

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Highlights 2019



Human rights,
democracy and
the rule of law



Activity report

COUNCIL OF EUROPE Highlights 2019

Human rights,
democracy and
the rule of law

Activity report

Sauli Niinistö,

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(Strasbourg, 23 January 2019)

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the Money", winner of the
Democracy Innovation Award
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(Strasbourg, 8 November 2019)

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(Strasbourg, 1 October 2019)

Emmanuel Macron,

President of France
(Strasbourg, 1 October 2019)

Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa,

President of Portugal
(Strasbourg, 26 June 2019)

French edition:

Points forts 2019

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Marija Pejčinović Burić,
Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Foreword

As this edition of the Council of Europe Highlights was being finalised, our societies were facing unprecedented medical, social and economic challenges due to the coronavirus crisis.

■ The Council of Europe's task is to assist our member states in making sure that the measures they take to fight the pandemic do not unduly risk the protection of our common European values of democracy, rule of law and human rights.

■ We are reminded of the foundation of these values this year which marks the 70th anniversary of the European Convention on Human Rights. 2019 – the year covered by these Highlights – marked the 70th anniversary of the Treaty of London in 1949 when the Council of Europe was founded. Since then, Europe has undergone tectonic shifts of its political and economic landscape, not least with the emergence and enlargement of the European Union.

■ The Council of Europe has maintained its own distinct role and place in the international institutional architecture. However, as many of the activities highlighted in this document demonstrate, the Council of Europe and the European Union now work together closely and in a complementary way in the interest of Europe's citizens.

Daniel Höltgen

Director of Communications

Spokesperson for the Secretary General



Transfer of the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers from Finland to France – **Amélie de Montchalin**, Secretary of State for European Affairs of France and **Timo Soini**, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland (Helsinki, 17 May 2019)

SEIL DE L'EUROPE



COUN



Transfer of the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers between France and Georgia – **David Zalkaliani**, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia and **Amélie de Montchalin**, France's Secretary of State for European Affairs (Strasbourg, 27 November 2019)

Committee of Ministers

The texts adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 2018 can be consulted at: www.coe.int/cm

The Committee of Ministers acts as the main decision-making body of the Council of Europe. It is made up of member states' foreign ministers or their permanent diplomatic representatives in Strasbourg.

During 2019, the Committee of Ministers was chaired by Finland until 17 May, then by France until 27 November and thereafter by Georgia.

The year was marked by the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe, celebrated on 5 May 2019, and commemorated by a solemn celebration in the presence of the President of the French Republic on 1 October. A re-enactment of the first Committee of Ministers meeting also took place in the Strasbourg City Hall.

■ The 129th Ministerial Session was held in Helsinki (Finland) on 16 and 17 May 2019, when the Committee reaffirmed the importance of the Organisation as a unique pan-European platform for dialogue and co-operation. It also enabled the Committee to take important decisions for the future of the Organisation with a view to ensuring respect for rights and obligations, principles, standards and values of the Council of Europe by all member states.

■ The Committee of Ministers reiterated its firm commitment to the **European Convention on Human Rights** (ETS No. 5, the Convention) and its unique system for the protection of human rights in Europe. It welcomed the positive results achieved since 2010, while noting with concern that the Convention system continues to face significant challenges, notably linked to serious or widespread violations, to systemic and structural problems of human rights in states parties and to the situation in unresolved conflict zones. The Ministers examined measures to secure the long-term effectiveness of the European Convention on Human Rights system.

■ In Helsinki, the Committee of Ministers also reaffirmed the importance of social rights across the continent and decided on measures with a view to strengthening the protection of human rights defenders and enhancing co-operation between civil society and the Council of Europe. It called for augmenting the Council of Europe's achievements by addressing major challenges (artificial intelligence, human trafficking, freedom of expression, inequality and discrimination, migration, social rights, combating violence against women and domestic violence), setting strategic objectives to meet the challenges ahead, ensuring the sustainability of the Organisation and continuing the ongoing structural and administrative reforms.

■ The Ministers held two informal working sessions entitled "Current challenges to the future of the Council of Europe" and "Fighting inequalities and protecting social rights in Europe".

■ Finally, the Committee of Ministers examined the Council of Europe's policy towards neighbouring regions and co-operation between the Council of Europe and the European Union.



Address by Pedro Sánchez,
Spanish Prime Minister, at a
Committee of Ministers meeting
(Strasbourg, 7 February 2019)

During its four specific human rights meetings devoted to the supervision of the execution of the judgments and decisions delivered by the European Court of Human Rights (the Court) in 2019, the Committee of Ministers closed its supervision of 2 048 cases, thus leaving 5 245 cases pending at the end of the year (compared to 6 152 cases the previous year). It also held a thematic debate on member states' obligation to investigate violations of Article 2 (Right to life) and Article 3 (Prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment) of the European Convention on Human Rights by law-enforcement officials.

During the year, the Committee held exchanges of views with the President of the European Court of Human Rights and with the Commissioner for Human Rights. It also made decisions regarding the selection and election process of judges of the European Court of Human Rights.

Important developments took place in other priority areas in 2019. The Committee of Ministers held two exchanges of views on the **European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT)**, which provided an opportunity to take stock of any good practices and encourage, as necessary, any further action that may be needed to achieve close dialogue and co-operation between the CPT and national authorities.

Regarding **social rights**, the Committee adopted a series of decisions mainly concerning possible reforms of the monitoring mechanisms of the European Social Charter (ETS No. 163).

In the field of **minority rights**, the monitoring mechanism of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ETS No. 157) was significantly reformed by Committee of Ministers Resolution CM/Res(2019)49 on the revised monitoring arrangements under Articles 24 to 26 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

The Committee of Ministers adopted two declarations in **the field of media and the information society** on the manipulative capabilities of algorithmic processes and on the financial sustainability of quality journalism in the digital age, respectively. The Committee also adopted terms of reference for an **Ad hoc Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAHAI)**, the first task of which will be to complete a feasibility study and produce the potential elements, on the basis of broad multi-stakeholder consultations, of a legal framework for the development, design and application of artificial intelligence, based on the Council of Europe's standards.

In the legal field, the Committee adopted the **Guidelines on electronic evidence in civil and administrative proceedings** and expressed its support to the **European Ethical Charter on the use of artificial intelligence in judicial systems and their environment** adopted by the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ).

The Committee of Ministers invited several non-member states to accede to conventions (on cybercrime (ETS No. 185) and mutual assistance in criminal matters, ETS No. 30) thereby underlining their potential global outreach.

The 129th Session of the Committee of Ministers – Commemorative ceremony for the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe – **Thorbjørn Jagland**, Secretary General of the Council of Europe (Helsinki, 16 May 2019)



■ Promoting and protecting the rights of the more vulnerable members of our societies remain a high priority for the Committee of Ministers, which *inter alia*, expressed its concern about the very high rates of child poverty in Europe and the growing inequalities that particularly affect children, by adopting a **Declaration on addressing child poverty**. It also took note of the final report of the Thematic Action Plan on the Inclusion of **Roma and Travellers**¹ (2016-2019) with a view to approving a new Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion (2020-2025) early in 2020.

■ Throughout the year, the Committee of Ministers reaffirmed its unequivocal opposition to the **death penalty**, including any reintroduction of it, in all places and in all circumstances. It reiterated the objective to create a death-penalty-free zone in Europe. The Committee deeply regretted that executions continued to be carried out in Japan and the United States, two observer states to the Council of Europe. It reiterated its call for Belarus to establish a moratorium on executions as a first step towards the abolition of the death penalty.

1. The term “Roma and Travellers” is used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term “Gens du voyage”, as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies. The present is an explanatory footnote, not a definition of Roma and/or Travellers.

■ In May, the Committee endorsed the **Principles on the protection and promotion of the Ombudsman Institution** elaborated by the European Commission for Democracy through Law (**Venice Commission**). It also held an informal meeting on the contribution of **national human rights institutions and ombudspersons** to human rights and the rule of law.

■ Two other informal meetings were held on topical human rights issues: discrimination against LGBTI persons in Europe and **cyberviolence against women and girls**.

■ The situation in several member states was regularly discussed in the Committee of Ministers including co-operation activities aimed to accompany individual countries in their efforts to bring legislation, institutions and practice further into line with European standards in the areas of human rights, the rule of law and democracy. In this respect, it adopted a new Council of Europe Action Plan for Armenia covering the period from 2019 to 2022, which aims to help the country meet its obligations as a member state of the Council of Europe. The Committee also took note of a report on the state of implementation of the commitments entered into by **Armenia** (July 2015–December 2017) and agreed to proceed with monitoring through a regular review of the state of co-operation with that country, with a view to following the implementation of its outstanding commitments.



**The 129th Session
of the Committee of
Ministers in Finland**
(Helsinki, 17 May 2019)

■ The Committee of Ministers held an exchange of views with Mrs Ivanna Klympush-Tsintsadze, Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of **Ukraine**, on co-operation with the Council of Europe, including on the Action Plan 2018-2021 and the situation in Ukraine.

■ In May and November, the Committee held discussions respectively on the Secretary General's 19th and 20th consolidated reports on the conflict in **Georgia**. In May it adopted a series of decisions on this subject. It notably reiterated the unequivocal support of the Council of Europe member states for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders. In November, the Committee approved an action plan designed to provide assistance to **Georgia** for the period from 2020 to 2023.

■ In 2019, the Committee of Ministers took note of a report on the Council of Europe's co-operation activities in **Kosovo**² and instructed the Secretariat to continue implementing them.

2. All reference 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.

■ In 2019, co-operation with other international bodies remained high on the agenda of the Committee. At the Ministerial Session in May, it took note with satisfaction of the developments in the co-operation between the Council of Europe and the **European Union**. In July, the Deputies granted the European Union observer status with the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO).

■ Regarding the **Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)**, the co-ordination group between the two organisations held two meetings in 2019 to review co-operation. The Committee also held an exchange of views with Mr Miroslav Lajčák, Minister for Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic and Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE. In February, an exchange of views on co-operation with the **United Nations** on human rights questions was held with the participation of external experts.

■ As regards relations with non-member states, the Committee of Ministers approved a new action plan to provide assistance to Belarus for the period from 2019 to 2021.



Transfer of the Presidency of the Committee of Ministers between France and Georgia, meeting between France and Georgia, Committee of Ministers (Strasbourg, 27 November 2019)

■ Regarding the policy towards neighbouring regions, the Committee took note of the final report on the implementation of the Council of Europe Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities for the **Kyrgyz Republic** and invited the Secretariat to continue the discussions with the authorities of the Kyrgyz Republic with regard to the preparation of a new co-operation document. The Committee also took note of the final report on the implementation of the Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities with **Palestine**³ (2016-2018) and invited the Secretariat to maintain contact with the authorities of Palestine with a view to preparing, in due course, a new co-operation document.

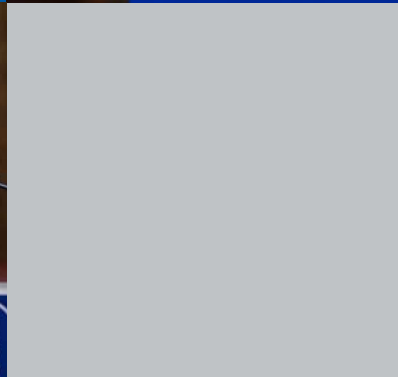
■ In March, the Committee of Ministers decided to submit to the Parliamentary Assembly the candidatures of Ms Marija Pejčinović Burić (Croatia) and Mr Didier Reynders (Belgium), in alphabetic order, for appointment to the post of Secretary General of the Council of Europe. In June, Ms Pejčinović Burić, was elected by the Parliamentary Assembly, succeeding Mr Jagland.

3. 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.

■ During the year, significant work was undertaken to strengthen the Council of Europe through improved consultation and co-operation between the two statutory organs in full respect of their respective mandates to allow for the possibility of joint action by the two statutory bodies in response to situations where member states seriously violate its Statute (ETS No. 1).

■ In November, the Committee of Ministers approved the Council of Europe's Programme and Budget 2020-2021, which reflects a move to zero real growth after six years of no adjustments for inflation (zero nominal growth). It also adopted a comprehensive reform programme for the coming year. Furthermore, the Committee of Ministers invited the Secretary General, in consultation with member states, to consider and prepare a four-year strategic framework reflecting the priorities for the Council of Europe's long-term mission.

Liliane Maury Pasquier,
President of the Parliamentary
Assembly of the Council
of Europe (Strasbourg,
24 October 2019)



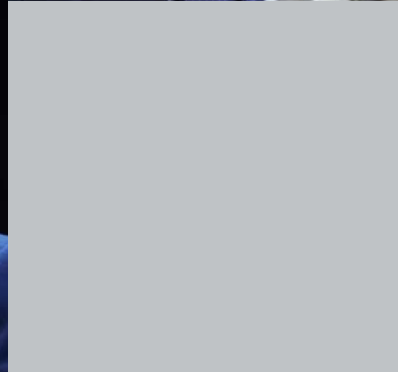
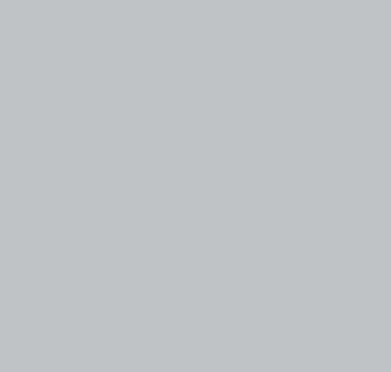
Emmanuel Macron,
President of France

Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa,
President of Portugal

Nikol Pashinian,
Prime Minister of Armenia

Mamouka Bakhtadze,
Prime Minister of Georgia

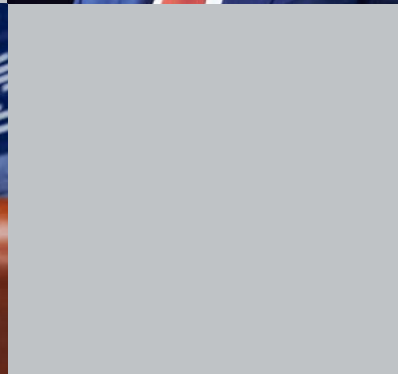
Sauli Niinistö,
President of Finland



Timo Soini,
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of Finland

Amélie de Montchalin,
Secretary of State attached to the
Minister for Europe and Foreign
Affairs of France, in charge of
European Affairs

David Zalkaliani,
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of Georgia



Parliamentary Assembly

The functioning of the Parliamentary Assembly, its rules, work, events, calendar, the profiles of its members and their activities within the Assembly, as well as the texts adopted by the Assembly in 2019, can be found on the Assembly website: <http://assembly.coe.int>

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, consisting of representatives from the national parliaments of member states, provides a forum for debate and proposals on Europe's social and political issues. Many Council of Europe conventions originate from the Assembly, including the European Convention on Human Rights.

President of the Parliamentary Assembly: Ms Liliane Maury Pasquier (Switzerland)

A PAN-EUROPEAN FORUM TO DEBATE MAJOR POLITICAL ISSUES

During 2019, the Assembly was presided by Ms Liliane Maury Pasquier, member of the Group of Socialists, Democrats and Greens.

■ In an exceptional context, the **Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs** contributed to solving the political and institutional crisis resulting from the withdrawal of the Russian Federation from the Assembly since 2016, by authorising, through a derogation from the Assembly's Rules of Procedure, the reintegration of the Russian parliamentary delegation and by modifying the regulatory framework with regard to the Assembly's decision-making process on possible "sanctions" in the process of verification of credentials of national delegations. In this very context, the **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy** presented a report on the role and mission of the Parliamentary Assembly, opening the way for the Helsinki ministerial decision in May 2019 and proposing enhanced synergies between the two statutory organs, followed by a report on the setting-up of a complementary joint procedure in response to a serious violation by a member state of its statutory obligations. This entire process was accompanied by an intense dialogue between the Parliamentary Assembly, the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General of the Organisation.

■ In 2019, the Parliamentary Assembly actively promoted its initiative "**Sexism, harassment and violence against women: #NotInMyParliament**". Its main activities included the organisation of high-level side events on promoting best practices to effectively fight against sexism and violence against women in politics, and the setting-up of a travelling exhibition to raise awareness of the effects and consequences of all forms of gender-based violence on women parliamentarians. The #NotInMyParliament initiative has benefited from the support of many national parliaments, including the German Bundestag and the Finnish Parliament, as well as other international parliamentary assemblies. The Assembly will continue to initiate new activities and partnerships throughout 2020.



European Conference of Presidents of Parliament,
family photo of presidents of parliament
(Strasbourg, 24 October 2019)

■ Among the dignitaries who addressed the Assembly in 2019 were the Presidents of Finland, France and Portugal; the Prime Ministers of Armenia and Georgia; the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the Secretary of State attached to the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, in charge of European Affairs, representing the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers as well as several other eminences who addressed the Assembly in the context of specific debates.

■ During its four part-sessions and three meetings of the Standing Committee in 2019, the Parliamentary Assembly debated issues of major political relevance in Europe, adopting 49 resolutions, 19 recommendations and 1 opinion. It observed parliamentary elections in the Republic of Moldova, North Macedonia and Belarus as well as the presidential election in Ukraine.

■ Special mention should be made of the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament, which brought to Strasbourg 60 presidents and vice-presidents of parliament from the 47 Council of Europe member states and a number of partner and observer countries, as well as the heads of several international parliamentary assemblies. The conference addressed three main themes, underlining for each of them the specific role and responsibilities of parliaments: Our common European home: the next 70 years; Implementing the United Nations 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals: contribution by parliaments; Women in politics and in the public discourse – What role can national parliaments play in combating the increasing level of harassment and hate speech towards female politicians and parliamentarians?

■ The Assembly awarded the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize jointly to imprisoned Uyghur intellectual Ilham Tohti from China and the Youth Initiative for Human Rights, which brings together young people from across the Balkans to promote reconciliation. The Europe Prize went to the city of Donostia/San Sebastián (Spain) and the 2020 Council of Europe Museum Prize to the The National Museum of Secret Surveillance “House of Leaves” in Tirana (Albania).



European Conference of Presidents of Parliament, opening speech by Lilliane Maury Pasquier, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 24 October 2019)

WORK IN COMMITTEES

— The Assembly's committees carried out the preparatory work leading to plenary debates, often enriching it with the organisation of hearings and conferences.

— The **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy** dealt with the protection of victims of terrorism, the countering of international terrorism, the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the challenges to stability in Europe and neighbouring regions. The committee continued its work on referendums and electoral matters as well as on challenges to democracy resulting from disinformation. It inaugurated a new model of co-operation with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and initiated work on: relations with the European Union 10 years after the Lisbon Treaty, the peace process in Ukraine, democratic governance of artificial intelligence (AI), the Council of Europe's role in European architecture and the review of the functioning of the Partnership for Democracy, as well as discussions on opportunities for co-operation in the Arctic region.

— The **Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights** maintained its support for Council of Europe human rights standards with proposals to improve the implementation of Court judgments, Committee for the Prevention of Torture recommendations and the Committee of Ministers Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)3 to member States on human rights and business. It continued opposing the death penalty and impunity, addressing issues relating to the rule of law, corruption and money laundering, and supporting the work of NGOs, human rights defenders and whistle-blowers. New issues on the committee's agenda included drug policy reform and artificial intelligence.

— The **Monitoring Committee** prepared reports on Bulgaria and North Macedonia in the framework of the monitoring and post-monitoring dialogues with these countries. Reports were prepared on the functioning of democratic institutions in the Republic of Moldova, Poland and Turkey.

— The **Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons** examined migration-related problems including violence against migrant children, trafficking and smuggling, as well as violent pushbacks. It continued to work on challenges such as deaths in the Mediterranean and "climate refugees". Specific current issues such as the implications of Brexit on migration and labour migration from eastern Europe, were also discussed.



Award ceremony – Václav Havel Human Rights Prize:
Liliane Maury Pasquier, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and
Enver Can, representing the winner **Ilham Tohti (China)** (Strasbourg, 30 September 2019)

■ The **Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development** finalised reports on wide-ranging topics such as: social rights, public health, children’s rights and their protection from sexual abuse, sustainable development – many of these in the context of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – and good governance.

■ Countering discrimination, inequalities, gender-based violence, sexism, racism and hate speech and promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities was the focus of the work and activities of the **Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination**. The committee maintained gender equality high on the political agenda and pursued progress with the ratification and effective implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (CETS No. 210, Istanbul Convention). It tackled issues related to sexism, sexual harassment and violence against women in parliaments. These issues and ongoing work on the gender dimension of foreign policy, access to contraception for women and combating the many forms of violence against women, such as so-called

“honour” crimes, contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 5 – gender equality – in addition to the activities to mark the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Conference. The committee promoted the adoption of administrative, civil and criminal law provisions to counter hate speech inciting xenophobia, racial hatred, antisemitism and intolerance, and targeting minorities, immigrants, women and LGBTI persons.

■ The **Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media** continued to pay close attention to the freedom of the media, as well as to the threats that malicious use of the internet creates for the functioning of democratic institutions. It finalised reports on issues related to social media, media education in the digital era, an internet ombudsman institution and threats to media freedom and journalist security. It also worked in the fields of cultural heritage and education. It addressed the issues of new forms of public debate on the advances of science and technology, threats to academic freedom and autonomy of universities in Europe, manipulation of sports competitions, football governance and ethics, and the role of young people in the prevention and resolution of conflicts.



Assembly celebration to mark the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe – Liliane Maury Pasquier, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 3 October 2019)

■ The **Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs** concluded its more than year-long follow-up to the report of the Independent Investigation Body, set up in April 2017 to investigate allegations of corruption within the Assembly, by drafting proposals to strengthen the Assembly’s ethical framework. It also closely followed the budgetary and financial situation of the Organisation.

CO-OPERATION PROGRAMMES WITH NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS

■ The Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly continued to develop co-operation programmes at the parliamentary level to ensure better implementation by member states of key Assembly resolutions and to reach out to a greater number of members of national parliaments through peer-to-peer parliamentary seminars. In 2019, it continued to contribute to the Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2021. The Assembly started regional co-operation work under the Horizontal Facility II with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Serbia.



Anders Knape,
President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities
(Strasbourg, 31 October 2019)

**Observation of local elections
in the Republic of Moldova**
(18-21 October 2019)



Congress of Local and Regional Authorities

The texts adopted by the Congress in 2019 can be found on its website coe.int/Congress

The Congress is the political assembly responsible for assessing the situation of local and regional democracy in the 47 Council of Europe member states and improving its quality. It implements the local and regional dimension of the Council of Europe's action in the field of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The Congress is made up of 648 members holding elective office and represents over 200 000 local and regional authorities in Europe. The statutory activities of the Congress derive from the European Charter of Local Self-Government, a legally binding instrument which affirms the role of cities and regions as the first level at which democratic rights are exercised.

President of the Congress: Anders Knappe (Sweden)

ROLE OF THE CONGRESS

In May 2019 in Helsinki, the President of the Congress addressed the foreign ministers and presented the Congress's contribution to the reflection on the future of the Council of Europe. This text, adopted by the Congress in April 2019, underlines that local and regional democracy is an essential pillar of European democracy and that, confronted with democratic crises, local institutions have a strategic role in rebuilding the link between citizens and the institutions that represent them. The president proposed that the ministers of foreign affairs incorporate, in their reflections, the Congress proposal to rethink the organisational model of Europe's territories, underlining that the key to the future democratic health of Europe lies in the collective ability to develop a new socio-territorial pact.

In this context, the Congress has continued, through its political message and its work, to contribute to the fulfilment of the United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development. The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) at local and regional levels in the member states is crucial for their success. The Congress views the concept of sustainability in a broad sense as democratic, social and economic sustainability based on key principles:

- ▶ achieving SDGs is a shared responsibility of all levels of government;
- ▶ local and regional authorities must have proper competences and financial autonomy;
- ▶ citizens must always remain at the heart of the action.

This was the message conveyed by the Congress in its activities of 2019, including during a seminar held in Metz in October with the theme "Local democracy facing the demands of sustainable development and climate".

In June 2019, the Congress and the European Committee of the Regions organised a joint event in Brussels to celebrate their 25th anniversary. They held a conference entitled "The Added Value of Local and Regional Authorities in the Unification of Europe" including a panel discussion on the local and regional contribution to implementing national policies in the member states. The participants highlighted the synergies between the work of the two institutions in strengthening local self-government and regional democracy.

In September 2019, the Congress organised a seminar on its history, achievements and prospects on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe. The seminar brought together former presidents and the current Bureau of the Congress to speak about the Congress's major achievements in promoting local and regional democracy and also about the threats to its future, in particular in terms of its resources and its place within the Council of Europe.

The President of the Congress published several statements following the local elections in Turkey on 31 March 2019 (observed by a Congress delegation) underlining in particular that "the excessive recourse to judicial proceedings against local elected officials in Turkey and their replacement by appointed officials is seriously undermining the democratic choice of Turkish citizens and the proper functioning of local democracy in Turkey".



Ignacio Sánchez Amor, Secretary of State of Territorial Policy of Spain, 36th Session of the Congress (Strasbourg, 2 April 2019)

Congress President **Anders Knappe** meets the President of the French Republic **Emmanuel Macron** on the occasion of the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 1 October 2019)



Following the municipal elections in the Russian Federation on 8 September 2019, the president highlighted the importance of democratic framework conditions in order to ensure genuinely free and fair elections, in particular with regard to the registration of independent candidates.

The 2019 Congress activities also included the meeting of the Congress President with the Prime Minister of Spain in February, the high-level visit organised in April to Belarus – with a meeting between the Congress President and President of the Republic of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko, the participation of the Congress President in the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July – where he met the United Nations Secretary General António Guterres – and in the United Nations Summit of Heads of State and Government in September, the declaration of the Bureau on ensuring sufficient resources for Congress activities in September and the granting of the Partner for Local Democracy status to Morocco and Tunisia, thus allowing delegations of local and regional elected representatives from those countries to participate in Congress sessions.

STATUTORY WORK OF THE CONGRESS IN 2019

The Congress is a political assembly composed of elected representatives of local and regional authorities. It ensures local and regional representation at European level as well as its active involvement in the Council of Europe's work.

The Congress works to promote genuine democracy that is close to citizens, local self-government and renewed attention to the role of local and regional authorities. Through its action, it contributes to increasing the quality of democracy in the field.

The Congress meets in session twice a year and holds two annual meetings of its chambers and of its three committees.

The overall theme of the two sessions in 2019 was "Mayors safeguarding democracy". Debates were held which examined, in particular, the difficulties faced by local and regional elected representatives

as well as their working conditions. Other thematic debates included open government, the urban/rural divide, the financial compensation of local and regional elected representatives, fairer distribution of taxes in transfrontier areas, the use of languages by local and regional authorities, smart cities and cybersecurity, the regional dimension in the future of Europe and the protection of internally displaced persons.

The Congress also adopted a Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-making Process, intended to help improve the efficiency of the participatory process and ensure that it is accessible to all citizens.

During its two plenary sessions, the Congress invited youth delegates from some 40 member states to participate in its debates, as it has done since October 2014 as part of its "rejuvenating politics" initiative in its drive to promote the participation of young people at local and regional levels. A large number of local projects implemented by the youth delegates during the year were presented to the Congress members.

MONITORING THE EUROPEAN CHARTER OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

The Congress monitoring activities are based on the European Charter of Local Self-Government (ETS No.122, the charter), a binding Council of Europe convention. The charter commits all 47 Council of Europe member states to respect the rights and responsibilities of local authorities and to work towards the implementation of the principle of subsidiarity.

In 2019, Congress delegations monitored the situation of local and regional democracy in the Russian Federation, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Armenia, Portugal, Austria and Turkey and undertook a fact-finding mission to Latvia, as well as a post-monitoring visit to Moldova. The Congress adopted recommendations on the situation of local and regional authorities in Slovenia, Lithuania, Georgia, Poland and the Republic of Moldova.

Missions are also conducted by the Congress to observe local/regional elections at the invitation of national authorities. They complement the political



Xavier Cadoret,
President of the Chamber
of Local Authorities
(Strasbourg, 31 October 2019)

Speech by **Souad Ben Abderrahim**,
Mayor of Tunis and President of
the National Federation of Tunisian
Cities (FNVT), during a debate on the
South Mediterranean Partnership
at the 37th Session of the Congress,
(Strasbourg, 30 October 2019)



monitoring of the charter. In 2019, the Congress sent missions to observe local and regional elections in Poland, Slovenia, Turkey and the Republic of Moldova as well as a preparatory mission to Sarajevo and Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in preparation for the local elections to be held in October 2020.

IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMMES IN THE FIELD

■ The Congress is also an operational body that implements the local and regional dimension of Council of Europe action plans for specific member states or within the Council of Europe policy towards neighbouring regions. These activities support the implementation of Congress recommendations for a better application of the European Charter of Local Self-Government and other thematic recommendations, for example on the consultation of local and regional authorities, public ethics, open government and political integrity.

■ The approach based on peer exchanges with Congress members enables the sharing of experiences of local democracy and innovative governance practices, thereby supporting local and regional elected representatives and their associations, as drivers of change.

■ In 2019, the Congress implemented activities in Armenia, Ukraine and Georgia as well as in Morocco and Tunisia. A new project “Strengthening the Communities Association of Armenia and transparent and participatory local governance” was launched in July 2019 and will support national and local authorities in preventing corruption and fostering public ethics and political integrity in Armenian amalgamated communities. The Congress also continued its project “Strengthening democracy and building trust at local level in Ukraine”, which was launched in July 2018. In this context, more than 500 Ukrainian mayors and councillors have enhanced their knowledge on transparency, open government, e-governance and gender mainstreaming at local level through a series of round tables and study visits. Focus was also placed on strengthening the protection of human rights at local level, in partnership with the Ombudsperson Office in

Ukraine and the Public Defender’s Office in Georgia. As a result of relevant activities promoting Congress Recommendation 419 (2018) on voting rights at local level as an element of successful long-term integration of migrants and IDPs in Europe’s municipalities and regions, the Electoral Code of Ukraine, approved in December 2019, includes provisions to ensure the full participation of IDPs in future local elections.

■ In April 2019, the Congress organised, in Minsk, round-table discussions on prospects for improving local self-government in Belarus and the role of national associations of local and regional authorities, in the preparation of a project proposed under the new Council of Europe action plan for that country.

PRACTICAL TOOLS

■ The concrete results of much of the Congress’s work surfaces at a later stage in the form of reports, recommendations, joint events and handbooks or toolkits, for example.

■ In 2019, the Congress prepared several publications and web tools to help local and regional elected representatives to fulfil their duties and responsibilities in the field.

■ It launched the online database CARTA-MONITOR which presents Congress monitoring reports and allows people to consult analysis and research on the implementation of the provisions of the charter by the member states.

■ The Congress also published the first brochure in a series on democratic elections entitled “Local voting rights for the integration of migrants and IDPs”. Based on a Congress report, this brochure aims to encourage participation in local elections as a key factor for the successful integration of populations that reside in places different from their places of origin.

■ It also launched a series of public ethics booklets compiling six practical guides based on reports adopted by the Congress on conflicts of interest, transparent public procurement, transparency and open government, administrative resources and fair elections, fighting nepotism and the protection of whistle-blowers.



Visit by **H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Norway**
to the European Court of Human Rights
(Strasbourg, 18 March 2019)

European Court of Human Rights

echr.coe.int

The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights in the 47 Council of Europe member states. Individuals can bring complaints of human rights violations to the Strasbourg Court once all possibilities of appeal have been exhausted in the member state concerned.

President of the Court: Guido Raimondi (Italy) until May 2019
Linos-Alexandre Sicilianos (Greece, since Mai 2019)

THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

On 21 January 1959 the first members of the European Court of Human Rights (the Court) were elected by the Council of Europe's Consultative Assembly and on 23 February of that year the Court held its first session. The 60th anniversary of the Court was celebrated throughout 2019 in a number of important events.

On 23 January 2019 the former Court President Guido Raimondi and Sauli Niinistö, President of the Republic of Finland, inaugurated an exhibition entitled "Finland presents 60 years of the European Court of Human Rights". Organised in connection with the Finnish Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, it consisted of a series of panels showing the key events in the Court's history. In June 2019, President Linos-Alexandre Sicilianos and Ms Amélie de Montchalin, Secretary of State to the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, responsible for European Affairs, inaugurated an exhibition entitled "France and the European Court of Human Rights", held during France's Presidency of the Committee of Ministers. It retraced the historical relationship between the Court and France, in particular the major role played by a number of prominent French figures in drafting the Convention, and presented the key judgments against France and the impact they had at the national level.

Another event which marked the 60th anniversary was the open day of the Human Rights Building on 5 May 2019. The iconic Court building, normally closed to visitors, had not been open to the public for 10 years. The famous French illustrator and graphic artist, Monsieur Z, designed a poster showcasing the Human Rights Building which was distributed to visitors.

In a written message to mark the anniversary, the President of the Court, Linos-Alexandre Sicilianos, reflected on the strength of the European system of human rights protection and the impact of the Court's case law for peace and stability in Europe. The message was published on the Court's website.

ENHANCED CO-OPERATION WITH THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE EXPERT AND MONITORING BODIES

Throughout 2019, a number of meetings between Court judges and various Council of Europe monitoring and expert bodies took place, for example with the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), the Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM), the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) and the Consultative Council of European Judges (CCJE). The idea behind the initiative was to systematise a regular exchange of views, to enhance mutual understanding and to give effect to practical co-operation. Focal points within the Court's Registry for regular co-operation with these bodies are currently being set up.



First session of the Court
(Strasbourg, 23 February 1959)



Pedro Sánchez, Spanish Prime Minister, and **Guido Raimondi**, President of the European Court of Human Rights (Strasbourg, 7 February 2019)

DIALOGUE BETWEEN JUDGES

The year 2019 saw a significant number of visits from domestic superior courts within the Council of Europe. These included the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation, the Constitutional Court of Turkey and the Court of Cassation of Turkey, the Council of State of France, the Constitutional Court of Croatia, the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court of Spain, the Constitutional Court of Germany, the Federal Labour Court of Germany, the Higher Courts of the Principality of Andorra, the Court of Cassation of Romania, the Supreme Court of Ukraine, the First President of the Court of Cassation of France and the Heads of the Higher Courts of the Czech Republic. On 12 and 13 September 2019, the President of the Court accompanied by a delegation of judges participated in the Conference of the Chief Justices of the Supreme Courts of the Council of Europe Member States. The Court also received delegations of judges from certain superior courts outside of the Council of Europe legal space, such as the Supreme of Court of Israel.

An important date in the Court's calendar was the working visit on 21 October 2019 of a delegation of judges from the Court of Justice of the European Union, headed by its president, Koen Lenaerts. The visiting judges took part in round-table discussions with members of the Court and Registry. The discussions concerned recent case law of the two courts and developments within both systems.

The Court's Superior Courts Network grew considerably in 2019 and now counts 86 courts from 39 states, making it certainly the largest such network in the world.

CO-OPERATION WITH REGIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COURTS

The Court continues to enjoy close and constructive relations with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, in particular following the San José Declaration signed in 2018. The aim of the co-operation set out in that declaration was to institutionalise dialogue and to organise regular tripartite meetings between courts. While each court works in a different region and sees global developments from a different perspective, all share common values. Co-operation is a sign that human rights are truly universal.

In October 2019, the first International Human Rights Forum between the three courts took place in Kampala, Uganda. The Court was represented on that occasion by the then Vice-President Angelika Nussberger and Judge Arnfinn Bardsen. Discussion took place on the different systems of awarding damages, as well as the implementation of court judgments. It was agreed that the second meeting of the International Human Rights Forum would be hosted by the European Court of Human Rights in March 2021, under the German Presidency of the Committee of Ministers.

PROCEDURAL INNOVATIONS AND IMPROVING WORKING METHODS

The most important challenge for the Court is certainly that posed by the number of pending cases which cannot be dealt with by way of a committee of three judges because of their complexity or the novelty of the legal issue raised. The Court's objective is to ensure that it can devote sufficient time to the most important and most complex of these cases and ensure that they are dealt with in due time. On 1 January 2019,



Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding at the International Human Rights Forum – Eduardo Ferrer Mac-Gregor Poisot (President of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights), **Sylvain Oré** (President of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights) and **Angelika Nussberger** (Vice-President of the European Court of Human Rights) (Kampala, 29 October 2019)



Ion Chicu, Prime Minister of Moldova, and **Linos-Alexandre Sicilianos**, President of the European Court of Human Rights (Strasbourg, 16 December 2019)

the Court introduced a non-contentious procedure from the communication of the case, which is the point where notice of the application is given to the respondent government. This mechanism encourages the parties to reach a friendly settlement, with the aim of reducing case-processing time and ensuring a speedier resolution of the dispute. The test phase of the new procedure has been extended to the end of 2020.

CASE LAW HIGHLIGHTS IN 2019

■ In response to the first request for an advisory opinion under Protocol No. 16 to the Convention (CETS No. 214) from the French Court of Cassation, requested on 12 October 2018, the Court delivered its opinion on 10 April 2019.⁴ The issue under consideration was the private life of a child born of surrogacy abroad and the recognition of the legal relationship between that child and the intended mother who has no genetic link to the child. The Court concluded that the child's right to respect for private life within the meaning of Article 8 did not require such recognition to take the form of entry in the register of births, marriages and deaths or the details of the birth certificate legally established abroad; another means, such as adoption of the child by the intended mother, might be used provided that the procedure laid down by domestic law ensured that it could be implemented promptly and effectively, in accordance with the child's best interests. A few months after the advisory opinion, the French Court of Cassation, sitting as a full court, opted for having foreign birth certificates registered in France in order to establish the parent-child relationship

4. Advisory opinion concerning the recognition in domestic law of a legal parent-child relationship between a child born through a gestational surrogacy arrangement abroad and the intended mother [GC], Request No. P16-2018-001, French Court of Cassation, 10 April 2019.

between such children and their intended mothers. It thus went even further than the Court's opinion. This is a perfect example of the dialogue-based approach established under Protocol No. 16.

■ A request for an advisory opinion by the Constitutional Court of Armenia was introduced on 2 September 2019 and on 2 October 2019 it was accepted by the Panel of the Grand Chamber. In its questions, the Constitutional Court asked for guidance from the European Court on certain aspects of Article 7 (No punishment without law) of the Convention, such as the concept of "law" within the meaning of that provision, the notions of a law's certainty, accessibility, foreseeability and stability, and on the principle of the non-retroactivity of a criminal law. The request is currently pending before the Court.

■ In *Ilgar Mammadov v. Azerbaijan*, 29 May 2019, the Court examined for the first time an application in the context of infringement proceedings. In this procedure, which is provided for by Article 46.4, the Court determines whether a state has fulfilled its obligation under Article 46.1 to abide by a final judgment of the Court. The essential question was whether there had been a failure by the Republic of Azerbaijan to adopt the individual measures required to abide by the Court's judgment and remedy the violation of Article 18 of the Convention taken in conjunction with Article 5. The Court concluded that Azerbaijan had failed to fulfil its obligation under Article 46.1 to abide by the *Ilgar Mammadov v. Azerbaijan* judgment of 22 May 2014.

■ The Court's Annual Report 2019⁵ contains a selection by the Jurisconsult of the most important judgments and decisions delivered by the Court in 2019.

5. www.echr.coe.int/Pages/home.aspx?p=court/annualreports&c=



Dunja Mijatović, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, and H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Norway (Strasbourg, 18 March 2019)

Commissioner for Human Rights

Information on the Commissioner's work in 2019 can be found at: www.coe.int/commissioner
The Commissioner's Twitter account is @CommissionerHR

The Commissioner for Human Rights is an independent and impartial non-judicial institution established by Council of Europe to promote awareness of and respect for human rights in the 47 Council of Europe member states.

Commissioner Mijatović carried out 8 visits and missions in 2019, and she published 5 reports, one memorandum and 12 letters addressed to governments and parliaments.

COUNTRY MONITORING

On 15 January, the Commissioner published an exchange of letters with the Czech Republic's Prime Minister, Andrej Babiš, and Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, Robert Plaga, in which she called on the authorities to ensure that legislative changes did not harm inclusive education efforts.

The Commissioner addressed the Equalities and Human Rights Committee of the Scottish Parliament regarding a bill on the age of criminal responsibility. In her letter published on 16 January she provided further clarification about her previous call on the government to increase the age of criminal responsibility to 14 years at least.

On 28 January, the Commissioner carried out a mission to Paris focused on the events linked to the "yellow vest" movement. In the memorandum published on 26 February she recommended that the French authorities show more respect for human rights during operations aimed at maintaining public order and refrain from introducing excessive restrictions to freedom of peaceful assembly through the bill on strengthening and guaranteeing public order at demonstrations.

In the report on Armenia published on 29 January she recommended measures to improve women's rights, the protection of disadvantaged or vulnerable groups, and establishing accountability for past human rights violations.

On 7 February, the Commissioner published a letter addressed to the Prime Minister of Italy, Giuseppe Conte, in which she asked the Italian Government to clarify the measures it intended to take to ensure the continuity of essential services for asylum seekers and beneficiaries of protection.

On 11 February, she concluded a five-day visit to Hungary. The report was published on 21 May and focused on refugee protection, civil society space, independence of the judiciary and gender equality.

On 28 February, the Commissioner published the report on her visit to Romania carried out in November 2018. She called on the Romanian authorities to improve the implementation of laws and ensure funding to effectively protect the rights of persons with disabilities and protect women from violence.

“Cartooning for peace” event,
inauguration of the fresco –
Speech by **Dunja Mijatović,**
Commissioner for Human Rights
(Strasbourg, 6 November 2019)



■ The Commissioner visited Poland from 11 to 15 March. She published the report following her visit on 28 June in which she urged Poland’s authorities to shield judges from pressure, actively protect women’s rights and step up policies for gender equality.

■ In a letter addressed to the Minister of Justice of Serbia, Nela Kuburović, published on 15 May, the Commissioner called on the authorities to reconsider the draft legislation introducing the sentence of life imprisonment without eligibility for conditional release for persons convicted of some of the gravest crimes.

■ On 23 May, the Commissioner published a letter to the Chairwoman of the Committee on Internal Affairs and Community of the Parliament of Germany, Andrea Lindholz, in which she urged the parliament to increase the human rights safeguards of a bill aimed at improving the implementation of expulsion of migrants.

■ On 27 May, the Commissioner published a letter addressed to the Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland, Stanislaw Karczewski, in which she regretted the adoption by the Polish Sejm and Senate of legislation on life imprisonment.

■ On 8 July, the Commissioner concluded a five-day visit to Turkey at the end of which she urged the authorities to put an end to arbitrariness in the judiciary and to protect human rights defenders. The report is expected to be published in the first quarter of 2020.

■ The Commissioner concluded a four-day visit to Azerbaijan on 12 July. The report of that visit was published on 11 December and focused on the need to protect freedom of expression, improve access to lawyers and uphold the rights of internally displaced persons.

■ On 5 August, the Commissioner published a letter addressed to the Minister of the Interior of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Kolokoltsev, in which she recommended that the Russian authorities ensure that human rights are respected in the context of policing of assemblies.

■ On 19 September, the Commissioner published an exchange of letters with the Prime Minister of Malta, Joseph Muscat, in which she recommended withdrawing the pending posthumous lawsuits against the family of Daphne Caruana Galizia.

■ On 31 October, the Commissioner concluded a five-day visit to Greece during which she visited reception facilities in Lesbos, Samos and Corinth. She urged the authorities to urgently transfer asylum seekers from the Aegean islands and improve living conditions in reception facilities.

Migrants warm themselves by the fire in one of the tents in the Vučjak camp in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Vučjak, 25 November 2019), © Damir Sagolj/Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights



On 2 December, following her five-day visit to Bulgaria, she called on the authorities to counter harmful narratives endangering human rights and step up efforts to fight hate speech and domestic violence. The report is expected to be published in the first semester of 2020.

On 26 November, the Commissioner published a letter addressed to the National Council of the Slovak Republic in which she called on that body to reject a legislative proposal which would restrict existing access to safe and legal abortion care.

On 29 November, she published an exchange of letters with the Maltese Government concerning the investigation into the murder of journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia. She called on the Maltese Government to refrain from any action which would prevent the investigation from being, or being seen as, fully independent.

On the same day, she published a letter addressed to the Chairman of the House of Representatives of the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr Mirsad Zaimović, calling on the parliament to discuss the deinstitutionalisation of children with disabilities and develop concrete proposals to make progress on that front.

On 3 December, the Commissioner published an exchange of letters with the Minister of Citizen Protection of Greece, Michalis Chrysochoidis, and the Alternate Minister for Migration Policy of Greece, Giorgos Koumoutsakos, concerning the plans to transfer migrants from the Aegean islands to the mainland and set up closed reception centres on those islands.

At the end of a four-day mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina on 6 December, the Commissioner called on the authorities to close the Vučjak camp and take concrete measures to improve the treatment of migrants in the country.

THEMATIC WORK

The main themes of the Commissioner's activities were the protection and promotion of the rights of migrants, Roma, women, LGBTI people, human rights defenders, children and persons with disabilities. She also engaged on issues pertaining to racism, judicial independence, counter-terrorism efforts, freedom of expression and of peaceful assembly, as well as artificial intelligence and transitional justice.

On 22 January, Commissioner Mijatović, together with the previous Commissioners Álvaro Gil-Robles, Thomas Hammarberg and Nils Muižnieks held a panel discussion to reflect on the evolution of human rights on the occasion of the office's 20th anniversary. They discussed current challenges and the next steps that need to be taken in order to defend and solidify the protection of human rights across Europe.



The former and current Commissioners at the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights: **Álvaro Gil-Robles, Thomas Hammarberg, Nils Muižnieks** and **Dunja Mijatović** (Strasbourg, 22 January 2019)

■ During the year, the Commissioner submitted five sets of written observations to the European Court of Human Rights. On 10 January she published her intervention in the case of *Kavala v. Turkey*, concerning the arrest and detention of a civil society activist and human rights defender in Turkey.

■ On 8 February, she intervened in the case of *M.A. v. Denmark*, concerning the refusal to grant family reunification to a person with temporary protection status, because he had not yet held a residence permit for three years.

■ On 3 June, Commissioner Mijatović intervened in the case of *Dabo v. Sweden*, concerning the refusal to grant family reunification to the family members of a person with refugee status in Sweden.

■ Another third-party intervention was published on 22 November and concerned the case of *S.S. and others v. Italy*, related to the interception and rescue operation of a boat in distress in the Mediterranean Sea, carrying around 150 people who had left Libya, and the alleged human rights violations resulting from this operation.

■ The last intervention was published on 25 November. It concerned the case of *Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. v. Turkey*, which relates to the blocking of a free, multilingual, collaborative online encyclopaedia hosted by the applicant, a non-profit organisation.

■ The Commissioner also published two recommendations. The first, entitled “Unboxing artificial intelligence: 10 steps to protect human rights”, was published on 15 May and provided several steps that national authorities can take to maximise the potential of artificial intelligence systems and prevent or mitigate the negative impact they may have on people’s lives and rights.

■ The second, entitled “Lives saved. Rights protected”, focused on European countries’ approach to migration in the Mediterranean Sea and was published on 18 June. The recommendation focused on measures to help member states to reframe their approach according to human rights.



The Commissioner with children in an internally displaced person (IDP) settlement in the old dormitories of the Technical University in the Yasamal district in Azerbaijan (Baku, 9 July 2019)

■ Seven Human Rights Comments were published in 2019 covering topics such as peaceful assembly, minority languages, trafficking in human beings, the independence of the judiciary, the environment, ethnic profiling and Roma rights. The Commissioner continued also to engage with the press and the public at large with opinion editorials, speeches, statements and an intense activity on social media platforms, in particular through her Twitter account (@CommissionerHR).



Ceremony for the 30th anniversary of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) – Dunja Mijatović, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 4 November 2019)

Anna Rurka, President of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 27 February 2019)



Adoption of the Revised Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in Decision-Making and opening of the photo exhibition on migrant women provided by the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe – Anna Rurka, President of the Conference of INGOs (Strasbourg, 30 October 2019)



Conference of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs)

More can be found on www.coe.int/en/web/ingo/home
Twitter: @CoE_NGO – Facebook: @CONFINGO

President of the Conference of INGOs: Anna Rurka (Poland)

CIVIL SOCIETY'S VOICE IN THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE:

■ In 2019, the Conference of INGOs continued the work started in 2018 on strengthening its effectiveness and accountability to its members and partners and adopted its new code of conduct. It pushed forward with its own reform in order to adapt its functioning to be in line with the changing environment of the Organisation. To underline its support, it adopted Resolution (CONF/PLE(2019)RES1) "The future of the Council of Europe: Civil Society's commitment".

■ Some 10 years after the adoption of its Code of Good Practice for Civil Participation in the Decision-making Process, the conference, together with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities, produced an updated version of the code. The revised code was adopted by the conference and welcomed by the Congress, which adopted Resolution 452 (2019) calling upon its members to endorse the code and promote its implementation by local and regional authorities in member states of the Council of Europe.

■ The conference contributed actively to the work of the various intergovernmental steering committees and organised a talk "Disinformation and fake news" during the World Forum for Democracy.

VOICE OF SOLIDARITY WITH EUROPEAN CIVIL SOCIETY

■ In line with its priority to protect and reinforce freedom of association and associated rights, delegations from the conference visited Armenia and Italy. Each visit provided an opportunity to meet with civil society representatives and public authorities to identify good practices in civil participation and public support for NGOs, as well as to highlight the difficulties and challenges being faced by civil society, notably under restrictive or ambiguous legislation.

■ The Expert Council on NGO Law published a study entitled *Using criminal law to restrict the work of NGOs supporting refugees and other migrants in Council of Europe member states*. The study considers the situation of NGOs carrying out humanitarian assistance and related work in support of refugees and other migrants in member states, and the extent to which criminal law and its enforcement impact on legitimate NGO activity.

■ Migration was the theme of the October session of the conference which included the screening of the film *Grand H – Our humanity in migration issues: why, what for, how far* and a photographic exhibition "Portraits of and by women on the run".



Meeting between **Patriarch Kirill of Moscow**, Russian Federation, and **Thorbjørn Jagland**, Secretary General of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 27 May 2019)



Meeting between **Mr George Tsereteli**, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE and **Marija Pejčinović Burić**, Secretary General of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 25 October 2019)



Meeting between **Louise Mushikiwabo**, Secretary General of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie and **Marija Pejčinović Burić**, Secretary General of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 2 October 2019)

External relations

www.coe.int/DER

POLICY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE TOWARDS NEIGHBOURING REGIONS

The policy towards neighbouring regions aims at developing a common legal space based on Council of Europe values and instruments in order to promote stability and democratic security in Europe and its neighbouring regions. The policy was carried out in close co-operation with the European Union. Implementation of the Neighbourhood Partnerships with Morocco and Tunisia, the Council of Europe's two main partners, continued. These partnerships combine and strengthen the two pillars of the policy – political dialogue and co-operation activities. Co-operation continued with Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Palestine⁶ through Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities. Multifaceted co-operation has also further developed with Israel. Regional activities as well as ad hoc co-operation (with Egypt and Libya, for example) also continued.

RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION, THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE OSCE

European Union

Close co-operation is needed more than ever to better address an increasing number of challenges, to preserve the coherence and efficiency of the European human rights system and to combat the growing threats to democratic institutions and the rule of law. Accordingly, the strategic partnership with the European Union was further strengthened through its three pillars: political dialogue, legal co-operation and co-operation projects. High-level dialogue was particularly intense throughout 2019 to address serious challenges, notably issues related to the rule of law. In addition, on 31 October, the European Union informed the Council of Europe Secretary General that it was ready to resume the negotiations on its accession to the European Convention on Human Rights. As in previous years, a substantial number of activities were carried out through joint programmes in Council of Europe member states and in the neighbouring regions. The Council of Europe liaison office in Brussels and the delegation of the European Union to the Council of Europe further facilitated the reinforcement of the co-operation described above.

6. 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.

United Nations

High-level political dialogue with the United Nations continued in 2019. In September, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe participated in the High-Level Segment of the 74th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York and met with the Secretary General of the United Nations on that occasion. In December, the Secretary General met in Vienna with the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Director-General of the United Nations Office in Vienna (UNOV). The implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Human Rights Council, the Universal Periodic Review, the status of women and artificial intelligence were areas of important co-operation. The issues of statelessness and refugees were other fields of intense co-operation and the Council of Europe participated in the 70th Executive Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner for Refugees – devoted to statelessness – in Geneva in October, as well as in the first Global Refugee Forum in Geneva in December. The co-operation between the two organisations was also strengthened thanks to the Council of Europe Liaison Offices in Geneva and Vienna.

OSCE

Co-operation with the OSCE focused on a broad spectrum of human dimension activities between the headquarters of the two organisations and in the field. This interaction covered the different Council of Europe and OSCE institutions and bodies. In November, an exchange of letters to further develop co-operation between the Council of Europe and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) was concluded. The Council of Europe liaison offices in Vienna and Warsaw facilitated the co-operation. High-level dialogue was further developed, in particular between the two Secretaries General.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS AND NON-MEMBER COUNTRIES

The Council of Europe maintained regular or ad hoc contacts with other organisations active in the areas of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, such as *La Francophonie*, the Order of Malta or International IDEA. Active preferential relations with the observer states (the Holy See, Canada, Japan, Mexico and the USA) were complemented by relations with more than 90 non-member states and focused on the fields where the Council of Europe's *acquis* present a global comparative advantage.



Visit by **Nikol Pashinian**, Prime Minister of Armenia – Meeting with **Thorbjørn Jagland**, Secretary General of the Council of Europe and **Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni**, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 11 April 2019)

Political advice

Following an in-country Secretariat visit to Azerbaijan (Baku, 6-7 May 2019), a regular report on the country's compliance with its obligations and commitments towards the Organisation covering the period between June 2017 and May 2019 was prepared and presented by the Secretariat.

■ The regular 19th and 20th consolidated reports of the Secretary General on the conflict in Georgia were presented to, and debated by, the Committee of Ministers on two occasions, in April and November 2019. As on previous occasions, the reports took stock of the situation in Georgia following the August 2008 conflict, provided information on the related activities of the Council of Europe and proposed further action for the Organisation in terms of confidence-building measures. The Ministers' Deputies took a decision following the presentation of the April report.

■ Regarding the functioning of the Information Point in Minsk, the project continued working actively to consolidate the action and visibility of the Organisation in Belarus through the organisation and support of more than 40 Council of Europe events in Minsk and in some of the country's regions (lectures, round tables, visits and conferences).

■ Some of the Council of Europe events in 2019 that were co-organised and supported by the Information Point in Minsk obtained high visibility in the country, in particular the Biannual Conference on Council of Europe treaties, a series of Council of Europe activities related to the dialogue on the abolition of the death penalty, in particular, a Round Table on Public Opinion and the Abolition of the Death Penalty in Belarus and the Human Rights Competition for Youth, Erga Omnes Competition: Council of Europe Law.

■ The Directorate of Political Affairs (DPA) continued to implement confidence-building measures (CBMs) in post-conflict, frozen or protracted conflict zones. In 2019, this programme supported the dissemination of Council of Europe standards and contributed to dialogue and capacity building of professionals in the affected regions. The main beneficiaries of the programme were representatives from Tbilisi and

Sukhumi, representatives from both banks of the River Nistru/Dniester in the Republic of Moldova and different local officials and population groups from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

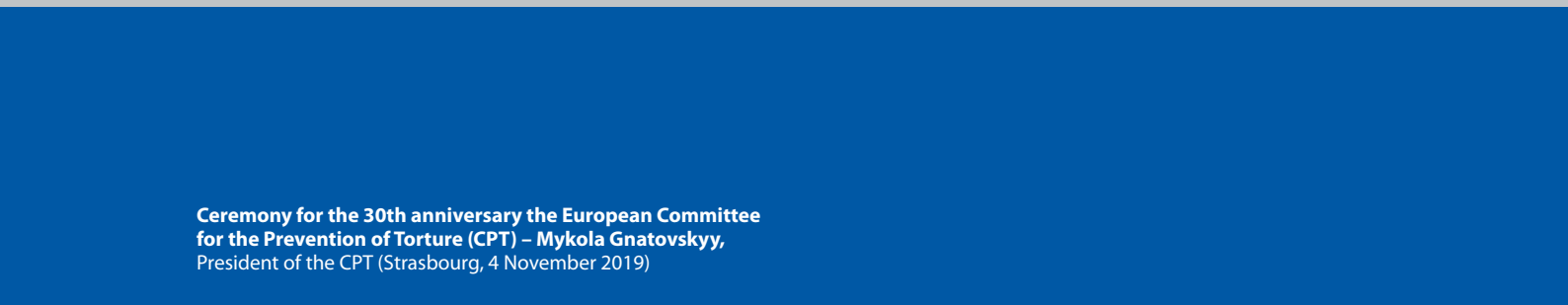
■ Concerning the Tbilisi-Sukhumi dialogue, the CBM programme evolved in terms of the diversity of thematic issues, such as the co-operation of translators from/to the Abkhaz language and the dialogue of specialists on bilingual education via a study visit to Cardiff in January 2019. At the same time, a dialogue between doctors and health professionals on the prevention and treatment of tuberculosis and viral co-infections was intensified, through co-operation with the French Embassy in Tbilisi. Follow-up to previous initiatives was maintained in the field of drug-prevention capacity building and the fight against violence against women, as well as a dialogue of journalists. Moreover, the second phase of the work on archive materials was finalised by a successful second publication on the period of collectivisation of the Abkhaz agricultural sector in the 1930s and was followed by work on missing persons from Abkhazia during the Second World War.

■ Concerning CBMs across the river Nistru/Dniester, in 2019 the DPA launched a new strand of activities focusing on the prevention and treatment of drug addiction, in co-operation with the Pompidou Group. At the same time, through its continued dialogue with the authorities in Chişinău and interlocutors in Tiraspol, the DPA set the basis for the continuation of other areas of CBM activities across the river Nistru/Dniester in the course of 2020.

■ Significant progress was achieved in the co-operation between the seven female mayors from Bosnia and Herzegovina. On the occasion of the 37th Session of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (28-30 October 2019), a co-operation agreement was signed by female mayors of municipalities on both sides of the entity-boundary line. The partnership with the established network of municipalities on both sides of the entity-boundary line was intensified with a view to enhancing the dialogue between young people and the municipal authorities at local level.



Moneyval 59th plenary meeting – Michael Stellini, Deputy Executive Secretary of Moneyval, **Elżbieta Frankow-Jaskiewicz**, chair of the bureau of Moneyval, and **John Ringguth**, co-chair of the bureau (Strasbourg, 5 December 2019)



Ceremony for the 30th anniversary the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) – Mykola Gnatovskyy, President of the CPT (Strasbourg, 4 November 2019)



Human rights and the rule of law

www.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-rule-of-law/home

HUMAN RIGHTS, DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Execution of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights

The department continued to assist the Committee of Ministers in the examination of action reports presenting the individual and general measures adopted by the respondent states to execute the Court's judgments, leading to the closure of a total of 2 048 cases (compared to 2 705 in 2018) as the result of the provision of individual redress to applicants and the adoption of 212 legislative or other reforms to address structural problems revealed by the Court's judgments. The department also assisted the Committee in the handling of some 1 142 new cases received from the Court (1 272 in 2018). As a result of the developments the total number of pending cases decreased to 5 246 (6 151 in 2018), and among these, cases concerned with structural problems amounted to 1 206 (1 248 in 2018).

The department engaged in specific activities to move the execution of many new and pending cases forward. The countries concerned included, among others, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Poland, Russia, Serbia and Ukraine.

On some 130 occasions executions were brought before the Committee of Ministers for more detailed examination. In 2019, the Court delivered its judgment against Azerbaijan with regard to an applicant who was imprisoned following criminal proceedings which the Court found to be without a legal basis and in fact to be punishment for having criticised the government. Following the Court's judgment, Azerbaijan indicated to the Committee of Ministers that the case would be resubmitted to the Supreme Court. The outcome is awaited.

The execution efforts undertaken by respondent states have led, *inter alia* to the adoption of reforms to ensure improved protection against killings and ill-treatment by the police in Bulgaria; better safeguards against undue surveillance of social-insurance benefit claimants and extended access to court for asbestos victims in Switzerland; the further development of land and forest property registries and better safeguards in expropriation proceedings in Greece; the introduction of a possibility for life prisoners to obtain a commutation of their sentence to a fixed-term sentence after having served at least 20 years in Lithuania; and the introduction of a new system of sanctions opening the possibility for certain prisoners in Russia to vote as well as a reform of pre-trial detention in Russia. The Committee of Ministers also closed many other cases relating to issues such as the non-enforcement of final domestic judicial decisions, the excessive length of judicial proceedings, freedom of expression and property rights.

Development and promotion of human rights

In 2019 the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) prepared the following texts:

- ▶ Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the system of the European Convention on Human Rights in university education and professional training;
- ▶ Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)6 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on the development of the Ombudsman institution;
- ▶ a report identifying good practices and making proposals with a view to improving the implementation of social rights in Europe;
- ▶ practical guidelines "Alternatives to immigration detention: fostering effective results".



Members of the CPT
(Strasbourg, 5 March 2019)

Human rights national implementation

Ensuring effective and coherent implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights at national level continued to be the focus of the Council of Europe's support to member states. Facilitating the execution of the European Court's judgments and bringing national laws and practices in line with Council of Europe standards remained priority areas of co-operation. Activities to support criminal justice reforms, strengthen national human rights mechanisms and ensure a harmonised application of European standards in national jurisdictions were carried out in Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, North Macedonia, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Ukraine and Kosovo.⁷ Activities were also carried out to promote human rights in Belarus, Tunisia and Morocco. At the end of 2019 human rights promotion activities also began in the five states of Central Asia.

Noteworthy achievements include the first organisational assessment of the Office of the Prosecutor General in Ukraine and the creation of a specialised unit dealing with the human rights of women in the armed forces in Armenia. In Turkey the Council of Europe intensified co-operation with the highest judicial authorities to promote the implementation of European Convention on Human Rights standards at domestic level and to sustain the individual complaint mechanism to the Constitutional Court as an "effective domestic remedy" in the sense of Article 13 of the Convention. Legal amendments in line with the Convention were introduced in Albania and Ukraine. Support was also provided to judicial training structures in almost all of the above countries.

7. All reference 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.

In 2019, the Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals Programme (HELP) developed new courses on issues such as effective investigation, prosecution and adjudication of hate crimes, family law, prevention of radicalisation, evidence in counter-terrorism cases, managing foreign national prisoners, access to justice for women, procedural safeguards in criminal proceedings and victims' rights. The number of HELP users continued to grow and reached 40 000 (compared to 6 000 in 2014). Legal professionals improved their capacities and skills after successfully completing HELP courses organised with judiciary schools and bar associations, largely thanks to targeted HELP projects in the European Union, the Russian Federation, Turkey and the Western Balkans. Work with law faculties was also intensified. Some 50 courses were launched. HELP continued to expand geographically in the southern Mediterranean and in Central Asia.

SPECIFIC HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

Prevention of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment

The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) carried out eight periodic visits (Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Denmark, France, Greece, Iceland, Ireland and North Macedonia) and eight ad hoc visits (Italy, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom).

National preventive mechanisms and NGOs: “Ensuring effective access to a lawyer in the first hours of detention in the Council of Europe and OSCE regions” – **Krassimir Kanev**, Chair of the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee (Strasbourg, 5 November 2019)



■ The CPT also held high-level talks with the authorities in Bulgaria, Greece, Lithuania and the United Kingdom. The purpose of these high-level talks was to discuss further action to be taken by the respective governments to address the recommendations of the most recent CPT visit reports to these countries.

■ In March, in application of Article 10.2 of the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (ETS No. 126), the CPT issued a public statement on the Russian Federation. In this statement, the CPT urged the Russian authorities to take decisive action to eradicate the phenomenon of ill-treatment by law-enforcement officials in the Chechen Republic and elsewhere in the northern Caucasian region of the Russian Federation, including through the conduct of effective investigations whenever relevant information comes to light.

■ At the request of the national authorities concerned, 15 visit reports and government responses were made public. The CPT welcomed the decisions of the Albanian and Czech authorities to authorise in advance the publication of all future CPT visit reports and related government responses concerning their countries. In its annual general report, the CPT published its reflections on good practices in conducting police interviews.

■ In November, a ceremony was held to mark the 30th anniversary of the CPT. On the same day, a high-level conference (co-organised by the CPT and the Association for the Prevention of Torture) on the topic of implementing safeguards in the first hours of police custody brought together 300 participants (including representatives of Council of Europe member states, National Preventive Mechanisms and NGOs).

Social rights

■ The European Social Charter’s quasi-judicial mechanism concluded a record 20 collective complaints with decisions on the merits adopted by the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR), 15 of which were related to equal pay between women and men and equal opportunities filed against all countries having adopted this procedure. The ECSR also indicated immediate measures in order to avoid the risk of serious irreparable injury stemming from evictions of people in a situation of accentuated vulnerability (in Italy) and as regards unaccompanied migrant children reportedly held in sub-standard refugee camps (in Greece). The ECSR also finalised around 900 conclusions under the Charter’s reporting procedure, and the Governmental Committee of the European Social Charter and the European Code of Social Security, entrusted with the follow-up to conclusions, agreed on 37 warnings to states, the highest number ever. In close co-operation with the International Labour Organization, the Governmental Committee continued to monitor compliance with the European Code of Social Security.



2019 HELP Annual Network Conference: HELP celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe
(Strasbourg, 4 July 2019)

As the entry into force of the Revised European Social Charter celebrated its 20th anniversary, the representatives of the 15 countries that have accepted the collective complaints procedure called for further ratifications of the Charter and for acceptance of the collective complaints procedure. Several countries indicated possibilities of accepting additional provisions, and one country (Spain) took decisive steps towards the ratification of the Revised Charter and acceptance of all of its provisions; the authorities also made firm commitments to accept the collective complaints procedure. At their session in Helsinki in May 2019, the Council of Europe Ministers for Foreign Affairs reiterated their support for the Charter and discussed the issue of growing inequalities. Recognising the need for continued attention to social cohesion, the Committee of Ministers renewed the mandate of the European Platform of Social Cohesion (PECS), and adopted a declaration prepared by PECS on addressing child poverty, expressing grave concern about the deteriorating situation and the serious damage that child poverty causes to individuals and society.

The Department of the European Social Charter also (co)organised events on reinforcing social rights (with the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers), on justiciability of social rights (with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and with the CoE-FRA-ENNHRI-EQUINET collaborative platform on social and economic rights), and on the family as a hub for social policies (with the Italian Government's Department for Family Policies). It launched a new

two-year co-operation project "Promoting social rights as a key factor of sustainable democracy in Ukraine", and facilitated publications on the connection between the European Union pillar of social rights and the Charter (by Olivier de Schutter), on protecting the child from poverty (by Aoife Nolan) and on engagement of non-governmental organisations with monitoring procedures under the Charter (by Claire Lougarre).

Bioethics

The Committee on Bioethics adopted a new Strategic Action Plan on Human Rights and Technologies in Biomedicine (2020-2025), which aims to protect human dignity and the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the individual with regard to applications of biology and medicine. The strategic action plan puts emphasis on addressing the main human rights challenges posed by new technological developments and by the evolution of practices in biomedicine. It is built around four thematic pillars comprising specific strategic objectives and actions concerning:

1. the governance of technologies,
2. equity in health care,
3. physical and mental integrity, and
4. transversal co-operation and communication.

The Committee on Bioethics also adopted the Guide to Public Debate on Human Rights and Biomedicine.



Launch of the European film directory LUMIEREVOD – **Radu Mihaileanu**, film director and President of ARP; **Suzanne Nikoltchev**, Executive Director of the European Audiovisual Observatory; **Thorbjørn Jagland**, Secretary General of the Council of Europe; **Mariya Gabriel**, European Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society; **Silvia Costa**, Member of the European Parliament and Coordinator of the Committee on Culture and Education (Strasbourg, 16 April 2019)

■ By the end of 2019, 135 legal and medical professionals from 14 countries had benefited from the HELP course on key human rights principles in biomedicine (available on <http://help.elearning.ext.coe.int/> in seven language versions).

Information society

■ The two main focuses of media-related activities were quality journalism and the safety of journalists. A strategy was adopted for a more effective implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)4 on the protection of journalism and safety of journalists and other media actors, and as its first step an implementation guide was developed with good practices and guidance for improving journalists' protection and combating impunity.

■ A Declaration by the Committee of Ministers on the financial sustainability of quality journalism in the digital age was adopted, and a draft recommendation on promoting a favourable environment for quality journalism in the digital age was finalised. Sustainability and the culture of trustworthy journalism was also discussed in two conferences co-organised by the Council of Europe, "Media pluralism – how can we deliver?" in March and "(Last) call for quality journalism" in November.

■ A final report on the implementation of the Organisation's Internet Governance Strategy 2016-2019 was prepared, as were elements for the draft Digital Governance Strategy 2020-2023. A second exchange of views of the Committee of Ministers with leading technology firms and associations was organised in June.

■ Focus was also placed on the human rights dimensions of digital technologies and artificial intelligence (AI). A Declaration by the Committee of Ministers on the manipulative capabilities of algorithmic processes was adopted in February, a study on responsibility and AI was published in June, and a draft recommendation to member states on the human rights impacts of algorithmic systems was finalised in December for adoption by the Committee of Ministers in early 2020.

■ AI development and its impacts on human rights, democracy and the rule of law was also the main topic at a high-level conference entitled "AI: Governing the Game Changer", in Helsinki in February. The event brought together global leaders from different disciplines to discuss gaps in applicability and enforceability of existing regulatory frameworks, and potential measures to ensure human rights-compliant AI. A follow-up event took place in October as a side event to the United Nations General Assembly.



International Conference on Convention 108 + “The right to data protection: what is needed for tomorrow?” – Jean-Baptiste Mattei, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of France to the Council of Europe; **Thorbjørn Jagland**, Secretary General of the Council of Europe; **Joseph A. Cannataci**, Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy, United Nations; **Jean Lessi**, Secretary General, Commission nationale de l’informatique et des libertés (CNIL); and **Ann Cavoukian**, Creator of Global Privacy and Security by Design (Strasbourg, 12 June 2019)

■ The European Union/Council of Europe Joint Programme on freedom of expression in South-East Europe (JUFREX) was successfully completed in May 2019, with a follow-up launched under the Horizontal Facility framework. In Ukraine, activities were implemented to increase the independence of the public broadcaster, and both in Ukraine and Tunisia support was provided to the media coverage of elections. Journalists were also assisted in their fact-checking efforts (Morocco), and self-regulatory initiatives. Expert reports addressed challenges in media regulation in Ukraine and Georgia, and a needs assessment was prepared for the Armenian media sector.

Data protection

■ At a time when personal data protection is a growing concern, the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (ETS No. 108) continues to play an important role as the main international instrument in this field. To date, there are 55 parties to this convention with Argentina and Morocco having acceded in 2019. The “modernised convention” (Convention 108+) has registered its first two ratifications by Bulgaria and Croatia, and a total of 36 signatory states. Convention 108+ and its principles have been presented and actively supported at international conferences and events in Europe and on all the other continents.

■ The Committee of Ministers adopted Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)2 on the protection of health-related data. The Consultative Committee of the convention drew up the Guidelines on Artificial Intelligence and Data Protection to reaffirm the importance of the right to privacy and data protection and thereby prevent the negative effects of an unregulated development of AI applications. Technical support through legislative advice was given to Belarus, the Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Jordan and Namibia to adopt their legislation.

■ In addition, the promotion and implementation of personal data protection measures were also ensured by local capacity-building activities, sectoral awareness-raising and technical support as part of co-operation programmes for European countries (in Georgia, training journalists on respect for private life, developing the HELP course on data protection and translating the *Handbook on European data protection law*) as well as in Tunisia and Morocco.

European Audiovisual Observatory – partial agreement

■ The Observatory is the Council of Europe’s clearing house for information on cinema, television (TV) and video on demand (VOD) in Europe. In 2019 the Observatory published eight legal reports on relevant topics for European media law, such as media law enforcement, independence of media regulators, disinformation in the media under Russian law, and self- and co-regulation, including two major Europe-wide comparative mapping studies on film funding criteria in Europe and the rules for promoting European works; and 18 market reports covering themes such as film financing, the VOD market, TV audiences in Europe, Russian pay TV and subscription VOD, and the circulation of films and TV fiction in Europe. In April the Observatory launched a new database, LUMIERE VOD, a ground-breaking tool to monitor which films are available on which VOD platforms in Europe. May saw the launch of a renovated and updated version of the Observatory MAVISE database on audiovisual services in Europe and an online directory of film research

The 9th meeting of the CoE-FRA-ENNHRI-EQUINET Collaborative Platform on Social and Economic Rights, “Justiciability of social and economic rights in Europe”
(Strasbourg, 28 November 2019)



documents produced by the European Film Agencies Research Network (EFARN). May’s Observatory conference at the Cannes Film Festival gathered together over 350 international film professionals to discuss “Film financing – European strategies to boost cultural diversity”. The year 2019 marked the Italian Presidency of the Observatory and the subject chosen by Italy for the traditional yearly presidency conference in June was “Cinema windows across Europe” which examined the order in which films and programmes are made available and through what channels. The Observatory’s annual conference in Russia took place in Moscow in October and focused on the Russian pay-TV market and possible “cord cutting” by Russian audiences. December saw the Observatory’s legal workshop in Strasbourg concentrating on artificial intelligence and its implications for the audiovisual industries in Europe.

ACTION AGAINST CRIME

Fight against terrorism and criminal law

■ The Council of Europe Committee on Counter-Terrorism (CDCT) took several steps forward in the implementation of activities under the Council of Europe Counter-Terrorism Strategy (2018-2022). The CDCT finalised the development of a practical tool for the evaluation of the risk that a terrorist attack may be carried out by radicalised persons. This tool will enhance the capacity of member states to make a timely identification of those persons present on their territories who are most likely to commit terrorist

attacks. The CDCT set up a network for the exchange of information on the rights of victims of terrorism, which has been operational since 1 November 2019, to make it possible for the competent authorities of any state to easily contact the competent authorities of other states in order to exchange procedural information concerning the legal standing of its citizens who are victims of a terrorist attack.

■ Similarly, the CDCT decided to open the Council of Europe 24/7 network for the exchange of information concerning persons travelling abroad for the purpose of terrorism to participation by all interested and relevant states and international organisations around the world. In the context of European fighters and other persons with connections to Daesh returning to Europe from the Middle East, the CDCT in co-operation with Spain conducted an international workshop in Madrid focusing on the prosecution of foreign terrorist fighters, for the first time allowing judicial practitioners of states across Europe and beyond to discuss their prosecutorial strategies and practical experiences in this regard.

■ The European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC) finalised an update and revision of the European Prison Rules, reflecting the most recent international standards in this area, as well as a draft recommendation on the practical application of the Council of Europe Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons and the additional protocol thereto, so as to facilitate and promote possibilities for persons sentenced abroad to serve their sentence in their home country.

Marin Mrčela, President of GRECO, at the 83rd Plenary Meeting of GRECO (Strasbourg, 17 June 2019)



Prison and police

■ The Criminal Law Co-operation Unit developed a quality monitoring tool for mental health services in closed institutions, the application of protocols for dealing with forensic patients and a training manual on the provision of care to forensic patients; a unified methodology and template for model individual treatment plans and a training programme on individual treatment plans for psychiatric institutions.

Fight against money laundering

■ The Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL) completed five country assessments and adopted another 16 follow-up reports. Four additional MONEYVAL states received a two-week onsite visit. MONEYVAL jointly organised together with the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) an expert meeting, hosted by the Israeli Government in Tel Aviv from 25-26 March, which focused on highly contemporary and relevant global challenges such as terrorist financing, virtual assets and cross-border conviction-based asset recovery. The meeting brought together over 300 delegates from 63 states and numerous other international organisations.

Fight against corruption

■ The Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) adopted nearly 50 evaluation, ad hoc and compliance reports. It also issued its first ever declaration of non-compliance. These reports largely focused on the prevention of corruption of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors (4th evaluation round) and have resulted so far in some 135 positive, legislative, policy and/or institutional changes in member states. GRECO also adopted a number of evaluation reports under its new 5th evaluation round on preventing corruption and promoting integrity in central governments (top executive functions) and law-enforcement agencies.

■ In certain countries, new legislative initiatives reversed reforms previously undertaken to comply with GRECO's recommendations, leading GRECO to either reassess the new legislation or remind the authorities of the countries concerned of the relevant GRECO recommendations through ad hoc urgent evaluations.

Co-operation in the fight against economic crime

■ In light of continuing money laundering scandals in Europe, co-operation activities to promote financial integrity, beneficial ownership transparency, monitoring of politically exposed persons and recovery of stolen assets were enhanced. Thus, an European Union-wide assessment of anti-money laundering systems was launched at the request of the European Commission. Country projects led to the establishment of an electronic asset declaration system in Albania, the creation of an effective asset recovery office in the Republic of Moldova and the adoption of a Council of Europe assessment of national money laundering risks adopted by the Bulgarian Government.

■ Partnerships with neighbouring regions to combat economic crime were developed. Several jurisdictions from the Middle East and North Africa acceded to the Network of Corruption Prevention Authorities. The first ever Council of Europe partnership project aimed at promoting financial integrity and combating economic crime was launched with Central Asia.



Octopus Conference 2019 – Workshop 3, Cooperation on cybercrime and cybersecurity: from incidents response to criminal justice (Strasbourg, 21 November 2019)

Cybercrime

■ The Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention, ETS No. 185) remains the most relevant international agreement on cybercrime. By June 2019, more than 150 states had used it as a source of domestic cybercrime legislation and the substantive criminal law of half of United Nations member states was broadly in line with this treaty. The number of parties increased to 64. In December, Brazil and Burkina Faso were invited to accede. The number of parties to the Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime, concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems (ETS No. 189) increased to 32 states.

■ The effective application of the Budapest Convention is supported by the Cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY) representing the Parties to the Budapest Convention. The primary focus of the T-CY was the negotiation of a Second Additional Protocol on enhanced international co-operation and access to evidence on cloud servers. This protocol will offer specific solutions such as provisions for more effective mutual legal assistance or direct co-operation with service providers in other jurisdictions, complemented by safeguards including data protection requirements. A particular highlight was the Octopus Conference on Cybercrime in November with close to 500 participants from 115 countries, and which included stakeholder consultations on the draft protocol.

■ The Budapest Convention and the T-CY are backed by capacity-building activities through a specialised office, the Cybercrime Programme Office of the Council of Europe (C-PROC) in Bucharest, which celebrated its 5th anniversary in February. Some 240 technical assistance activities were supported in 2019 in all regions of the world.

Drug use and illicit trafficking

■ The Pompidou Group started a new four-year work cycle under the chairmanship of Portugal and the vice-chairmanship of Poland. The new work programme “Sustainable drug policies respectful of human rights” emphasises the need to integrate human rights into the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of drug policies. This dimension was thus at the heart of many of the activities, for example, the Conference on the Sustainable Development Goals in Mexico City (30-31 October); the seminar “Responding to drug-related challenges for refugees, migrants and IDPS” in Athens (8-11 October) as well as a thematic discussion on human rights of drug users at the November MedNET meeting. Special attention was also devoted to drug prevention, by conducting seminars entitled “Drug prevention approaches that make a difference” (25-26 September) in Reykjavik and “The role of police in drug prevention” in Warsaw (12-15 November). The gender dimension and specific needs of men, women and transgender communities were addressed in the capacity-building format through executive training.



120th Plenary session of the Venice Commission (Venice, 11 October 2019)

■ The Pompidou Group also launched its statutory review process by conducting an open discussion with its member states on the mandate, functioning and working methods of the group in view of its 50th anniversary in 2021. In addition, as a result of a broad consultation process extending to all Council of Europe member and observer states, Spain (re) joined the MedNET network and Armenia joined the Pompidou Group as of 1 January 2020, thus becoming its 40th member state.

JUSTICE AND LEGAL CO-OPERATION

Venice Commission

■ “The Venice Principles”, which are guidelines on the protection and promotion of ombudsman institutions, were finalised by the Venice Commission following instances of threats to these institutions in recent years. The Commission, jointly with the OSCE/ODIHR, also updated the Guidelines on freedom of peaceful assembly. In the report on funding of NGOs, the Commission stressed that the right of associations to seek financial and material resources was protected as an “inherent part” of the right to freedom of association.

■ In two opinions on language issues in Ukraine and North Macedonia, the Commission called for a balance to be struck between strengthening state languages and safeguarding the linguistic rights of minorities; in North Macedonia, the Commission notably advised that the provisions on bilingualism in judicial proceedings be abandoned.

■ The parameters on the relationship between the parliamentary majority and the opposition in a democracy were codified into a checklist.

■ The Commission concluded in a report that a clear obligation existed under international law for all states and international organisations not to recognise an annexation, either explicitly or implicitly.

■ The functioning of judicial councils, the appointment of judges to the highest courts and their responsibilities were recurrent issues in 2019. The Commission recommended that improvements be made to the legislation on the judiciary and the prosecution service of Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, North Macedonia and Romania.

■ The Commission provided legal assistance to four election observation missions of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

■ Two UniDem Med Campus seminars for high-level civil servants in the Southern Mediterranean region took place in Marrakesh and Amman. The 7th Intercultural Workshop on Democracy, organised in cooperation with the Consultative Council of European Judges (CCJE), addressed the independence of justice and the high councils of the judiciary.

■ The Commission’s database CODICES on constitutional case law reached 10 000 cases. The membership of the World Conference on Constitutional Justice (WCCJ), initiated and managed by the Commission, has reached 116 constitutional courts and councils.

■ Canada joined the Commission as a full member in 2019 bringing its membership to 62 states.



Gianni Buquicchio, President of the Venice Commission, and **Mamuka Bakhtadze**, Prime Minister of Georgia (Strasbourg, 10 April 2019)



The 33rd plenary meeting of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) – Jean-Paul Jean (left, former President of Division at the French Court of Cassation), during his Pro Merito medal award ceremony and **Christophe Poirel**, Director of the Human Rights Directorate (Strasbourg, 5 December 2019)

Legal co-operation

■ The European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) started work on developing two sets of guidelines; firstly, on ensuring the compatibility of court-based online dispute resolution mechanisms with member states' obligations in respect of Articles 6 and 13 of the European Convention on Human Rights; and secondly, on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of legal aid schemes in member states.

■ An analysis of current practices and challenges as regards the avoidance and reduction of statelessness in Europe was completed and presented to the CDCJ in November.

■ Member states' practice in mainstreaming the promotion of equality between women and men in the process of law reform (developing new legislation etc.) was presented at an event organised by the CDCJ in November.

■ Support was provided to national authorities and judicial bodies of 11 member states (Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Portugal, Serbia, Turkey, and Ukraine) and two non-member states (Belarus and Tunisia) to support their reforms in the justice sector, including specific training.

Independence and efficiency of justice

■ The European Commission was provided by the Council of Europe European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) with a detailed and comparative analysis of the functioning of the judicial systems of 26 states enabling it to prepare its "Justice Scoreboard". A similar analysis, completed with information about integrity of justice, was initiated concerning the Western Balkans. The promotion, follow-up and implementation of the first European ethical charter on the use of artificial intelligence in judicial systems and their environment was ensured by developing operational standards for the principles of the charter. New CEPEJ tools were adopted, such as the toolkit for the implementation of the guidelines on cyberjustice, which aim to improve judges' skills and competencies, strengthen knowledge sharing and collaboration and move beyond a culture of judicial isolation as well as a glossary of terms used by the CEPEJ. The CEPEJ has also developed a European handbook for mediation law-making, a mediation awareness programme for judges, a mediation awareness and training programme for notaries, a training programme for lawyers to assist clients in mediation, as well as guidelines on designing and monitoring mediation training schemes.

■ The Crystal Scales of justice Prize was awarded to the Supreme Court of Slovakia, for a project entitled "Improving the quality of justice" ("IQ Justice").

Drahošlav Štefánek, new Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees (Strasbourg, 20 November 2019)



■ The tools and methodology of the CEPEJ have been used to guide judicial reforms in Albania, Azerbaijan, Latvia, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Slovakia, Spain, Morocco, Tunisia and Kosovo.⁸ Four joint opinions were adopted by the Venice Commission with the CCJE providing an expert as rapporteur for opinions about the judiciary in Armenia, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The situation of the status of judges in Poland and Montenegro was assessed by the Consultative Council of European Judges (CCJE), and the proposed amendments to the Constitution of Serbia regarding the organisation of the judicial power were examined by the CCJE and the Consultative Council of European Prosecutors (CCPE).

■ Opinion No. 22 (2019) of the CCJE entitled “The role of judicial assistants” highlights European standards as regards the framework and modalities of the legal support rendered to judges. This opinion has become the first instrument of “soft law” on this particular topic at international level. Many member states greatly appreciate the opinion. For example, it was translated into Ukrainian and presented by the Supreme Court of Ukraine during a workshop devoted specifically to this opinion in December 2019.

8. All reference 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.

■ Opinion No. 14 (2019) of the CCPE entitled “The role of prosecutors in fighting corruption and related economic and financial crime” provides an in-depth overview of all aspects – policy, legislation, institutions, operational framework, mechanisms and procedures – related to prosecutors’ fight against corruption. The opinion also focuses on the personal requirements for prosecutors and their ethical standards. It provides practical models to be followed at national level by member states as regards both the criminal procedure and the career of prosecutors.

■ The CCJE and the CCPE also contributed to the implementation of the Council of Europe’s Plan of Action on “Strengthening judicial independence and impartiality”.

THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL ON MIGRATION AND REFUGEES

■ The Special Representative published a report on his fact-finding mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia (April) in which he assessed the situation of migrants and refugees and the different challenges the countries face, and he made concrete recommendations on how the Council of Europe could offer assistance.

■ He participated in the development of two Committee of Ministers recommendations: one on support to young refugees in transition to adulthood, developed with the Joint Youth Council and another on effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration, developed by the Ad hoc Committee for the Rights of the Child (CAHENF).

■ In April, the Special Representative organised a Conference on Effective Alternatives to the Detention of Migrants jointly with the European Commission and the European Migration Network. The discussions concluded that alternatives are in general under-used by European states and more awareness is needed for a swift and fair resolution of cases. In November, the first meeting of the National Network Focal Points on migration took place with the aim to build co-ordination and co-operation in the field of migration.

■ In April, the Special Representative published an issue paper on human rights aspects of immigrant and refugee integration policies and in December, the publication “Promoting child-friendly approaches in the area of migration: standards, guidance and current practices” was launched in co-operation with the Council of Europe office in Belgrade and UNICEF Serbia.

■ In April, Ambassador Tomáš Boček completed his mandate as the first Special Representative after three years. In December, the Secretary General Marija Pejčinović Burić announced the appointment of Ambassador Drahošlav Štefánek as her new Special Representative on Migration and Refugees.



Snežana Samardžić-Marković, Director General of Democracy at the Council of Europe, and **H.R.H. the Crown Prince of Norway**, at the European Youth Centre (Strasbourg, 28 March 2019)

Round-table discussion organised by the Council of Europe, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the City of Strasbourg: "The role of education in supporting the integration of refugees in their host societies"
– **Snežana Samardžić-Marković**, Director General of Democracy, Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 1 March 2019)



Democracy

www.coe.int/democracy

GOVERNANCE, EQUALITY, HUMAN DIGNITY

Democratic governance

The Committee of Ministers adopted Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)3 to member States on supervision of local authorities' activities, while the European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG) finalised draft guidelines on public ethics as well as a guide to promote public ethics in public organisations. The CDDG also contributed to reforms in five member states through its peer reviews and contributed to exchange of good practice through its rapid response service mechanism.

■ The Centre of Expertise for Good Governance supported public administration and local government reforms in 20 countries. Noteworthy results were also achieved in promoting the 12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance, contributing to the promotion of a common vision of good governance in Europe and to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Electoral assistance

■ The main activities of electoral assistance were concentrated in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, including the Autonomous Territorial Unit Gagauzia, and Ukraine, where the Council of Europe supported numerous actions to promote more integral and transparent electoral processes, the participation of young people and women in the electoral processes and electoral dispute resolution. To support gender mainstreaming in election administration a Participatory Gender Audit (PGA) was conducted in the Georgian Central Electoral Commission (CEC) and a PGA report was delivered which helped to document good practices, to identify gaps and to develop recommendations which resulted in the revision of the internal CEC regulations accordingly.

■ Special attention was also given to increasing the transparency of electoral processes through continuous digitalisation, namely, in Georgia and the Republic of Moldova, in particular during electoral campaigns. The Council of Europe supported adjusting the State Register of Voters and the official webpage of the CEC (www.cec.md). In Georgia, the State Audit Office's Political Finances Monitoring Department was supported in conducting a comprehensive upgrade to existing software and websites.

■ A set of methodological guidelines to make electoral co-operation useful, relevant, sustainable and owned (URSO) was developed and piloted in the Republic of Moldova.

■ A permanent training course for judges on election law and election dispute resolution was developed and introduced at the High School of Justice of Georgia. The course enables judges to obtain understanding of the Council of Europe *acquis*, a deeper knowledge of domestic electoral legislation and court practice, peculiarities of election dispute resolution within courts and the election administration, international standards in electoral matters and European Court of Human Rights case law.

“Women’s rights at the crossroads” meeting – Claudia Luciani, Director of Human Dignity, Equality and Governance at the Council of Europe; **Dubravka Šimonović**, Special Rapporteur on violence against women (UN); **Thorbjørn Jagland**, Secretary General of the Council of Europe; **Snežana Samardžić-Marković**, Director General of Democracy at the Council of Europe; **Marlène Schiappa**, Secretary of Equality between women and men of France; **Dunja Mijatović**, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe; and **Feride Acar**, President of GREVIO at the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 24 May 2019)



COUNCIL OF EUROPE DEVELOPMENT BANK (CEB) – PARTIAL AGREEMENT

■ The CEB approved 46 projects for an overall amount of €3.98 billion. Of those projects 26 (€1.63 billion) concern Target Group countries in central, South-East and eastern Europe. In 2019, around 20% of the volume of approved projects was directly or indirectly in favour of migrants, refugees and displaced persons. The projects also targeted social housing for vulnerable population groups, including migrants and refugees and their families, persons with disabilities and the elderly, as well as the construction or modernisation of school and health facilities, the preservation of jobs and the mitigation of the impact of climate change.

■ The CEB’s Migrant and Refugee Fund (MRF) successfully completed its mandate by approving 27 projects totaling €28 million in 15 countries, predominantly along the “Balkan route”.

■ The CEB pursued its active role in the Regional Housing Programme (RHP), which aims to provide sustainable housing solutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia. As at December 2019, approximately 11 800 homes had been delivered to some 35 000 beneficiaries.

■ In December, the CEB adopted the Development Plan 2020-2022, which confirms its alignment with the priorities, principles and values of the Council of Europe. The CEB’s strategy and operations incorporate the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): through its projects, the CEB intends to contribute towards meeting the SDGs in its member states. The plan features other important elements, such as an increased focus on local and regional authorities and, as potential new areas of co-operation, the assistance to Council of Europe member states to implement the Istanbul Convention and the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CETS No. 197) as well as the construction of infrastructure for young people in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Gender equality and violence against women

■ A new Committee of Ministers recommendation on preventing and combating sexism, which contains, *inter alia* the first ever internationally agreed definition of sexism, was adopted. Promotion initiatives undertaken include a launching conference, a promotional video and dedicated website, and its translation into 15 languages. The Committee of Ministers also agreed to launch work to develop a new recommendation on the rights of migrant and refugee women, in line with the objectives of the current Gender Equality Strategy. The first baseline evaluation of the Istanbul Convention continued, with the adoption of reports and recommendations on Finland, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Serbia. Ireland was the 34th state to ratify the convention.

■ Various initiatives were undertaken also with respect to ensuring accurate information about the convention in states discussing its ratification, such as the Czech Republic, Moldova and Armenia. The Venice Commission adopted an opinion on the constitutional implications of the ratification of the convention by Armenia. Several events took place at national and international level to raise awareness and ensure follow-up to the findings of GREVIO. Co-operation projects on promoting gender equality and combating violence against women were developed in new areas and with an increased range of beneficiary countries, including the Russian Federation.

■ Strategic partnerships were strengthened with other organisations and fora, including the G7 and the United Nations, to discuss new emerging trends and to overcome political and social resistance to effective gender equality. A high-level conference was organised on “Women’s rights at the crossroads” to strengthen synergy between, and support for, the various regional and global mechanisms for the protection of women’s rights. The international recognition for the monitoring work by GREVIO and the Committee of the Parties has been consolidated, and GREVIO is part of the Platform of



Members of the GRETA (Strasbourg, 22 March 2019)

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)

ECRI published seven reports and 11 conclusions on the implementation of the recommendations subject to interim follow-up. It also started its sixth country-by-country monitoring cycle and carried out seven visits on the ground. At the conference for its 25th anniversary, ECRI brought together members of 10 governments and 330 participants, and published its “Roadmap to Effective Equality” that contains its work programme for the years to come. In this context, ECRI plans to use its 6th monitoring cycle to contribute to further strengthening effective equality and access to rights, including through promoting the independence and effectiveness of equality bodies, inclusive education and lesbian, gay, bisexual transgender and intersex (LGBTI) equality. In addition, it will focus on combating hate speech and hate-motivated violence and on inclusive integration. Within the framework of its roadmap, ECRI also aims to revise its General Policy Recommendation No. 5 on combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims and General Policy Recommendation No. 9 on the fight against antisemitism.

Minorities and minority or regional languages

A 2019 landmark event was the adoption of the reform of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by amending its implementing Committee of Ministers resolutions. The objective of the reform is to make the framework convention more relevant by shortening its procedures. Furthermore, the amended resolution for the first time contains a reference to country visits and a procedure for rapid reaction in case a situation or development warrants an urgent examination in the light of the principles set out in the framework convention. The reform entered into effect on 1 January 2020.

In 2019, the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ACFC) adopted nine opinions and carried out nine visits. The Committee of Ministers adopted six resolutions in the context of the control system of the framework convention.

United Nations and regional independent mechanisms on violence against women and women’s rights. The various measures taken to implement the convention are contributing significantly to other processes such as the SDGs and the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, which its review process in 2019 has shown.

Trafficking in human beings

In 2019, the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) carried out 11 country evaluation visits, nine as part of the third round of evaluation of the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (to Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Slovak Republic), one as part of the first evaluation round (to the Czech Republic), and a combined first and second round visit to Monaco. GRETA’s 8th General Report focused on the provision of assistance to victims of human trafficking. In November 2019, the Secretary General announced a roadmap on strengthening action against human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation. A round-table meeting on “Stepping up the Council of Europe action against trafficking in human beings in the digital age” explored ways of strengthening collaboration with businesses and civil society. Co-operation projects linked to GRETA’s recommendations were implemented in several member states. The HELP course on combating human trafficking was translated into four additional languages.

INSCHOOL training programme for facilitators and educational advisors –
“Inclusive Schools: making a difference for Roma children” (Strasbourg, 12 November 2019)



■ In relation to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ETS No. 148), the reform adopted by the Committee of Ministers in November 2018 with a view to strengthening the monitoring mechanism entered into force on 1 July 2019. Now parties to the charter will present their periodical reports every five years, aligning the reporting dates with those of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. In addition, states will be requested to provide information on the recommendations for immediate action adopted by the Committee of Experts halfway through the reporting cycle. Under certain requirements, parties could ask the Committee of Experts for a confidential dialogue. Lastly, the reports will be automatically published upon reception of the final comments on the evaluation report received from the states parties, thus speeding up the publication procedure.

■ In 2019, The Committee of Experts adopted seven evaluation reports and carried out five visits. The Committee of Ministers adopted seven recommendations and one decision.

Inclusion

■ Member states were supported in improving legal frameworks, building institutional capacity and effective partnerships with civil society in order to ensure equality for all, protect the rights of LGBTI persons, strengthen the inclusion of minorities and counter hate speech. A pioneering study was prepared on new governance models of online hate speech which will contribute to the development of a new Council of Europe legal standard on combating hate speech. An innovative action to develop comprehensive policies against hate speech was carried out in Spain. An equality week was held in Georgia with 1 055 events involving more than 26 000 persons. Following recommendations by the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and with

Council of Europe expert support, a new state service on ethnic policy and freedom of conscience was created in Ukraine, as a dedicated institution dealing with the protection of national minorities.

■ The implementation of Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on measures to combat discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity was evaluated and recommendations were made for further policy initiatives to strengthen the rights of LGBTI persons.

■ Two further cities joined the Intercultural Cities Network bringing the number of members to 136. National Intercultural Cities Networks were set up in the United Kingdom and Australia and the Intercultural Regions Network was launched. The Intercultural Cities Index questionnaire was revised, and a methodological guide was produced. Some 89 good practices were added to the database.

Roma and Traveller⁹ issues

■ Implementation of the Thematic Action Plan on the Inclusion of Roma and Travellers (2016-2019) was completed and the final implementation report published. Through intergovernmental co-operation, dialogue with Roma and Traveller civil society, and co-operation projects with member states, several accomplishments have been possible, in particular as regards the fight against stereotypes, discrimination, and anti-Gypsyism as well as in the field of good

9. The term “Roma and Travellers” is used at the Council of Europe to encompass the wide diversity of the groups covered by the work of the Council of Europe in this field: on the one hand a) Roma, Sinti/Manush, Calé, Kaale, Romanichals, Boyash/Rudari; b) Balkan Egyptians (Egyptians and Ashkali); c) Eastern groups (Dom, Lom and Abdal); and, on the other hand, groups such as Travellers, Yenish, and the populations designated under the administrative term “Gens du voyage”, as well as persons who identify themselves as Gypsies. The present is an explanatory footnote, not a definition of Roma and/or Travellers.



Conference on the fight against domestic violence, “The role of the police” – **Telma Fernandes**, Chief Superintendent, Oporto, Victim Service and Information Office (GAIV); **Ivo Holc**, Member of GREVIO (Council of Europe); **Samuel Hosotte**, Superintendent, Head of Prevention and Partnerships Division Central Directorate for Public Safety – DCSP (France); **Véronique Walravens**, SAPV Head of Service, Police Victim Assistance Service (Brussels) (Strasbourg, 24 September 2019)

local governance. Roma and Traveller civil society was involved through regular biannual dialogue meetings. Main achievements of the plan include: the development and adoption of new standards, such as Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)10 on improving access to justice for Roma and Travellers in Europe; the provision of peer reviews through intergovernmental expert co-operation on thematic work and reports; and the organisation of co-operation and capacity-building activities in the framework of joint programmes with the European Union, (e.g. INSCHOOL, JUSTROM, ROMACT and ROMACTED).

Based on the assessment of the implementation of the above-mentioned plan, a new Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion (2020-2025) was elaborated to address the remaining challenges, particularly in the fields of education and training, the fight against discrimination, hate speech, violence and anti-Gypsyism and active participation in public life.

Roma history and culture was promoted through co-operation with the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC). Several of instruments and tools were prepared, such as a draft Committee of Ministers recommendation on the inclusion of the history of Roma and/or Travellers in school curricula and teaching materials; a study on the representation of Roma in European curricula and textbooks, carried out in co-operation with the Roma Education Fund (REF) and the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research (GEI) in 21 Council of Europe member states and Kosovo;¹⁰ a book entitled *The representation of*

10. All reference 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.

Roma in Major European museum collections: The Louvre; and the updating and completing of the Council of Europe factsheets on Roma history and culture in co-operation with the University of Graz, Austria.

The 7th International Roma Women’s Conference, entitled “Roma and Traveller women’s access to justice and rights”, held in Espoo, Finland, under the Finnish Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers, 25-27 March 2019, recognised the rights of Roma and Traveller women to live their lives freely and to be able to make their own choices without being subjected to undue pressure from either their communities, their family members, or the states where they live. The conference, attended by more than 100 women, raised awareness about the serious obstacles Roma and Traveller women face in accessing justice and rights.

Three child-friendly Dosta! campaign video clips and accompanying educational material were developed for children and young people to address prejudice and stereotypes against Roma in the school environment.

Children’s rights

The Committee of Ministers adopted Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)11 on effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration. A publication on the risks and opportunities for children with disabilities in the digital environment, containing recommendations for states and other stakeholders, was finalised: “Two Clicks Forward and One Click Back”. Three further member states evaluated their child participation mechanisms with Council of Europe support.



Conference “EDQM and European Pharmacopoeia: state-of-the-art science for tomorrow’s medicines” – Susanne Keitel, Director, EDQM, Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 19 June 2019)

Member states, through the Ad hoc Committee for the Rights of the Child, furthermore, reiterated their commitment to Council of Europe action for the rights of the child through the Mid-Term Evaluation Conference “Redefining Power” in November 2019, and supported future action and priorities of the new Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF) in 2020-2021.

The Lanzarote Committee progressed with the analysis of the situation in states parties to the convention within the context of its second thematic monitoring round focusing particularly on preventive strategies with a view to protecting children against the criminal exploitation of child self-generated sexual content (in particular sexually explicit images and videos). The Lanzarote Committee also examined children’s contributions to its monitoring work. The 2019 edition of the European Day for the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (18 November) mobilised an important number of Council of Europe member states that organised initiatives on “Empowering children to stop sexual violence”.

Co-operation at global level was enhanced with the support of the Global Fund to End Violence Against Children (EVAC) by mapping member state’s responses with regard to preventing and combating online child sexual exploitation and abuse and reviewing mechanisms for collective action in this area.

Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)

EPAS pursued activities based on the resolutions adopted at the 15th Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport (Tbilisi, Georgia, 16 October 2018), focusing on protecting human rights in sport and fighting

corruption in sport. Regarding the latter, it continued to play a key role in the International Partnership Against Corruption in Sport (IPACS) and co-ordinate Action 3 of the Kazan Action Plan to support sport ministers’ interventions in the field of sport integrity. EPAS explored issues such as discrimination, media freedom and athletes’ access to justice in a seminar on human rights in sport. It also held a diversity conference in April 2019 entitled Sexual Violence against Women and Children in Sports with the aim of scaling up actions to tackle sexual violence against women and children in sports. The Start to Talk initiative gained momentum with 20 states using the tools, six of them having launched national campaigns.

EUROPEAN DIRECTORATE FOR THE QUALITY OF MEDICINES AND HEALTHCARE (EDQM)

In 2019 the European Pharmacopoeia (Ph. Eur.) Commission adopted 24 new and 233 revised monographs and general chapters for publication in the Ph. Eur., taking account of the latest scientific and technological developments. To mark the publication of the 10th edition of the European Pharmacopoeia (Ph. Eur.), an international conference entitled EDQM & European Pharmacopoeia: State-of-the-Art Science for Tomorrow’s Medicines was organised on 19 and 20 June 2019 in Strasbourg. This conference was also the occasion to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the European Network of Official Medicines Control Laboratories (OMCLs) and of the Certification of Suitability Procedure. The plenary sessions and workshops were attended by more than 300 participants from 47 different countries, highlighting the impact of EDQM’s activities and its contribution to ensuring access to good quality medicines across continents.

■ The Ph. Eur. Commission also adopted 373 reference standards (RSs), manufactured and established by the EDQM. Of these, 98 were new RSs and 275 were replacement batches of existing RSs. Albania ratified the Ph. Eur. Convention on 8 November 2019, bringing the number of signatory parties to 40 and demonstrating the continued interest of the Council of Europe member states in the Ph. Eur.'s activities.

■ With regard the Certification of Suitability Procedure (CEP), the evaluation and inspection activities were conducted according to established procedures. Continued efforts were made to strengthen relationships with competent authorities and to increase acceptance of CEPs around the world.

■ Concerning the issue, identified in 2018, of medicine contamination by nitrosamines (impurities classified as potentially carcinogenic in humans), the EDQM continued to contribute to the detection and control of these impurities in active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) and medicines, in close collaboration with international partners. This included requesting materials from manufacturers and evaluating data and corrective actions, and performing inspections of manufacturing sites to verify compliance with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP). Furthermore, the EDQM continued to co-ordinate method development as well as sampling and testing by the network of Official Medicines Control Laboratories (OMCLs). The technical expertise and test results provided by the network were instrumental in supporting legal actions taken by European and other competent authorities on related medicines. The Ph. Eur. monographs for the APIs concerned (sartans with a tetrazole ring) were revised and published in the 10th edition of the Ph. Eur. and now contain strict limits for nitrosamines. Finally, a revised version of the general monograph "Substances for pharmaceutical use" addressing the risk of contamination by nitrosamines was published for public consultation. This monograph applies to all APIs and excipients used in medicines on the European market.

■ The Russian Federation and the Taiwan Food and Drug Administration were granted observer status to the human Official Control Authority Batch Release (OCABR) network to allow them to exchange information on vaccines and blood-derived medicines in the interest of public health. At the same time, all possible measures were taken to mitigate the impact of the upcoming Brexit on OCABR activities of the network, which are crucial for the release of these medicines to the market.

■ The year 2019 was also marked by the publication of the 4th edition of the *Guide to the quality and safety of tissues and cells for human application*, a well-recognised technical standard in the field, and the adoption of the 20th *Guide to the preparation, use and quality assurance of blood components*, containing a chapter on good practice guidelines for blood establishments, which is referred to in the European Union legislation on the subject (Directive (EU) 2016/1214).

■ A market surveillance study performed by the European Network of Official Cosmetics Control Laboratories (OCCLs) identified a significant proportion of tooth whiteners that were not compliant with national and European standards.

■ The EDQM underwent successful audits by official certification bodies of its ISO 9001 certification and ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation.

■ Finally, the EDQM's contingency site for the storage and distribution of RSs was inaugurated on 15 November 2019. The establishment of this site is the consequence of a risk analysis conducted to ensure the EDQM's business continuity and, more importantly, the continued supply of RSs to users to enable the release of medicines onto the market.

World Forum for Democracy 2019, “Cartooning for peace” debate on freedom of expression and the protection of journalists – Plantu, cartoonist at *Le Monde* (France) (Strasbourg, 7 November 2019)



DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION

The Platform for the Protection of Journalism and Safety of Journalists

■ The first comprehensive annual report of the platform was launched in 2019, highlighting major issues with regard to media freedom in Europe – increased attacks on journalists, a growing number of physical threats, the lack of proper police and judicial follow-up to crimes against journalists, detentions and repressive legislation.

■ In 2019, the platform received 142 alerts on serious media threats regarding 25 Council of Europe member states. Some 59 alerts (41%) were responded to by the member state concerned or resolved by the end of the year.

■ On 2 November 2019, on the occasion of the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, the dedicated webpage, launched in 2018, was updated with the new impunity for murder cases.

Education

■ Standards for education were strengthened through Recommendations CM/Rec(2019)9 on fostering a culture of ethics in the teaching profession and CM/Rec(2019)10 on developing and promoting digital citizenship education.

■ Academic freedom and institutional autonomy in the European Higher Education Area were addressed during a global forum in June 2019 “Academic Freedom, Institutional Autonomy, and the Future of Democracy” and with the adoption of a declaration that has drawn international attention.

■ The project Free to speak, safe to learn – Democratic schools for all supports the use of the Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture.

■ Education opportunities for migrants and refugees have been improved through the European Qualifications Passport for Refugees and a toolkit for the linguistic integration of adult migrants, which is available in seven languages.

■ The Education Department participates in the implementation of UNESCO’s Sustainable Development Goal 4 and co-organised a side event at the High-Level Policy Forum in New York in July 2019.

■ Some 11 capacity-building programmes support countries in promoting a democratic and inclusive culture and in introducing anticorruption measures in education. Member states received support upon request for reforms such as new laws or curricula.

■ The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) presented the results of its 2016-19 programme at a conference in December marking the 25th anniversary of the ECML. The event also served to launch the ECML’s new 4-year programme, Inspiring innovation in language education.

■ The Education Department launched the Education Portal for Online Learning in 2019.

■ The Network of Schools of Political Studies offers training to emerging leaders in 24 countries throughout Europe and in the Southern Mediterranean region. Four pilot seminars for the Academy for Democratic Leadership for members of the refugee community and people working with refugees were organised with a view to launching a capacity-building programme in interested countries.



National day for the implementation of the European Landscape Convention in France – Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 26 November 2019)

Youth

Several thousand young people participated in activities in the European Youth Centres in Strasbourg and Budapest, or were supported by the European Youth Foundation, thus empowering them in promoting human rights and democratic participation.

In recognition of its co-management system – one of the world’s most empowering youth policies – the youth sector received the Bronze Future Policy Award from the World Future Council.

Committee of Ministers Recommendation CM/Rec(2015)3 on the access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights was reviewed by over 300 young people and youth workers during the Enter! Youth Week, which was supported by the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers. The rights of young refugees were reinforced thanks to Committee of Ministers Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)4 on supporting young refugees in transition to adulthood, and a long-term project with young refugees.

The Joint Council on Youth developed and adopted a draft youth sector strategy 2030 which upholds the youth sector’s contribution to the Organisation’s values and principles and its key role in associating young people with those values.

Armenia, Cyprus and Georgia benefited from tailor-made support measures for the development of their youth policies in line with Council of Europe standards.

Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention)

The Standing Committee of the convention celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Bern Convention. It dealt with five major issues facing biodiversity:

climate change; invasive alien species; conservation of the Eurasian lynx; illegal killing of birds; and sturgeon populations. Recommendations were adopted on detecting, reporting, assessing and responding to changes in the ecological character of Emerald Network sites, and on the progress in the implementation of the Emerald Network of Areas of Special Conservation Interest.

European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA Partial Agreement)

The agreement contributed to the Global Forum for Disaster Risk Reduction, organised by UNDRR, notably to protect vulnerable groups from disaster risks, and supported the organisation of a national workshop in Azerbaijan. EUR-OPA sustained 21 field projects in member states to better prepare populations for major hazards and develop national policies and strategies. Co-operation with partner organisations (UNDRR, UNESCO, UNICEF, IOM, European Union) was strengthened.

European Landscape Convention

In 2019, Iceland ratified the European Landscape Convention. The Committee of Ministers adopted two recommendations (CM/Rec(2019)7 on landscape integration in policies relating to rural areas in agricultural and forestry, energy and demographic transition, and CM/Rec(2019)8 on landscape and democracy: public participation) and decisions concerning the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe. The national landscape policies are presented on the Information System of the Convention. The 10th Council of Europe Conference on the European Landscape Convention was held under the auspices of the Finnish Presidency of the Committee of Ministers. The Third International Landscape Day of the Council of Europe was celebrated with water as the theme.

Assembly of European Heritage Days
– group photo with, at the centre,
Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni,
Deputy Secretary General of the Council
of Europe (Strasbourg, 17 October 2019)



Culture and cultural heritage

■ A multi-stakeholder conference, organised in Nicosia by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and the Council of Europe, promoted the Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property (CETS No. 221) among stakeholders from governments, civil society and businesses. The highly interactive event generated action proposals for working vigorously towards a culture of awareness and responsible handling of cultural property. A cultural policy peer review offered recommendations to the Government of the Republic of Moldova for enhancing its cultural industries.

European Heritage Days (EHD)

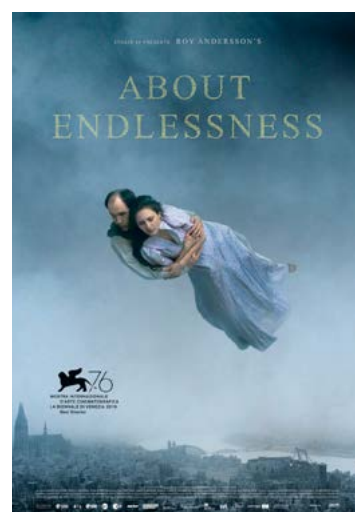
■ Tens of thousands of European Heritage Days events were organised under the theme of arts and entertainment in the majority of the 50 European States Parties to the European Cultural Convention. The Assembly of EHD met in Strasbourg, with the participation of national co-ordinators and the European Commission. Three initiatives, launched in 2018 to celebrate the European Year of Cultural Heritage, continued successfully: European Heritage Stories; European Heritage Makers' Week for young people and transfrontier projects.

Cultural Routes Enlarged Partial Agreement

■ The Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe Programme was awarded the 2019 Carlos V European Award by His Majesty the King of Spain for its contribution to European memory, identity and values. The enlarged partial agreement increased its membership to 33 member states and added three new observer states. Five new Cultural Routes were certified, bringing the total number of Cultural Routes to 38. Furthermore, 10 Cultural Routes were recertified.

Eurimages Enlarged Partial Agreement

■ Eurimages supported 73 international co-productions for a total of €18.8m. Several co-productions supported by Eurimages were selected by major international film festivals: *God Exists, Her Name is Petrunya* by Teona Struga Mitevska (winning the European Parliament Lux Prize); *A Tale of Three Sisters* by Emin Alper; *Atlantic* by Mati Diop; *The Swallows of Kabul* by Zabou Breitman and Eléa Gobbé-Mévellec; and *Fire Will Come* by Oliver Laxe, were selected at the Cannes Film Festival. The film *About Endlessness* by Roy Andersson, was awarded the Silver Lion for Best Director at the Venice Film Festival. Eurimages celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2019 and noted the accession of two new states, including Argentina, a non-member state of the Council of Europe. The Board of Management of the fund adopted a proposal to reform its functioning. Changes to the governance bodies and how projects are selected is central to improvements in order to comply with standards of transparency, ethics and accountability.



The film *About Endlessness*, by Roy Andersson, awarded the Silver Lion for Best Director at the Venice Film Festival 2019



North-South Prize 2018 – Laureates Jaha Dukureh and Damien Carême (Lisbon, 13 September 2019)

North-South Centre (European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity)

■ The North-South Centre launched a new version of the Global Education Guidelines, a pedagogical support tool for educators. They include new chapters on media literacy and interfaith dialogue and relate global education competences to the Council of Europe’s framework competences for democratic culture.

■ Women Civil Society Organisations in the Euro-Mediterranean region profited from a co-operation platform and, having the Istanbul Convention as a reference, advocated for the urgent need for multi-level, multi-sectoral, multilateral and cross-border co-operation to protect women and girl victims of gender-based violence, with particular focus on refugees, migrants and asylum seekers.

■ Jaha Dukureh and Damien Carême were awarded the 24th North-South Prize of the Council of Europe for their dedication to human rights and global solidarity.

■ On the centre’s 30th anniversary, the Lisbon Forum outlined the relevance of joint quadrilogue action for the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), highlighting the importance of a stronger regional effort in the SDGs’ governance.



The 25th Lisbon Forum of the North-South Centre – José Carozo, Executive Director of the North-South Centre; **Manuel Montobbio**, Permanent Representative of Spain to the Council of Europe; **Marija Pejčinović Burić**, Secretary General of the Council of Europe; **Ana Paula Zacarias**, Secretary of State for European Affairs of Portugal; and **Miguel Ángel Moratinos**, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations (Lisbon, 25 November 2019)



European Union/Council of Europe Joint programme “South Programme III” information event
(Strasbourg, 10 May 2019)

Actions in the field and resource mobilisation

MEMBER STATES

In 2019, the Council of Europe and the Structural Reform Support Service (SRSS)¹¹ of the European Union began to streamline their co-operation through a framework agreement. This co-operation is tailored to the needs of European Union member states in strengthening their capacity to prepare growth-sustaining and structural reforms related to the rule of law, human rights protection and efficient democratic governance.

Through more than 240 activities implemented by the Cybercrime Programme Office (C-PROC) in Romania, cybercrime legislation and rule of law safeguards, training of the judiciary and criminal justice authorities, and public-private and international co-operation were strengthened in the Eastern Partnership region, South-East Europe and Turkey, the Southern Neighbourhood countries as well as in Africa, the Asia-Pacific region and Latin America. By December 2019, C-PROC had a portfolio of projects with a budget of some €30 million – co-funded by the European Union and voluntary contributions from other donors.

Eastern Europe

In the **Republic of Moldova**, two new projects on anti-discrimination and the efficiency of justice were launched. The capacity of the equality council, the office of the ombudsman and the national preventive mechanism to effectively implement their mandate was strengthened. Electoral institutions also benefited from support. The Council of Europe provided support to increase the transparency of the activities of the superior council of prosecutors and assisted reforms in the field of civic education. Other actions consolidated the capacities of the law-enforcement agencies to fight and prevent corruption and money laundering and supported combating child sexual exploitation and abuse.

11. As of 1 January 2020 SRSS is called DG REFORM.

In the **Russian Federation**, a joint programme to assist the implementation of the Russian Federation National Action Strategy for Women (2017-2022) has been completed. The work also continued on human rights in sports and strengthening the capacities of legal professionals to combat domestic violence. The project to fight corrupt practices in the business environment was completed.

In **Ukraine**, work continued towards the ratification of the Istanbul Convention notably through amendments introduced to a number of laws, including the criminal code. A number of amendments to relevant legislative acts on the fight against corruption were adopted. Other areas of co-operation include strengthening the system of protection of national minorities, continuation of the decentralisation reform and reform of the prosecution service, improvement of the electoral system, strengthening the capacities of the public broadcaster and increasing the capacity of in-service training institutions and universities to provide training on the Council of Europe standards.

A number of co-operation activities with the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Belarus (see below) were implemented under the joint programme with the European Union Partnership for Good Governance (PGG).¹² Within PGG, a quick response mechanism was put in place to respond to requests for legislative expertise and policy advice.¹³

12. The PGG phase II started in January 2019 for 36 months and encompasses 15 projects with a total budget of €17.5 million.

13. In 2019, 10 requests led to the adoption of opinions by the Venice Commission



Launch of the Council of Europe Armenia Action Plan 2019-2022 – Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, and Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia (Yerevan, 17 June 2019)



Launch of the Council of Europe Georgia Action Plan 2020-2023 – Marija Pejčinović Burić, Secretary General of the Council of Europe and David Zalkaliani, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia (Tbilisi, 11 November 2019)

South Caucasus

■ A new Council of Europe Action Plan for **Armenia** 2019-2022 was launched in June 2019. The action plan reflects the priorities of the Armenian authorities related to the legal and institutional reform currently under way in the country. The action plan supports the efforts of the Armenian Government and society to reinforce human rights, including in the armed forces, to enhance the independence of the judiciary, to ensure justice, to combat ill-treatment and impunity in the penitentiary system, and to promote democratic governance.

■ In **Azerbaijan**, the Council of Europe continued to support legal reforms, standard setting and capacity building in the areas of fighting and preventing corruption, strengthening anti-money laundering, improving the penitentiary system and promoting and enhancing gender equality. The new Council of Europe Action Plan for Azerbaijan 2018-2021 was launched in Baku in May 2019.

■ In **Georgia**, the “fourth wave” of judicial reforms was concluded. The Council of Europe provided recommendations to this new legislative package. The “I Choose Equality” awareness-raising campaign promoted tolerance, diversity and equality and was complemented by the first ever Equality Week in Georgia in November 2019. The Council of Europe continued working in the areas of protecting and promoting human rights, ensuring justice, countering threats to the rule of law, strengthening democratic governance, and confidence-building measures in the framework of the Action Plan 2016-2019. A new Council of Europe Action Plan for Georgia 2020-2023 was launched in November 2019 in Tbilisi by Secretary General of the Council of Europe Marija Pejčinović-Burić and Foreign Minister of Georgia David Zalkaliani.

South-East Europe and Turkey

■ Co-operation in South-East Europe and Turkey was carried out with the support of the European Union, notably through the Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey,¹⁴ and other donors. An expertise co-ordination mechanism continued to be used under the horizontal facility to respond to requests for legislative expertise and policy advice.¹⁵

■ Support for the reform of the justice system in **Albania** continued to focus on the preparation of a new judicial map, the information technology strategy of the justice system and the evaluation scheme of judges, guidelines and related forms. Co-operation also continued in the fields of economic crime, penitentiary reform, freedom of expression and freedom of the media, anti-discrimination and education. The portal www.administrata.al was established as a comprehensive and innovative online tool for managing human resource processes in public administration.

14. In 2019 the second phase was contracted to last till May 2022, encompassing 46 actions for a total exceeding €41 million.

15. In 2019, six requests have been processed under the ECM in particular in the field of freedom of expression/freedom of the media, transitional processes of the property, use of languages, legal acts, reform of electoral and other legislation.



iPROCEEDS Conference – “Targeting crime proceeds on the internet in southeastern Europe and Turkey”
(Strasbourg, 9 December 2019)

■ In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, through the Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021, the Council of Europe contributed to the implementation of the Reform Agenda for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2015-2018, and in particular to the implementation of sectoral strategies related to human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Specific actions such as combating discrimination and ethnic segregation in schools, strengthening the protection of national minorities, Roma integration, freedom of expression/freedom of the media, preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, penitentiary reform, including structured sentence management for violent and extremist prisoners, subscribed to this overall goal.

■ The Council of Europe assisted the authorities of **North Macedonia** in setting up an independent external oversight mechanism with regard to the work of the police. Co-operation also continued in the fight against economic crime and trafficking in human beings, penitentiary reform, freedom of expression/freedom of the media and free legal aid. The fight against discrimination constituted a new area for co-operation launched in 2019.

■ Council of Europe action in **Montenegro** continued to focus on human rights and the protection of vulnerable groups, the implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights, the accountability and independence of the judiciary, freedom of expression and freedom of the media, education and the fight against economic crime. Based on the Council of Europe Media Sector Inquiry an action plan has been adopted by the Montenegrin Government and a series of media reforms at national level has been initiated.

■ The 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe was marked with mediatised events in co-operation with the Serbian authorities, including a high-level conference to mark the 25th anniversary of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) on 16 September, with ECRI and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) members

present alongside government, civil society and diplomatic representatives. The Council of Europe continued to support the constitutional reform process, the independence of the justice system, freedom of expression and freedom of the media, inclusive education and integrity in higher education, the protection of national minorities, public administration reform and human resource management in local self-government. A high-level visibility event was organised to promote the actions under the European Union/Council of Europe joint programme Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey.

■ The Council of Europe organised five major launch events in **Turkey** in areas focusing on increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the administrative judiciary and the Court of Cassation, and supporting criminal justice reform, the civil monitoring system for prisons and the human rights action plan. The launch ceremony of the human rights action plan held in Istanbul on 9 December was opened by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe together with the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Ambassador of the European Union Delegation in Turkey.



Election assessment mission of the Congress in Turkey, debriefing meeting with EU ambassadors based in Ankara – **Andrew Dawson** (United Kingdom) Head of Delegation/Rapporteur (Ankara, 1 April 2019)

Deposit by Ms Naziha Laâbidi, Minister of Women, Family and Children of Tunisia, of the instrument of accession to the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (CETS No. 201) in the presence of **Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni**, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 15 October 2019)



NON-MEMBER STATES

■ A new Action Plan for **Belarus** 2019-2021 was adopted in July 2019. Co-operation with Belarus focused primarily on the fight against money laundering, judicial reform, protection of personal data and human rights training for legal professionals. Work continued with the national authorities towards the moratorium on the death penalty and its subsequent abolition.

■ In **Kosovo**,¹⁶ projects continued in the field of efficiency of justice, the fight against economic crime, anti-discrimination, education (including integrity in higher education and access to language learning), freedom of expression and freedom of the media, and protection of the rights of people deprived of liberty. A new project on reinforcing the fight against violence against women and domestic violence was launched in May. Support was also provided to the Constitutional Court.

Southern neighbourhood

■ In **Morocco**, work continued on the fight against violence towards women and domestic violence. Assistance was also provided to the development of the National Action Plan on Democracy and Human Rights in the fields of governance, the rule of law and non-discrimination.

16. All reference 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.

■ In **Tunisia**, a number of important results have been achieved. Tunisia acceded to the Lanzarote Convention and signed Convention 108+ on data protection; it was awarded the status of Partner for Local Democracy of the Congress; it published the prisoners' guide and the prison law manual; it also launched the Nazaha radio station to promote transparency in the fight against corruption. In addition to other actions, two major joint Council of Europe/European Union programmes in Tunisia were launched.

■ Co-operation activities were implemented at the regional level under the European Union–Council of Europe South Programme III¹⁷ with the participation of Southern Mediterranean Beneficiaries. In particular, the Council of Europe launched the cross-border HELP course on violence against women and domestic violence for legal professionals of the Southern Mediterranean region. Tunisia and Morocco acceded to the Šibenik Network of Corruption Prevention Agencies.

17. The South Programme III (total budget of €3 334 million) was implemented from March 2018 to February 2020, covering beneficiaries of the Southern Mediterranean region (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine,* Tunisia).

* 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.



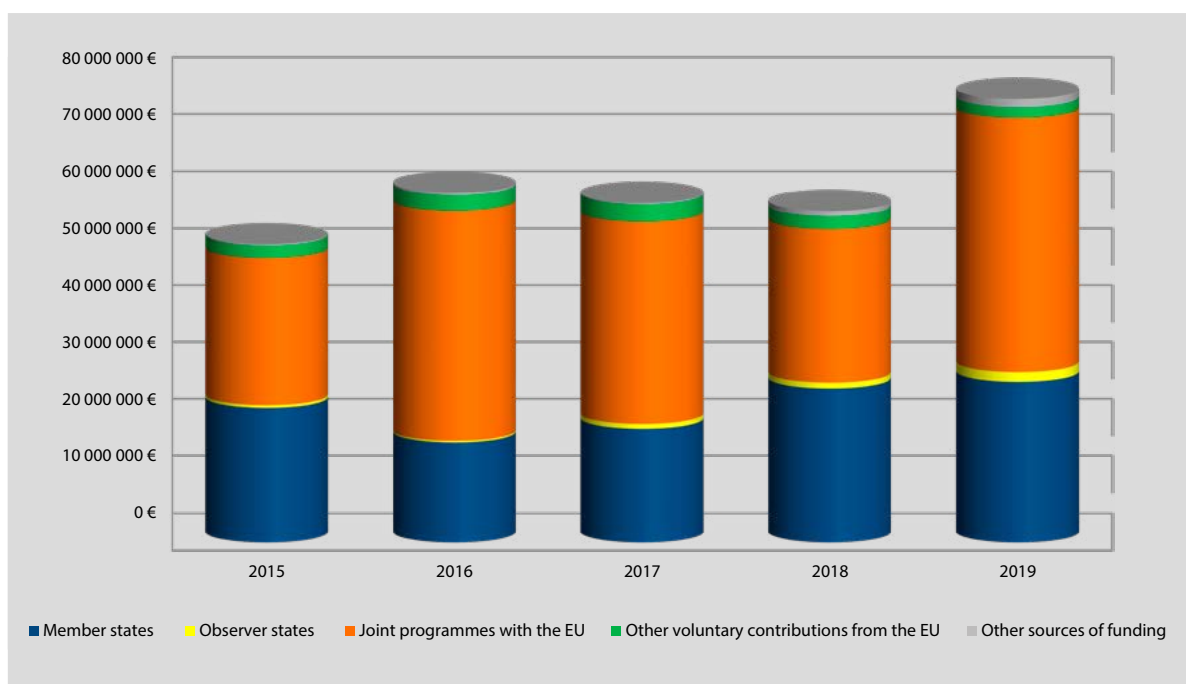
Agreement between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Council of Europe.
Lt. Gen. **Alik Shpekbayev**, Chairman of the Anti-Corruption Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan and **Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni**, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 15 October 2019)

Central Asia

■ A new regional Council of Europe/European Union joint programme on the rule of law in Central Asia was launched in November 2019. The programme covers all five Central Asian states and it is expected to last four years (2020-2023). This programme aims at facilitating the creation of a common legal space between Europe and Central Asia and enhancing human rights protection, promoting transparency and action against economic crime and fostering good governance through the efficient functioning of state institutions and public administration. Co-operation with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan also continued in the framework of the Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities documents.

RESOURCE MOBILISATION AND DONOR RELATIONS

2019 Extra budgetary resources



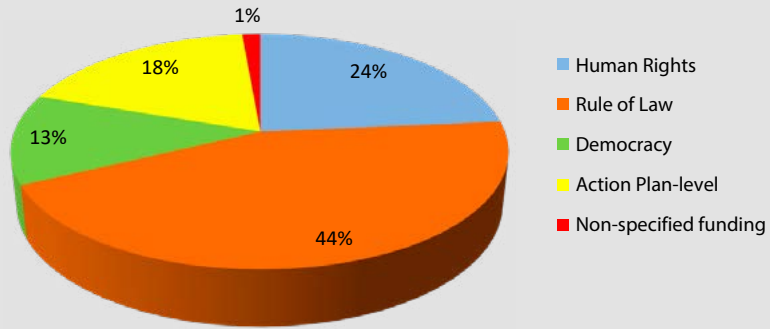
2019 compared to 2018

- ▶ Overall receipts **increased by 34%** to approximately **€77.8 million** (€58.1 in 2018, €59.5 in 2017, €61.2 in 2016, €52.3 in 2015, €42.5 million in 2014).
- ▶ Contributions from all donor categories have increased.
- ▶ Voluntary contributions from **member states¹⁸ increased by 4% to €28 million**. (2018 saw an increase of 36%.)
- ▶ Some **39** of the 47 **member states contributed in 2019** (44 in 2018).
- ▶ The top 10 contributors represent 84% of the total receipts from member states (81% in 2018).
- ▶ **Norway, Sweden, Germany, France and Switzerland** rank highest among member states, with contributions of €8.2 million, €6.5 million, €2.1 million, €1.8 million and €1.6 million, respectively. The Human Rights Trust Fund¹⁹ contributed €1.7 million.
- ▶ When taking into account contributions to the Human Rights Trust Fund and bilateral voluntary contributions, **nine member and observer states contributed more than €1 million** (Norway, Sweden, Germany, France, Switzerland, Canada, United Kingdom, Luxembourg and Finland).
- ▶ Receipts in the framework of **Council of Europe–EU joint programmes increased by 65% to €44.6 million** (€27 million in 2018) and accounted for 57% of total extra-budgetary receipts.
- ▶ The European Union also made a number of voluntary contributions outside of joint programmes amounting to €1.86 million (€1.6 million to the EDQM, €200 000 to CEPEJ, €19 000 to the Bern Convention, €15 000 to Council of Europe visibility).
- ▶ Contributions from non-member states having observer status increased by 80% to €1.8 million, with Canada accounting for €1.7 million.
- ▶ “Other” sources of funding (that is, not EU, member or observer states) contributed €1.4 million, equivalent to approximately 2% of overall extra-budgetary receipts.

18. Includes Human Rights Trust Fund and EEA and Norway Grants.

19. Finland, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

2019 EXTRA BUDGETARY RESOURCES PER PILLAR OF THE PROGRAMME AND BUDGET



EXTRA BUDGETARY RESOURCES PER PILLAR		Euros
HUMAN RIGHTS		18 338 422,90
RULE OF LAW		34 420 962,23
DEMOCRACY		9 641 034,83
ACTION PLAN-LEVEL		14 299 734,36
NON-SPECIFIED FUNDING		1 077 158,00
TOTAL		77 777 312,32



57th meeting of the CAHDI (Strasbourg, 21 March 2019)

58th meeting of the CAHDI – Presentation of the new CAHDI publication “Immunities of special missions” by Petr Válek, chairman of CAHDI, Sir Michael Wood and Andrew Sanger, legal advisers and authors (Strasbourg, 27 September 2019)



Public International Law

www.coe.int/en/web/cahdi

The Council of Europe facilitates exchanges and co-ordinates the views of its member states in the field of public international law through the Committee of Legal Advisers on Public International Law (CAHDI), an intergovernmental committee which brings together the legal advisers of the ministries of foreign affairs of the member states of the Council of Europe as well as of a significant number of observer states and international organisations. In 2019, around 90 experts from 45 member states, seven non-member states and six international intergovernmental organisations participated in the two CAHDI meetings.

■ In its flagship function as “The European Observatory of Reservations to International Treaties” the CAHDI examines reservations and declarations subject to objection in international treaties prepared within the Council of Europe and the United Nations. This activity, involving 20 reservations and/or declarations in 2019, contributes to an important dialogue at international level and has an impact on the subsequent actions of states as regards their respective reservations and/or declarations.

■ The CAHDI gathered the replies of 38 member states and non-member states to its questionnaire on “Immunities of Special Missions” and prepared an analytical report of the information submitted, which was included in a publication on this topic. The bilingual CAHDI book on the same subject was published by Brill Nijhoff in 2019 and distributed to all CAHDI experts.

■ Over the year, the CAHDI continued and strengthened its co-operation and collaboration with the United Nations and international tribunals. It held exchanges of views with Judge Ivana Hrdličková, President of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon and Mr Pavel Šturma, Chair of the International Law Commission (ILC) of the United Nations. Furthermore, the chair and the secretariat of the CAHDI participated in the debates of the Sixth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly and the annual exchanges of views with the UN ILC.

■ On 31 October 2019, the Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the United Nations in New York and the CAHDI organised a side event in the framework of the International Law Week of the United Nations General Assembly’s Sixth Committee at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, on the topic “The CAHDI and its contribution to the international law practice”. The panel included Mr Petr Válek, Chair of the CAHDI, Professor Pavel Šturma, Chair of the UN ILC, and Ambassador Emil Ruffer, Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the Council of Europe. Mr Jörg Polakiewicz, Director of Legal Advice and Public International Law at the Council of Europe, moderated the side event.

■ The Chair of the CAHDI participated in the 58th Annual Session of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), held in Dar es Salaam (United Republic of Tanzania) on 21-25 October 2019, where he presented the CAHDI’s work and activities under the overarching theme “Multilateralism and the International Legal Order based on International Law”.



Visit by Nikol Pashinyan, Prime Minister of Armenia –
Press statements (Strasbourg, 11 April 2019)



Open day as part of the 70th anniversary
of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 5 May 2019)

Communications

Working closely with media professionals and European influencers and networks, the Directorate of Communications (DC) generated greater visibility for the values and standards of the Council of Europe in 2019.

ONLINE AND AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATIONS (WAVCOM)

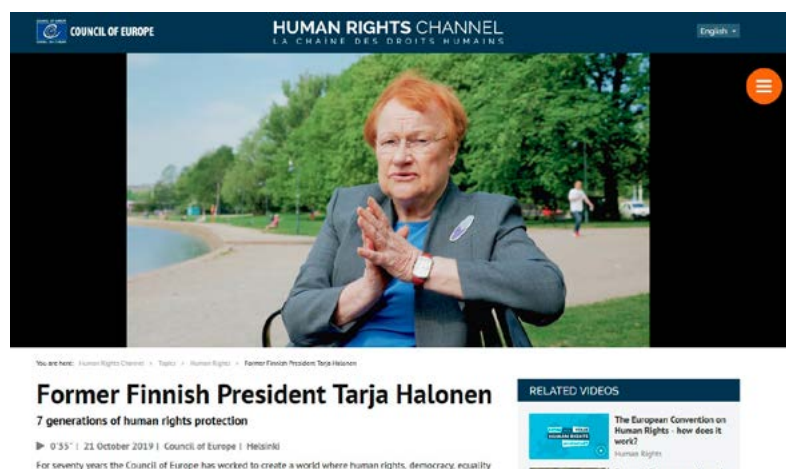
The organigram of the **Web and Audiovisual Communications Division** was updated to include specific editorial responsibilities allocated to two senior editorial advisers, and the online and web teams combined into a new Digital Communications Section (See WAVCOM organigram). DC is seeking to engage a social media community manager to complement the team. Taken together these innovations have already enhanced the team's ability to optimise key messages and consolidate the Organisation's online presence.

The new **Editorial Section** of WAVCOM was created to plan ahead and prepare messages and quality texts for communications. Direct advice and support continues to be provided to Main Administrative Entities (MAEs) around their projects, priority events, campaigns and messages through individual meetings. The editorial team developed a website dedicated to the 70th Anniversary of the Council of Europe. The division introduced six new training courses on various aspects of digital communications with Human Resources. Over the course of 2019, 12 training sessions took place.

The **Audiovisual Section** more than doubled its production activities in 2019, taking the number of productions to more than 150, including news items, interviews, promotional videos, statements and factual/educational videos, some in several language versions. A series of 13 films was made to mark the 70th anniversary of the Organisation and five more films for the European Convention on Human Rights Impact project were made. Films focused on Council of Europe core business and served the needs of all services.

Film production highlights:

- ▶ A series of 70th anniversary videos (13 videos) were produced on various topics.
- ▶ Protecting our rights for generations – 8 videos co-produced with the European Union
- ▶ Court impact testimonies – 5 videos were produced
- ▶ All In project which is about equality in sport – 5 videos were produced
- ▶ Sexism – a video based on a CM recommendation. This video is voiced over in different languages such as Ukrainian, Georgian and Croatian. We still receive requests for other language versions.



Interview with former Finnish President **Tarja Halonen**, for the website "Human Rights Channel" (Helsinki, 21 October 2019)



Open day at the European Court of Human Rights
(Strasbourg, 5 May 2019)

■ Council of Europe videos achieved 1.1 million streams this year. The team continued to film numerous interviews in the television studio and to use quality photography, audio and video formats to enhance the Organisation's communications, especially in the rapidly expanding sector of social media. Video news offers were sent to leading news agencies, such as Reuters and Eurovision, in order to gain access to television channels across Europe and beyond. The audiovisual team has become the focal point for all videos produced for or on behalf of the Organisation. It drafted a framework contract for audiovisual productions, in consultation with the Directorate for Information Technology (DIT) and the Procurement Team. The framework contract will be operational early in 2020.

■ The **Digital Communications Section** continued to implement the digital communications strategy adopted in December 2018. See <https://rm.coe.int/effective-communication-and-impact-through-web-and-social-media/168098de67>). The comprehensive Social Media Plan was adopted in June 2019, after finalisation with members of the group of managers of social media accounts. See <https://rm.coe.int/social-media-plan/168098ddcb>. Their recommendations were distributed to members of the GT Web in December. Almost all actions recommended by the Directorate of Internal Oversight (DIO) in its evaluation of digital communications and access to information via the internet have now been completed.

■ The WAVCOM Division team organised one meeting of the Digital Communications Task Force, four meetings of the GT Web Steering Group, nine GT Web operational meetings, and two meetings of the Social Media Account Managers' Group in 2019. A register of all social media accounts is maintained, and managers of new accounts are invited to join the group.

■ DC is ready to deploy the revamp of the Council of Europe's website including thematic navigation and rich content zones for MAEs' content in the first quarter of 2020. The team worked closely with the DIT during 2019. DC made recommendations regarding user experience and proposed improvements to the public search function.

■ Action pages on sexism and the ALL IN campaign were created, and the pages for organ donation and ECRI were updated. DC created a web site for the new Secretary General and 34 newsletters for MAEs.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

■ The Organisation's identity and values were promoted among target groups through public relations activities and events, in particular on the occasion of the open day on 5 May, and of the Council of Europe's 70th anniversary. More than 4 400 people visited the Palais de l'Europe and there were 3 000 visitors to the European Court of Human Rights. Steps were also taken to raise awareness of the institution's work at the Festival of Europe in Paris in May, the Strasbourg Road Races and the City Cap event in Strasbourg in May. An exhibition on the Council of Europe's 70th anniversary took place at the Aubette museum in Strasbourg city centre, with more than 1 200 visitors in July and August.

■ The Council of Europe was also present at the Educa Fair in Helsinki (Finland) in January, at the legal book fair in Paris (France), the Frankfurt (Germany) book fair and at the IAPSS (International Association for Political Science Students) Congress in Madrid in May, and at the annual ESIL (European Society for International Law) conference in Athens (Greece) in September. The Organisation's work was further presented at some 100 specialised conferences.



European Human Rights Moot Court Competition (ELSA). The winning team, law students from Oxford University (Strasbourg, 18 April 2019)

■ For all these events, visual and information material (leaflets, booklets, posters, exhibition panels, etc.) were designed and produced. They were promoted via the contacts database (featuring nearly 15 000 addresses) and on partner sites.

■ Commercial publications highlighted the Organisation's priorities, in particular the publications entitled: *Les relations entre le Conseil de l'Europe et l'union européenne: vers un partenariat stratégique?* (in French only); *The individual application under the European Convention on Human Rights* (in English and French); *Europe: a human enterprise* (in English with a co-edition for the French version); *Human rights challenges in the digital age: judicial perspectives* (in English), and a German version of the *Introduction to the European Convention on Human Rights*.

■ The game on European values "Europe matters" devised for children aged 8 to 12 was translated into Polish and distributed in 17 countries. More than 30 information leaflets were revised, updated or published. In addition, more than 150 reproduction or translation agreements were finalised.

■ The online publications platform continues to extend its range of digital products, with over 2 150 files available in pdf and epub formats. Material for the general public (leaflets, posters, documents for teachers, etc.) can all be consulted and downloaded free of charge from doc.coe.int. Other publications can be ordered online at book.coe.int, the online bookshop, where excerpts from books can also be found. The two sites totaled more than 1 100 000 visits over the year and there were more than 46 000 subscribers to the publication information. In addition, over 4 000 digitised publications are available on Google Play, with 995 000 book visits in 2019.

■ Almost 36 900 visitors (1 031 groups) took part in Council of Europe study tours and guided visits. Close to 450 customised lectures were given during personalised tours.

■ The partnership with the European Law Students Association (ELSA) network continued with the holding of the seventh Human Rights Moot Court Competition in English on the European Convention on Human Rights: 106 teams from 29 European countries submitted their arguments in a fictitious case on cyberbullying and hate speech. The final took place in April at the European Court of Human Rights, with 20 teams from 13 different countries taking part. ELSA Day focused on the theme of freedom of expression online, and the work of the Council of Europe was presented at 40 events in 15 countries. In addition, four webinars were held and customised videos presented with the ELSA network (18 700 views). The partnership with the University of Strasbourg for the French version of the Moot Court (Concours René Cassin) continued with 300 students at the finals held in Strasbourg in April. The partnership with the Strasbourg Institute of Political Studies was strengthened with the holding of the European Prize for Eloquence in February, with more than 250 participants (12 reaching the final, from nine countries).

■ The visual identity of the Organisation was strengthened with harmonised templates, and with the implementation of the visual identity for the Organisation's 70th anniversary on general or event-related media, and a new identity was established to celebrate, in 2020, the 70th anniversary of the European Convention on Human Rights.

2019 contributions of Council of Europe member states (in euros)

MEMBER STATES	
Albania	492 972.16
Andorra	236 623.41
Armenia	497 333.29
Austria	5 624 533.91
Azerbaijan	1 217 467.17
Belgium	7 894 333.28
Bosnia and Herzegovina	583 180.08
Bulgaria	1 215 152.61
Croatia	1 075 951.48
Cyprus	519 861.85
Czech Republic	3 263 757.49
Denmark	4 638 013.61
Estonia	505 737.05
Finland	3 529 358.85
France	38 658 976.90
Georgia	539 453.22
Germany	36 914 012.89
Greece	3 350 204.81
Hungary	2 320 853.97
Iceland	523 096.88
Ireland	3 960 796.11
Italy	35 873 440.71
Latvia	589 116.17
Liechtenstein	381 527.20
Lithuania	824 306.06
Luxembourg	1 162 199.49
Malta	390 969.74
Moldova	360 633.74
Monaco	361 872.07
Montenegro	394 161.47
Netherlands	11 220 174.60
North Macedonia	501 606.60
Norway	5 798 259.78
Poland	8 557 724.31
Portugal	3 360 372.44
Romania	3 778 864.29
Russian Federation	32 644 935.07
San Marino	144 695.85
Serbia	1 103 932.93
Slovak Republic	1 589 660.03
Slovenia	828 847.28
Spain	18 748 919.13
Sweden	7 358 189.71
Switzerland	9 082 544.56
Turkey	14 318 688.33
Ukraine	3 789 077.53
United Kingdom	33 403 538.62
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	314 129 928.73

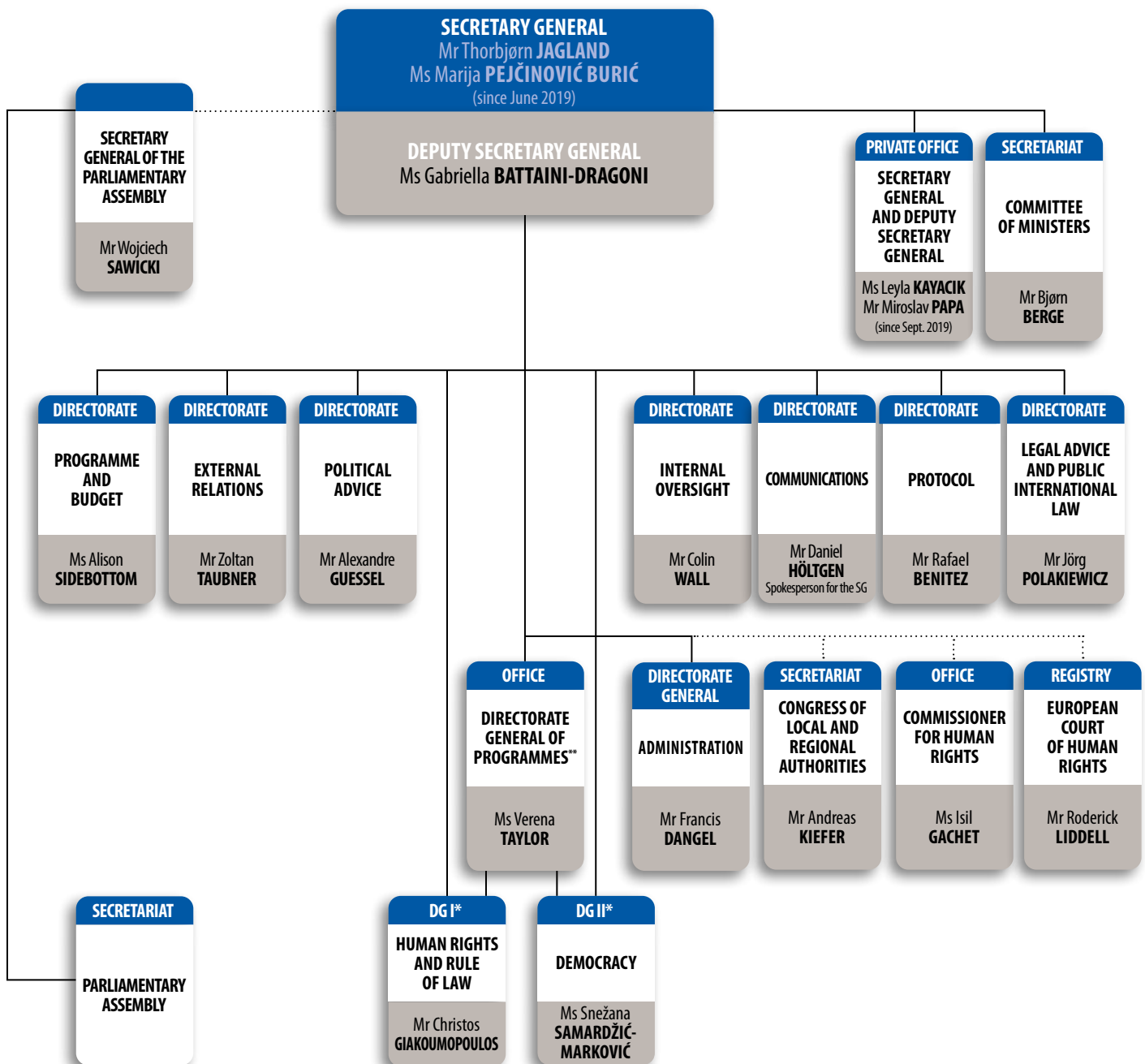
2019 voluntary contributions to the Council of Europe (in euros)

MEMBER STATES			
Norway	8 245 876.00	Cyprus	40 446.91
Sweden	6 525 433.08	Poland	25 000.00
Denmark	2 084 389.00	Malta	25 000.00
Belgium	1 814 074.35	Russian Federation	21 000.00
United Kingdom	1 744 000.00	San Marino	15 000.00
Human Rights Trust Fund ¹	1 618 756.18	Estonia	10 000.00
Germany	847 358.23	Hungary	10 000.00
Austria	755 850.88	Lithuania	10 000.00
European Economic Area (EEA) ²	693 553.15	Andorra	10 000.00
Switzerland	595 230.79	Croatia	7 415.00
France	501 508.55	Slovenia	5 537.01
Luxembourg	500 000.00	Bulgaria	3 000.00
Netherlands	330 161.33	Romania	1 667.16
Finland	299 000.00	Azerbaijan	1 600.36
Ukraine	256 885.45	Armenia	1 000.00
Italy	200 000.00	Serbia	1 000.00
Liechtenstein	182 500.00	Iceland	604.51
Ireland	171 922.00	Latvia	393.28
Monaco	120 000.00	Montenegro	7 332.84
Portugal	112 911.30	Spain	5 000.00
Slovak Republic	108 083.62	Albania	1 332.84
Turkey	96 957.94	Republic of Moldova	1 000.00
Czech Republic	67 806.01	Georgia	415.00
		TOTAL MEMBER STATES	28 060 922.09

1. Finland, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, United Kingdom.
2. Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway.

OBSERVERS			
Canada	1 684 180.54	European Lotteries	40 000.00
United States of America	52 227.37	World Lottery Association	39 302.61
Japon	45 000.00	Israel	35 000.00
TOTAL OBSERVERS	1 781 407.91	Comité national olympique et sportif français	30 000.00
EUROPEAN UNION		Isle of Man	30 000.00
Joint Programmes	44 641 637.13	States of Guernsey	25 000.00
Other Voluntary Contributions	1 861 205.00	Française des jeux	20 000.00
TOTAL EUROPEAN UNION	46 502 842.13	Moscow State Linguistic University	10 000.00
OTHERS		Réseau GDS	10 000.00
Fund to End Violence Against Children	423 116.17	Strasbourg événements	10 000.00
Australia	254 922.88	Eurac Research	7 560.00
Qatar	240 000.00	Charta 77 Foundation	7 500.00
Gibraltar	103 000.00	Václav Havel Library	7 500.00
Zurich University of Teacher Education	84 238.53	Faroe Islands	5 000.00
Aga Khan Development Network	50 000.00	TOTAL OTHERS	1 432 140.19
		GRAND TOTAL 2019	77 777 312.32

Organisation chart of the Secretariat General of the Council of Europe in 2019



* DGI DGII report to the Secretary General

** Office of the DG PROG co-ordinates intergovernmental activities

This publication presents the work carried out in 2019 by the different bodies and sectors of the Council of Europe, highlighting its particular strengths and achievements.

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

