the publication of Electoral Code of Ukraine was organised by the project jointly with the Supreme Court for 98 judges of the Supreme Court and staff of the Court, as well as judges of district and administrative courts of appeal. The principles of institutes of election administration bodies, voter lists, election information support and election campaigning, election observation, and appeal of election offenses were analysed in detail. Ukrainian Amicus Curiae brief on the limits of subsequent (a posteriori) review of constitutional amendments by the Constitutional Court, adopted by the Venice Commission at its 131st Plenary Session (Venice, 17-18 June 2022) was translated in Ukrainian by the project, following the request of the national partners.

- **AP CoE Project "Continued support to promoting social human rights in Ukraine"** has provided expert support to the development of the term of references in the areas of social policy, barrier-free society, pension reform and labour rights as a framework for the National Council for the Recovery of Ukraine. The working group for development of the Social Code of Ukraine to ensure social human rights of vulnerable groups of people has been created and the sector Parliamentary Committee and Council of Europe were elected as co-chairs of the mentioned working group.

- **AP CoE Project "Support for judicial institutions and processes to strengthen access to justice in Ukraine"** organised a series of consultations with the key stakeholders in judiciary on possible ways to optimise procedures on selection and appointment of judges (first and second instances court) and disciplinary proceedings against judges. Besides, the project organized the first official visit of the Supreme Court's President to the CoE headquarters where the delegation met with representatives of the CoE bodies and discussed the ways how to address challenges faced by Ukrainian judiciary in the current context of war. Finally, the project organised a thematic discussion with participation of national experts and

staff of the Government Agent's Office on implementation of the international humanitarian law and its interconnection with case law of the ECtHR.

- **AP CoE Project "Internal Displacement in Ukraine: Building Solutions – Phase II"** in cooperation with the National School of Judges launched development of a new course for judges on the judicial protection of property rights of IDPs and the war-affected people. The project provided its expertise and policy advice on development of a regulatory framework for addressing urgent housing needs of IDPs and the war-affected people, as well as protection of IDPs' rights through various inter-agency working groups. Furthermore, the project delivers grant support to local NGOs that are currently responding to the emergency protection needs of IDPs on the ground, including relevant digital solutions. 87 psychologists, lawyers, social workers, and youth activists, who took part in eleven online sessions, organized by the project, improved their skills in providing emergency psychological support and counselling to IDPs and war-affected people, with a focus on trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder. Youth related activities were delivered jointly with the CoE project "Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II". Finally, because of the information campaign on IDPs' rights, launched by the project in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Policy, 12 000 copies of infographics and posters on access to essential services and hotlines for IDPs were printed and placed in departments of social protection, centers of administrative services, free legal aid offices and railway stations.

- The new AP CoE Project **"Support to Safety of Journalists, Media, and of Access to Information, including communication strategy for Prosecutor General's Office in Ukraine"** aiming to support the Ukrainian media in addressing current needs and consequences of the Russian aggression and war in Ukraine was launched in May 2022 as a follow up to the previous EU/CoE Project on media freedom. The project adapted to the national context and translated into Ukrainian language the CoE's and other international organisations' standards on freedom of expression in the times of war. The participation of Chair of the national media regulator in the 55th meeting of the European Platform of Regulators (EPRA) on 11-13 May in Antwerp, Belgium was supported. The project provided a grant to the Ukrainian Public Broadcaster to cover accommodation expenses of 80 relocated staff members, thus contributing to enabling the favourable working conditions and sustainability for the relocated team.

- **PGG II Project "Strengthening measures to counter money laundering and financing of terrorism in Ukraine:** following consultations with the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations of the European Commission in March 2022 it was decided to put on hold the project and to address the requests of the Ukrainian partners for targeted assistance under the regional PGG project on anti-corruption. This approach allows to address the emerging needs in a flexible manner in consultation with the national partners and the European Union Delegation to Ukraine taking into consideration the evolving situation. Thus, in June an on-line training on seizure and confiscation was delivered for members of the Working Group of the National School of Judges of Ukraine. Preparations have been launched for a workshop on comparative solutions and good practices in strategic analysis, which will take place in September.

- **Gender mainstreaming and gender equality:** Verkhovna Rada voted in favour of ratification of the Istanbul Convention on 20 June, which is a culmination of several years of work by the CoE and other international organisations in Ukraine. All the projects and other activities in Ukraine have been supported by the Gender Advisor and during the reporting period the Gender Advisor has instructed projects especially on how to integrate gender perspective in the context of armed conflict. The Office maintains external presence by active participation in relevant working groups and meetings, including the weekly Gender-Based

Violence Subcluster meetings to follow conflict-related gender discussions in Ukraine. The Sectoral Working Group on Gender met on 6 April. Gender Letter with current updates, especially about gendered impacts of war, was sent to the staff on 25 May.

Visibility and outreach

Communication Activities of the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine

- 35 statements and news items with key messages by Council of Europe leaders were translated into Ukrainian, published and disseminated during the reporting period, including 30 statements made on the Russian Federation's ongoing aggression against Ukraine, the atrocities in Bucha and other towns near Kyiv, the crimes against Ukrainian citizens and elected local leaders, the situation in the besieged Mariupol, the response to Ukraine refugee crisis, an adjusted Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2022, the human rights situation in Crimea, approval of the Istanbul Convention, on missile attack in Kremenchuk.
- The news agency WESTINFRONT published an interview with the Head of the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine, Steen Nørlov.
- 110 news items were published on the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine's website.
- Users have made 30 243 visits to the website, 49 361 pageviews and 40 763 unique pageviews.
- During 1 April – 30 June 2022, 198 posts on the Facebook page of the CoE Office in Ukraine covering 85221 unique users were published. The number of followers of the CoE Office in Ukraine Facebook page has increased up to 6052 (78 new followers).
- As for the Twitter account in the same period: 233 tweets, 94 new followers, 15436 profile visits, 70105 tweet impressions. The number of followers has increased up to 1076.
- Since May, the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine issues a newsletter published on the Intranet.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- On 3-6 May, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunja Mijatović paid a working visit to Kyiv and its regions.
- On 9 May, Secretary General Marija Pejčinović Burić paid her working visit to Kyiv and visited Borodyanka and Irpin.
- On 1-4 June, the President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, Leendert Verbeek, paid a visit to Ukraine, accompanied by the Secretary General of the Congress, Andreas Kiefer.
- On 28 June, a cross-party delegation of ten members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe paid a working visit to Ukraine and its regions.

Sarajevo

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 7 (including one trainee), project staff – 20, total staff – 26.

The Office implements eleven projects, of which five are funded through the EU/CoE Horizontal Facility (HF Phase II) for the Western Balkans and Turkey, while six are funded by voluntary contributions to the Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition, the Office is participating in the implementation of one regional project, the EU/CoE Joint Programme on Roma empowerment at local level (ROMACTED).

State of implementation of projects / the Action Plan

- **EU/CoE HF 4 “Strengthening human rights treatment of detained persons based on European standards and best practices in Bosnia and Herzegovina”:** The Ministry of Interior of the Sarajevo Canton integrated operational procedures from the Human rights of persons deprived of liberty in police custody manual in its [Instructions for dealing with persons deprived of liberty](#). The [call for tender](#) to procure computers in pilot prisons and support digitalization in BiH was published on 15 June.
- **EU/CoE HF 19 “Promotion of diversity and equality in BiH”:** Knowledge of the FCNM and the Language Charter was enhanced for 24 Minority coordination group members, to be applied for further advocacy initiatives. Promotion of literature by an author who is Roma, Hedina Tahirovic-Sijerčić, took place. The capacity of 20 education professionals/officials - from Republika Srpska, the Brčko District and six FBiH Cantons - to prevent stigmatisation and violence against LGBTI pupils was built up. As during previous years and in tandem with other domestic and international actors, the action extended support to the BiH Pride march in Sarajevo. A new 6-month workplan was adopted at the fifth Steering Committee Meeting.
- **EU/CoE HF 21 “Quality education for all”:** Cooperation among State, entity and cantonal ministries of education was effective. At their 6th meeting held in Sarajevo on 7 April, Advisory Board members assessed activities, outputs and outcomes of the recent period, in particular those organised within the grant scheme and implemented by civil society organisations for promotion of competences for democratic culture in pilot schools. From the 29 pilot schools involved, 415 teachers actively promoted benefits of democratic school culture in their schools and local communities through fostering the whole school approach and enabling student participation and development of 28 Critical thinking school clubs, 20 joint school project and 15 school-community initiatives.
- **EU/CoE HF 20 Project “Preventing and combating human trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina”:** The capacity of 55 child education professionals and 25 health care professionals in identification and protection of child victims of trafficking was enhanced through specialised tailored trainings. The research study "[Assessing the age of children at risk of trafficking in human beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)", that explores ways to develop a feasible age assessment procedure in line with International and European standards and facilitates implementation of GRETA recommendation, was published and widely disseminated. In addition, 25 legal and social welfare professionals and labour inspectors completed the new online module of the HELP Trafficking in Human Beings course, concerning labour exploitation.
- **EU/ CoE HF33 Project “Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media in Bosnia and Herzegovina – JUFREX 2”:** Two cascade trainings for lawyers from FBiH were held, in collaboration with the entity’s Bar Association, respectively on hate speech (19-20

April) for 13 participants (9 of them women), and on whistler-blower protection (24-25 May) with 17 participants (including 11 women). A conference on the results of JUFREX in Bosnia and Herzegovina was held on 7 April, in collaboration with the Association BiH Journalists. A total of 40 representatives of the legal and media communities attended (30 of them women). Although collaboration between those professional communities has been significantly enhanced through JUFREX, journalists are still facing challenges, particularly as regards their safety.

- **Project VC 2870: "Ensuring Sustainable Penitentiary Actions in managing rehabilitation of violent extremist prisoners in Bosnia and Herzegovina (ESPA-VEP)":** A follow-up 30-month project on de-radicalisation was launched in April in cooperation with the State and entity Ministries of Justice, as well as the respective penitentiary institutions. The project's first Steering Committee meeting was held on 21 June and the 5-month Work Plan was endorsed. The first multi-agency Working Group meeting on drafting standardised criteria for establishment of prison intelligence units (PIU) and single points of contact (SPOC) for data gathering, analysis and exchange took place on 22 June, resulting in mapping of the main institutional and operational elements and criteria for establishment of such mechanisms.

- **VC Project "Initiative for Legal Certainty and Efficient Judiciary in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Phase III":** Seventeen judges and legal associates acquired skills for reasoning of criminal judgments. The Herzegovina-Neretva Canton agreed to allocate funds for repayment of outstanding debts under the *Kunić* group of cases. Five legal staff from the Government Agent Office developed research and drafting skills for action plans and reports. Through train-the-trainers support, 12 new trainers were accredited for delivering human rights training for the judiciary, and 7 human rights modules were produced. The report on the situation of the judiciary by the ad hoc Parliamentary Commission was promoted domestically and internationally. Human rights modules were developed under the Human rights Curriculum produced during Phase II.

- **VC Project "Innovating democratic participation at local level in Bosnia and Herzegovina":** On 6 May, the HoO and the Mayor of Mostar signed a [Grant of 35,000 EUR](#) to support the implementation of recommendations of the first Mostar Citizens' Assembly held in July 2021. Following an open call for expression of interest, a selected group of 23 local authorities in BiH established a [Platform of exchange](#) and met on 24 May to share perspectives, together with peers from other parts of Europe, on innovative democratic approaches, open government, political integrity and transparency with the goal of increasing citizens' trust. A new CoE Congress booklet "How to make your town a better place", aimed at raising children's awareness of sustainable development goals, was translated and adapted to the BiH context.

- **VC Project "Support to more integral and inclusive electoral processes in Bosnia and Herzegovina":** Over 50 participants attended the conference "Criminal justice sector response to the threats to fairness and integrity of elections" held in Sarajevo (23-25 June) for prosecutorial authorities, Centres for education of judges and prosecutors, police agencies, and representatives of the Central Election Commission (CEC), the first event of its kind in BiH. Ways to improve communication/coordination between the CEC and prosecutor's offices and courts were explored, so as to ensure investigation/prosecution of election fraud. Specific topics covered filing criminal complaints, conducting investigations/the main trial, rendering of verdicts and potential appeal processes. Conclusions for further action were adopted.

- **VC Project "Media and Information Literacy (MIL): for human rights and more democracy":** The research study "Media and Information Literacy in various institutions" was

translated and published, while the English version of the study "Gender and Media" was issued and is currently being translated to the languages of BiH. Dissemination plans for the project outputs been completed and will serve as a basis for a social media campaign. Furthermore, several activities aimed at strengthening the capacities of the Communication Regulatory Authority (CRA) have started, including assessment of the informal MIL network, creation of an effective communication strategy for the CRA and planning of the international MIL week.

- **VC Project "Enhancing institutional capacities on freedom of expression and information in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EEx)":** Final inception phase activities are ongoing, including meetings with relevant stakeholders that did not take place during the mission from DGI (Cooperation on Freedom of Expression), i.e. certain State and entity institutions and agencies, international actors and civil society organisations. The inception phase of the project has officially ended and the Work Plan has been completed and shared with the project partner. With a view to providing support and capacity-building to the project partner, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees (MHRR), an international call for tender for a long-term consultant has been prepared for publishing.

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

- **JP EU/CoE "Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level" (ROMACTED):** The ROMACTED II Regional Steering Committee, held in Skopje, brought to the attention of the participants the importance of local level involvement, Roma sensitive budgeting, synergies, and cross-cutting issues such as gender and antigypsyism. A key message highlighted was that Roma need to be involved in all of the above-mentioned processes. New Action Plan for Roma Social Inclusion 2021-2025 was officially adopted by the Council of Ministers, a process supported by ROMACTED in close co-operation with the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees (MHRR). In synergy with the Regional Cooperation Council, a 2-day training was held for 12 programme municipalities on Roma Sensitive Budgeting.

Other relevant activities

- On 7 April, the HoO addressed the JUFREX Final Conference, organised by the Association BiH Journalists.
- On 21 April, the HoO met the Chairman and members of the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council (HJPC) to ensure coherence of Council of Europe support related to promoting the efficiency of the judiciary.
- On 24 May, the HoO took part in the launch of the Platform of exchange on local governance on Mount Igman near Sarajevo.

Skopje

Situation of the Office

The Office implemented projects, in the framework of the EU/CoE

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

- **EU/CoE - HF „Promotion of Diversity and Equality in North Macedonia “**: The first draft of the Data analysis on hate speech and hate crime was finalised. A two-day meeting between equality bodies from Albania, Montenegro and North Macedonia was organised on 4-5 April. Two promotional events of the campaign Block the Hatred. Share the Love were organised in Skopje in April and May, and the videos were promoted and the roll out of the main messages has started. Two trainings with State Labour Inspectors on anti-discrimination in the workplace were organised on 6 and 7 June in Skopje and Bitola in cooperation with ROMACTED and Action on Combating and Preventing Human trafficking in North Macedonia.
- **EU/CoE - HF "Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media in North Macedonia"**: "The pool of national trainers (judges, prosecutors and lawyers) on freedom of expression has been expanded to 37. A workshop for the public broadcasters on the Guidelines of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services on monitoring of the application of reporting standards in gender-based violence cases in the media was held by the Agency for audio and audiovisual media services. The Association of Journalists of Macedonia within the grant agreements with the JUFREX action organised an inter – professional seminar for journalists and lawyers on strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs), comparative experiences and practice to recognize and prevent."
- **Concerning the anti-trafficking action**, on 20 April, 25 high school psychologists and pedagogues were trained on interviewing techniques to identify a potential child trafficking victim. On 29 April, the working group of the Ministry of Justice on proper implementation of the State Compensation Draft Law, supported by the action, met, and prepared an action plan for the implementation of legislation. On 25-26 May, the EU/CoE HF II anti-trafficking action in North Macedonia organised two focus groups on the role of health professionals in proactive identification and referral of potential THB victims. The action is preparing information material on this topic for health professionals who may come in touch with potential trafficking victims. On 20 May, the 6th SC meeting of the action took place in Skopje with 17 members and observers. On 6-7 June, two trainings on discrimination and THB for labour exploitation, targeting labour inspectors were delivered in cooperation with the EU/CoE HF II action on Promoting Diversity and Equality and ROMACTED. Two more grant-based stories about child begging, Covid-19 and human trafficking were published in the media.
- The **Action against economic crime finalized the draft on non-conviction-based confiscation**, continued its support to beneficiary institutions for conducting a ML/FT risk assessment of legal entities and legal arrangements and organised a follow up training from the Asset declaration Unit within the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption.
- In North Macedonia, **HF12** increased the capacity of the Regional Offices of MoJ (ROs) to respond effectively to increasing number of free legal aid (FLA) applications: 50 employees of offices improved their skills in dealing with applications in two cascade trainings facilitated by the Action's trainers and 25 laptops were purchased to improve efficiency of work and provide better quality of FLA services. A commission, composed of the employees of the MoJ trained

by the Action, published a Call for grants to CSOs and Legal Clinics, evaluated applications and finalized the tender process, incorporating the recommendations issued under the Action. As a result of the FLA awareness campaign (reached over 350 000 people only in online media), the number of people who received primary legal aid at ROs increased by 299%, and the approved requests for secondary legal aid by 125% in 2021 when compared to 2019.

- Under **HF13**, the SOP on providing healthcare in prisons was piloted in the Shtip Prison. The medical personnel working in prisons benefitted from two trainings, while some of them also joined the study visit to Madrid, exchanging experience on the transfer of healthcare provision.

Tbilisi

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 8, Project staff – 34, Total staff – 42.

The Office implemented 18 projects, 3 in the framework of EU/CoE Partnership for Good Governance (PGG II), 1 funded through EU/CoE joint cooperation, and 14 funded through voluntary contributions at Action Plan-level.

State of implementation of projects/programmes/action plans

- **EU/CoE PGG Project “Enhancing the Accountability and the Efficiency of the Judicial System and the Professionalism of Lawyers in Georgia”**: An employee satisfaction survey tailored to the needs of Georgian judiciary was developed. It is expected to conduct the survey in at least two courts by the end of 2022. After the revision of the adaptation course theoretical modules and the development of unified criteria for the creation of course outlines (syllabuses), the project supported a practical training of trainers in this area. As a result, 9 new unified course outlines (syllabuses) will include a proper summary of the covered topics and outcomes of the course.
- **EU/CoE PGG Project “Enhancing the systems of prevention and combatting corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing” (PGG II-GE)**: The Project helped enhance the knowledge of the Georgian financial (commercial banks, payment service providers) and non-financial (accountants/auditor) sector representatives on establishment of effective anti-money laundering/countering financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) compliance and cooperation systems, as well as ensuring transparency of beneficial ownership. Representatives of the Georgian law enforcement agencies improved their skills for effective investigation and prosecution of corporate criminal activities.
- **EU/CoE PGG Project “Supporting the Criminal Justice Reforms. Tackling Criminal Aspects of the Judicial Reforms in Georgia”**: During the reporting period close communication was maintained with beneficiaries and relevance of the project was confirmed during bilateral meetings also in the view of ongoing reform on separation of powers between prosecution and investigators and work on new Administrative Offences Code. Furthermore, a Georgian version of the Council of Europe HELP course on International Cooperation in Criminal Matters was developed with the involvement of prosecutor tutors.
- **AP “Promoting an Integrated Approach to End Violence against Women and Enhancing Gender Equality in Georgia”**: Through joint support of the project and UN Women, and in cooperation with the High School of Justice, a training module was developed for court staff on administration of justice on sexual violence crimes. 20 judges and 20 assistants to judges from city courts and courts of appeal of Georgia successfully completed a 2-day pilot training. Moreover, a 3-day ToT was organised for judges, based on the revised module on VAW and DV issues. It will be followed by two pilot trainings for court staff. On 13-15 June a study visit to Sweden was organised for 12 representatives of relevant State institutions on legislation on sexual violence and good practices based on the Istanbul Convention.
- **AP “Strengthening Freedom of media, Internet governance and Personal Data Protection in Georgia” SMIP-GE**: A roundtable on Strategic Litigation against Public Participation (SLAPPs) was organised with the focus on strategic litigation against media

actors. The roundtable gathered civil society organisations and the Ombudsperson. Interviews were conducted with all stakeholders in the field of safety of journalists as part of the study "Review of the Legal and Policy Framework of Georgia with regard to the Protection and Safety of Journalists". The project supported the Council of Europe visibility action at Tbilisi Open Air Festival aimed at awareness raising of the youth with the focus on freedom of expression and freedom of internet. This action also promoted the work of civil society organisations in these fields.

- **AP "Enhanced Access to Legal Aid Services for Marginalised Population"**: On 29-31 May the project organised a discussion of draft legal amendments to seven laws regulating professional activities of lawyers. The discussion involved the Georgian Bar Association (GBA) management and members of the Parliament of Georgia. With the support of the project the GBA completed a series of meetings (7) on professional ethics with lawyers in regions of Georgia. With the support of the project the Legal Aid Service (LAS) implemented a series of meetings (11) with citizens and moot courts for free legal aid lawyers in regions of Georgia. The project started an assessment of the Law of Georgia on Legal Aid, draft Statute of the LAS and its Staff Regulations with the involvement of an international expert.

- **AP "Supporting Transparency, Inclusiveness and Integrity of Electoral Practice and Process in Georgia"**: The 'Vote outside the box' training empowered election officials and young leaders from Ajara with practical instruments to better impact decision-making. A regional workshop proved to be a new dimension for thematic, high-level peer-to-peer exchange between Central Election Commission members of Georgia and Moldova. At a two-day workshop Central and district election commission members worked on the improvement of strategic planning of electoral cycle. At the conference 'Media environment and elections' organised within the project, high-level election officials and representatives of major media outlets discussed possible steps towards better media environment during elections.

- **AP "Strengthening Protection of Social and Economic Rights in Georgia"**: The project adapted a HELP course on Labour Rights as Human Rights for Labour Inspection Office (LIO) and launched an online tutored course for 32 Labour Inspectors. The participants graduated the latter with 96% success rate. 119 employees of LIO were trained on communication and social skills to reinforce effective communication with employers and employees while pursuing their mandate. The training was preceded by a workshop to identify key issues of concern and areas for improvement, the specifics of the mandate and practice dealing with difficult situations.

- **VC Austria/AP "Strengthening participatory democracy and human rights at local level in Georgia" (PMM 2638)**: 95 participants representing local elected representatives, municipal staff, CSOs, NALAG and PDO strengthened their knowledge on gender equality (two workshops) and human rights data (spring school). A grant agreement was signed with NALAG to strengthen human rights' promotion at local level, develop effective mechanisms for multilevel dialogue, and strengthen advocacy. A first round table discussion between LAs and PDO was organised to launch a structured dialogue on PDO's recommendations. A baseline assessment identifying local authorities' capacities for human rights implementation is being finalised.

- **VC Austria/AP "Strengthening participatory democracy and human rights at local level in Georgia" (PMM 2802)**: Two regional academies of participatory democracy were organised and around 50 representatives of local authorities and CSOs from 12 municipalities were trained with regard to civil participation tools. Preparation of Citizens' Assemblies was launched in two municipalities (Rustavi and Ozurgeti). Three CivicLab

methodology online trainings for the pilot group of experts have resulted in a group of 6 certified CivicLab experts and 10 CivicLab specialists. The tools – “Civil Participation in Decision-Making”, “CivicLab”, “Uchange” were adapted and translated into Georgian. Information leaflets were prepared for each tool. Guidelines on existing civil participation statutory forms and mechanisms were developed.

- **EU/CoE JP – “Support for a better evaluation of the result of judicial reform efforts in the Eastern Partnership” (Justice Dashboard EaP):** Upon the finalisation of the quality check of the 2020 data collected within the Justice Dashboard EaP, the following two parts of the report (or deliverables) have been submitted to DG NEAR: Part 1: Comparative tables and charts for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, with summary overviews per indicator (submission date: 1.04.2022); Part 2: Beneficiary Profiles for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine (submission date: 10.06.2022).
- **AP “Human Rights Compliant Policing in Georgia”:** Analyses of challenges and relevant follow-up recommendations were prepared for the Special Investigation Service. Additionally, a one-year work-plan was drafted for future and immediate actions. Furthermore, SIS received support in developing detailed instructions to ensure effective investigation. High ranking police officers and managers of MIA regional offices benefited from the training on managing demonstrations, use of force and efficient communication with the media. Police officers and investigators participated in the training on legal and psychological aspects of the treatment of juveniles. A training needs assessment was conducted for the MIA Academy. The NPM staff received training on psychological peculiarities of treatment of the juveniles by police officers and international standards established in this area.
- **AP “Promoting the Effective Protection of Equality and Non-Discrimination in Georgia”:** The first Steering Committee Meeting gathered government partners and CSOs. A workshop was organised allowing the MIA to learn from the experience of the POG on specialisation of prosecutors on hate crime. Another workshop provided forum for discussion for MIA, POG, Supreme Court and SIS on the gaps of data collection on hate crimes. Agencies agreed to publish the analytical part for the report for 2022. Equality and non-discrimination corner at Tbilisi Open Air festival reached over 300 participants. Representatives of insurance companies underwent the training on equality and non-discrimination.
- **AP “Enhancing Healthcare Provision in Georgia’s Penitentiary System”:** Two Council of Europe publications, that had been translated, edited and proofread in Georgian during the previous project, were printed. Their accessibility in native language will further promote deeper understanding of human rights standards and best European practice by the Georgian authorities and penitentiary system staff involved in the organisation and delivery of medical treatment and prevention.
- **VC Switzerland/AP “Democracy Starts in Schools-Engaging School Children in Decision Making Processes in Schools and Communities in Georgia” (PMM 2767):** The first Steering Committee meeting was conducted, where the terms of reference of the Steering Committee, project work plan and communication strategy were discussed. International and national experts were contracted to work on the assessment report on the state of education for democratic citizenship and democratic school governance.
- **AP “Enhancing Implementation of Human Rights Practices and Education in Georgia”:** the project started in April 2022. The launching event took place on 14 June 2022 with participation of interlocutors from Minister of Justice of Georgia, the Prosecution Service

of Georgia, the Human Rights and Civil Integration Committee of the Parliament of Georgia, the Georgian Bar Association and Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University.

Follow up action (i.e. future actions)

- Projects AP "Developing a Drug Prevention Support Network for Parents and Professionals in Georgia" and AP "Ensuring child-friendly justice in Georgia: preventing and protecting children from violence, including in the digital environment" started on June 1st and are at the staff recruitment stage.
- Justice Dashboard EaP to proceed with the preparation of the third deliverable/summary analysis, to be submitted to DG NEAR on 15.07.2022.
- PMM 2802 to support the application of the of Civil Participation in Decision-Making Toolkit and organization of Citizen's Assemblies in 3 selected municipalities; to launch the awareness raising campaign "I participate".

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- 16-20 May: a delegation of ECRI visited Georgia to assess the situation with regard to equality body, inclusive education, the situation of irregular migrants, LGBTI equality, racist and homo-/transphobic hate speech and violence within the framework of its fifth round of monitoring.
- 18-19 May: Venice Commission delegation carried out a "virtual visit" to Georgia in preparation of the opinion on the "December 2021 amendments to the Organic Law on Common Courts" upon the request of the Monitoring Committee of the PACE.
- 16-18 June: The Director of the CoE Directorate of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance, Ms Claudia Luciani paid an official visit to Georgia to participate in Tbilisi Women's International Conference and hold meeting with local interlocutors.

Tirana

Situation of the Office

The CoE Office in Tirana has 21 staff members (4 male/17 female) out of which 7 (4/3) are core staff and 14 (female) project staff.

The Office implements eight projects, out of which seven are co-funded by the EU, one by the Swedish Sida. Except for one regional project, the projects implemented by the Office are administratively fully decentralised. Due to Covid-19 pandemic situation in the country the Office continued to alternate teleworking with office presence.

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

- Within the **HF II Action on Strengthening the Efficiency of Justice (SEJ III) in Albania**, an innovative online system was launched at Tirana District Court to collect the feedback of the court users with the view to improve the justice service. Over **100 members of the judiciary** were capacitated on the CoE standards of efficiency of justice, independence, and accountability of the judiciary. A study visit to the High Council of Magistracy in Portugal, enhanced the knowledge and expertise of Albanian High Judicial Council's staff in protecting judicial independence, and its procedures focusing on strategic planning, case management, judicial disciplinary procedure and judicial performance evaluation. The HJC was supported in drafting its internal rules and regulations as well as job descriptions of all court administration staff. Moreover, **54 court managers** (court presidents, deputy presidents and chancellors) improved their knowledge of effective court leadership. Magistrates of Inspection Services of Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Spain and Albania gathered in Tirana to exchange with the Albanian counterparts their expertise and experiences concerning key challenges to the administration of justice, the public interest and the independence of magistrates.
- Within the **HF II Action Enhancing the protection of human rights of prisoners in Albania**, the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the treatment of prisoners with mental health disorders and SOPs for the treatment of forensic patients were prepared to assist the authorities in implementing CPT recommendations. A treatment programme for women offenders was adapted to the Albanian context, integrating relevant CoE standards into the programme guidelines. The Training Centre for Prison Staff was supported with two publications "Trainer's Workbook" and "Training modules for the initial training of prison police.
- Within the **HF Action on Economic Crime in Albania**, **34 representatives** of the Albanian delegation to GRECO enhanced their capacities to better follow up on the implementation of GRECO's recommendations, as **20 staff of the General Directorate of Customs** and main customs points were capacitated to effectively detect cash smuggling and proliferation based on international standards.
- Within the **HF II Action on Supporting effective domestic remedies and facilitating the execution of judgments (D-REX)**, the consultation process among key Albanian institutions on the amendments to the Law on the Treatment of Property was facilitated in view of the ECtHRs recommendations. **35 state advocates** enhanced their knowledge of ECtHR judgments with particular focus on property rights. To support the harmonisation of the judicial practice, a compilation of the most relevant decisions of the Albanian High Court was published and the knowledge of the documentation centre staff was improved. **Two**

lawyers from the State Advocate are temporarily seconded to the Department for the Execution of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights. **45 judges and legal advisors** were capacitated on the harmonisation of the judicial practice on the treatment and registration of properties, reopening of criminal proceedings, execution of sentences and alternatives to detention, administrative contracts and public administration, pensions, social insurance and labour relations.

- Within the **HF II Action on Promotion of Diversity and Equality in Albania**, a comprehensive needs assessment report was prepared for the National Committee of Minorities. Two contact points were established in every Local Police Directory to facilitate the reporting of domestic violence and hate crime cases. The International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia was supported through several activities including the Pride on 21 May in Tirana with more than **400 participants**.

- Within the **HF II Action on Judiciary and Freedom of Expression (JUFREX)**, partner CSOs Respublica and Albanian Media Council enhanced the knowledge of students from different Albanian universities on Article 10 of the European Convention of Human Rights and case law of the ECtHR, disinformation and fake news in Albanian media, especially in the fields of digitalisation and the need for self-regulation.

- Within the joint EU/CoE regional **ROMACTED Programme**, over **1500 people** participated and many others were reached during the **Roma Week activities in Albania** (4-11 April 2022) under the slogan "History and culture in the spotlight for a better present". Joint activities with international and domestic actors took place in **15 Albanian municipalities** raising awareness on the most prominent institutional barriers faced by the Roma minority while nurturing the policy dialogue towards Roma integration and empowerment.

- Within the Swedish Sida funded project on **Strengthening Democratic Citizenship Education in Albania**, **375 members of School Development Teams** enhanced their capacities on Democratic and Inclusive School Concepts, Inclusion Index Methodology and the Self-Assessment Instrument (with special focus on the Culture Component). **42 presidents and representatives of students governments** from 20 secondary schools increased their understanding and skills on inclusive and democratic school governance. **125 teachers**, members of TeacherNET were trained on CoE Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture as **70 others** participated in peer exchange events. A group of Turkish students paid a study visit to Albania, to learn from the democratic school practices being used in primary and lower-secondary education (grade 4-9) in Albania and share experiences and best practices.

Other activities

- On 29 June - 1 July 2022, the co-rapporteurs of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) for the monitoring of obligations and commitments by Albania, Joseph O'Reilly (Ireland, EPP/CD) and Asim Mollazada (Azerbaijan, EC/DA), paid a visit to Albania.

Yerevan

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 6, Project staff – 23, Total staff – 29.

The Office implements 12 projects:

- Four projects – two national projects and two decentralised regional projects, are funded by the EU under the Partnership for Good Governance II (PGGII);
- One project funded by the Government of Switzerland and comes to its end on 30 June 2022;
- and seven projects funded by donors' Action Plan-level voluntary contributions.

State of implementation of projects

• **PGG II Project - Component 1 "Support to the judicial reform – enhancing the independence and professionalism of the judiciary in Armenia"**: The Project organised discussion of the expert opinion on the Decision of the Supreme Judicial Council of Armenia "On prescribing benchmark periods of the average duration of case examination as per individual types and complexity of cases" (SJC-65-VO-165). A round table was held to discuss the draft Judicial and Legal Reforms Strategy of Armenia for 2022-2026. In May-June, the Council of Europe HELP online course on Ethics for Judges, Prosecutors, and Lawyers was launched online for a group of 22 legal professionals from Armenia in co-operation with the Justice Academy of Armenia and the other CoE project (PGG II-Component 2). The Project also organised a high-level visit of the delegation of the Court of Cassation of Armenia to Strasbourg. A high-level Conference "The Judiciary as a Guardian of Democracy" was co-organised by the Council of Europe and the Constitutional Court of Armenia. A round table discussion on the right of access to court for persons being declared as legally incapable as a result of mental disorder was organised based on the case law of the European Court of Human Rights in cooperation with two other projects of the Council of Europe.

• **PGG II Project - Component 2 "Support to the judicial reform - supporting the criminal justice reform and harmonising the application of European standards in Armenia"**: Two practical Guides on conceptual solutions and innovative principles of the new Criminal (CC) and Criminal Procedure (CPC) Codes of Armenia were developed to provide commentaries and facilitate the effective implementation of provisions of the new Codes. 125 investigators improved their knowledge on the selected issues of the new CC and CPC during five two-day training seminars organised in April- June. 15 national trainers enhanced their skills on adult learning methodology in the context of the new CC and CPC at a ToT held in June. In May, June, the Council of Europe HELP online course on Ethics for Judges, Prosecutors, and Lawyers was launched online for a group of 22 legal professionals from Armenia in co-operation with the Justice Academy of Armenia and the other CoE project (PGG II-Component 2).

• **PGG II Project "Strengthening institutional capacities to fight and prevent corruption in Armenia"**: The Project held its Third Steering Committee meeting, where the representatives of the national anti-corruption system of Armenia, the Council of Europe and the European Union Delegation discussed the results of the technical assistance provided to the country's anti-corruption and anti-money laundering efforts in the framework of the PGG II Programme, and further needs for support in this area. The Project also delivered an

assessment of the legislative and institutional framework on conflict of interests and incompatibilities in Armenia, which includes recommendations for the consideration of the authorities in the ongoing design of national reforms.

- **PGG II Project “Strengthening the profession of lawyer in line with European standards” (regional, decentralised project):** The Project finalised the country-specific action plans as to the introduction/improvement of mechanisms that provide an effective defense to lawyers and agreed them with the project stakeholders and other relevant institutions. The network of the young lawyers’ associations of the project countries was supported through their integration in the European Young Bar Association (EYBA), the establishment of a dedicated committee within the EYBA and the participation of the associations in the EYBA Summer Conference and Annual General Meeting held on 23-26 June in Strasbourg. The project finalised the Concept Paper on supporting women lawyers and their associations in the project countries, which was presented and discussed with the project stakeholders.

- **Project “Human Rights and Women in the Armed Forces of Armenia – Phase II”, Action Plan level funding is provided by Germany, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Sweden:** The HRDP personnel was training on International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights in Armed Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations. Armenian military police and lawyers of the military units were trained on the new Criminal and Criminal Procedure Codes of Armenia. Armenian military police and investigators also received training on effective investigation of death and ill treatment cases in the armed forces. The Project organised a training for Armenian journalists on media in security and defence sector, dedicated to the following issue: what are the limits of media coverage in terms of “responsible journalism”. The Project held a coordination meeting with international and regional organisations that support reform of the security and defence sectors in Armenia. The Project supported the development of a Model Visibility and Communication Plan for the Women Councils of the Military Units of Armenia.

- **Project “Strengthening the Communities Association of Armenia and transparent, participatory local governance in Armenia”, funded by Switzerland:** The Code of Conduct for Communities Elected Representatives and Staffs was amended taking into account the Model Code of Conduct approved by the Corruption Prevention Commission and presented in six selected communities. According to the agreement, Lori Berd, Amasia and Byureghavan communities will discuss and present for adoption the Code of Conduct during the upcoming sessions of the Council of Elders scheduled for mid-July. Two two-day trainings for implementation of anti-corruption self-assessment tool for 50 representatives of the Community of Practice were organised. On-job training on “Terms and conditions on maintaining registers for administrative acts” was held for representatives of six communities. Legal support to the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure was provided to identify gaps that can create corruption risks stemming from the “powers” of local self-government bodies, local elected representatives and community staff by providing assessment of the following legal acts: on local duties and payments; on financial equalisation; on the budget system, on local self-government; on local self-government in the City of Yerevan; territorial administration”). Five-year Strategy and two-year Activity Plan was developed for the Communities Association of Armenia (CAA) with the support provided by project international experts, whose participation was approved during the General Assembly meeting held on 24 May. The Project also supported the CAA in the development of the draft New Charter, which reflects changes introduced by the Territorial Administration Reforms in Armenia. The draft was presented at the meeting of the Republican Council and the General

Assembly of the CAA. The final project activity, the International Conference “Decentralisation in Armenia: a new agenda in the post-TARA environment”, took place on 28 June hosting high level state officials, community leaders, international experts, international development agencies acting in the Country, local and international NGOs . The project ended on 30 June.

- **Project “Support the scaling-up of the probation service in Armenia”, funded by donors contributing to the Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019–2022:**

On 15 June, the Law on Probation was amended incorporating recommendations provided to the authorities by the Project experts on deferring execution of the sentence due to an illness of a person, application of the obligation to receive psychological assistance by the probationer as well as a number of other changes. Guidelines on utilisation of the criminogenic needs assessment electronic tool for adult and juvenile probationers were developed and submitted to the MoJ. An Individual Supervision Plan of the Probationer and guidelines to it were also developed by Project experts and submitted to the MoJ. 12 probation officers passed eight-day training on general rehabilitation programme which then was piloted in Yerevan and regional units of the Probation Service. A four-day ToT was organised for six representatives of the Centre for Legal Education and Rehabilitative Programs on previously revised training modules. It was followed up by three 2.5-day cascade trainings organised for 40 probation officers on these specific training modules. Probation and MoJ representatives participated in a study visit to Georgia that took place on 26-29 April.

- **Project “Enhancing health care and human rights protection in prisons in Armenia”, funded by donors contributing to the Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019–2022:**

Five two-day skilled-based trainings for representatives of the Penitentiary Service and Prison Medicine Center on the introduction of the Toolkit for Screening and Risk Assessment of Suicide, Self-Harm Behaviour in Penitentiary Institutions of Armenia were organised with the aim to equip the participants with essential knowledge on the Toolkit, specific international standards and principles of the field, information on the sequence of the steps of overall assessment, the roles and the functions of the professionals involved covering overall 171 participants. Ten sessions of two-day Professional First Aid accredited training sessions for the medical staff of all the penitentiary institutions were successfully completed contributing to the capacity building of penitentiary medical staff to ensure the provision of a better health care and the prevention of lethal outcomes in prisons. The Professional First Aid sessions engaged 142 participants in total. Practical Guide on Managing Hunger Strike in Places of Deprivation of Liberty was published and disseminated among the prison medical staff. Representatives of the Prison Medicine Center and MoJ took part in a joint study visit to Georgia on 26-29 April.

- **Project “The Path towards Armenia’s Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence”, funded by donors contributing to the Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019–2022:**

During the period covered by this report, 75 police officers strengthened their capacity building to response to domestic violence cases through a chain of trainings organised. Vast data collected from state agencies and women support centre was analysed as part of developing the baseline survey on domestic violence. Four multi-agency meetings with the related authorities (Police, Ministry of Social Affaires, regional educational agencies, etc.) were carried out to discuss the common gaps in the national practices and legislation on combating domestic violence. Several awareness raising materials on domestic violence and violence against women, which were developed by the CoE and the project earlier, were further promoted through the Social Media.

- **Project “Protection of Human Rights in Biomedicine I”, funded by donors contributing to the Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019–2022:** Capacity-building on ethical rules for healthcare professionals was organized for 25 journalists to enhance their skills on ethical rules. A working-level discussion on the diagnostic study on human rights issues in emergency situations was organised at the Ministry of Health. A round table discussion on the right of access to court for persons being declared as legally incapable as a result of mental disorder was held in cooperation with other CoE Projects based on the case law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). A high-level annual meeting of the Chief Advisors of the Ministry of Health on policy priorities and strategy of the Ministry of Health was organised by the Ministry of Health in co-operation with the Project. An animated video on ethical rules for healthcare professionals was developed in collaboration of the Ministry of Health.

- **Support for the Execution by Armenia of Judgments in Respect of Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights:** A study-visit of the team of the Office of the Representative of Armenia on International Legal Matters and a high delegation visit of the Court of Cassation of Armenia to Strasbourg were conducted. A draft package for legislative amendments into the Armenian legal framework aimed at improving of application of Protocol 16 to the European Convention of Human Rights at national level was developed and is in the process of finalization. Five distance learning modules for the Academy of Justice of Armenia were finalized. These modules aimed at further strengthening the compulsory trainings on execution of ECtHR judgments and will be further incorporated into the online learning platform of the Academy of Justice. The project experts provided recommendations on issues related to the access to court for persons with mental incapacity in order to bring the national legislation and/or any other regulatory documents closer in line with the respective Council of Europe standards and requirements of the ECtHR case-law. And based on this recommendations, the Project supported the development of a Guidebook in Armenian and English languages. The Guidebook is in the process of publication and its both paper and electronic versions will be available to the general public shortly. An expert discussion on the right of access to court for persons being declared as legally incapable as a result of mental disorder took place. Design and development of the Integrated Office Management (IOM) system for the Office of the Representative of Armenia on International Legal Matters is currently under development to facilitate the smoother execution of the ECtHR judgements.

- **Strengthening access to justice for victims of discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Eastern Partnership countries:** Two grantees from Armenia, NGO “Armavir Development Center” based in Armavir and NGO “Equal Rights, Equal Opportunities” based in Vanadzor, concluded their actions and organized closing ceremonies in May and June, respectively. Representatives from both NGOs testified that the grants awarded in the scope of the regional anti-discrimination project fully achieved their objectives and brought positive changes to the projects’ beneficiaries. The Manual for Educators on Hate Speech Online has been finalized in terms of design and will be presented to the wider public this autumn. On June 3, an online workshop on “Addressing hate speech through improving data collection” was held, gathering together representatives of Ombuds offices from the member states covered by the Partnership for Good Governance and Horizontal Facility.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- From 30 May to 3 June took place the ECRI sixth monitoring round country visit to Armenia.
- From 8 to 9 June, the President of the Council of Europe Commission For Democracy through Law (the Venice Commission) Claire Bazy Malaurie paid visit to Armenia.
- From 16 to 17 June Secretary General Marija Pejčinović Burić paid visit to Armenia.
- On 28 June, the President of the Chamber Local Authorities Bernd Vöhringer and two other members of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe participated in the International Conference "Decentralisation in Armenia: a new agenda in the post-TARA environment".

Pristina

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 6, Project staff –15, Total staff - 21.

The Office implemented 9 projects, 3 in the framework of the EU/CoE regional Joint Programme "Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey"/South Programme", 1 EU/CoE Regional Joint Programme (ROMACTED), 2 EU/CoE Joint Projects, and 3 funded through non-earmarked voluntary contributions.

State of implementation of projects/programmes

- **EU/CoE - HF "Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media (JUFREX)":** Seven (7) capacity-building events on Freedom of Expression-related topics for the judiciary, law enforcement representatives, and media actors were organised with the partner institutions. The first steps toward identifying and analysing the Agency's for Information and Privacy needs have been initiated. The first draft of the report was submitted during the reporting period and is expected to be finalised in the coming weeks. A study visit of employees of the Independent Media Commission (IMC) to the Croatian regulatory authority was organised in June. Among others, during this visit topics related to media pluralism, transparency and ownership were discussed.
- **EU/CoE – HF "Ensuring Efficiency and Quality of Justice (KOSEJII)":** In cooperation with the Academy, Court Presidents and KJC members were trained for two days in using key CEPEJ tools based on CMIS Statistical Reports and Dashboards. The KJC and Ministry of Justice signed the Memorandum of Understanding to pilot e-summonses between the Basic Court of Pristina and the State Advocacy. CEPEJ international experts provided expertise to the KJC for the drafting on its IT Strategic Plan for 2023-2027.
- **EU/CoE – HF "Promotion of diversity and equality in Kosovo*":** During April, finalized the recording and editing of short videos of No Hate Speech Ambassadors, which will be posted in upcoming period on social media. On 18 May, a working breakfast with NHS Ambassadors was organized in Pristina - An activity as part of the "Block the Hatred. Share the Love." campaign in Kosovo*, under the auspices of the Italian Presidency of the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers. In framework of the campaign on 15 and 16 of June, organized workshops on "bullying and cyberbullying" in three municipalities, five schools, involving more than 90 pupils. This activity was organized in cooperation with INCLUDE.
- **EU/CoE – JP "Building Capacity for Inclusive Education" – INCLUDE:** 240 school professionals (193F and 47M) from 24 schools completed the training on Democratic and Inclusive learning community. 174 school professionals (142F and 32M) from 17 schools completed the ten-day training on Inclusive Education, assessment of students with special educational needs (SEN) based on the International Classification Framework and Individual education plans (IEP) which was organised in two rounds. Framework for Inclusion of Students with SEN was launched by the Minister of Education on the Diversity Day, 26 April. It was also introduced to 39 VET school directors (30M and 9F) on a two-day workshop. 29 Education Inspectors (15M and 14F) attended a training on Inclusive Education and familiarised themselves with IEPs and the tools for assessment of SEN students.

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

- **EU/CoE – JP “Project against Economic Crime in Kosovo*” (PECK III):** As a follow-up to the support provided to Kosovo* authorities, the Government approved the draft law on Targeted Financial International Sanctions on 13 May 2022 and a Concept Document on establishing the Confiscation Fund on 21 June 2022. At the capacity development level, as a result of provided support, authorities have increased their engagement with the private sector and demonstrated that their efforts have raised the level of understanding for a large swath of reporting entities, including in the application of risk-based approach.
- **EU/CoE regional JP “Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level (ROMACTED)”:** Two Community Needs Assessment workshops were organized with Community Action Groups of 10 beneficiary municipalities. Questionnaire on Municipal Capacity and Needs Assessment was distributed with 10 municipalities. The Term of Reference for Policy brief and Baseline on Roma Responsive Budgeting was prepared, and local consultant contracted. Regional Steering Committee meeting was held and regional event on Roma Responsive Budgeting. A grant agreement is signed with consortium of the local NGOs in Prizren municipality to promote and advocate on Romani language rights.
- **VC non-earmarked “Preventing and combatting trafficking in human beings”:** The project launch event commenced on June 9. Project support to implement GRETA recommendations was highly appreciated by beneficiaries. From 13-22 June, in cooperation with Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, the project trained a total of 100 education professionals (pre-school and primary-lower secondary schools) from Pristina, Prizren and Peja, on early identification/the role of education institutions, support and protection of victims of trafficking, the referral mechanism and multi-disciplinary approach to prevent human trafficking.
- **VC non-earmarked “Support to the Constitutional Court in applying and disseminating the European Human Rights Standards”:** The official launching of the project was organized on 12 April 2022, with high-visibility international conference on harmonization of judicial practice and keeping consistency of the caselaw. The Placement Program of judges and legal advisors of the Constitutional Court with European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) was launched in mid-April, and to date two judges and one legal advisor were placed for 2-month internship each. First thematic workshop on standards set in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), Electoral Disputes and ECHR, was held on 6-7 June. Project completed needs assessment for the upgrade of the Constitutional Court’s electronic caselaw database. Project completed assessment of the Impact of lengthy proceedings on the liberty of persons and pre-trial detention.
- **VC non-earmarked “Reinforcing the fight against violence against women and domestic violence in Kosovo* - phase III:** HELP course on VAW/DV delivered for the students of the Faculty of Law, University of Prishtina, (20 students successfully completed). Two peer to peer training on implementation of the Quality Guidelines for Shelters for victims, with 38 participants staff of shelters and centres for social work. One Training of Trainers (ToT) for Legal Professionals “Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence”, 19 duty -bearers were certified as Trainers. For 11th anniversary of the Istanbul Convention, a hybrid roundtable on the topic of Violence against Women in the digital dimension was organised jointly with the Embassy of Italy in Pristina (under the Italian Chairmanship of the CM). The event gathered a total of 57 participants.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

The Office facilitated two visits of delegations of the Venice Commission: 10-11 May preparing Opinion on the Law on Confiscation of Assets, and 19-20 May preparing Opinion on vetting in the judicial system. The Office also support the visit of the Commissioner for Human Rights to Kosovo* from 30 May – 4 June.

Rabat

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

The Office implemented or provided logistical support for six projects funded by the European Union.

State of implementation of projects

- **EU/CoE joint project "Support to the National Preventive Mechanism against Torture and to the development of the key role of Parliament in Morocco" (ENI/2020/418-263)**

Support for the development of the role of the Parliament in Morocco

- From 4 to 6 April, visit by the international expert, Regis Weber, in connection with the redesign of the House of Councillors' website;
- On 25 April, an information meeting about the PACE was held for the Moroccan delegation to the PACE in Strasbourg;
- On 17 May, a contribution was made to a conference on the process for the implementation of Amazigh as an official language and arrangements for its integration in the public sittings and the bodies of the House of Councillors;
- From 23 to 25 May, a training seminar was held in Strasbourg/Kehl for the thematic working group set up to assess the House of Representatives' public policies regarding the public administration reform plan;
- On 22 and 23 June, visit by the international expert, David Lowe, concerning participatory democracy;
- From 27 June to 1 July, two parliamentarians and six NGOs from Morocco took part in the Youth Action Week in Strasbourg.

Support for the National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture (NPM)

- On 10 May 2022, the second working group meeting was held on drawing up a Prisoner's Guide and a manual on Moroccan prison law (with the participation of the Presidency of the Public Prosecution Office (PMP), the National Human Rights Council – National Mechanism for the Prevention of Torture (CNDH-MNP), the General Delegation for Prison Administration and Reintegration (DGAPR), the Council of Europe and various experts);
- On 16 May 2022, as part of technical consultancy, a meeting was held to gather information on the Moroccan NPM's working methods in connection with improving and increasing the efficiency of preventive visits to places of deprivation of liberty and the drafting of visit reports;
- From 6 to 10 June 2022, the first training session was held for NPM members and officials on the working methods of a European NPM, reforms of legislation and regulations on places of deprivation of liberty, monitoring in psychiatric institutions and medical monitoring in places of detention, as well as the methodology of thematic visits;
- On 9 June 2022, as part of technical consultancy, the report following the information-gathering meeting was presented and discussions were held on the recommendations presented by the expert;

- On 22 and 23 June 2022, the first communication workshop was held for NPM members and staff on the subject of interpersonal communication;
 - From 27 June to 1 July, NPM members and staff paid a study visit to their Austrian counterparts.
- **EU-CoE programme "Regional Support to Reinforce Human Rights, Rule of Law and Democracy in the Southern Mediterranean" (South Programme IV)**

Combating violence against children

- On 2 and 3 June, the 27th International Book Fair was held in Rabat;
- On 3 June, the attendance certificates for the HELP course on child-friendly justice were awarded.

Combating violence against women

- On 26 April, an awareness-raising workshop on combating violence against women was held at University Mohamed V-Agdal, Rabat;
- On 25 May, a round table was held on "Protecting women and girls from violence in the digital age" (Commission for the Protection of Women Victims of Violence (CNFV));
- On 16 and 17 June, a seminar was held on strengthening the role of prosecutors in combating violence against women and domestic violence (for senior judicial officials).

HELP Programme / Human rights capacity-building programme for prosecutors (DGI)

- On 13 May, HELP tutor training was held for the Supreme Judicial Council (CSPJ);
- On 24 May, the HELP course on freedom of expression was launched (High Authority for Audiovisual Communication (HACA), Higher Institute of Information and Communication (ISIC), Ministry of Communication);
- On 3 June, HELP tutor training was held for justice officials;
- From 29 June to 1 July, the HELP network's 2022 annual conference was held in Strasbourg, with two participants from the Presidency of the Public Prosecution Office (PMP) and two from the Higher Institute of the Judiciary (ISM).

Combating trafficking in human beings

- May 2022: the compendium of national case law on trafficking in human beings was translated from Arabic into French;
- May 2022: flyers for the SAVE NGOs for potential human trafficking victims were reprinted in Arabic and French;
- On 20 May, round table 2 on protocols for co-operation between professionals in the field on care for trafficking victims was held in Tangiers (ABA ROLI);
- On 28 May, round table 2 on protocols for co-operation between professionals in the field on care for trafficking victims was held in Casablanca (ABA ROLI);
- On 1 and 2 June, initial two-day training on combating human trafficking was held in Rabat – University Mohammed V, legal clinic, National Commission;
- On 24 June, round table 2 on protocols for co-operation between professionals in the field on care for trafficking victims was held in Beni Mellal (ABA ROLI);
- On 25 June, a Council of Europe expert took part in a two-day training course on combating trafficking for civil society representatives (SAVE, CCEM, Voix des Femmes, Humanité et Inclusion).

Council of Europe high-level visits and other official delegations

The Secretary General of the PACE, Ms Despina Chatzivassiliou, made an official visit and held high-level meetings with the EU Ambassador to Morocco, the President of the National Human Rights Council (CNDH), the Secretary General of the House of Representatives of the Parliament of Morocco and members of his team and the Director with responsibility for the EU and for Mediterranean processes in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, International Co-operation and Moroccans Living Abroad.

Tunis

Situation of the Office

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

The Office continued providing support to the coordination and implementation of the following country-specific projects, within the framework of the new Neighbourhood Partnership 2022-2025, as well as regional projects, as follows:

- EU/CoE JP “Support to Tunisian independent bodies” (PAII-T)
- EU/CoE JP “Support to justice reform” (AP-JUST)
- EU/CoE JP “Regional Support to Reinforce Human Rights, Rule of Law and Democracy in the Southern Mediterranean” (South Programme IV)
- EU/CoE JP “Cybersouth”

Reporting period was marked by the publication of three opinion by the Venice Commission, two on Tunisia and one on Lebanon. The urgent opinion published on 27 May 2022, upon request of the EU Delegation in Tunis, on the constitutional and legislative framework for the referendum and elections announced by the President of the Republic, and in particular on Decree Law No. 22 (of 21 April 2022) amending and supplementing the organic Law on the ISIE attracted severe criticism of the President of the Republic. Consequently, many of the programmed activities have been postponed thus limiting the cooperation under the bilateral projects. One notable achievement was the launching of the toolkit for better protection of personal data in the health sector in Tunisia on 17 May 2022. On the other hand, the regional activities have yielded important results such as the regional conference on personal data protection that took place on 1 June 2022 in Tunis, which gathered representatives from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia, and the regional conference on prevention of terrorism and violent extremism organised on 22-23 June 2022 in Tunis, with the participation of representatives and experts from 7 countries (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia). A regional Conference held in Casablanca on 11-12 May 2022 culminated in the creation of a South Mediterranean network of justice inspection services. Finally, the achievements of the fourth Phase of the South Programme were discussed during a regional steering committee held in Alicante on 8 June, followed by a regional conference marking 10 years of the South Programme on 9 June 2022.

State of implementation of projects / programmes

Bilateral joint programmes:

- **EU/CoE Joint Programme “Support to Tunisian independent bodies” (PAII-T)**
 - Co-operation with the Venice Commission, support to independent elections instance (ISIE):
 - Two opinions of the Venice Commission were adopted in June:
 - An urgent opinion requested by the EU Delegation in Tunis on the constitutional and legislative framework for the referendum and elections announced by the President of the Republic, and in particular on Decree Law No. 22 (of 21 April 2022) amending and supplementing the organic Law on the ISIE.
 - An opinion on the draft State Property Code, which was requested by the Tunisian authorities.

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

- Preparatory work was under way to launch a series of training workshops on “fact-checking” targeting local radio stations and journalists as well as awareness raising events for the local public in the regions. The first workshops will be organised in July and continue throughout the summer period. This is a collaborative effort with the HAICA and the National Syndicate of Tunisian Journalists.

- Preparations were underway for the setting up of a mini data centre for the INAI, which aims at reinforcing and completing the existent technical IT infrastructures, as well as to create a functioning internal server for the body.

➤ Data protection, support to the national body on personal data protection (INPDP):

- A toolkit for better protection of personal data in the health sector in Tunisia was launched together with the INPDP on 17 May 2022. The objective of the tool kit is to raise awareness among health professionals, patients, research teams and all structures that manage data or face challenges in processing or exchanging personal information relating to people’s health.

- Training workshop on the mapping of personal data processing in Tunisia was organised in partnership with INPDP on 18 May 2022. It targeted 100 Tunisian data protection officers (DPOs) from different administrations, ministries, insurance companies, banks, hospitals and clinics.

- A regional conference on “Personal data protection: an opportunity and an imperative for the region” took place on 1 June 2022 in Tunis. Organised in partnership with the INPDP and the League of Arab States, it gathered representatives from countries in the region, including Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia to discuss and exchange around four themes: international data protection standards, cybercrime, digital identity and cross-border flows.

➤ Fight against trafficking in human beings / support to the national body combating human trafficking (INLTP) and HELP programme:

- On 10 May, Tunisian and Libyan professionals were trained on the HELP methodology. The cross-border workshop was organised in partnership with the Tunisian Ministry of Justice (Judicial Pole for the fight against terrorism, Juvenile Justice Unit and the general Committee for Prisons and Rehabilitation) and Ministry of Interior (Security Pole for the fight against terrorism) as well as the Libyan National Committee for Children’s Rights and the Office of the general Delegate for child protection.

- A regional conference “Prevention of terrorism and violent extremism – a human rights coordinated approach” was organised on 22-23 June 2022 in Tunis. Representatives and experts from 7 countries (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia) participated in the conference. Two HELP courses relevant to the theme were also presented to the regional audience, namely those on hate speech and prevention of radicalisation.

➤ Support to the National body in charge of combating torture (INPT):

- The Prisoners’ Guide and the Prison/penitentiary Law Manual, developed in the framework of the PAII-T in collaboration with national actors, were presented to the general public at the national library on the occasion of the cultural days of prevention of torture on 22-24 June 2022.

- Two new awareness raising videos were launched with the INPT in an effort to disseminate and promote the second edition of the Tunisian Prison/penitentiary Law Manual.

➤ Fight against corruption and money laundering:

- On the request of the Tunisian Financial Analysis Committee (CTAF) two separate sectoral risk assessment processes on money laundering and terrorist financing were launched in the fields of online gambling and drug trafficking. Online consultations with experts took place on 10 June and will continue throughout July, the documents will be presented to stakeholders in October 2022.

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

- To enhance the implementation of the jshare platform a training on digitalisation of justice was organized with ISPA (April 2022).

- Several meetings were held to a) approve the final comments on the manual of good practice in judicial expertise (April 2022); b) define the remote trials guide content (May 2022); c) discuss future actions with the ANEJT (May 2022).

- Representatives of the MoJ General Inspectorate participated in the regional conference of the Justice General Inspectorates held in Morocco and in the creation of a network of the Southern Mediterranean Inspectorates (May 2022).

- A conference was organised with the Court of cassation on the Joint Chambers Jurisprudence Unification (May 2022).

- A training on administrative and financial management by objectives in court administrations and regional administrations was organised for clerks of the Sousse region (May 2022).

- The first draft of the HELP module of mediation was discussed with the relevant group of experts (June 2022).

- Technical support to the preparation of the judicial experts' code of ethics was provided: provision of comments (May 2022), working meeting (June 2022).

- The Commercial Law Study (Etude Droit Commercial), including a comparative analysis of commercial judicial systems in several European and African countries, has been completed and its publication both in French and Arab versions is underway.

- A Study evaluating the results of the projects implemented by three national NGOs until December 2021 is currently being finalised and will be available in July 2022.

- The service providers and experts selected in March 2022 following four procurement procedures are currently carrying out activities in support of the CEJJ (Centre des Etudes Juridiques et Judiciaires), in particular digitalisation of its publications and upgrade of its website.

Joint Programmes

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

Several regional events with participation of Tunisian professionals, experts and partners were held in the fields of human rights and the rule of law:

- Human rights were further promoted in the region, including with participation of Tunisian counterparts, through the development and launching of several HELP courses and awareness raising on CoE most relevant conventions, as for example the Conventions 108 and 108+ during a regional Conference on the protection of personal data on 1 June 2022. Combatting the violence against women and the fight against trafficking in Human Beings were addressed through awareness-raising and capacity building activities in the region, in cooperation with universities, legal professionals and civil society. The South Programme

contributed towards the regional conferences on data protection (1 June 2022) and radicalisation prevention (22-23 June 2022) held in Tunisia jointly with the PAII-T.

- As regards the rule of law, a regional Conference held in Casablanca on 11-12 May 2022 culminated in the creation of a South Mediterranean network of justice inspection services. A regional workshop held on 14-15 June allowed for raise awareness and promote exchanges between relevant beneficiary institutions in the Southern Mediterranean region on their experiences and practices in fighting economic crime by targeting cooperation issues of common interest. An opinion of the Venice Commission on the judicial law of Lebanon was prepared and presented during its Plenary Session in June 2022.

The achievements of the fourth Phase of the South Programme were discussed during a regional steering committee held in Alicante on 8 June, followed by a regional conference on "Building a common legal space: a decade of joint action in the Southern Mediterranean region" marking 10 years of the South Programme on 9 June 2022.