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Quarterly report of Council of Europe Offices

October-December 2022

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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 October-December 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

Head of Office Zayats held various bilateral meetings with, in particular:

- Representatives from the EU institutions, such as:
 - Chair of the Council working group on human rights (COHOM) Stefanek.
 - A member of the Cabinet of the President of the European Council, after the first Summit of the European Political Community - EPC (6 October).
 - Head of Equality Commissioner Dalli's Cabinet.
 - Director for Fundamental Rights (Commission - DG Just) Crabit.
 - EEAS Principal Advisor Gentilini, on the setting-up of the European Diplomatic Academy (10 November).
- Representatives from member States/Presidencies /Observers, such as:
 - Permanent Representative of Latvia to the EU Lice-Licite.
 - Permanent Representative of Hungary to the EU Odor.
 - Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the EU (PSC) Komada.
 - Icelandic Ambassador Stefanson (Icelandic chairmanship of the CoE).
 - Director General for European Affairs of Canada (MFA) Bonser and Deputy Head of the Canadian Mission to the EU Brousseau.
- Representatives from other international organisations, such as:
 - Head of International IDEA - Europe Programme van der Staak.
 - Regional representative of UNFPA (UN Population Fund) Bauer and UNFPA EU representative Van Hout.
 - Secretary General of European Movement International Fassoulas.
 - Secretaries General of European Associations of local and regional authorities, with the Secretary General of the Congress.
 - Representatives of the Brussels based EPC think tank.

Head of Office Zayats also prepared and accompanied high-level visits of Council of Europe representatives to Brussels, such as President of the Venice Commission **Bazy-Malaurie**, Congress Secretary General **Kiefer**, Director General for Human Rights and the Rule of Law **Giakoumopoulos**, Director General for Democracy and Human Dignity **Ruotanen** and Director of Programme Co-ordination **Neukirch**.

He facilitated or followed high-level interactions, such as: Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement **Varhelyi**, addressing the Committee of Ministers; the **Secretary General**, opening the SLAPPs Conference in the European Parliament; European Parliament Vice-President **Charanzova** and EEAS Deputy Managing Director **Kokkinakis**, participating in the World Forum for Democracy in Strasbourg; Commission Vice-President **Jourova**, participating in a session of the Venice Commission.

He further participated in the following **events**: public hearings organised by the EP-AFCO Committee on the EU-CoE institutional relationship; the "Friends of Europe" event on the EU-Western Balkans Summit; the EU (CATS, Commission, EEAS) - CoE regular meeting on normative developments; the debate on higher education with Commissioner Gabriel.

He also met several colleagues from DGI, DGII and DCP during their visits to Brussels.

The Office:

- facilitated the participation of the **CoE in EU events**, in particular: the SLAPPs conference in Strasbourg and the Gender Equality Week in Brussels.
- maintained high-level **liaison** between Strasbourg colleagues and EU representatives on matters such as: the accession to the ECHR; artificial intelligence; EEAS and Commission policies with regards to the Eastern Partnership; developments on rule of law matters (Poland and Hungary in particular); gender issues; developments in the media; and protection of the environment through criminal law.
- facilitated the CoE's participation in the consultation on the future "Democracy Defence package" elaborated by the Commission.
- facilitated the organisation of the **DPC visit** to Brussels.

In terms of programmes, the Office also maintained a high level of intensity in terms of contacts with various parts of the Commission, in particular EEAS; DG Empl on the 2023 Year of Skills; DG Just on violence against women; DG Near on Turkey, the Western Balkans and cybersecurity; DG Reform; and the EEAS. DGI participated in the Steering Committee Meeting of the "Cyber-south" programme and DCP participated in the kick-off meeting of the "South Programme V" (both in Brussels).

The Office also followed and reported on **major events at EU level**, primarily:

- The first Summit of the new "European Political Community" (EPC), hosted by the Czech EU Presidency of the Council in Prague on 6 October.
- Assistance to Ukraine and the fight against impunity (creation of an international tribunal, compensation for war damages, sanctions against Russia).
- Ministerial discussions (Council meetings) on: protection of the environment through criminal law; judicial training; fundamental rights in times of crises; the rule of law (Commission withholds EU funds for Hungary, Art 7 hearing on Poland); the Conference for the future of Europe; the European Year of Skills 2023.
- Various additional EU foreign affairs matters, such as: presentation of the Enlargement Package 2022; the future of the Eastern Partnership; Armenia-Azerbaijan relations (monitors at the border); Belgrade-Pristina dialogue; violence around the licence plate issue in Kosovo*¹; opening of visa-free regime.

Visibility and relations with media

The Brussels-based Spokesperson/Media Officer co-ordinated communications work around Ireland's Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, including visits by high-level representatives to the Council of Europe; the publication of the High-Level Reflection Group's report on the future of the Council of Europe and the judicial conference in Dublin, as well as the Committee's decision to hold a fourth Council of Europe summit in Reykjavik in May 2023 and the hand-over of the presidency to Iceland. He also co-ordinated communications work around the December CM-DH meeting.

He carried out media, online and social media work on topics including Ukrainian President Zelenskyy's address to the Parliamentary Assembly, the World Forum for Democracy, various reports and statements from PACE and from monitoring and consultative bodies, as well as new factsheets on the execution of ECtHR judgments and various judgments and decisions from the ECtHR. He also covered the European Day for the Protection of Children from Sexual

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Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, the new agreement between the Council of Europe Development Bank and the European Union, the opening for signature of the 2nd Protocol to the Budapest Convention and the anniversary of the European flag.

The Spokesperson/Media Officer also represented the Council of Europe in the latest regular "C-9" meeting of communications staff from various international organisations and networks working on human rights. In addition, he continued to oversee the ongoing communications project highlighting the impact of the European Convention on Human Rights and discussed possibilities for future co-operation on communications work with representatives of the European Implementation Network and the UK-based human rights organisation "Equally Ours".

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

The Office ensured the liaison between the Geneva-based organisations and the relevant MAEs of the Council of Europe.

It facilitated the participation of SRSG on Migration and Refugees Kayacik in the 73rd session of the Executive Committee of the UNHCR High Commissioner's Programme and in the Nansen Refugee Awards Ceremony (10-13 October). It also organised Ms Kayacik's bilateral meetings with:

- Mr Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees
- Mr Antonio Vitorino, Director General of IOM
- Mr Jonathan Prentice, Head of the Secretariat of the UN Migration Network
- Ms Peggy Hicks, Director for Thematic Engagement, Special Procedures and Right to Development (OHCHR)
- Ms Adriana Quinones, Head of the Geneva Office of UN Women

and facilitated Ms Kayacik's informal meeting with Ms Gillian Triggs, UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection.

It participated in the UN/Geneva Protocol introduction session on 18-19 October.

It attended the Workshop on Regional Arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights (18-19 October).

It represented the relevant MAEs in the meeting of the Focal Points of Regional Human Rights Mechanisms on 20 October.

It facilitated the participation of DGII in the 15th UN Forum on Minority Issues (1-2 December) where Mr Nicolas Levrat, Second Vice-President of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, introduced the ongoing work of the ACFC.

It participated in the UNHCR High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection, on behalf on the SRSG on Migration and Refugees (7-8 December).

It participated in the Organisational Session of the HRC for the 17th cycle (2023) on 9 December.

Furthermore, the Office participated online in the:

- 51st session of the Human Rights Council (12 September to 7 October)
- HRC/WG on the Universal Periodic Review on the UK (10 November)
- HRC Special Session on the deteriorating human rights situation in Iran (24 November)

and informed the relevant departments of the results/conclusions of such meetings.

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

- 6 October: OSCE Permanent Council meeting dedicated to the conflict in UA; address by Head of the Regional Council of Zaporozhia (UA) Zhuk.
- 11 October: OSCE Special Permanent Council meeting dedicated to the RF's missile attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure in UA.
- 13-14 October: OSCE Permanent Council meeting dedicated to the conflict in UA; report by the Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo*² and report by the Special Representative of the Chairman-in-Office and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.
- 20 October: OSCE Permanent Council meeting dedicated to the 2023 Unified Budget Proposal; report by Director of ODIHR Mecacci.
- 27 October: OSCE Permanent Council meeting dedicated to the conflict in UA; address by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly; report by the Director of the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre.
- 4 November: OSCE Permanent Council meeting dedicated to the report by the Representative on the Freedom of the Media.
- 10 November: OSCE Permanent Council meeting dedicated to the conflict in UA; report by the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities; report by the Head of the OSCE Mission to the Republic of Moldova.
- 17 November: OSCE Permanent Council meeting dedicated to the conflict in UA.
- 24 November: OSCE Permanent Council meeting dedicated to the conflict in UA; address by the Co-Chairs of the Geneva International Discussions.
- 8 December: OSCE Permanent Council meeting - address by Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania Landsbergis; report by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities; extension of mandates of OSCE field operations.
- 22 December: Special meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council - extension of the mandate of the OSCE Mission to the Republic of Moldova.

Participation in other meetings including expert committees and conferences

- 10 October: 65th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs - Chair's One-Day Forum on Access and Availability of UNODC.
- 10-14 October: Evaluation Mission to Vienna of the CoE Evaluation Division of the Directorate of Internal Oversight. Visit of Ms Aygen Becquart, Head of the Evaluation Division, and Ms Taruna Gupta, External Evaluator, to the CoE Office in Vienna and to the OSCE.
- 17-21 October: Monitoring visit to Austria of the Committee of Experts on the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention.
- 3 November: OSCE High-Level Conference on the Safety of Journalists - Protecting media to protect democracy (with the participation of Mr Patrick Penninckx and Mr Adrian Evtuhovici from the CoE).
- 15 November: 2022 OSCE Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting.
- 23 November: Launch of the joint UNODC-UN Women research brief on gender-related killings of women and girls.

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- 30 November: High-Level Informal Dinner for Heads of Delegation to the 2022 OSCE Ministerial Council hosted by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Polish Foreign Minister Rau, in Lodz, Poland.
- **1-2 December: 29th meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council** - Ambassador Rudolf Lennkh and Mr Pawel Wierdak represented the CoE.
- 8-9 December: Joint meeting of the 65th reconvened session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and 31st reconvened session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ).
- 16 December: 35th meeting of the CoE/OSCE Co-ordination Group. Informal briefing for the CoE delegation on recent developments in the OSCE by Ambassador Rudolf Lennkh.

Note: Between October and December, the Office submitted a total of 11 spot reports about activities and events related to the OSCE.

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

7-9 November: Visit to Strasbourg of First Deputy Director of OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) Ryabiko - participation in the World Forum for Democracy; series of meetings in the CoE Secretariat.

1-2 December: 29th OSCE Ministerial Council in Lodz, Poland.

Activities of the Office

a) Enhancing the co-operation with OSCE ODIHR – Following the visit of the First Deputy Director of ODIHR to Strasbourg in November, the Office initiated discussions on furthering co-operation between ODIHR and the Council of Europe. Discussions were also launched on joint activities for 2023. The main co-operation programme planned for the coming months is the CoE-UNHCR-ODIHR-OECD inter-agency pilot project on migrants' integration at local level. The HoO participated in regular consultations with international partners as well as with the Union of Polish Metropolises, with which the project is to be implemented.

Besides high-level meetings and the participation in the 29th OSCE Ministerial Council, the HoO continued to maintain close working relations with ODIHR experts on a regular basis. These discussions included, *inter alia*, meetings with Ms Andrea Huber, Head of the Human Rights Department, Mr Konstantine Vardzelashvili, Head of the Democratisation Department, Ms Carolyn Hammer, Adviser in the Rule of Law Unit in the ODIHR Democratisation Department, and Mr Jacopo Leone, Special Adviser to ODIHR Director.

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 and activities of the Community.

c) Establishment of closer co-operation with Frontex – The second study visit to Strasbourg of the Frontex Deputy Fundamental Right Officer and the group of Frontex Fundamental Rights Monitors was organised in November to discuss the CoE standards related to migration. The programme of the visit included, amongst others, meetings with the SRSG on Migration and Refugees and representatives of the CoE Secretariat (CPT, GRETA, Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights and lawyers at the European Court of Human Rights and in the Department for the Execution of Judgments). In addition, a group of newly-recruited Frontex Fundamental Rights Monitors enrolled in a HELP tutored online course on Asylum and Human Rights, launched in October in Warsaw. The Office followed and informed on a regular basis on the progress of the recruitment of the Agency's new Executive Director, which ended in December with the appointment of Mr Hans Leijten.

Ensuring the visibility of the CoE – The Office provided ongoing support for CoE activities in Poland, including the visit to Poland of the SRSG on Migration and Refugees, the seminar for Ukrainian lawyers and Asylum/Migration HELP e-Desk managers on European legal practices to assist Ukrainian refugees, the launch event for the HELP tutored online course on Asylum and Human Rights for legal professionals and the CoE Pilot Training on Psychological Support to Refugees: Strengthening Professional Capacities.

B. FIELD AND PROGRAMME OFFICES

Baku**Situation of the Office**

Core staff – 5, Project staff –8, Total staff - 13.

The Office implemented 5 projects, 3 in the framework of the EU/CoE regional Joint Programme "Partnership for Good Governance", 1 funded through voluntary contributions at the Action Plan-level, and 1 funded through the Human Rights Trust Fund and a voluntary contribution from Belgium.

State of implementation of projects

- **EU/CoE-PGGII "Strengthening the efficiency and quality of the judicial system in Azerbaijan"**: (i) The Project organized an experts' mission to Baku with the aim to assess work efficiency of the Supreme Court of Azerbaijan. A report with recommendations on improvement of the case management, processing of cases and e-filing, based on CEPEJ instruments, will be prepared as a result of the visit and discussions with the representatives of the Supreme Court. (ii) Representatives of the Ministry of Justice of Azerbaijan participated in a study visit to Portugal to deepen their knowledge about the "mixed" system of enforcement of court decisions and learn more on electronic systems used by Portuguese enforcement agents.
- **EU/CoE-PGGII "Strengthening Anti-Money Laundering and Asset Recovery in Azerbaijan"**: (i) The project raised awareness on money laundering and terrorist financing risks in the non-profit sector, by bringing together representatives of the government, civil society and religious entities. Notaries, including supervisors of the notaries and securities sectors learned how to implement effective measures against money laundering and terrorist financing. (ii) Prosecutors, investigators, judges, financial intelligence and other law enforcement practitioners were introduced to latest mechanisms for confiscation of proceeds from crime. (iii) The project also supported the Government with a review of the draft National Action Plan for anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism.
- **EU/CoE-PGGII "Raising Awareness on the Istanbul Convention (IC) and other Gender Equality Standards in Azerbaijan"**: (i) The project developed a draft plan on multi-agency co-operation. (ii) Members of the "GEWE AG" (a high-level advocacy group of key international actors working in the country) were familiarised with recommendations of the gap analysis of the national legislation. They acknowledged the recommendations' added value and pledged to advocate for their implementation. (iii) Seven Azerbaijani officials increased their knowledge in the field of tackling the problem of violence against women and domestic violence after a study visit to Spain. (iv) Awareness of the general public about GBV, the IC, myths and facts around it was raised as a result by publishing videos, brochures and other materials during the "16 days of activism".
- **VC/Action Plan-level "Promoting media professionalism and freedom of information in Azerbaijan (PRO-M-FEX)"**: (i) A group of social media influencers were trained in digital media literacy and a group of journalists were trained in disinformation and media literacy during two two-day workshops. (ii) Azerbaijani journalists participated in the regional Conference on Media in Times of War and Conflicts, held in Tbilisi, Georgia, and contributed actively to the discussions. (iii) A group of civil society representatives and human rights defenders were trained in international standards on data protection and privacy during

a two-day workshop. (iv) A group of lawyers-members of the Azerbaijani Bar were trained in international legal standards on data protection and privacy.

- **VC HRTF and Belgium “Support for the improvement of the execution of the European Court judgments by Azerbaijan”:** (i) The project launching conference took place on 21 October. The project staff held working level discussions with representatives of four key project partners and discussed expected outcomes, planned outputs and activities. (ii) To enhance awareness among the national project partners regarding the relevant CoE guidelines and the Committee of Ministers’ recommendations, relevant materials aiming to ensure effective and timely execution of ECHR case law and judgments have been translated from English into Azerbaijani. The Azerbaijani translations of the materials are planned to be disseminated widely during the next quarter.

Other relevant activities

- In the framework of the Council of Europe visibility week, on 9 December the Office organized, jointly with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan and the ADA University, a round table dedicated to the upcoming International Human Rights Day. The round was attended by Mahmud Mammad-Guliyev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Sabina Aliyeva, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Fariz Ismayilzade, Vice-Rector of ADA University, Ambassador Peter Michalko, Head of European Union Delegation in Azerbaijan, representatives of the national partners and international community.
- On 14 December, HoO addressed the EU Ambassadors in Baku and held an exchange of views with them on Council of Europe’s activities in Azerbaijan.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- The Office assisted the delegation headed by Constantinos Efstathiou, the PACE Rapporteur for execution of the ECHR judgments, with organisation of a visit to Baku on 22-23 November. In Baku the delegation, accompanied by HoO, met with the Ombudsperson, the Chairman of the Human Rights Committee of the Milli Mejlis, the Office of the Prosecutor General, the Presidential Administration, representatives of other authorities, as well as with civil society representatives, human rights lawyers and their clients.

Belgrade

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 7, Project staff – 30, Horizontal Facility Coordination Hub (HFCH) – 1, Regional Finance Officer -1, Total – 39.

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 / Action Plans / co-operation documents

- **EU/CoE HF “Quality Education for All-Serbia”:** The online in-service teacher training curriculum accredited by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and placed on the Minister's list of courses of national significance. The first group of 1500 teachers completed the training. Mentors started with the final evaluation of new 39 schools and with the self-evaluation to establish the change. With MoE organised Democratic School Day in Pirot and participated in the Education Fair in Belgrade where thousands of participants learned about the democratic school culture. Final action SCM was organised with actions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro. MoE established and is financing external policy advisors on democratic culture. Serbian education professionals shared their work on CDC with Bosnian counterparts.
- **EU/CoE HF “Promotion of Diversity and Equality in Serbia”:** The Action provided expert advice to the Government's Coordination Body for Bujanovac, Medvedja and Presevo in the process of development of the ‘Action Plan for achieving successful integration of the Albanian national minority to the state institutions at the local level’. The Action raised awareness of the issues around discrimination by supporting and contributing to various workshops and events within the frame of the Euro Pride 2022 in Belgrade. Over 2.000 primary school children in Nis and Pirot attended ‘Block the Hatred, Share the Love’ workshops to promote tolerance and discourage hate speech, racism, and discrimination.
- **EU/CoE HF “Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in Serbia”:** In co-operation with the Ministry of Health, the action implemented two trainings for 48 health care professionals on human trafficking and participated in the development of national indicators for health care system. Challenges and ideas for the improvement of the domestic system for protection of human trafficking victims were discussed by the key anti-trafficking stakeholders at the round table meeting held on 17 October. With support of the action, more than 20 grant-based media products (articles, videos, radio shows) on ethical and fact-based reporting on human trafficking were broadcasted in print and electronic media. Final action's Steering Committee meeting was held on 9 December 2022.
- **EU/CoE HF “Enhancing human rights protection for detained and sentenced persons”:** Anti-torture Commission was acquainted with Austrian and Belgian police complaint mechanisms. The Commission was also supported in improving cooperation with CSOs on torture prevention issues, and second meeting between their representatives was facilitated. Study visit to Ireland on the topic of forensic mental health for Prison Administration officials was organised. In the final 10th training session additional 40 treatment officers from various

prisons were trained to deliver treatment programmes. Staff from psychiatric clinics in Nis and Kovin 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”:** Serbian working group members (Department for Execution of Criminal Sanctions, MoJ and Service for Combatting Terrorism, MoI) participated at the regional conference “Towards successful management, rehabilitation and post-penal assistance to violent extremist prisoners (VEPs) in the Western Balkans – achievements and the way forward” in Tirana, Albania on 4 – 5 October 2022. The conference recapitulated on progress in the field of rehabilitation and disengagement of VEPs from violence, their preparation for release, post-penal assistance and reintegration back into the society.

- **EU/CoE HF “Strengthening Independence & Accountability of the Judiciary”:** One day training for judges and public prosecutors on resisting and reporting undue influence has been organized in all appellate jurisdiction. A group of 35 judges and 60 public prosecutors acquired necessary skills and knowledge on different types of undue influence, how to recognize and report it. At the Workshop on Confidential Counselling for HJC and SPC Ethics Committees Members, American and European experiences of confidential counsellor position and relationship with Ethical Board has been presented. Workshop on Code of Ethics and Novelties in the Rules of Procedure of the Ethics Committee was organized in Belgrade for 30 judges.

- **EU/CoE HF “Strengthening the effective legal remedies to human rights violations in Serbia”:** The main findings of the Analysis of the effects of the Law on the protection of the right to a trial within reasonable time were discussed with commercial courts’ judges. 57 trainees of the Judicial Academy participated in the HELP course “Judicial Reasoning and Human Rights”. Analysis on references to the ECHR and the ECtHR case-law in domestic judicial decisions was drafted. Publication “ECHR and ECtHR case-law in Constitutional Court’s decisions” and Bulletin of the Republic Public Prosecutor’s Office were published.

- **EU/CoE HF “Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media in Serbia (JUFREX 2)”:** Two Media Literacy Open days events raised pre-school educators’ awareness on the threat posed by harmful online content to young children and a research on media literacy was prepared for the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media. Two trainings were held on freedom of expression for lawyers (22 participants) and safety of journalists for police (25 participants), on existing and evolving standards. A workshop was organised for Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media (17 participants) on Audio-visual Media Services Directive, followed by a working visit to their counterpart in Zagreb, Croatia. A follow up workshop for lawyers (20 participants) was organised on the ECtH Case law and legal reasoning.

- **EU/CoE HF “Freedom of Expression and the Media in South-East Europe (JUFREX 2)”:** In October, a regional conference on third party liability for online content was held for legal professionals, and a regional conference on co-regulation mechanisms to counter harmful content online was held for the representatives of regulatory media authorities, enabling discussion on emerging trends and exchange of best practice recommendations.

- **EU/CoE HF regional “HELP in the Western Balkans”:** 10 HELP online courses (one regional) on 9 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 regional HELP course on “Judicial Ethics” gathered in one group 25 legal professionals from all six Beneficiaries. The course is tutored in English by two co-

tutors, one international and one local. The regional HF40 reached 7,800 individual users in the HELP e-learning platform, increased by 5% in the reporting period. In the consultations with the partners' institutions, the launching events are organised in person as it was the case in the period before Covid-19 pandemic.

- **EU/CoE JP "Human Resources Management in Local Self-Government - phase 2":** 13 selected LSGs have completed Organisational Municipal Support Programme grants (up to €30,000). Most grant projects targeted improvement of LSGs' capacities through digitalisation of services and working processes. The Programme organised the Peer Review in Belgrade for Serbian National Academy for Public Administration, with Peers coming from Spain, Latvia, Germany, Austria and Great Britain. The Final Conference of the Programme was held on 17 November. High-level representatives from the MPALSG, the Council of Europe, EUD and SCTM, NAPA addressed more than 100 participants from 38 LSGs. Programme shared with beneficiaries the analysis of Mandatory provisions of the professional development.

- **EU-CoE regional JP "Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level (ROMACTED)-phase 2":** Training sessions in 14 partner LSGs on Project Cycle Management were delivered to the participants from local Roma communities and local authorities to strengthen capacities and assist them with preparation of the project proposals for the upcoming ROMACTED2 small grants scheme. The First Advisory Group Meeting in Serbia was organised on 24 November with 45 representatives from the partner LSGs and essential stakeholders at national and international level. Draft Analysis on Roma Responsive Budgeting and Publication on local capacities for providing support to Returnees in 14 LSGs were presented during this event.

- **EU/CoE JP "Support for the implementation of judicial reform in Serbia":** The set of new judicial laws was put forward by the Ministry of Justice to the second round of public consultations, with additional five meetings aimed at wider civil society inclusion. A workshop on further application of relevant Rule of Law standards in judicial laws was held for members of the Judges' Association. Caselaw harmonisation at the Supreme Court level is tackled by in-depth analysis, updates to electronic database and training for staff. A joint session of all four appellate courts was held, with the aim to harmonise caselaw. The 2nd SC meeting unanimously approved the report on implemented activities and the work plan for forthcoming 6 months.

- **VC (Swedish MFA) "Preventing money laundering and terrorist financing in Serbia":** The project provided support to Serbian judiciary and law enforcement agencies to enhance their awareness on processing money laundering as a standalone offence. The project finalised IT needs assessment of the Ministry of Interior for financial investigations and developed technical specifications for required software. Results of the latest National Risk Assessment were presented in Novi Sad, Vrnjacka Banja and Kraljevo. A fit and proper testing workshop has been organised with the representative of the banking sector and central authorities. The project hosted Conference on Evolution of AML/CFT standards and latest developments for all relevant stakeholders.

Follow-up actions

- The contract on the new phase of the EU/CoE joint programme "Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Türkiye" was signed, paving a way for the continuation of six country specific actions in Serbia – related to the human rights, anti-discrimination, penitentiary reforms, freedom of expression and combating THB and participation in a number of regional actions.

- The new VC project "Citizenship and human rights education with young people in Serbia", co-funded by the Kingdom of Belgium has been launched in December 2022. The aim of the project is to support the access of young people in Serbia to democracy and human rights education based on the Compass manual and the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education.

Other relevant activities

- Visit of the Venice Commission and ODIHR delegation regarding the electoral legislation of Serbia took place on 17 and 18 October.
- Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages visited Serbia from 24 to 28 October.
- The First Annual Forum for History Education took place in Belgrade on 3 and 4 November. Belgrade Office supported the organisation of the event which was held under the auspices of the Irish Presidency of the CoE Committee of Ministers.
- From 23 to 25 November, members of the Venice Commission paid a visit to Serbia and met with relevant interlocutors to prepare the Opinion on two draft Laws implementing the Constitutional Amendments of the Prosecution service.
- Matjaž Gruden, Director of Democratic Participation, paid a visit to Belgrade, on the occasion of the First Annual Forum for History Education. During the visit, he met with the Minister of Education, Minister of Culture and visited to the Ecological Center "Radulovački" (awarded with CoE Quality Label for Youth Centres).

Bucharest

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 0.5, Project staff – 37, Total – 37.5

The office was responsible for the implementation of five capacity building projects on cybercrime with a combined budget of over 39.2 million EUR. Four projects are jointly funded with the European Union (EU) and one is funded by voluntary contributions (currently Canada, Japan, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, United Kingdom and USA).

In the assessed period 1 senior project officer, 3 project officers and 4 project assistants were recruited for GLACY+, CyberEast and iPROCEEDS-2 projects.

State of implementation of projects (October - December 2022)

- **Cross-cutting major activities:** Several regional and international major events were organized or supported through joint efforts the projects implemented by C-PROC. In October, under the lead of CyberEast Project, around 40 participants from 25 countries attended the Europol Conference and debated 2022 threats, the need for harmonized legislation, but also the role of emerging technologies and the law enforcement response to the abuse of such technologies.

To maximize resources and build on the outcomes of the Conference, back-to-back with the Europol Conference, under the lead of iPROCEEDS-2 project, C-PROC organized a meeting of the 24/7 Network with the aim of strengthening the role of the points of contact, identifying needs and challenges and further capacity building efforts required in view of the new roles and responsibilities of 24/7 POC under the Second Additional Protocol.

In November, C-PROC continued the stream of activities dedicated to ransomware and, under the lead of the CyberSouth project, organized a 2-day [international workshop on ransomware](#), in cooperation with Eurojust.

In November, Octopus and GLACY+ projects organized in cooperation with the Legislative Assembly and the Public Ministry of Costa Rica, the [Americas Regional Forum on enhanced international cooperation](#), gathering around 140 policymakers, criminal justice authorities and law enforcement professionals from 24 countries. On the margins of the Regional Forum, with the support of GLACY+ project, the [Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica and FOPREL organized a side event for the FOPREL member countries](#), that resulted in [the adoption of a resolution on the legislative actions on cybercrime and electronic evidence](#), where participating countries made a very clear commitment to strengthen the fight against cybercrime through adoption of legislation in line with the Convention on Cybercrime.

Back to back with the Americas Regional Forum, C-PROC held an [International Conference on promoting the role of women in preventing, investigating and prosecuting cybercrimes](#), where around 190 participants from 50 countries across the Americas, the Caribbean, Europe, Africa, Asia and the Pacific shared experiences of building women's capacity to engage actively in the criminal justice response to cybercrime and to strength the investigation, prosecution and adjudication of cybercrimes against women.

Octopus and GLACY+ projects supported the [Annual PILON Workshop on Cybercrime](#) (28 November – 2 December), which focused on gendered impact of online engagement and the most common types of cyber-enabled offences in Pacific communities, promoting knowledge sharing, capacity building and regional cooperation.

The T-CY plenary (29-30 November) was supported by all projects implemented by C-PROC.

- **Octopus Project:** The Project further built capacities of criminal justice authorities around the globe in [addressing cybercrime and the challenge of electronic evidence](#), including [online xenophobia and racism](#), [cyberviolence against women](#), as well as [online child sexual exploitation and abuse](#). Focusing on [accountability and attribution of cybercrimes during the Internet Governance Forum](#) provided a venue for developing strategies to effectively tackle this challenge. Dialogue fostered within the [Cybercrime Convention community](#), and the adoption of the [guidance note on ransomware](#) contributed to further strengthening of the [membership, reach, relevance and impact of this Treaty](#) with the support of the project. Translated training materials available through the [Octopus Platform](#) and [HELP platforms](#), as well as [Cyberviolence online platform](#) served as important tools enabling criminal justice authorities and legal practitioners worldwide to increase their knowledge on the topic.

- **iPROCEEDS-2:** Capacities of criminal justice authorities were enhanced through specialized training on investigation of [ransomware attacks](#) and sustainable judicial training on cybercrime, electronic evidence and international cooperation. Closer link between magistrates, investigators, cybersecurity community and private sector was achieved by supporting [public/private meetings](#) at domestic level, with a focus on cooperation between criminal justice authorities and service providers. Co-ordination with other projects and initiatives in the region was ensured by participation in meetings, workshops and exercises focused on law enforcement and cybersecurity institutions cooperation. The Guide for conducting investigations of ransomware attacks was developed to be a useful tool for law enforcement and judicial authorities in their fight against cybercrime. The 6th Meeting of the Project Steering Committee was held with the aim to assess the achievements of the last six months, monitor the project implementation, review the progress and shape the future workplan.

- **GLACY+:** Continuing the focus on building technical capacities of law enforcement, experts from 7 GLACY+ countries participated in the [Digital Security Challenge 2022](#) organized by INTERPOL, aimed at providing a realistic simulated environment for specialists to further develop their knowledge and exchange expertise in investigating cybercrimes. A [workshop on channels and avenues for international cooperation](#) for enhancing modalities for police-to-police cooperation was organized on the margins of the Europol Conference. A [train-the-trainers course for first responders](#) is seeking to build a network of trainers in the LATAM region to support the national dissemination of the digital forensics skills among law enforcement in the region. GLACY+ further deepened its focus on judicial training through national training workshops in [Mauritius](#) (in cooperation with Octopus Project), [Kiribati](#) and [Ghana](#). International cooperation was strengthened in Fiji through a [stakeholder webinar on the roles and responsibilities of 24/7 Points of Contact Network under the Budapest Convention](#). The project continued its strong cooperation with other projects and organisations active in the field through participation in EU CyberNet Stakeholder Community Day, OCWAR-C's Cooperating against cybercrime in the ECOWAS region & Mauritania and Internet Governance Forum 2022. In November, the EU Commission and the Council of Europe signed an additional contribution agreement for a new project Global Action on Cybercrime Enhanced (GLACY-e) with a budget of EUR 5.56 million starting in August 2023 and scheduled to end in February 2026.

- **CyberSouth:** Enhancing the capacities of judiciary to obtain, handle and share electronic evidence, as well as improving the co-operation on cybercrime with other countries at regional and international level was in the focus of seven training courses on international cooperation and electronic evidence delivered in [Algeria](#), [Jordan](#), [Lebanon](#) and [Morocco](#). Tunisia adopted a new decree law on cybercrime (n.54/2022) and a visit to discuss the compliance with the Budapest Convention and the steps for the ratification process was organised. The work to

develop and introduce judicial training modules on cybercrime into the national curricula was finalised in Algeria and Lebanon. The fourth CyberSouth judicial network meeting was held to discuss training needs of all priority countries and how to connect the network with other coordination mechanisms. The project continued to coordinate and co-operate with other international organisations active in the MENA region and meetings with EU CyberNet, US/INL and UNODC were organised. The 9th Steering Committee meeting of the CyberSouth project was organised to review the achievements and approve the work plan for 2023.

- **CyberEast:** Work on legislation with project countries continued in view of the requirements of the [Second Additional Protocol](#) to the Convention, with Moldova and Ukraine [signing](#) in November 2022. The Master's Programme in Cybercrime Investigation and Computer Forensics for the project's countries concluded with [Conferring Ceremony and graduation workshops](#) at the University College Dublin in December 2022. The project reinforced capacities of criminal authorities and interagency co-operation via series of dedicated sessions on [cybercrime reporting](#) and [access to data](#) in the private sector, with two-years project work in these areas summarised at the Regional Meeting on Reporting and Data Sharing. Targeted support to Ukraine included work to ensure the [admissibility of evidence](#) and support to legal reforms.

Follow up action

- Publication of the updated report on the global state of cybercrime legislation, January 2023
- [UN Ad Hoc Committee on ICT crimes – side-event on the Convention on Cybercrime in practice: lessons learnt 2001 – 2022](#), 10 January 2023 – Octopus & GLACY+ projects
- Support participation of selected countries at the fourth session of the UN Ad hoc committee to elaborate an international convention on countering the use of ICTs for criminal purposes, Vienna, Austria, 9-20 January 2023
- [International Conference on Xenophobia and Racism committed through computer systems, Strasbourg, France](#), 30-31 January 2023 – all projects
- GLACY+ Steering Committee, Brussels, Belgium, 3 February 2023
- International training on Joint Investigative Teams (JITs) and improved cooperation with foreign service providers under the Second Additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention, Lisbon, Portugal, 14-16 February 2023 – all projects
- [International Conference on strengthening co-operation on cybercrime and electronic evidence in Africa, Rabat, Morocco](#), 6-7 March 2023 – CyberSouth, Octopus and GLACY+ projects

Other relevant activities

- [Timor Leste invited to join the Convention on Cybercrime](#), October 2022
- [Ransomware: New Guidance Note by the T-CY](#), November 2022
- [The Netherlands makes a voluntary contribution to the Octopus Project](#), November 2022
- [Brazil deposited the instrument of accession to the Convention on Cybercrime](#), November 2022
- [Croatia, Moldova, Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Ukraine and the United Kingdom signed the Second Additional Protocol](#), November 2022

Chisinau

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 7, Project staff – 25, Total staff – 32.

The Office implemented thirteen projects, eight funded through voluntary contributions at Action Plan level, two in the framework of the EU/CoE regional Joint Programme “Partnership for Good Governance” and three funded through voluntary contributions from Norway, the Netherlands, and the United States of America respectively, as detailed below³.

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

- **AP “Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova”:** 49 Moldovan schools successfully finalized the piloting of the Democratic School Governance Methodological Guide. The Ministry of Education and Research plans to approve the methodological guide for nationwide implementation. The Guide boosts beneficiaries’ understanding of the process of democratic school governance, supports them in gauging the level of stakeholders’ involvement in school life and assists in planning more effective and meaningful forms of participation.
- **AP “Strengthening the prison and probation reforms, provision of health care and treatment of patients in closed institutions in the Republic of Moldova”:** 48 Electronic Monitoring bracelets were donated to the National Probation Inspectorate (NPI), to enhance their capacity to ensure alternatives to incarceration. 12 NPI trainers were capacitated to deliver the initial training to probation counsellors while 19 specialists from five prisons were trained on working with juveniles and young adults during a pilot course. In addition, 15 representatives of the Ministry of Justice, the National Administration of Penitentiaries, and the NPI participated in a study visit in Strasbourg, with a focus on the conditions of detention and healthcare in prisons.
- **AP “Support for Media Pluralism and Freedom of Expression in the Republic of Moldova”:** normative acts were drafted to assist the Audiovisual Council (AC) on the regulation of commercial and audiovisual content; the presentation of the draft legislation took place during two roundtables attended by 25 media institutions. A visibility campaign promoting the new feature to alert the AC of breaches to the Audiovisual Code by TV and Radio stations was carried out in October and November. In addition, three representatives from the AC, independent media and human rights NGOs took part as speakers at the CoE Regional Conference in Tbilisi “Media in Times of War”.
- **AP “Improving Electoral Practice in the Republic of Moldova, Phase II”:** the Central Electoral Commission learned practices on oversight of political parties and electoral campaign financing through a visit to their Croatian counterparts. Moldovan judges can now benefit from a newly developed e-course on electoral dispute resolution based on ECHR case law while a concept for awareness raising on combating sexism and gender-based violence in

³ In addition to the donors mentioned above, the following countries are currently contributing to the Council of Europe-Republic of Moldova Action Plan 2021-2024 (in alphabetical order): Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania, Sweden and Switzerland.

elections was publicly discussed. 18 regulations of the Training Centre were updated to facilitate its accreditation as an education institution. An e-course on combating hate speech in elections was launched by the Training Centre.

- **AP "Preventing and protecting children from violence including in the digital environment"**: a workshop on online safety for children with a focus on challenges to prevent and combat online child sexual exploitation and abuse was delivered in October for 22 representatives of public authorities and private sector (internet providers and host companies). Consequently, bilateral meetings in support of the development of a gap analysis of the online child exploitation and abuse framework were held. The methodology for the Specialized Commission for the Coordination and Monitoring of the Implementation of Lanzarote Convention has been finalized and presented during a public event.

- **AP "Supporting the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in the Republic of Moldova"**: 40 representatives of state authorities, civil society and private sector enhanced their knowledge on the digital dimension of violence against women based on the GREVIO's first General Recommendation whereas 45 social workers acting on VAW/DV cases enhanced their skills during a Training of Trainers based on the newly developed Guidelines on prevention, protection, and intervention in line with the Istanbul Convention. Four national level WGs on the implementation of the pillars of the Istanbul Convention were operationalized.

- **AP "Reinforcing the culture of dialogue and consultation of local authorities in the Republic of Moldova – Phase II"**: in October 2022, recommendations on how to enhance the functioning and effectiveness of the consultation and dialogue-building process were proposed by Congress experts, building on the analysis of existing consultation mechanisms. The recommendations and analysis were presented at a roundtable discussion attended by all levels of government and representatives from the Parliament. The report containing the recommendations and analysis was shared with CALM, the State Chancellery, and the Parliamentary Committee on Public Administration.

- **AP "Strengthening the human rights protection of refugees and migrants in the Republic of Moldova"**: the project was operationalized during the reporting period.

- **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"**: the study visit for representatives of the Equality Council to anti-discrimination institutions in Romania enabled participants to share experiences and opinions as well as to learn from examples of good practices. Also, this activity enhanced peer-to-peer exchanges, which are relevant to promote equality and anti-discrimination in the Republic of Moldova.

- **EU/CoE - PGG " Support to further strengthening the efficiency and quality of the judicial system in the Republic of Moldova"**: on the basis of the "Methodological Guidelines on improving the enforcement of judgements concerning the determination of the residence and access to the applicants' children" developed by the Project, 180 enforcement agents and 25 judges have been trained to increase the quality of judgements and their enforcement in line with ECHR case-law. In order to improve beneficiaries' performance evaluation and document management systems, the project started the development of the

JUSTAT Automated Information System and is in the process of procuring a server for the needs of the National Union of Enforcement Agents.

- **VC Norway “Strengthening the human rights compliant criminal justice system in the Republic of Moldova”:** 33 paralegals and 95 legal aid lawyers enhanced their capacities to provide legal aid to refugees and asylum seekers. Following Venice Commission recommendations, the Parliament approved legislative changes to strengthen the capacity and efficiency of the Ombudsperson Institution, whose Strategic Development Programme for 2023-2030 was finalised. Moreover, the Ombudsperson organised a Human Rights Forum to raise the awareness of civil society and state institutions on the human rights challenges considering the Republic of Moldova’s accession process to the European Union.

- **The Netherlands “Enhancing diversity and equality in the Republic of Moldova”:** peer-to-peer sessions on addressing discrimination and hate crime towards vulnerable groups enhanced the capacity to identify and investigate related offenses of 127 Police officers working in the regions. Cooperation agreements to create networks of local services and civil society organisations to combat hate crimes were signed with two regions. Judges and prosecutors consolidated their knowledge on practical aspects of the protection of victims, as well as the effective investigation of hate crimes in the view of the ECHR case-law.

- **VC United States of America (Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs) “Action Against Corruption in the Republic of Moldova II”:** the project planned inception meetings with national authorities and the development partners and started working on the project webpage.

Follow up actions

- The project “Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova” was closed on 31 December 2022 and a new initiative will follow in January 2023.
- On 15 December, the Austrian Development Agency signed a financing agreement for the project “Enhancing Employment Rights in the Republic of Moldova”, co-funded by the Council of Europe, which will be operationalized soon.

Other relevant activities

- Between October and December 2022, the Office’s website recorded 108,262 pageviews, out of which 80,994 single-time pageviews and 64,257 new visits, registering a slight increase compared to the previous reporting period. Important CoE documents were among the 76 downloads registered. The Facebook page recorded a reach of 96,974 people, with an increase of 26,8% of page visits and 53,4% new likes. The LinkedIn page also registered an increase, with 260 pageviews and 109 additional new visitors. Focusing on key results, the Office started issuing a monthly interview, disseminated online. On Facebook all four interviews enjoyed a total reach of 60,153 people and an engagement of 4,485 persons. On the occasion of the European Day on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (18 November), a video spot on sexual abuse in sport was promoted, reaching 37,7K people with an engagement of 2,332 persons.

- Coordinated by the project “Supporting the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in the Republic of Moldova”, the understanding of the Convention was enhanced during the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence via publishing messages from 11 mayors on social media and 2 solution reports on counselling program for family aggressors and support groups for victims of violence. A video on the roots of violence reaching all together 28K people on Moldova.org, TikTok, YouTube and Instagram was produced by a grantee, while the Office joined the initiative with a video aligned with the campaign’s messages.
- On 23 November, a Coordination Meeting with CoE Member States and Observer States following the Steering Committee Meeting of the Action Plan was organized in cooperation with the MFAEI.
- Between 12-14 December, the Office facilitated the mission of a Delegation from the Department of Execution of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights to discuss issues pertaining to the execution of the Court’s judgments related to the Transnistrian region as well as to all judgments against the Republic of Moldova pending in enhanced procedure. The Office organised meetings with the representatives of civil society, diplomatic missions and the Ombudsperson’s Office.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- Between 21-24 November, the Office facilitated the visit of the Director of the Directorate of Programme Co-ordination (DPC), Mr. Claus Neukirch, to the Republic of Moldova. The Director met with national authorities to discuss cooperation priorities.

Kyiv

Situation of the Office

- Core staff – 11, project staff – 51, total staff – 62.

State of implementation of projects/programmes

• **AP CoE Project “Supporting Institutions to Combat Ill-Treatment in Ukraine Phase II”:** in November the Project trained SBI investigators and operatives on open-source intelligence to enable them collect information from a wide range of sources, building a detailed picture of criminals and improving the response to security threats. The training had particular importance in the context of conditions of war, as it can contribute to war crime investigations and identify illegally obtained assets. The online course “Application of aerial video shooting for crime scene inspection when investigating war crimes” was developed and made available for all investigators and operative staff of the State Bureau of Investigation at their internal in-service training portal. The course comprises 6 modules and provides for certification of trainees upon knowledge tests completion. Additional online self-education tools were also completed and handed over for use at the SBI’s portal. In December the Project supported the organisation of JustConf Ukraine 2022. JustConf Ukraine 2022 focused on strengthening the criminal justice in times of war. In December the Project supported an exchange session for the SBI on gender equality in law enforcement sector at the time of war thus bringing to light some outstanding gender-related developments of wartime context. Furthermore, the Project finalized two expert documents for the SBI: 1) “Opinion on the proposed introduction of independent expert (forensic) institutions within the structure of the State Bureau of Investigation of Ukraine”; 2) “Report on European standards, existing practices and recommendations for evaluating the efficiency of investigators performance and suggestions regarding possible methodology for evaluation of performance of investigators of the State Bureau of investigation”.

• **AP CoE Project “Combatting violence against women in Ukraine”:** successfully completed in October 2022 projects of 4 Ukrainian CSOs focused on protecting and promoting women’s human rights during the war in Ukraine. The applicability of the Istanbul Convention during armed conflict was discussed at the international round table “Russia’s aggression against Ukraine: Implementing the Istanbul Convention during armed conflict” conducted on 23 November 2022. The Round Table also focused on Ukraine’s access to the GREVIO monitoring mechanism of the Istanbul Convention and next steps. The project was actively involved in 16 days of activism against GBV. The new [infographics](#) and explanatory [brochure](#), developed under the project explains the relevance of the convention for women and girls, refugees, men and boys, migrants and asylum seekers, the economy, NGOs and educators. Project results and achievements have been shared with the project stakeholders at the final SCM on 30 November 2022.

• **AP CoE Project “Combating violence against children in Ukraine Phase III”:** On 20 October 2022, the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine, together with the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, held an online meeting on the occasion of the presentation of Guidelines and Methodology for Documenting Child Rights Violations Resulting from Sexual Abuse. On 27-28 October 2022 the Project together with the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, conducted an online training “Documenting child rights violations resulting from sexual abuse». The training was attended by 30 prosecutors from different regions of Ukraine. [Link to the news item.](#) In June 2022 the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine approached

the Project with a request to evaluate and analyze the Road map materials "Directives in criminal proceedings involving children". As a result, the Presentation "[A roadmap for implementation of child-friendly justice](#)" was developed for the Office of the Prosecutor General. The Project prepared an "[Analysis of compliance of the current system of statistical indicators](#)" of the prosecutor's office of Ukraine with the standards of child-friendly justice set forth in the guidelines of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on child-friendly justice. The overall purpose of the assessment and the recommendations is to promote an effective interagency collaboration response in the context of the introduction of the Barnahus model in Ukraine.

The project supported a two-day webinar on November 16-17 for social workers "Support for mental health and psychosocial assistance for children in situations of armed conflict", where more than 700 more professionals from all regions of Ukraine attended the webinar. [Link to the news item.](#) 2 series of webinars for psychologists of the Ministry of Social Policy, including specialists from children's services, centers for social and psychological assistance, shelters for children, etc., were organised and held in two rounds - December 5-6 and December 7,9. Webinars were held in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Policy, more than 400 more professionals from different regions of Ukraine participated in the webinars. [Link to the news item.](#) Furthermore, the Project organised an online workshop for civil society organisations and Hot line consultants "Psychosocial support for war-affected children and adolescents".

• **AP CoE Project "Enhancing decentralisation and public administration reform in Ukraine"**: on 8-9 November the Programme jointly with the Project "Supporting the transparency, inclusiveness and integrity of electoral process in Ukraine – Phase III" co-organised a high-level dialogue on enhancing good democratic governance in post-war context. The meeting resulted in broad agreement among the key national stakeholders as regards further actions to improve legal framework on multi-level governance and elections. Upon request of the national partners, with the goal to promote metropolitan governance in Ukraine the Programme (i) facilitated drafting a law on agglomerations in consultation with local authorities to be most affected by the future law, in partnership with the Association of Ukrainian Cities and taking into account the Council of Europe's legal expertise of [2020](#) and [2017](#), (ii) launched the initiative on elaboration of Lviv agglomeration development strategy; (iii) prepared a comparative study on governance of 13 European metropolitan areas from 11 countries and their economic development. The Programme jointly with the [Ministry for Communities and Territories Development of Ukraine](#) (MinRegion) prepared 2 (two) methodological recommendations dedicated to (i) labour relations in military administrations that temporarily exercise local authorities' powers and (ii) implementation by military administrations of settlements and their officials of some powers of local authorities under martial law and supported relevant capacity building activities at regional and local level with the focus on de-occupied territories. Moreover, in line with the Council of Europe toolkit on [City to City Cooperation](#), the Programme jointly with the MinRegion developed a manual regarding international partnerships at municipal level. The Programme's support also enabled and improved provision of administrative, social and other public services for more than 450,000 residents in 1023 settlements in some 40 Ukrainian communities the Programme provided IT equipment to 37 local communities of Luhansk, Sumy, Kharkiv, Kherson and Chernihiv regions enabling operation of the Centres for administrative services provision ("one stop shops"), creation of remote and mobile workplaces. Moreover, the Programme successfully completed the grant programme with the aim to reinforce local economy and good governance. The grant programme was implemented in 6 (six) pilot communities from 3 (three) Western regions of Ukraine (Khmelnitsky, Lviv, Ternopil), and resulted in (i) set up of 6 (six) co-working spaces, including one multifunctional, (ii) methodological recommendations and practical guidelines provided for inter-municipal cooperation and cooperation between levels of local self-government, including for children with special educational needs (the latter

produced in partnership with the Project [“Continued support to promoting social human rights in Ukraine”](#), (iii) professional capacity of the administration of the centre and its teachers increased by providing educational, consulting and mentoring support. The Programme also implemented the Council of Europe [Best Practice in Local Government](#) toolkit and 2 (two) national contests inspired by it: (i) the 7th National Media Contest focusing on public administration in a time of crisis, organised jointly the MinRegion ([the 12 best media materials](#)) from regional media (printed, online, radio, and TV) were awarded in 2022, (ii) Best practice programme on human resources development completed in partnership with the [National Agency](#) of Ukraine on Civil Service, resulting in identifying and promoting 9 innovative training service providers. In addition, the Programme completed the annual [public sociological survey on public administration in Ukraine](#) in co-operation with the [MinRegion](#) and in co-ordination with the [Ministry for Reintegration of the Temporary Occupied Territories of Ukraine](#). Thus, it enabled the national partners to adjust their national policy development strategies and communication with the people of Ukraine.

- **AP CoE Project “Youth for Democracy in Ukraine: Phase II”:** provided operational expert, technical and mentoring support to youth centres, local communities, youth councils and youth NGOs. Over sixty youth workers took part in a public presentation-discussion about youth work experiences, challenges and initiatives to respond to the needs of young people in time of war, based on a study about the needs and challenges of youth centres also conducted in the framework of the project. Eighteen youth workers, youth policy makers and young activists took part in a five-day training seminar on social cohesion and on how to remove barriers to ensure young people’s contribution to, and participation in social cohesion. Based on the experience of the activity and the expressed needs of youth workers, a training manual was drafted within the Project to multiply the learning outcomes and methodologically support other youth workers across Ukraine. Fifty representatives of youth organisations took part in information sessions about the European Youth Foundation’s special call for pilot activities in support of young people from Ukraine, hence enlarging the scope of organisations and projects eligible for support by the Foundation across Ukraine. Twelve experts active in the Project explored models and approaches to evaluation of educational activities taking part in a workshop and individual mentoring programme with the view to strengthen the quality of the activities. A 4-month programme “Trauma-Informed Youth Work” supported twelve youth centres across Ukraine to organise educational activities for two hundred and forty youth workers and young people on prevention of burnout and compassion fatigue, first psychological aid in crisis situations. In synergy with the Council of Europe project “Internal Displacement in Ukraine: Building Solutions - Phase II” and in cooperation with the Ministry of Youth and Sports of Ukraine, the Project developed a manual “Trauma Informed Youth Work”. Representatives of youth centres - participants of the programme took part in the focus group discussion to develop proposals to the new professional standard “Youth specialist (youth worker)”. On 7 December 2022 the second meeting of the Steering Committee of the project was held in Strasbourg in a hybrid format.

- **AP CoE Project “Supporting the transparency, inclusiveness and integrity of electoral practice in Ukraine – Phase III”** provided technical support to the online platform “CEC: prosvita” continuously ensured. Broad consensus reached among key national stakeholders how to improve legal framework on multi-level governance and elections in light of European standards and good practices as result of High-level dialogue held on 8 – 9 November. Consultancy to CEC and profile Parliamentary Committee provided on war related election challenges. Reports on political parties’ functioning and gender balanced political participation in war and post-war period produced. The Supreme Court judges’ knowledge enhanced on the ECHR case-law on election matters and post-war election challenges.

- **AP CoE Project “Strengthening local democratic governance in Ukraine”** promoted the findings of the survey on the needs and priorities of local authorities of Ukraine related to the provision of services in times of war and post-war recovery. Based on responses of 241 local authorities and focus groups meetings, key results shows that the local level (63% for mayors and 60% for councils) enjoys the highest public trust after state and civil institutions responsible for security. At the third meeting of the Platform for National - Local Dialogue, 83 representatives of local authorities, member of the Association of Ukrainian Cities (AUC), and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine jointly identified approaches to co-creation in recovery responses and within the new Action Plan for the Implementation of the Open Government Partnership Initiative 2023 – 2024. The promotion of deliberative democracy, youth engagement at local level and the development of a network of civic hubs, were also presented. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Congress, the Open Government Partnership (OGP) and the AUC setting the frame for deepened co-operation, further promotion of co-creation for better local policies, and exchanges of tools and resources.

- **AP CoE Project “Strengthening civil participation in democratic decision making in Ukraine”:** as a result of the project expert and methodological support, the 3-year municipal programme on promotion of volunteer activities, developed in the framework of the CoE project, was adopted by Lviv, Zvyahel and Mukachevo city councils. The Programme creates a wide range of opportunities for the volunteer communities of the municipalities - the local authorities will provide legal, psychological, promotional, logistical, and other support to volunteer organisations and individual volunteers. Zviahel and Zhovkva city councils adopted the civic engagement mechanism, enabling and empowering IDPs to participate in the local decision-making. The participatory processes around the development of the community multi-year Strategies of Zhovkva and Novoyavorivsk territorial communities (Lviv region) were finalised: the results and draft strategies were presented to the local partners. Moreover, the project monitored the implementation of the Strategy of Khmelnytskyi city territorial community and supported the participatory development of proposals and recommendations as regards the implementation plan of the Strategy for the year 2023. 40 local officials from selected municipalities strengthened and enhanced the engagement of representatives of CSOs, activists, residents in the process of the development of policies and decisions through 3-week Academy of civic engagement in the decision-making at the time of war. The project launched the development of a methodological tool on monitoring and evaluation of participatory decision-making process that will be piloted in 2023. More than 60 representatives of local, regional and national authorities, CSOs, experts participated in the final meeting of the project aimed at summing up the results of its implementation in 2021-2022, receiving feedback and evaluation from partners, discussing further plans and initiatives.

- **AP CoE Project “Protecting national minorities, including Roma, and minority languages in Ukraine” – Phase II:** the expert opinion on the draft law on National Minorities (NM) was prepared and discussed on 7 November 2022. The meeting was organised in Strasbourg and attended by the First Deputy Speaker of the Parliament of Ukraine, Ukrainian institutions and the Council of Europe’s General Directorate of Democracy and Human Dignity together with experts and other members of the secretariat. Expert and technical support was provided to the working group on the draft law on NMs. The project supported an online consultation with the NMs to discuss the draft law on NMs, 54 participants attended the online consultation. In December, the CoE experts provided follow-up comments to the registered draft law on NMs. About 30 representatives of the national minority NGOs attended the online presentation of the study “Ethnic minorities and communities: The key to public participation and trust”, prepared by Melitopol Local Initiative Group of NMs. From 6 to 8 December 2022 the project held meetings with national stakeholders to summarize results of the implemented projects and discuss possible activities and ways of cooperation under the new thematic

projects within the new CoE Action Plan for Ukraine “Resilience, Recovery and Reconstruction” (2023-2026). 9 grantees provided their financial and narrative reports.

• **AP CoE Project “Human Rights Compliant Criminal Justice System in Ukraine”:**

From 14 to 17 October 2022, the Project organised the visit of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, Andrii Kostin, to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. The Council of Europe's support to the public prosecution service of Ukraine in the context of the Russian Federation's military aggression against Ukraine was at the core of the discussions. On 13 October 2022, an online expert discussion on the applicable standards under the European Convention on Human Rights to trials in absentia as well as peculiarities of trials in absentia in war-related criminal proceedings in Ukraine was organised with the participation of the members of the Council of Europe Expert Advisory Group to the Office of the Prosecutor General and the prosecutors of the War Crimes Department of the Office of the Prosecutor General. On 28 October 2022, an information session on OSINT was conducted for the prosecutors of the War Crimes Department of the Office of the Prosecutor General. On 3 November 2022, the Council of Europe presented the draft Expert Analysis of the Disciplinary Practice of the Body in Charge of Disciplinary Proceedings within 9 Months of Work (2021-2022) to the members of the Body in Charge of Disciplinary Proceedings and its Secretariat. In cooperation with the National School of Judges of Ukraine and the Prosecutors' Training Centre of Ukraine, methodological recommendations for judges regarding consideration of cases on conflict-related sexual violence were developed and then presented during the webinar for judges and prosecutors held on 28 November 2022. On 6 December 2022 the Council of Europe supported the Conference on the training as an element for introducing unified approaches in investigation of war crimes which was co-organised by the Prosecutors' Training Centre of Ukraine (PTCU) along with the JustGroup. On 14 December 2022, the Project co-organised JustConf 2022 (see above). A presentation and discussion of the report “Application of Pre-Trial Detention and House Arrest in Ukraine” was organised on 14 December 2022. Office IT equipment (worth of about EUR 228,000) was procured for the War Crimes Department of the OPG to support the interviewing processes within the investigation of gross human rights violations in times of war; the procurement was done in response to the request of the OPG. Grant to promote non-coercive interview standards in the criminal justice system in Ukraine was implemented via NGO JustGroup in cooperation with the Prosecutors' Training Centre of Ukraine. On 29-30 September and 17 October 2022, the Project supported a facilitation session on the process of planning and implementation of the training for 17 employees of the Prosecutors' Training Centre of Ukraine. On 21 November 2022, a webinar on derogation from the obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights in the context of armed conflicts was held for judges and prosecutors; the webinar was organised in cooperation with the National School of Judges of Ukraine and the Council of Europe Project “Support for judicial institutions and processes to strengthen access to justice in Ukraine”. On 8-9 December 2022, the Council of Europe supported a two-day session on effective business communication for the staff of the Prosecutors' Training Centre of Ukraine. The HELP course on Procedural Safeguards in Criminal Proceedings and Victims' Rights was translated into Ukrainian and made available for public access. A Guide on Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights was translated into Ukrainian and published on the website of the European Court of Human Rights. The project contributed to the update of the HELP e-learning course on Prohibition of Ill-treatment has been provided.

• **AP CoE Project “Supporting constitutional and legal reforms, constitutional justice and assisting the Verkhovna Rada in conducting reforms aimed at enhancing its efficiency. Phase III”:** during the 4th quarter of 2022, the focus of the work of the project was on studying the needs of our main project stakeholders in connection with the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine. During the specified time, the project paid

attention to assistance to the Constitutional Court, as well as to the specialised committees of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. The European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission of the Council of Europe) during its 132nd Plenary Session on 21-22 October 2022, adopted a Joint Amicus Curiae Brief on Certain Issues Related to the Election and Disciplinary Responsibility of Members of the High Council of Justice. On July 1, 2022, the Acting Chairman of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine, Mr. Serhiy Holovaty, addressed the Venice Commission with an amicus curiae request regarding certain issues related to the election and disciplinary action of members of the Supreme Council of Justice of Ukraine. The request of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine to provide an amicus curiae opinion refers to the Law of July 14, 2021 No. 1635-IX "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine Regarding the Procedure for Election (Appointment) of Members of the High Council of Justice and Activities of Disciplinary Inspectors of the High Council of Justice". The opinion of AMICUS CURIAE was prepared jointly by experts of the Venice Commission and the General Directorate for Human Rights and the Rule of Law of the Council of Europe. 8-10 November, experts of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe held consultations with national stakeholders regarding the evaluation and preparation of the Conclusion to the draft law No. 7662 "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine on Improving the Procedure for Selecting Candidates for the Position of Judge of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine on Competitive Basis". During November 8-10, the rapporteurs and experts of the Venice Commission held a number of meetings with officials of national authorities, representatives of public organizations, deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, judges of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine, the leadership of the Council of Judges of Ukraine and other interested parties.

On November 23, the European Commission "For Democracy through Law" (Venice Commission of the Council of Europe) adopted an Urgent Conclusion on the Draft Law of Ukraine "On Improvement of Certain Legislative Acts of Ukraine Regarding the Improvement of the Selection of Candidates for the Post of Judge of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine".

On October 10, 2022, the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Ruslan Stefanchuk, asked for an urgent opinion of the Venice Commission on the draft Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to Some Legislative Acts of Ukraine on Improving the Procedure for Selecting Candidates for the Position of Judge of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine on Competitive Basis".

This urgent conclusion was prepared based on the comments of the speakers and the results of online meetings with representatives of the Office of the President of Ukraine, individual judges of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine, representatives of the Committee on Legal Policy of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, as well as with representatives of the international community and civil society.

International Workshop in Supreme Court: "Constitutional Limits and Restrictions of Human Rights in Wartime: the Criteria for Determination in Administrative Proceedings" (Kyiv, December 2, 2022). The participants discussed the following topics: "Constitutional Semantics of the Limits and Restrictions of Human Rights in Wartime: Doctrinal Approaches"; "Human Rights Restrictions: Main Criteria and Grounds for Application". The project supported the high-level dialogue "*Good democratic governance in Ukraine: achievements, challenges and the way forward in post-war period*" (Strasbourg, 8-9 November 2022).

- **AP CoE Project "Support for judicial institutions and processes to strengthen access to justice in Ukraine":** In 2022 the project jointly with the CEPEJ supported assessment of the legislative initiatives on remote hearings to ensure safe conditions for the organisation of proceedings. The assessment has become the source of useful information for the national stakeholders in their attempts to adapt the legislation to the context of war. Besides, to facilitate overcoming of the challenges faced by the judiciary of Ukraine (numerous judges' vacancies, dysfunction of the institute of the disciplinary proceedings against judges) the project delivered recommendations as to optimisation of the procedures for selection and

appointment of the judges and disciplinary proceedings against judges in the result of the comprehensive analysis of the framework of Ukraine. The methodology on the assessment of the uniformity of the courts case law delivered by the project makes possible proper and timely assessment of the courts case law as to its uniformity. Besides, the project supported analysis of the practice of the courts of appeal based on the said methodology and the respective conclusions were transferred to the stakeholders. The Practical guide on remote court hearings in civil, administrative and criminal proceedings developed jointly by the experts of the CEPEJ and judges of the Supreme Court under the support of the project can serve the road map for the national judges in organisation of the proceedings in safe conditions for the participants and in line with requirements of Article 6 of the European Convention of Human Rights. Besides, in order to facilitate unified application of the cassation filters by the Supreme Court of Ukraine the project supported delivery of the Overview of the judicial practice of the Supreme Court which contains analysis of the judicial practice of the Supreme Court as to the application of the cassation filters in non-criminal cases for the period from 01.01.2020 till 31.12.2021 on the basis of 200 court decisions for each jurisdiction (commercial, civil and administrative) as to its unity and conformity with the CoE standards. The project provided the recommendations as to the improvement of the Standards on quality of the secondary free legal aid for civil, administrative proceedings. Monitoring of their implementation should be made during the forthcoming years. In order to facilitate the development of the mediation in Ukraine the project supported delivery of the Road map for implementation of the pre-trial mediation in Ukraine. In order to support renewal of functioning of the courts that were destroyed as a result of the military attacks of the Russian Federation the project delivered more than 150 items of the IT tools as requested by State Judicial Administration. The project supported the visit of the delegation including judges of the Supreme Court of Ukraine and judges of the courts of appeal (in total 7 persons) to the Supreme Court of Slovenia and the Supreme Court of Croatia (December 2022). A number of webinars on the CoE standards for the assistants of members of parliament and staff of the Parliamentary Committee on Legal Affairs were delivered to strengthen ability of the Committee to draft legislation and to examine drafts laws with due regard to the CoE standards. Finally, the project jointly with the National School of Judges of Ukraine (in December 2022) organised a round table dedicated to discussion of main achievements in implementation of the CoE standards and main challenges in the current context for the national stakeholders and judiciary.

• **AP CoE Project “Internal Displacement in Ukraine: Building Solutions – Phase II”:** A [thematic report of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights](#) (the Ombudsman) on the rights of war-affected people was developed, published and [presented](#) with the Project’s support. [A series of webinars on IDPs rights for legal professionals](#) was held in cooperation with the Coordination Center for Legal Aid Provision (CCLAP). As a result, 359 lawyers and free legal aid staff were trained on IDPs rights protection in line with Council of Europe standards. Relevant [learning materials](#) were finalised and uploaded to the CCLAP e-learning platform. Access to housing for IDPs and conflict affected people has been facilitated following the development of [a digital platform for the mapping and reconstruction of houses](#) destroyed or damaged as a result of the military aggression and piloting it at the community level. The Project provided in-demand IT equipment and software to strengthen operational capacities and to facilitate access to essential services for IDPs in partner communities (Kramatorsk, Berdyansk (displaced to Zaporizhiya), Tairove). [An assessment](#) of the long-term training on treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder and strengthening community and the effect of the toolkit “Traumatic events: psychological support and self-care” was finalised. The Project carried out a raising awareness campaign to promote the videos on IDPs rights and available services, as well as a national hotline for IDPs and conflict-affected people set up by the Commissioner for IDPs. The videos were disseminated through social media and regional TV channels and reached over 405 000 views.

- **Support to Safety of Journalists, Media, and to Access to Information, including communication strategy for Prosecutor General's Office in Ukraine**: the Draft Law "On Media" N 2693-d has been adopted on 13 December 2022 following extensive expert support provided by the Council of Europe projects. Two meetings with Ukrainian partners on implementation of the expert opinion on the Draft Law "On Media" were organised with participation of the representatives and experts of the Council of Europe and additional comments have been provided for further revision of the Draft Law "On Media". The high level [webinar on electronic evidence of war crimes and role of journalists, media and social media](#) was held on 25 November 2022. The office IT equipment was provided to the National TV and Radio Broadcasting Council of Ukraine to enable efficient operation of its staff relocated from the territories of active military actions and/or the temporary occupied territories. The Project finalised and disseminated on Facebook a series of infographics on digital safety of journalists and other media actors. The Council of Europe experts have developed the Guidelines on communicating gross human rights violations and war crimes and the Draft strategic communication strategy of the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine for the crisis period and provided expert support. Two Council of Europe experts provided advice to the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine on the modalities for regulating and creating mechanisms for encouraging the use of alternative formats of information support to ensure better access to information for people with disabilities.
- **AP CoE Project "Continued support to promoting social human rights in Ukraine"** published brochures on ensuring the social rights of the Ukrainians fleeing the war concerning 7 countries. Training on monitoring violations of social human rights in Ukraine during the war was conducted following development of guidelines on monitoring of social rights violations and documenting war crimes. Draft law on employment of persons with disabilities has been registered following CoE experts' engagement. Tutored HELP course "Labour rights as human rights" was held for 30 legal professionals. The Concept of the Social Code of Ukraine was developed and presented at the Meeting of the Working Group on Social Code Development.
- **PGG II Project "Strengthening measures to counter money laundering and financing of terrorism in Ukraine"**: (1) online training on anti-money laundering (AML) and counter-terrorist financing (CTF) supervision over designated non-financial businesses and professions; (2) online training on AML/CTF compliance for auditors and tax consultants; (3) online training on AML/CTF compliance for real estate brokers; (4) advisory session for the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine on improving AML/CTF supervision.
- **HRTF CoE Project "Ensuring the effective implementation of the right to a fair trial (Article 6 of the ECHR) in Ukraine"**: facilitated international expertise in producing the amicus curiae on the election and discipline of the members of the High Council of Justice, adopted by the Venice Commission in October 2022. Facilitated by the Project post-adoption review of Law No. 1629 and Law No. 1635 on their compliance with the Council of Europe standards in the sphere of judiciary and Venice Commission recommendations established that the majority of provided recommendations were taken on board. In November, the Project organised a webinar for 57 legal professionals (judges and prosecutors, 33 women, 24 men) about derogation from certain Articles of the European Convention on Human Rights according to Article 15 of the Convention made by Ukraine as a consequence of the military aggression by Russian Federation against Ukraine and the ECtHR case-law related to derogations. In November the CoE facilitated an analysis of the derogation from certain Articles of the Convention made by Ukraine which produced a set of recommendations for judges. The Project produced an overview of the practice of four member states of the Council

of Europe as to the functioning of the members of councils for the judiciary and plans to present the overview to key stakeholders.

• **AP CoE Project “Supporting Implementation of the European Human Rights Standards in Ukraine”:** the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine stipulated an active cooperation with the newly appointed Ombudsperson and his Office. A specific focus of cooperation was made on strengthening of the Ombudsperson’s Office capacity to prevent human rights violations and respond to the challenges related to reporting of gross human rights violations in the military context. In October 2022 a series of bilateral expert meetings with the newly appointed leading staff of the Ombudsperson Office were held in the CoE headquarters in Strasbourg. The positive effect of these exchange meetings resulted in preparation of the report on the current status and further steps in the development of the Office of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights. The report contains the findings on the current needs of the Ombudsperson Office as well as provides for a set of recommendations on priorities and feasible actions the Ombudsperson’s Office need to undertake to efficiently implement its mandate in the current circumstances. Among others, the special focus of the report was made on the institutional development of the Office, legislative gaps regulating the Ombudsperson functioning, its public outreach and external communication, and cooperation with NGOs. Special attention of the report was paid to the NPM underlining the urgent need to enable its functioning in full within the expanded mandate in correspondence with the current and emerging needs. Assisting the Ombudsperson Office to strengthen the NPM capacity to monitor human rights situation a series of trainings were organised for the new NPM staff members in December 2022. A special in-person training on specific aspects of the NPM work in the context of war was held for 20 NPM staff members representing different regions of Ukraine (Uzhhorod, Zaporizhzhia, Odesa, Khmelnytskyi, Kropyvnytskyi, Rivne, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kyiv and Lviv) in Warsaw, Poland.

Other relevant activities

- 151 news items were published on the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine’s website, including 39 from the HQs.
- Users have made 72208 visits to the website (+18% if compared to 2021), 119870 pageviews (+11.5%) and 89890 unique pageviews (+14.5).
- 39 statements and news items with key messages by Council of Europe leaders were translated into Ukrainian, published and disseminated during the reporting period, including 18 statements made on Russian air strikes against towns and cities in Ukraine, the attempted annexation of Ukrainian regions by Russia, on awarding of Nobel Peace Prize to human rights activists in Belarus, Russia and Ukraine, the importance of a 4th Council of Europe Summit, the adoption of the new Action Plan for Ukraine (2023-2026), and ad hoc international criminal tribunal to hold to account perpetrators of the crime of aggression against Ukraine, etc.
 - ✓ 6 by the Secretary General Marija Pejčinović Burić;
 - ✓ 5 by the PACE President Tiny Kox;
 - ✓ 3 by the Congress President Leendert Verbeek;
 - ✓ 2 by the Committee of Ministers under the Irish Presidency;
 - ✓ 2 by Commissioner for Human Rights Dunja Mijatović, etc.
- The Ukrainian media published more than 150 news items on the Council of Europe’s projects activities and key messages of the Council of Europe’s leaders on condemnation of the Russian Federation’s aggression and reaffirming support to Ukraine, including a round table on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the

implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights, a High-level Dialogue "Good Democratic Governance in Ukraine: achievements, challenges and the way forward in post-war period", the presentation of the digital platform for destroyed/damaged housing at the community level and recommendations to national partners, a record €50 million Action Plan for Ukraine for 2023-2026 "Resilience, Recover and Reconstruction", Ukraine's accession to the Council of Europe Development Bank, etc.

- During 1 October – 31 December 2022, 293 posts on the Facebook page of the CoE Office in Ukraine covering 264321 unique users were published. The number of followers of the Office Facebook page has increased to 6,651 (350 new followers).

During the reporting period, special information campaigns on Facebook were conducted:

- ✓ tips on how to receive payments and social guaranties for those who were injured during the performance of official, labor, professional duties and their family members, other victims. Also for those who lost relatives, and suffered due to Russian aggression against Ukraine;
- ✓ 16 days of activism against gender-based violence;
- ✓ social rights of Ukrainians fleeing the war (in the EU and CoE states)
- ✓ video tips for IDPs on how to receive legal and social support;
- ✓ tips on how to ensure digital safety for journalists;
- ✓ videos about five school co-workings funded by the CoE project on decentralization.
- As for the Twitter account in the same period: 254 tweets, 73 new followers, 13327 profile visits, 66400 tweet impressions. The number of followers has increased to 1245.
- During the fourth quarter, 11 weekly Newsletters (selection of news from the office and headquarters for the week, published on the website) in Ukrainian and English were sent. The recipients are partners, NGOs, media, embassies, etc. There are 411 persons in the contact list. Average statistics – 25-28 % reactivity.

Also, three monthly Updates were created during October-December 2022. These documents highlight the activity of projects of the Office of the Council of Europe in Ukraine. Updates are published on the Intranet in the "Ukraine: special file" section.

Sarajevo

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 7, project staff – 18, total staff – 25.

The Office implemented ten projects, of which five are funded through the EU/CoE Horizontal Facility (Phase II), while five are funded by voluntary contributions to the Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021 and to the Action Plan 2022-2025. 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 [Steering Committee](#) recognised the sustainable achievements in dealing with persons deprived of liberty across the custodial environment. Cantonal [Police Commissioners](#) committed to intensifying efforts to prevent and investigate allegations of ill-treatment. Ten [police officers](#) were accredited for peer training on human rights modules. A series of [audio podcasts](#) geared towards the general public were released. The [expert assessment visit](#) to the Sokolac Forensic Facility in November found more thorough documentation in risk and needs assessment and treatment planning. Grant agreements were finalised with entity Ministries of Justice to support the application of prison software.
- **EU/CoE HF 19 "Promotion of diversity and equality in BiH":** A roadmap and priority strategies to address hate speech at a systemic level were presented through the study "Mapping responses to hate speech in Bosnia and Herzegovina." Minority-language topographic signs - 49 in total - were placed in different municipalities, promoting inclusivity and affirming the visibility of minority groups in a positive manner. The first-ever LGBTI action plan to be adopted in Bosnia and Herzegovina was publicly presented. The TV broadcast of the ***Block the hatred. Share the love.*** campaign reached more than 1,700,000 viewers. The project assisted the Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs in planning and organising the first public debate with a view to adopting legislation on same-sex partnership.
- **EU/CoE HF 21 "Quality education for all":** Regional cooperation was reinforced through a joint meeting in Zlatibor between pedagogical institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and state educational institutions of Serbia. The analysis of history and geography curricula developed over the last two years by four education administrations (in primary schools and gymnasiums, a total of 14 curriculum documents reviewed) showed that the documents in question were partly in line with applicable recommendations. 29 pilot schools marked the "Democratic school culture month" through different activities, including a joint online chatroom for 70 pupils dedicated to Human Rights and Democracy.
- **EU/CoE HF 20 Project "Preventing and combating human trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina":** The capacity of 25 legal and 28 health care professionals in identification/protection of child victims of trafficking was enhanced through specialised trainings. At the XV Annual Symposium of Prosecutors, which coincided with European Anti-trafficking Day, legal experts built up competencies for investigating/prosecuting online exploitation of children. A delegation of 14 labour inspectors and police investigators visited

Belgium for a peer exchange on detection of labour trafficking. In addition, 27 spokespersons from institutions and NGO representatives completed a training on the protection of private life / personal data of human trafficking victims. Results of the action were presented to 22 stakeholders at the final Steering Committee meeting.

- **EU/ CoE HF33 Project “Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media in Bosnia and Herzegovina – JUFREX 2”:** The Study Analysis of defamation case-law in Bosnia and Herzegovina was produced and presented at the closing Steering Committee meeting. According to the research covering the period from January 2019 to March 2022, court decisions in defamation cases reflect a more consistent application of Council of Europe standards and the case-law of European Court of Human Rights. Around 60 court decisions of all court instances in Bosnia and Herzegovina were analysed (State Constitutional Court, the Supreme Courts in each of the two entities, and first and second instance courts throughout the country).

- **VC Project: “Ensuring Sustainable Penitentiary Actions in managing rehabilitation of violent extremist prisoners (VEPs) in Bosnia and Herzegovina (ESPA-VEP)”:** Representatives of the Ministries of Justice (State Ministry and the ministries of each entity) visited the Unit for Combating Violent Radicalisation of the French Prison Administration, for an exchange focused on good practices / lessons learnt as regards rehabilitation interventions and reintegration programmes. A needs assessment report, including recommendations for establishing training co-ordination mechanisms and harmonised curricula for staff working with VEPs in all three administrative jurisdictions, was presented to project beneficiaries. The second Steering Committee meeting was held, as were Working Group meetings to discuss criteria for prison intelligence units and single points of contact.

- **VC Project “Initiative for Legal Certainty and Efficient Judiciary in Bosnia and Herzegovina – Phase III”:** Through three trainings on legal reasoning of civil and criminal decisions, as per the new Human rights training curriculum of the CoE, 29 newly appointed and 16 in-service judges enhanced their judicial reasoning skills. As follow-up to two bilateral meetings of BiH authorities and the Execution department, preliminary steps were identified towards the execution of the *Hadžimejlić and others* and *Muqishta* judgments. Human rights clinics at the Law faculties of Banja Luka and Zenica were launched for 37 law students. The case-law department of the Supreme Court of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was reinforced with two legal advisers, which is expected to contribute to further harmonisation of judicial practice.

- **VC Project “Innovating democratic participation at local level in Bosnia and Herzegovina”:** Further to the recommendations of the 2021 Citizens’ Assembly, and with the financial support of the CoE, the City of Mostar organised an ecological awareness campaign, the “greening” of two school yards, as well as purchasing waste bins. Through two online sessions, 47 representatives of 19 local authorities increased their knowledge on public procurement. A member of the Mostar administration and two local councillors increased their knowledge and promoted the Mostar Citizens’ Assembly at the School of Deliberative Democracy (Estonia) and during the World Forum for Democracy (Strasbourg). A public call was launched to select a local authority to implement another deliberative process in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- **VC Project “Media and Information Literacy (MIL): for human rights and more democracy”:** A two-day Conference on Media and Information Literacy, gathering over 70 participants, was held during Global MIL week. Three texts were prepared for the benefit of the Communications Regulatory Agency (CRA): Guidelines for Development of Media Literacy

Policy in Bosnia and Herzegovina, a strategic paper on Improving the organisational structure and functioning of the Media Literacy Network in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and guidelines on Development of an Effective Communication Strategy. In addition, content for the MIL website was produced (including a video, infographics, leaflet, articles), to be published in January 2023. The project officially ended on 31 December 2022.

• **VC Project “Enhancing institutional capacities on freedom of expression and information in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EFEx)”**: A contract was concluded with an international consultant who is to provide support / capacity-building to the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees. During two missions, the project team and the consultant met with 15 institutions, international and civil society organisations active in the field of freedom of expression, as well as with representatives of the donor and the CoE Office in Sarajevo. The following activities were initiated: mapping of local stakeholders regarding monitoring / reporting on freedom of expression / freedom of information, assessment of training needs of representatives of relevant institutions / organisations, and creation of two working groups (on freedom of expression and of access to information).

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

• **JP EU/CoE “Promoting good governance and Roma empowerment at local level” (ROMACTED)**: In synergy with the NGO Otaharin, the programme successfully trained 84 municipal officials on antygypsyism, based on ECRI General Policy Recommendation N°13 on combating anti-Gypsyism and discrimination against Roma and the Strategic objective 1: Combating antigypsyism and discrimination and supporting real and effective equality as part of the CoE Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion (2020 - 2025). Twelve programme municipalities applied for small grants and for post-COVID recovery, making up a total of 24 applications. Three Local Action Plans for Roma Inclusion were developed and submitted to municipal Councils for adoption.

Other relevant activities

- On 12/10, the HoO addressed participants attending presentations of the LGBTI Action Plan and of the study mapping responses to hate speech.
- On 25/10 the HoO opened the Conference on Media and Information Literacy.
- On 10/11 the HoO addressed the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council regarding the development of a strategic document for improving security of judicial office-holders.
- On 15/11, DHoO addressed the Regional Seminar “Visible Value – Strengthening implementation of the European Youth Work Agenda in Eastern and Southeast Europe” organised by the EU-CoE Youth Partnership.
- From 17 to 21 October, a delegation of the Bern Convention carried out a first-ever on-the-spot appraisal in Bosnia and Herzegovina, concerning the impact of hydro-power plant development.
- From 14 to 18 November, an external Evaluation of Action against Crime was carried out with the aim of providing an independent assessment focused on the period 2018-2021.

Skopje

Situation of the Office

Core staff 3, Project staff 13, Total staff 16.

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

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

- **Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media in North Macedonia:** In October, the Action supported the Agency for Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information of North Macedonia (ASPI) in the organisation of the Third Regional Conference under "Initiative 2020" on Proactive Transparency and the Tromsø Convention. An analysis of the trends in the application of European standards in the case-law of Macedonian courts on Freedom of Expression and Safety of Journalists, covering the period between 1 January 2016 and 1 June 2022 was prepared, highlighting improvements in jurisprudence and identifying areas in which technical assistance could further contribute to the implementation of European standards. Based on mutual collaboration among the Action and the AJM, a prosecutor monitoring cases in which journalists are concerned had been appointed and a new Law on civil liability on insult and defamation was adopted. The second phase of the Action was finalised with a Closing event in Skopje.

- **Action on Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking in North Macedonia:** The Law on state compensation for victims of violent crimes, supported by the action, was adopted in November 2022. The action delivered a training on human trafficking for diplomatic and consular representatives, and 3 trainings on child trafficking prevention to the support centers for foster families and to kindergarten teachers. It finalized and distributed the Study on Trafficking in Human Beings in Macedonian, English and Albanian languages and a short video on human trafficking for labor exploitation. The visibility of the action was raised by a joint marking of the European Anti-trafficking day with the line Ministries and at a municipal event with a participation of the mayor. The last SC meeting was held on 16 December. The action will continue to build on its achievements in the phase III of the EU/CoE HF.

- **Campaign for Free Legal Aid (FLA) In North Macedonia, under HF12 project:** Under the HFII-12, 50 employees at the Regional Offices of the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (Centers for Social Work) were trained on access to justice in cases of domestic and gender-based violence. An assessment of the training needs of the Civil Society Organisations and Legal Clinics authorized for FLA was carried out, and a Training Needs Report was prepared. 60 lawyers successfully finished the HELP course on Violence against women and domestic violence. The Legal Needs Survey Report for North Macedonia had been finalized. The first part of the Software for appointment of ex officio lawyers has been finalized, as well as the Feasibility Study for establishment of one single management body for the FLA system, and the Legal Needs Survey Report. Five multifunctional printers/scanners were purchased and handed over to the Ministry of Justice, to improve their daily work.

- **Enhancing the capacities of the penitentiary system and the external oversight mechanism in North Macedonia:** An amendment of the collective agreement has been signed by the Ministry of Health and the respective trade union, which foresees salary increase

of 30% for the medical staff working in prisons following the legislative analysis designed by the Action, as well as the subsequent roadmap on improving healthcare in prisons. Eight doctors and medical personnel, alongside with ten prison officers enhanced their knowledge on mental healthcare management in prisons. In November, the applicability of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on healthcare provision was tested in the Skopje Prison. The External Oversight Mechanism (EOM) established regular monthly meetings. In November, the Ombudsman's Office received two digital cameras for registering evidence of alleged cases of ill-treatment. Posters were delivered to increase awareness on the EOM among sentenced and detained persons. The project staff had meetings with members of the Government Commission on Reform of the Judiciary to advocate for involvement of the civil society, internal coordination and to further enhance the capacities of the EOM.

- **Action on Promotion of Diversity and Equality:** During the reporting period in co-operation with the Football Federation of North Macedonia an event "Give Red Card to Hate Speech" was organized in the framework of FFM's Children's League, where participants wrote messages for love and against hatred. The Action published the Data Analysis on Hate Speech, and Hate Speech and the Anti-Discrimination Manual, organized two more workshops on Anti-Discrimination with Action ROMACTED phase II. 55 more lawyers completed the HELP course on combating racism, homophobia and transphobia. The Action also continued promoting the campaign Block the Hatred, Share the Love. The Recommendation CM/Rec (2022)16 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on combating hate speech was translated into Macedonian language and it will be published and promoted in the next phase of the Action. The Action officially closed with the Closing Conference: Looking Back and Moving Forward.

- **Action against economic crime:** In-depth ToT sessions were organized for representatives of the Training Unit within the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption. The Action also continued its support in assessing the money laundering and financing of terrorism risk of legal persons and legal arrangements. This activity resulted with a report based on the assessment, that is to be adopted by the authorities. Several trainings were organized for national authorities, but also for the NGOs and private sector, obliged entities by the Law on combating money laundering and financing of terrorism. The Action also supported authorities in developing a consolidated methodology for off-site supervision of the financial sector. High level round table discussion regarding the draft legal framework on non-conviction-based confiscation was organized on 25 November.

- **ROMACTED Programme phase II – implemented in North Macedonia in 15 Municipalities:** Local Action Plans and COVID 19 action plan – the latter by ten municipalities out of fifteen - for Roma were adopted. Analysis of the impact of private companies for employment over young Roma as obstacles to continue with further education has been completed as well as analysis on Roma returnees in 15 municipalities. Non-Governmental Platform on Roma Returnees has been established in cooperation with World Bank and UNDP. Situational testing of access to public goods and services took place in Prilep. ToT training and CAG workshop for legislation of persons without IDs were organized. In the area of nondiscrimination there were CAG training, workshop for teachers and students, ToT Training and Training for Municipal administration. Training for Municipal Administration for European funds and opportunities for financing projects was held. The first draft of Guidelines for Roma Responsive Budgeting at local level was drafted. Free Legal Aid Session with Municipalities was also part of the activities, in cooperation with HF 2 Programme.

Tbilisi

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 10, Project staff – 38, Total staff – 48.

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

- **EU/CoE PGG Project “Enhancing the Accountability and the Efficiency of the Judicial System and the Professionalism of Lawyers in Georgia”:** The GBA's adaptation course's theoretical modules are standardised incorporating main aspects of modern teaching syllabi. The study visit of Independent Inspector's office in the Portuguese Republic enabled the office to assess disciplinary regime in Portugal. With the CEPEJ's involvement the study visit for selected court managers organised in the Kingdom of Netherlands which served as a good step in improving respective courts' overall efficiency. Employee satisfaction survey, developed with the CEPEJ methodology, have been conducted in two pilot courts that collected insights on different work-related issues.

- **EU/CoE PGG Project “Enhancing the systems of prevention and combatting corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing” (PGG II-GE):** In Georgia, the Project trained: the Secretariat of the State Commission for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions on the local application of targeted financial sanctions; Supreme Court Judges on the adjudication of economic crime; members of the Anti-corruption Council Secretariat and its Working Group on the development of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and Action Plan; the financial sector to ensure anti-money laundering/countering financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) compliance. The local anti-corruption trainers from the State Security Service of Georgia instructed representatives of local municipalities in Adjara, Guria, Samtskhe-Javakheti and Shida Kartli regions on matters related to the fight against corruption.

- **EU/CoE PGG Project “Supporting the Criminal Justice Reforms. Tackling Criminal Aspects of the Judicial Reforms in Georgia”:** A total of 98 prosecutors and judges (33 women and 65 men) gained qualification on application of pre-trial measures, to better substantiate motions, in line with ECHR case-law, recent developments of court practice in relation to domestic violence, admissibility of evidence, and various aspects of fair trial standards. Protection of victims' and vulnerable persons' rights, the system of pre-trial measures and conduct of investigative actions have been identified as areas which should be paid special attention to during the ongoing criminal justice reform in Georgia, at the high-level conference on “Criminal Justice legal framework: Areas for further improvement and ongoing reform in Georgia.”

- **AP “Promoting an Integrated Approach to End Violence against Women and Enhancing Gender Equality in Georgia”:** Within the joint support of the project and UN Women and in cooperation with the Special Investigation Service (SIS) trainings on sexual violence crimes were conducted for 40 SIS investigators (8 women and 32 men). Within the same joint support training was organised on adjudication of sexual violence crimes for 15 managers and 2 representatives of Human Rights Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Moreover, project supported DataFest Tbilisi 2022 aiming at raising awareness on

gender equality and combating and preventing sexism and gender stereotypes. The festival hosted 824 participants (235 female, 217 male and 380 participants prefer not to say).

- **AP "Strengthening Freedom of media, Internet governance and Personal Data Protection in Georgia" SMIP-GE:** The regional conference "media in times of war" took place gathering up to 100 participants from the Eastern Partnership countries. The initial legal expertise on three inquiries related to the draft Law on Broadcasting was provided to the Parliament at its urgent request. While the Council of Europe recommendations were not reflected in the adopted Law on Broadcasting, the Parliament declared it is committed to change the Law following the final legal expertise expected from the Council of Europe in February 2022. A survey of the applicants, journalists and media managers was carried out as part of the development of the strategy of the Charter of Journalistic Ethics of Georgia. The annual conference "Georgian Internet Governance Forum" took place.

- **AP "Enhanced Access to Legal Aid Services for Marginalised Population":** The project started the development of a training module for managers of Free Legal Aid Bureaus with the involvement of national and international experts. With the support of the project the Justice Coordination Council involving judges, lawyers and prosecutors held two bench-bar meetings and developed recommendations to better protect the interests of children and victims of domestic violence during court hearings. The project started supporting the efforts of the Legal Aid Service to digitalise its services. The project is contributing to the development of the electronic consultation module in the field of labour law and supported the organisation of a conference on the integration of AI services into the justice system.

- **AP "Supporting Transparency, Inclusiveness and Integrity of Electoral Practice and Process in Georgia":** The Project promoted regional cooperation among election officials via the 10th International Annual Meeting of Election Management Bodies, an exchange platform proposing solutions to global challenges in a digital era. To enhance the quality of election observation, domestic observers improved knowledge of report writing, identified measures to counter the misuse of observer CSOs. At a roundtable meeting, electoral stakeholders discussed practical instruments to implement findings of the conducted study - Identifying Barriers to Women's Political Participation in Georgia. Staff of the State Audit Office worked on improving standards of personal data protection during oversight of political finance.

- **AP "Strengthening Protection of Social and Economic Rights in Georgia":** The second Donor Coordination meeting was held at the initiative of the CoE, with the aim to coordinate activities of different international organisations working on strengthening protection of labour rights in Georgia. A workshop on developing quality national reports on the implementation of the European Social Charter with the participation of different stakeholders was held. Submitting quality reports to the European Committee of Social Rights shall enable the Committee to provide comprehensive conclusions to help policy makers take better-informed legislative and policy steps.

- **VC Austria/AP "Strengthening participatory democracy and human rights at local level in Georgia" (PMM 2638):** At the 2nd meeting of the Forum of Exchange on human rights (HR) at local level, member local authorities discussed the findings of their capacities and needs Baseline Assessment. The mayors signed a declaration calling for NALAG to strengthen its advocacy within HR multilevel governance. The call for local initiatives on mainstreaming equality, diversity, and enhancing inclusion was launched. A NALAG Executive Board thematic meeting was held to support the development of its HR localisation strategy.

In an online workshop, around 75 representatives of local and national authorities, CSOs and PDO discussed the interrelation between HR governance and the environment.

- **VC Austria/AP “Strengthening participatory democracy and human rights at local level in Georgia” (PMM 2802):** A public consultation process for the development of the OGP local action plan for Ozurgeti municipality was conducted with the support of CoE experts applying the CoE “CivicLab” methodology. 18 CSO representatives gained in-depth knowledge and developed skills on how to organise the process of Citizens’ Assemblies (CA). Representatives of municipalities of Ozurgeti and Rustavi were trained to implement CA process. Focal points from 15 pilot municipalities and the staff of the MRDI Georgia were trained in civil participation methodologies. The 2nd coordination meeting with international organisations working in the field of civil participation was conducted.

- **EU/CoE JP “Support for a better evaluation of the result of judicial reform efforts in the Eastern Partnership” (Justice Dashboard EaP):** The 2021 data collection has been launched in November through the COLLECT platform, accompanied by a revised Questionnaire and Explanatory Note. The support to data collection is being provided upon request. The Steering Committee meeting, which took place online on 24 November, praised the 2020 Report and set the stage for reporting in the 2nd data collection cycle under the Project. The assessment of the capacity of each beneficiary to collect, process and transfer judicial data is underway, aiming at providing recommendations for improvements at countries and regional level.

- **AP “Human Rights Compliant Policing in Georgia”:** The project reviewed the detailed draft instructions, designed to facilitate communication of SIS investigators with victims and witnesses of alleged crimes, along with the instructions on application of special protection measures to victims and witnesses of crimes under SIS mandate. 40 investigators of the SIS enhanced their skills and techniques for interviewing juvenile victims and offenders. 80 police officers enhanced their knowledge on policing demonstrations and use of force during manifestations.

- **AP “Promoting the Effective Protection of Equality and Non-Discrimination in Georgia”:** The training on non-discrimination practices in private sector enabled the representatives of banking sector to deepen their knowledge on national and CoE standards and to exchange practical examples with the representatives of Public Defender’s Office. The workshop with the participation of the representatives of the Prosecutor’s Office, MIA and Judges enabled for multisectoral discussion of the challenges associated in investigating, prosecuting and adjudicating the hate motivated crimes, standards thereof and collection of statistical data. Trainings, informational sessions and public lectures were conducted on equality and non-discrimination and awareness campaign reached whole country in the scope of Equality Week. Opening event of the Equality week hosted high level public officials, Ambassadors, civil society.

- **AP “Enhancing Healthcare Provision in Georgia’s Penitentiary System”:** In the reporting period, the activities mainly contributed to the capacity building of around 160 members of the penitentiary and probation staff: five 1-day training sessions were delivered on Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT) in penitentiary institutions; two 3-day training sessions were held on managing acute mental health crisis, including first aid in case of suicide attempt and self-harm; two 2-day training sessions were held on Suicide Prevention with special focus on gender-specific issues and juvenile offenders. Also, a high-level inter-agency conference was held on the role of psychologists and social workers in the processes of rehabilitation and

resocialisation. This was the first ever event fully devoted to the topic in Georgia with participation of all relevant national authorities.

- **VC Switzerland/AP "Democracy Starts in Schools-Engaging School Children in Decision Making Processes in Schools and Communities in Georgia" (PMM 2767):**

In October, the project launching event/national conference "Role of Schools in Developing a Culture of Democratic Participation in Georgia" was organised. A group of national and international consultants developed an initial draft of methodological guidelines for student participation in decision-making processes. A local expert in research was contracted to develop monitoring tools and analyse the results of the first stage of piloting methodological guidelines - assessment visits. In December, the first phase of piloting was completed during which facilitators visited 20 schools in seven regions of Georgia to assess the state of student participation in schools and local communities.

- **AP "Developing a Drug Prevention Support Network for Parents and Professionals in Georgia":** The project started implementation of several key activities: Adaptation and development of the Self-Assessment Tool for people using drugs; Peer review of the Positive Parenthood Programme; Developing Standard Operational Procedures/Roadmap for specialists of the Referral Centre working with children age of 7-14 years old.

- **AP "Ensuring child-friendly justice in Georgia: preventing and protecting children from violence, including in the digital environment":** Important synergies and contact with local partners were made before the 1st Steering Committee meeting which took place on 3rd of November 2022, whereby the partners and the project team confirmed the project strategy and objectives and identified partners' needs. The parties referred to a lack of appropriate training for law enforcement officials, as well as of a lack of legislative clarity with respect to child grooming and absence of awareness raising concerning sexual abuse of children as some of the key challenges in the country. As the project implementation has just started in November 2022, it is not yet possible to measure the indicative impact.

- **Project "Strengthening Implementation of Human Rights Practices and Education in Georgia":** The Project actively worked with GBA to ensure that the HELP course and methodology is compulsory component within Professional Adaptation Programme which will provide potential lawyers with practical knowledge and advocacy skills and promote successful integration into the profession. The Project continued involving various partner universities by holding bilateral meetings and consultations on a regular basis for the inclusion of HELP in their curriculums. Hence, for the first time in Georgia, a number of local educational institutions (Iv. Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University, Alte University and Ilia University) started to apply HELP Methodology and online courses in university education with a focus on law students.

Follow up action (i.e. future actions)

- "Support for a better evaluation of the result of judicial reform efforts in the Eastern Partnership" (Justice Dashboard EaP): Proceed with support for the 2021 data collection cycle and quality check starting with January 2023; Proceed with capacity building activities, at country and/or regional level, where and as necessary.
- "Strengthening participatory democracy and human rights at local level in Georgia" (PMM 2802) - Organisation of Citizens' Assemblies in Ozurgeti and Rustavi in the first quarter 2023; public launching of the information campaign "I participate" in Tbilisi.

Council of Europe high level visits and other official delegations

- 15-16 November: Venice Commission delegation together with the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights carried out a visit to Georgia, under the Quick Response Mechanism, to assess draft amendments to the Election Code of Georgia and the Law on Political Associations of Citizens (CDL-REF (2022)057).

Tirana

Situation of the Office

The CoE Office in Tirana has 20 staff members (4 male/16 female) out of which 7 (4/3) are core staff and 13 (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**, a peer-to-peer exchange between the members of the Kosovo* Judicial Council and the High Judicial Council (HJC) of Albania was organized in Tirana. HJC finalized and adopted the CEPEJ recommendations on the regulatory framework for the implementation of the new judicial map. An online Human Resource Management platform was developed for the HJC, based on Action's recommendations on the internal rules and regulations as well as job descriptions of all categories of the court administration staff.
- Within the **HF II Action Enhancing the protection of human rights of prisoners in Albania**, a programme was developed to improve the management and treatment of high risk/violent prisoners. 22 multi-disciplinary staff increased understanding of their role in assisting disengagement of radicalised inmates and management of high risk/violent prisoners. 4500 prison staff are anticipated to benefit from the delivery of online initial and continuous trainings following the improved technical capacities of the Training Centre of the General Directorate of Prison. A step-by step approach was drafted to guide the implementation of the different processes pertaining to the initial screening, in-depth evaluation, design and monitoring of individual treatment plans for prisoners with mental health disorders.
- Within the **HF Action on Economic Crime in Albania**, the Albanian Central Election Commission was supported in developing an online platform to facilitate the monitoring/reporting process of the political parties and electoral campaign financing. The Minister of State for Standards and Services was supported in drafting two Explanatory Manuals for effective implementation of the Albanian Ministerial Code of Ethics as 38 political advisers of the Ministers' cabinet and the Prime Minister's Office were trained accordingly. 27 prosecutors and investigators from the Special Prosecution Office Against Corruption and Organised Crime, the General Prosecution Office and the National Bureau of Investigation enhanced their capacities on financial analytics and use of open-source investigations.
- Within the **HF II Action on Supporting effective domestic remedies and facilitating the execution of judgments (D-REX)**, relevant central and local authorities were supported in addressing a latest decision of the ECHR v. Albania concerning the segregation of Roma and Egyptian children. The meeting was jointly organised with the other Action "Promotion of Equality and Diversity in Albania". The 2nd regional meeting on harmonisation of judicial practice was organised in Korca with participation of 45 judges/ legal advisors from courts of Elbasan, Korca and Pogradec, in cooperation with High Court and High Judicial Council. The amendments to the Law 133/2015 "On the treatment of property and finalisation of the process of compensation of property" were decreed by the Albanian president.

- Within the **HF II Action on Promotion of Diversity and Equality in Albania**, the "Block the Hatred. Share the Love" campaign was successfully concluded with a No Hate mural painted in a prominent spot in Tirana. Video and awareness graphics continued to circulate and draw hundreds of viewers in social media. The annual conference of the People's Advocate, supported by the Action, focused on two CoE's Recommendations on development and strengthening of National Human Rights institutions (NHRI) and on the Hate Speech. 2 contact points will be appointed in every Local Police Directory in Albania to facilitate the process of reporting the domestic violence and hate crime cases. They will also ensure that the correct procedures are followed in line with European standards.
- Within the joint EU/CoE regional **ROMACTED Programme**, Local Action Plans on Equality, Inclusion and Participation of Roma and Egyptians 2022-2025 were approved by local councils in the municipalities of Lushnje and Gjirokastra. 233 Roma children in need for school package and bags were supported through the community initiatives in the municipalities of Cerrik, Korca, Fier, Vlora, Roskovec and Lushnje. Roma and Egyptian Responsive Budgeting at Local Level was presented at the Consultative Council meeting between central and local authorities in Albania.
- Within the Swedish Sida funded project on **"Strengthening Democratic Citizenship Education in Albania"**, 300 members of 25 School Development Teams of the second cohort trained in LEMON Course "Intercultural School Development". 5 courses dedicated to professional development of teachers were accredited by the National Agency for Quality Assurance of Pre-University Education System. The mobile exhibition Fake ≠ Fact, was launched in Tirana and travelled in 11 secondary schools in Devoll, Korça, Kavaja, Fier, Vlora reaching out to over 8, 500 students and teachers.

Yerevan

Situation of the Office

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

Currently, the CoE Office implements 13 projects: two national projects (Nos 1-3) and two regional projects (Nos 4&5) funded by the EU under the Partnership for Good Governance II (PGGII); and seven projects (Nos 6-12) funded by donors' Action Plan-level voluntary contributions, including one project funded by the Government of Austria (No 13). The Office also provides assistance with the implementation of activities of the HELP Secretariat (No 14) in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries. In addition to that, the Office provides support to MAEs in the implementation of other regional projects and activities.

The CoE Action Plan for Armenia 2019-2022 came to an end on 31 December 2022. Together with the Action Plan, the lifespan of six projects (Nos 6-11) funded by donors' Action Plan-level voluntary contributions also ended on 31 December; and one project was closed on 30 November (No 12). On 1 December, the implementation of the follow-up project on decentralisation (No 13) started.

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

- **PGGII Project - Component 1 "Support to the judicial reform – enhancing the independence and professionalism of the judiciary in Armenia":** Members of the Armenian judiciary and other legal professionals from different regions of Armenia took part in [a discussion](#) on the recent Opinion of the Consultative Council of European Judges (CCJE) No. 24 (2021) on the evolution of the Councils for the Judiciary and their role in independent and impartial judicial systems, presented by the CCJE President Anke Eilers, and increased their knowledge on the European standards. In co-operation with the Europe in Law Association, a [presentation](#) of the Armenian version of the book *"Taking a Case to the European Court of Human Rights"*, by Professor Philip Leach, for members of the Armenian legal community. The book is a valuable resource, as it provides comprehensive coverage of the law and procedure of the ECtHR. 300 copies of the book were published and will be further disseminated among educational institutions, courts and legal professionals.
- **PGGII Project - Component 2 "Support to the judicial reform - supporting the criminal justice reform and harmonising the application of European standards in Armenia":** In October- November, the project supported a chain of training activities on the new Criminal and Criminal Procedure Codes for members of the judiciary. As a result, 43 judges and 18 judicial servants received extensive training on the new legislation in order to ensure the codes' effective implementation. With the assistance of the PGGII, the Court of Cassation of Armenia created a new [website](#) with the goal of improving access to its decisions and increasing public trust and transparency in the Court's activities. The data on more than 1800 decisions of precedent nature of the Court of Cassation, dated from 2008 to 2022, was systematised and uploaded to the website's database with corresponding search filters. The Cassation Court's decisions are now available online, thanks to the website's launch on November 28. This is critical for the unified application of judicial practice.
- **PGGII Project "Strengthening institutional capacities to fight and prevent corruption in Armenia":** In order to support the efforts of the Armenian authorities in

aligning the national system to international standards and global and national challenges, the project delivered a [workshop on risk-based Anti-Money Laundering/Countering the Financing of Terrorism](#) (AML/CFT) supervision and management of virtual assets for 21 (6 male and 15 female) representatives of the Central Bank of Armenia (CBA) and its Financial Monitoring Centre (FIU). The training programme covered the latest relevant FATF guidance on the application of a risk-based approach towards virtual assets, the 5th EU Anti Money Laundering Directive and other standards providing a platform for discussion on current practices and challenges faced at the country level. The project was finalised and presented to national stakeholders with an expert review of the legal amendments related to virtual assets and virtual asset service providers in Armenia aimed at further enhancement and improvement of the draft in line with international standards and good practices. During the discussion, practical considerations of the supervisory authorities on the further improvement of relevant instruments and industry standards were raised to ensure that the draft amendments met the current practical context.

- **PGGII Project “Strengthening the profession of lawyer in line with European standards” (regional, decentralised project):** 35 lawyers and judges (17 men, 18 women) from Armenia, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine gathered online to discuss the CCJE Opinion No. 16 on the interactions between judges and lawyers in courts. The event provided a comparative overview of the laws and practises in the respective countries. It also serves as a forum for the initiation of a dialogue between two professions, the sharing of visions on possible pathways to improved co-operation through legislative reform at the national level, as well as strengthening the compliance of these professionals with relevant standards, including the Opinion No.16. The project also initiated a cross-country review on the impact of gender-related issues on the legal profession and on access to justice in the EaP countries, which is a CoE priority under the Gender Equality Strategy for 2018-2023 and will contribute to the identification of current challenges for equality in accessing the justice system and the profession of lawyer, as well as the impact of gender-based discrimination. Marking the National Lawyer’s Day in Armenia, the project supported an online event for Armenian lawyers on the CoE HELP platform (see page 48).

- **PGG II “Strengthening access to justice for victims of discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes in the Eastern Partnership countries”:** Two representatives of the Armenian Human Rights Defender’s Office (HRDO) took part in the regional seminar [“Addressing hate speech through improving data collection”](#) focused on data collection and analyses for policy-making. The event enabled a platform for enhancing knowledge on applicable European and other international standards, exchanging good practices and networking. The [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2022\)16 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on combating hate speech](#) was translated into Armenian and prepared for publication to ensure a better access to relevant standards to a wider range of national stakeholders. Commemorating both the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) and Human Rights Day and in co-operation with the HRDO Office, the project supported a discussion on [“Combating discrimination based on disability and health of the person”](#) during the Extended session of the Public Council on the Protection of the Rights of PwDs, which gathered together over 20 representatives from state institutions, civil activists with disabilities, other civil society members and experts, presenting recent ECHR case law on discrimination and the European Disability Strategy 2021–2030 aimed at promoting the full participation of PwDs in the social life.

- **Project “Human Rights and Women in the Armed Forces of Armenia – Phase II” funded by donors contributing to the Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019–2022:** The HELP Course "Human Rights in the Armed Forces" was launched and translated into Armenian; its adaptation to the local contexts is ongoing. The revised Human

Rights Course and its Teaching Manual, for the Military University of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) were developed, lectures trained, and the curriculum handed over to the University. The CoE also assisted the University in technically equipping the Human Rights Lecture Room, where this course will be taught using interactive learning methods. The draft amendments proposed by the MoD to the Disciplinary Code of the Armed Forces were assessed, and recommendations were provided for their further alignment with the CoE standards and good practices. 20 (12 women, 8 men) staff members of the MoD Social Protection Department enhanced their skills on social service delivery through dedicated training; gaps and deviations in the current work were identified to improve the quality of service in the future. To further support access to social rights and relevant benefits, a poster on "Military Pension" was developed, and 350 copies will be further disseminated among military units. The Manual on Social Rights and Guarantees of Women Military Servicepersons was finalised, with 300 copies published and to be disseminated within the MoD to enlarge the knowledge of women servicepersons, their management, and peers on the labour rights of women in the army, covering rights, additional social guarantees and existing limitations. A gender-sensitive poster "What do you know about military education?" was developed, explaining the equal access to education for girls and boys, and 450 copies will be disseminated by the MoD in high schools. It will be followed up by a pilot project in high schools to be held in 2023, with the final aim of expanding the promotion of women in the armed forces. A study visit to Sweden on disciplinary matters and the enhanced participation of women in the armed forces took place; the visit also became a platform for establishing closer co-operation between the two countries. The project implementation ended with a closing event, where, together with project results, the Comparative Study on Whistle-blower Protection in the Armed Forces of Council of Europe Member States was presented. It was followed by the final steering committee meeting.

• **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:**

The recommendations on the draft Law on Probation Service and several Government Decrees related to the field of probation were finalised and submitted to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). The Report on validating and improving the risk and needs assessment tool was produced and submitted to the authorities for future access. The e-probation management information system was finalised and presented to the leadership of the MoJ and the Probation Service. Necessary IT equipment (approximately EUR 51,000) was delivered to the Probation Service to ensure the smooth functioning of the e-probation system. Following the finalisation of the piloting process and assessment of its results, the general offender rehabilitation programme was revised by the consultants, and proposed amendments were shared with the authorities. Three vocational programmes for probationers were supported through the provision of relevant equipment and supplies. An animation video on the role of the Probation Service in the re-socialization of probationers was produced and handed over to the Service for awareness raising efforts among the population and criminal justice actors. The successful completion of the project was marked by a closing conference that was broadly attended by the project's key stakeholders and partners.

• **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:**

The software and hardware equipment for the electronic medical system and telemedicine solutions was installed at all ten penitentiary institutions in Armenia, ensuring paperless document circulation, a unified approach to documentation, and better access to quality health care services for inmates. A [therapeutic programme](#), developed through a grant scheme, was piloted at the Abovyan penitentiary institution to improve quality of mental health care for inmates. The expert recommendations on a draft Decree of the

Government of Armenia were developed and submitted to the MoJ to support smooth and effective transfer of healthcare services for inmates by the "Penitentiary Medical Center" SNCO, which should be moved from the MoJ to the Ministry of Health (MoH). Through a series of training activities, the medical staff of the penitentiary professionals improved their skills: 80 professionals benefited from four [training sessions](#) on medical ethics, organised with the CoE project on biomedicine (No.10), 104 professionals enlarged their knowledge on managing hunger strike through a human-rights lens; training was based on the Manual previously developed by the project. The successful completion of the project was marked by a closing event broadly attended by its key stakeholders and partners.

• **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:**

Training for police officers on improving their response to domestic violence (DV) cases continued: 50 police officers (16 women, 34 men) were skilled to ensure better protection of victims of DV. The baseline survey on DV, which included analyses of 80 DV cases opened between 2019 and 2021, was completed, and recommendations were made to improve Armenia's laws, policies, institutional and judicial responses to DV. According to the external evaluation, the project made significant progress in three of its four pre-defined immediate project outcomes or expected results, namely increased knowledge skills on DV/violence against women (VAW) and the Istanbul Convention among law enforcement and legal professionals, other public officials, social workers, and journalists, as well as strengthened capacity of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MLSA) to provide support to victims of DV / VAW based on the support received by the CoE. During the needs assessments, priority areas for future CoE co-operation activities in the fields of DV/VAW and gender equality in Armenia were identified. A closing conference and the final steering committee meeting were organised, where the key project results were presented in [a short video](#) and discussed together with the future priorities identified during the needs assessment.

• **Project "Protection of Human Rights in Biomedicine I", funded by donors contributing to the Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019–2022:**

The work on promotion of ethical standards in the field of healthcare has continued, and a number of training activities were organised for two Armenian Research Ethics Committees (REC) (14 members), the National Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (24 staff members); the Prison Medical Centre (80 staff members, see project No.8). A [discussion](#) on the international recommendations related to the legal basis of the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the healthcare sphere took place, whereas the related [Report](#) of the CoE's Steering Committee for Human Rights in the fields of Biomedicine and Health (CDBIO) was presented; as a follow-up, it was agreed to create a platform on AI in healthcare to adapt the legal framework to the local context. In facilitation of the Oviedo Convention and its Protocol's ratification, a [study visit](#) to Strasbourg was organized for six representatives of the MoH leadership to enhance their understanding of the CoE standards in the field of biomedicine and the work of the CoE Secretariat in this field. The support continued for the implementation of the [Nikolyan v. Armenia](#) ECHR judgement through a dedicated [discussion](#) on the revision of the legal incapacity system and shifted closer towards the supported decision making as proposed under the respective draft Government decision. The project held its [closing event](#), where, together with the project results, the legal analyses of the compliance of the national legislation with the Oviedo Convention and its Protocols were presented.

• **Project "Support for the Execution by Armenia of Judgments in Respect of Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights":**

The development of software for the interaction of the Office of the Representative on International Legal Matters in the context of the execution of ECHR judgements was finalised and followed up with training for the staff of

the Office. A distant learning course for the Academy of Justice on the execution of judgements was launched and is currently available for legal professionals. Two Guides on Re-opening of judicial proceedings in Armenia and on Article 6 (civil limb) were made available in Armenian, published, and distributed among the Project partners. The project's external evaluation was carried out and concluded recognising the successful implementation of the project. The implementation of the project was marked by the final Steering Committee meeting.

- **Project "Decentralisation and Cross-Border Cooperation in Armenia", funded by donors contributing to the Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia 2019–2022:**

The [cross-border cooperation activity organised in Akhaltsikhe, Georgia, on 17-19 October 2022](#) with the participation of respective Deputy Ministers from Armenia and Georgia, and representatives of neighbouring regional and local authorities from each state helped raise awareness of the legal framework and of the relevance of ratification of [Protocol 3 of the Madrid Outline Convention](#). 40+ stakeholders from local authorities, civil society, international organisations, and the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure met [in a public consultation](#) to discuss proposals for a new legislative framework for local self-government that reflects the realities on the ground following amalgamation helping to consolidate the decentralisation process.

- **Project "Democratic Development, Decentralisation, and Good Governance in Armenia, Phase II", funded the Government of Austria:** The follow-up project was launched on 1 December and is currently in its inception phase.

- **HELP in the EaP countries**

Three HELP courses were launched for pilots groups jointly with the respective CoE Projects and UNHCR and successfully accomplished by the majority of /all participants:

- HELP Course on "[Key human rights principles in bioethics](#)", 36 professionals.
- HELP Course on "[Alternative measures to detention](#)", 16 professionals.
- UNHCR/HELP Course "[Asylum and Human Rights](#)", 21 professionals and 10 students of the Yerevan State University Centre of European Studies.

Jointly with the PGGII regional project (No.4) and the Chamber of Advocates of Armenia, 96 lawyers participated in the [online presentation of the HELP platform](#). The translation of the HELP Course "Refugee and Migrant Children" into Armenian was initiated. Working meetings with the law academic institutions took place to establish co-operation in the field of human rights education for law students.

Follow-up actions

- As a follow up to the presentation of the [Media Needs Assessment](#) report, with the facilitation of the Office, the MoJ of Armenia applied to DGI with a request for expert opinion on the draft legislative amendments on media self-regulation. The consultations is currently underway.

Other relevant activities

- During the 133rd Plenary Session of the European Commission "Democracy through Law" (Venice Commission) two opinions were adopted in respect of Armenia:

- [Amicus curiae](#) Brief for the Constitutional Court of Armenia on certain questions relating to the Law on the Forfeiture of Assets of Illicit Origin, funded under the Quick Response Mechanism.
- [Joint Opinion](#) of the Venice Commission and DG1 on the draft amendments to the Judicial Code supported through the PGGII justice project (No.1).

Pristina

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 6, Project staff –19, Total staff - 25.

During the reporting period, the Office implemented 11 projects, 3 in the framework of the EU/CoE regional Joint Programme "Horizontal Facility II for the Western Balkans and Turkey"/South Programme", 1 EU/CoE Regional Joint Programme (ROMACTED), 2 EU/CoE Joint Projects, 1 funded by UNMIK, and 4 funded through non-earmarked voluntary contributions.

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

- **EU/CoE - HF "Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media (JUFREX)":** Five capacity-building activities for legal professionals and media actors which reached out to 88 participants (37 men/51 women) were organised. The NAR for the IaPA which provides an overview of the sector's needs and current technical assistance is compiled. The report considers CoE's role as the guardian of HR rights and relevant standards in the area of access to information and data protection. Partner institutions expressed their views on the implementation process as well as the needs and priorities for the future during the SCM. Law students Peja/Peć were taught about European standards on fighting hate speech and protecting freedom of expression. Action concluded 31 December 2022.
- **EU/CoE – HF "Ensuring Efficiency and Quality of Justice (KOSEJII)":** Based on the MoU signed in June 2022, around 70 e-summons were sent between the Court of Pristina and the State Advocacy, significantly increasing efficiency. A peer-to-peer workshop took place between the Kosovo Judicial Council and the High Judicial Council of Albania to discuss common challenges. The action finalised two reports with recommendations to improve the judge's performance evaluation system and the collection of statistics to better manage prosecution offices. Action concluded 31 December 2022.
- **EU/CoE – HF "Promotion of Diversity and Equality in Kosovo*":** On 9 October in cooperation with Municipality of Pristina and HandiKos a public event was organized in Pristina in the framework of the "Block the Hatred. Share the Love." Campaign - 23 media outlets reported on the event. On 14 November a regular meeting of the Advisory and Coordination Group for the rights of LGBTI communities took place. On 25 November, jointly with Office for Good Governance, a public event was organized and the first Monitoring Report on Implementation of Law of Protection from Discrimination was published. High level event, with participation of Deputy Prime Minister, Ombudsperson and Head of CoE Office took place in Pristina. On 9 December took place the Closing Steering Committee Meeting. Action concluded 31 December 2022.
- **EU/CoE – JP "Building Capacity for Inclusive Education" – INCLUDE:** 70 education professionals completed a ten-day training on inclusive education, assessment of students with special educational needs and individual education plans. 250 completed two workshops on creating a democratic and inclusive learning community. 80 resource centre professionals completed Day 1-2 of the Module I "Disability and Inclusive education". 6 resource centre music teachers completed WS on music therapy. The training programme on teaching methodologies on bilingual education (Albanian/Sign Language) was accredited by the MESTI.

Grants were awarded to two NGOs to implement mentoring for Roma students. MESTI approved the revised curriculum for teaching in the fields of activities.

- **EU/CoE – JP “Project against Economic Crime in Kosovo*” (PECK III):** A new Law No 08/L-146 on Implementation of Targeted Financial Sanctions was adopted on 9.12.2022, taking into account Project’s recommendations. The VC positively assessed in its follow-up opinion adopted on 16 December 2022 the Amendments on the draft law on the State Bureau for verification and of unjustified assets which were reviewed with the Project’s support. A Roadmap and Guidance for designing and implementing effective anti-corruption compliance programs was provided to the private sector. 26 officials (18 males; 8 females) from line ministries and other public administration bodies were trained on protection of whistleblowers.

- **EU/CoE regional JP “Promoting Good Governance and Roma Empowerment at Local Level (ROMACTED2)”:** A roundtable on Responsive Budgeting on Roma Ashkali Egyptian communities has been organized, a Policy Paper was presented and discussed with local and central authorities. An exchange visit to Prizren and Janjeve with Community Action Group members from Kamenica was organized. Roma language was recognized as language in official use in Prizren. This initiative was supported through project grant agreement. Guideline on Covid 19 socioeconomic recovery was prepared in cooperation with Ministry of Local Government Administration. Grant award on small action and Covid 19 recovery measures has been launched with 10 beneficiary municipalities. In this light, 20 project proposal were submitted.

- **VC non-earmarked “Preventing and Combatting Trafficking in Human-beings”:** Starting from October 18, EU Anti-Trafficking Day, the project supported a month-long awareness raising campaign against human trafficking. Among diverse outreach activities, around 700 children throughout 6 regions received lectures and educational materials on how to identify, prevent and report human trafficking, as well as provide support to victims of trafficking. During this quarter, the project facilitated the process of drafting Administrative Instruction for the database on victims of trafficking and School/Teachers Manual on prevention of human trafficking.

- **VC non-earmarked “Support to the Constitutional Court in applying and disseminating the European Human Rights Standards”:** Project organized two thematic workshops with judges and legal advisors of the Constitutional Court including Effective Processing of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, European Standards and Practice, and the Right to Effective Legal Remedy – Standards and Practice of the European Court of Human Rights. The project completed the assessment of Business Requirements for the Grant Agreement with Constitutional Court on purchase and installation of IT equipment and software. Two legal advisors of the Constitutional Court completed two-month placements with European Court of Human Rights in mid-November. The survey on users’ satisfaction with services provided by the Constitutional Court was launched. HELP course on Judicial Reasoning and Human Rights was translated in Albanian language.

- **VC non-earmarked “Reinforcing the Fight against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in Kosovo* - phase III”:** The report on alignment of Kosovo’s laws, policies and other measures with the standards of the Istanbul Convention which followed the GREVIO methodology, was published on 24 November. Curriculum for the training of professionals working on perpetrator programmes developed with the support of the project was adopted and launched by the Ministry of Justice. Two Training of Trainers (ToT) were organized on the respective Curriculum, in total 39 duty-bearers successfully completed the ToT (32 women and 7 men). In cooperation with CoE project ROMACTED II and the Ministry

of Justice, the project organized a roundtable discussion on “Domestic mechanisms on combatting the violence against women and domestic violence – needs and possibilities for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities”. The HELP course “Access to Justice for Women” was launched.

- **VC non-earmarked “Improvement of the treatment of persons deprived of liberty”**: Project launched 1 October 2022. On 22 November the launching event of the project took place, followed by the first project steering committee (SC), where the SC members and observers were presented and the overall project workplan was presented. During the same meeting the first 6-month work plan was agreed upon and approved by the SC members. On 19-22 December, an assessment mission on the provisions of mental healthcare in all places of detention and assessing the mental health protocols of the Prison Health Department, including the Standard Operating Procedures, was conducted throughout Kosovo*.

- **VC earmarked “Promoting Human Rights and Non-Discrimination Principles at the Local Level”**: During the reporting period the set of training on monitoring and reporting skills were organized in three different regions covering 11 municipalities and 39 trained municipal officers. On 27-28 October took place the training in Gjilan/Gnjilane with 16 participants in total, from which 15 anti-discrimination officers from Municipalities of Gjilan/Gnjilane, Vitia/Vitina, Kamenica and Novoberda/Novoberdo, and 1 legal officer representing the OiK regional office. On 8-9 November took place the training in Prizren with 13 participants in total, from which 12 anti-discrimination officers from municipalities of Prizren, Dragash/Drigas, Rahovec/Orahovac and Shtime/Shtimlje, and 1 legal officer representing the OiK regional Office. On 15-16 November the training was organized in Peja/Pec with 10 anti-discrimination officers from municipalities of Peja/Pec, Kline/Klina, Istog/Istok.

Follow up action (i.e. future actions):

- PECK III: International Conference on regulating and supervising virtual assets – Trends and development is planned on 28 February 2023. It is expected that this event will inform the Assembly of Kosovo in the drafting process of the new law on Crypto assets.
- Improvement of the treatment of persons deprived of liberty: The assessment mission will be followed by relevant working group meetings planned for February and March 2023.

* 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.

Rabat

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 3, Project staff – 7 (including 1 on maternity leave), Total staff – 10.

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

State of implementation of projects

- **Joint EU/CoE project “Support to the National Preventative 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 26 to 28 October, a seminar was held in Rabat on the “Evaluation of laws by the parliamentary institution – case of Law 103.13 on Combating violence against women”.
- On 28 and 29 November, a study visit to the Italian Parliament was organised on the theme of opening Parliament to citizens.
- On 5 December, a study meeting on the role of parliamentarians in combating violence against women was hosted by the Kingdom of Morocco’s House of Representatives.
- In December, a service provider was selected (via a tender procedure) to redesign and relaunch the website of the Parliament’s House of Councillors. The report of the conference of 13 July 2021 on “Women in politics: how to progress towards equality?” was also published. The “Handbook for parliamentarians on the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women” was translated into Arabic.

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

- On 5 and 6 October, representatives from the National Human Rights Council (CNDH) and the NPM participated in the European Conference of NPMs held in Strasbourg. Under the theme of “Monitoring the rights of specific groups of persons deprived of their liberty”, it was aimed at providing tangible and operational solutions to NPMs while zooming in on the particular features of monitoring the detention conditions and treatment of various groups of vulnerable persons deprived of their liberty.
- On 11 and 12 October, a technical support workshop on improving the drafting of visit, monitoring and thematic reports was held for members and officials of the Moroccan NPM.
- On 24 and 25 October, an interpersonal communication capacity-building workshop was held for NPM members and officials in Morocco with a view to improving their communication skills for visits, in particular when meeting officials and staff working at places of deprivation of liberty and persons deprived of liberty, and optimising the communication process from A to Z.
- On 22 and 23 November, a member of the National Human Rights Council attended the international symposium of the National Authority for the Prevention of Torture in Tunis.
- On 13 and 21 December, a meeting was held to present the recommendations from two technical support workshops on improving report writing and on increasing the efficiency of preventive visits to child protection facilities.

• **EU-CoE programme “Protecting human rights, the rule of law and democracy through shared standards in the Southern Mediterranean” (South Programme V)**

HELP Programme / Combating violence against women

- On 29 November, the new online HELP course for law enforcement officers on violence against women and domestic violence was released.
- On 8 December, the Council of Europe and the Higher Judicial Institute held a HELP programme awareness-raising workshop on combating violence against women and domestic violence at which justice officials were awarded their certificates for completing the course.

Combating violence against children

- On 3 and 4 November, a training workshop for about 20 teachers on dealing with harassment and cyberbullying in schools was held by the Ministry of National Education, Preschool and Sports and the Moroccan Centre for Polytechnic Research and Innovation (CMRPI), with Council of Europe support.
- On 22 November, the CMRPI (in partnership with Genius Programme directors from the Ministry of National Education, Preschool and Sports, and with Council of Europe support) held workshops on introducing standard protocols for dealing with cyberbullying cases in schools in urban and rural areas for teachers from Rabat-Salé-Kenitra and Marrakech-Safi regional education and training academies (AREFs).
- On 1 December, the second “National campaign to prevent cyberviolence and cyberbullying” was launched with a conference held under the aegis of the Ministry of Digital Transition and Administrative Reform and the CMRPI, in partnership with the Council of Europe.
- On 13 December in Rabat: a technical round table on reporting cyberviolence against children and young people was held by the CMRPI, in partnership with the Council of Europe, to emphasise the importance of reporting mechanisms in combating cyberbullying and cyberviolence against children and young people and to join up the efforts of all stakeholders, including the General Directorate of National Security (DGSN), the Gendarmerie, the Ministry of Justice and the Presidency of the Public Prosecutor’s Office.
- On 15 December 2022: Young people from “Morocco Cyberconfidence Space Youth” (EMC-Youth) ran an awareness-raising session for young secondary school students from Exupéry school in Rabat on best practices and advice for reporting and combating cyberbullying and cyberviolence. The event was organised by the CMRPI in partnership with the Council of Europe.

Cybercrime

On 24, 25, 27 and 28 October, training workshops were held in Tangier and Fez on mechanisms for international co-operation on cybercrime under the Budapest Convention.

Venice Commission

- On 23 and 24 November, the 16th UniDem Med Seminar on “The digital transformation of public administration” was held in co-operation with the Ministry of Digital Transition and Administrative Reform.

Trafficking in human beings

- From 23 to 30 October, the Bureau took part in a regional simulation on the referral of victims of trafficking in human beings that was held in the Republic of Malta.

Council of Europe high-level visits and other official delegations

- On 19 October, the President and the Director of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities visited the Moroccan Parliament and participated in the 4th Parliamentary Forum of Regions, which was on the theme of the "Institutionalisation of the Contractual Approach: Fundamental pillar for the acceleration of advanced regionalisation implementation".

Tunis

Situation of the Office

Core staff – 6, Project staff – 14, Total staff - 20.

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 "Protecting human rights, the rule of law and democracy through shared standards in the Southern Mediterranean" (South Programme V)
- EU/CoE JP "Cybersouth"

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):

- No activities are implemented with the ISIE due to the political context. Cooperation and contacts have been on stand-by since the publication of the Venice Commission opinion (27 May 2022) on the constitutional and legislative framework of the referendum and elections and in particular on the Decree-law No. 22 of 21 April 2022, amending and supplementing the Organic Law on the ISIE.

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

- The audience of Radio El Madra FM had the opportunity to meet the journalists of their local media in Ras Jebel on 5 November 2022. This public information and awareness day was organised as part of a series of training and awareness-raising activities on "fact-checking" implemented in cooperation with the HAICA, the National Syndicate of Tunisian Journalists with an aim to strengthen local radio stations. By the end of the year 2022, 9 radio stations have already benefited from the training and a total of 17 operational local radio stations, which are licensed by the HAICA, will be covered by the end of the first quarter of 2023.
- On 18-19 November 2022, the 5th edition of the training on access to information was held in cooperation with INAI in Tozeur for the attention of public institutions from four governorates of South-West Tunisia: Tozeur, Kebili, Gafsa and Sidi Bouzid.
- Preparations continued 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. It will be completed in the first quarter of 2023.

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

- A guide "Reconciling the right of access to information and the protection of personal data" was launched jointly with the INPDP and the INAI on 5 October 2022. This guide aims to facilitate the task of public officials when making decisions that affect both these fundamental rights and is the first tool of its kind on both shores of the Mediterranean. The launching event was organised as a regional event and gathered up to 60 participants from the French speaking partner countries in the region and beyond, including l'AFAPDP (*L'Association francophone des autorités de protection des données*).

➤ **Fight against trafficking in human beings / support to the national body combating human trafficking (INLTP)**

- A regional simulation exercise entitled "Trafficking in human beings on migration routes" was held in Malta on 22-29 October 2022 in close collaboration with the joint EU/CoE South programme V (see below) and the Foreign Ministry of Malta. As a first event of this scope in the region, it gathered more than 90 participants from Algeria, Belgium, Egypt, France, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Morocco, Palestine*, Portugal, Senegal, Tunisia, United Kingdom representing national authorities responsible for the fight against trafficking in human beings (THB), the police, prosecutors and lawyers, NGOs, consular services, and medical staff. It focused on skills to detect, identify and refer victims of THB according to a victim-centred and human-rights based approach.

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

- As a result of an intensive "FormaCtion" training 8 new INPT members were trained in monitoring of places of deprivation of liberty. Held on 3-7 October 2022, the training included an on-site visit to the Bouchoucha detention centre (Tunis) on 5 October 2022.
- As a follow-up to the "FormaCtion", a training workshop was held online on 3-4 November 2022 to accompany the new members of the INPT in the drafting of their visit report to the detention centre of Bouchoucha (Tunis).
- The PAII-T provided supported the INPT in the organisation of its annual international colloquium entitled "Problem on impunity: causes, manifestation and solutions" held in Tunis in a hybrid format on 22 November 2022.
- Based on a comparative study prepared in 2021, preparatory work continued with INPT for the drafting of a road map for the establishment of a "pôle saisine" aiming to improve the collection and processing of referrals.

➤ **Fight against corruption and money laundering:**

- Two Training of Trainers (ToT) sessions on Prevention and fight against money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CTF) were organised on 25-28 October 2022 in close collaboration with the Tunisian Financial Analysis Commission / Tunisian FIU (CTAF). The training targeted private sector actors including real estate agents, notaries and the staff of the Land Property Registry in charge of legal drafting as well as their supervisory authorities.
- A workshop on corruption proofing of legislation "Towards a methodology for corruption proofing in Tunisia" was organised on 26-28 October 2022, in close

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

collaboration with the Services of the Legal Advisor and Legislation at the Presidency of the Government. It brought together several directorates of the Presidency of the Government, legal affairs directorates of more than 15 ministries, representatives of the Presidency of the Republic as well as academics. Corruption proofing of legislation is one of the relevant tools to prevent corruption and Tunisia would be the first country in the region to adopt such an approach.

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

- 4 decentralised trainings sessions have been organised in Hammamet, Tabarka, Sousse and Sfax for clerks on the measures and the procedures to protect data and documents in courts.
- The HELP module on mediation is in its final stage of development.
- CEJJ website has been updated and is operational whereas the Electronic Document Management is to be finalised before the end of 2022 and six months of decisions from various jurisdictions have been selected, digitalised and anonymized.
- The latest printed version of the Etude sur le Droit Commercial have been received and is currently revised according to Council of Europe visibility rules. A final review of the French and Arabic version is undertaken according to the new Tunisian Constitution.
- The capitalization/evaluation study of the projects developed by *Association Femme et Citoyenneté*, *Avocats sans frontières*, *Terre d'asile* was completed.
- The implementation of wires and switches started and 3 courts (TPI Guebili, TPI Tataouine, TPI Tozeur) have been equipped.

Joint Programmes

• **EU/CoE JP "Protecting human rights, the rule of law and democracy through shared standards in the Southern Mediterranean" (South Programme V):**

- The first regional simulation on the protection of victims of trafficking in human beings organised in Malta in October 2022 (see above under PAII-T/INLTP) was a step towards creating a regional pool of Southern Mediterranean experts in this field. The simulation will be followed up by HELP training sessions in January-February 2023 for selected experts and a series of other regional simulation exercises to be organised on prevention, protection, prosecution and partnership during 2023-2025.
- Organised by the Venice Commission in co-operation with the Ministry of Digital transformation and administration reform of Morocco, the 16th UniDem Med Seminar entitled "The digital transformation of public administration" gathered 80 international experts and senior public officials from the Southern Mediterranean (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Palestine*and Tunisia) on 23-24 November 2022.
- On 3-4 November, a second two-day training course on dealing with harassment and cyberbullying in the school environment was organised in cooperation with the Ministry of National Education, Pre-school and Sports and the Moroccan Centre for Polytechnic Research and Innovation (CMRPI). 25 teachers from the Marrakech region were trained.
- On 8 December, an awareness-raising workshop on combating violence against women and domestic violence was organised in partnership with the *Institut Supérieur de la Magistrature* in Morocco. It aimed to build the capacity of the judicial officers and to officially certify those who have completed the HELP course on combating violence against women and domestic violence, adapted to the Moroccan national context and launched in September 2022.

- The South Programme V continued dialogue and assistance for the ratification of Council of Europe convention by the Southern Mediterranean partners, in particular with Tunisia which has been invited to adhere to the Medicrime Convention, the Action against Trafficking in Human Beings Convention, the Budapest Convention, the Istanbul Convention and which has also showed interest for the Tromsø Convention on access to information. Moreover, Moroccan authorities requested further activities in the scope covered by Lanzarote and Istanbul Conventions, with a view to a future accession.
- The South Programme V supported the participation and contribution of Moroccan experts to the 22nd plenary meeting of the Gender Equality Commission organised on 16-18/11/2022 in Strasbourg, as well as students of the Moroccan School of Political Studies in the 2022 World Forum for Democracy "Democracy: A New Hope?" held in Strasbourg on 7-9 November 2022.