

COUNCIL OF EUROPE 2012 highlights



Activity report

Top from left to right:
Tawakkol Karman (Yemen),
Nobel Peace Prize 2011
Saaddine El Otmani,
Minister for Foreign Affairs
and Cooperation of Morocco

Bottom from left to right:
David Cameron,
Prime Minister
of the United Kingdom
Ban Ki-moon,
Secretary General
of the United Nations,
next to **Thorbjørn Jagland**,
Secretary General
of the Council of Europe

French edition

Conseil de l'Europe:
points forts 2012

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Thorbjørn Jagland,
Secretary General of the Council of Europe,
and His Majesty King **Abdullah II of Jordan**

Preface

Thorbjørn Jagland

Council of Europe Secretary General

The financial crisis and its impact on governments and international organisations made 2012 a challenging year for Europe. At the same time, we witnessed threats to human rights such as rising corruption, censorship, xenophobia and hate speech in many countries. In the face of these challenges, the Council of Europe remained focused on its mandate to safeguard human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

■ A high-level conference in Brighton introduced new reforms to the European Court of Human Rights, which helped to improve its operational efficiency. 2012 saw a steady decrease in the number of repetitive cases, and, for the first time, an increase in the number of cases closed. This positive trend continues.

■ In 2012, the Council of Europe also gave special priority to initiatives focusing on freedom of expression and the media. Together with the Turkish Ministry of Justice, the High Courts and the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors, the Council of Europe launched a co-operation programme in the area of media freedom, which aims to bring Turkish legislation and judicial practice in line with the case law of the Strasbourg Court. This programme has been instrumental in preparing the legislative amendments of the fourth reform package, which came into force in 2013.

■ We started intensive discussions with the Hungarian government concerning new media legislation and judicial reforms. Based on the legal assessment made by the Venice Commission – the Council of Europe’s constitutional experts – and by our media experts, the Hungarian government adopted several amendments. We have agreed to continue this constructive dialogue in 2013.

■ Discrimination and violence based on sexual identity or gender orientation are unfortunately still widespread in Europe. In 2012, we increased our resources dedicated to fighting sexual discrimination, making the Council of Europe a world leader in this area. We encourage all member states to join our initiatives against discrimination, in particular our movement against hate speech online.

■ The Council of Europe expanded its use of project-based co-operation with the member states. We assisted in a broad reform programme of the judicial sector in Ukraine in 2012 which will continue until 2014. We approved a co-operation programme with the Russian Federation for the Chechen Republic in 2012, and we set up an action plan and a co-operation programme for Armenia and Albania.

■ The work of the Council of Europe’s monitoring bodies, including its anti-corruption group GRECO and its anti-money laundering body MONEYVAL, gained further international recognition in 2012. Our monitoring bodies are a powerful tool for safeguarding human rights standards and I intend to make more use of them in our co-operation with the member states in the future.

■ Our neighbourhood policy, launched in 2011, has led to co-operation agreements with Tunisia, Morocco and Jordan. In January, European Commissioner Füle and I signed a joint programme to strengthen democratic reform in the southern Mediterranean countries. The Council of Europe should soon be able to offer a new formal status to interested countries in the neighbouring regions, enabling them to adopt relevant Council of Europe conventions.

■ One vital step toward the unification of Europe will be the EU accession to the Convention on Human Rights. As set out in the Lisbon Treaty, EU accession will subject the EU and its legal acts to the standards of the Convention and the jurisdiction of the Strasbourg Court, thereby creating a pan-European system for the protection of human rights. Negotiations between the Council of Europe and the EU made significant progress and brought us closer to realising our goal of a common legal space for all Europeans.

Handover between the United Kingdom and Albania

during the session of the Committee of Ministers in May 2012:
Edmond Haxhinasto, Vice Prime-Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Albania, and **William Hague**, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom



The **High-level Conference on the future of the European Court of Human Rights** was held in Brighton in April 2012

Handover between Albania and Andorra :
Edmond Panariti, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Albania, and **Gilbert Saboya Sunye**, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Andorra



Committee of Ministers

*The texts adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 2012
can be found on its Internet site: www.coe.int/t/cm/Home_en.asp*

During 2012, the Committee of Ministers was chaired by the United Kingdom until 23 May 2012, then by Albania until 9 November 2012 and thereafter by Andorra. The promotion of the Organisation's core values – human rights, democracy and the rule of law – remained the overriding priority for the three chairmanships.

Reform of the system of the European Convention on Human Rights was discussed at the High-level Conference on the Future of the European Court of Human Rights held in Brighton in April 2012. At its 122nd Session (23 May 2012), the Committee of Ministers, specifically endorsed the Brighton Declaration and adopted a number of decisions concerning the follow-up to it. In particular, it instructed the Steering Committee for Human Rights to submit by 15 April 2013 a draft protocol amending the European Convention on Human Rights on a number of the questions raised by the declaration as well as a draft optional protocol relating to advisory opinions (for more information see the chapter "Human rights and rule of law" below). The Ministers' Deputies reported to the Committee of Ministers (Session of 16 May 2013) on the measures taken by the member states, the Court and the Secretary General.

■ In October, in the context of the follow-up to the Brighton Declaration, the Committee of Ministers took note of the final report of the Steering Committee for Human Rights on a simplified procedure for amendment of certain provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights and agreed to return to this issue once work has been completed on the priorities set out in the Committee of Ministers' decisions for the current biennium.

■ In respect of the reform of the Convention system, the Committee of Ministers exchanged views with Sir Nicolas Bratza, then President of the European Court of Human Rights. It also adopted guidelines on the selection of candidates for the post of judge at the European Court of Human Rights.

■ The Committee of Ministers instructed the Steering Committee for Human Rights to continue negotiations with the European Union in order to finalise the legal instruments laying down the details of the process for EU accession to the European Convention on Human Rights.

■ In supervising **the execution of judgments** in 2012, the Committee of Ministers, in the case of *Sejdic and Finci*, strongly urged the authorities and political leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina to amend the constitution and the electoral legislation so as to bring them into conformity with the Convention requirements without any further delay. The Court found the constitutional arrangements according to which only people declaring affiliation with the "constituent peoples" (Bosniacs, Croats or Serbs) were eligible to stand for election to the tripartite state presidency and the second chamber of the state parliament to be discriminatory. In its resolution on *Zhovner/ Ivanov* group cases, the Committee urged the Ukrainian authorities to adopt as a matter of utmost priority the necessary measures in order to resolve the problem of non-enforcement of domestic judicial decisions and to fully comply with the pilot judgment with no further delay.

■ In addition to the interstate case *Cyprus v. Turkey*, the Committee of Ministers continued to supervise the execution of several individual cases.

■ In 2012, the Court transmitted to the Committee of Ministers 1 438 new cases (compared to 1 606 in 2011), including some 313 revealing new structural problems in the countries concerned. The 2012 statistics show a steady decrease in the number of judgments of the Court brought before the Committee of Ministers concerning repetitive cases which are well founded. At the same time, the number of closed cases is up (1 035 in 2012 compared to 816 in 2011). This positive trend seems to be linked with various factors including the emphasis placed on the need to guarantee the effectiveness of domestic remedies as an integral part of every process of executing a judgment. It also illustrates the positive impact of the reform process agreed during the Interlaken, Izmir and Brighton conferences (for more information see the chapter “European Court of Human Rights” below).

■ The Committee of Ministers also held several **thematic debates** on the protection of journalists, discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, freedom of religion and the situation of religious minorities as well as the question of how to live together in the 21st century.¹

■ The Committee of Ministers reaffirmed its opposition to the **death penalty** on several occasions. It adopted several declarations, in two of which it deplored executions which had taken place in Belarus and in Japan in March. It once again called on the Russian Federation to take, without delay, all the necessary steps to transform the existing moratorium on the death penalty into *de jure* abolition of the death penalty and to ratify Protocol No. 6, and invited other countries which had not yet done so to consider ratifying Protocol No. 13. It called on all countries which still apply the death penalty, including those holding observer status with the Council of Europe, to immediately apply a moratorium.

¹ The question was formulated as follows: “Living together implies having a level of common competences as regards intercultural and democratic dialogue, as well as a system of attitudes, behaviour and common values. Can these be taught?”

■ In February, the Committee of Ministers adopted the Council of Europe Strategy for the **Rights of the Child** (2012-2015) which focuses on the implementation of existing standards in this field. The programme will concentrate on four strategic objectives: promoting child-friendly services and systems, eliminating all forms of violence against children, guaranteeing the rights of children in vulnerable situations and promoting child participation.

■ The Council of Europe Strategy 2012-2015 on **Internet Governance** to protect and promote human rights, the rule of law and democracy online, was adopted by the Committee of Ministers in March. The strategy contains more than 40 lines of action structured around six areas (Internet openness, the rights of users, data protection, cybercrime, democracy and culture, and children and young people).

■ In June the Committee of Ministers adopted the Fourth Additional Protocol to the **European Convention on Extradition** (CETS No. 212) and its Explanatory Report, modernising a number of provisions of the European Convention on Extradition (ETS No. 24). It was opened for signature on 20 September 2012 during the 31st Council of Europe Conference of Ministers of Justice in Vienna (Austria).

■ As regards specific co-operation with member states, in January the Committee approved an assistance programme for the elections to be held in **Georgia** from 2012 to 2014. In November, in the presence of Mr D. Zalkaliani, First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia, the Deputies discussed the Secretary General’s 6th consolidated report on the conflict in Georgia. In March, the Committee reviewed the state of co-operation and the fulfilment of statutory obligations by **Montenegro**. A similar review was conducted regarding the statutory obligations of **Serbia**. Concerning the **Republic of Moldova**, in February the Committee adopted a new programme for confidence-building measures across the river Nistru/Dniester in 2012 and 2013. An in-depth discussion was held on this subject during an exchange of views which took place at a meeting of the relevant rapporteur group with Mr Eugen Carpov, Vice-Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova in early February.

■ The Committee of Ministers approved in March the co-operation programme between the Council of Europe and the Russian Federation for the Chechen Republic in 2012 and requested the Secretariat to implement it. The Committee also approved an action plan and a co-operation programme respectively with regard to **Armenia** and **Albania** with a view to supporting these countries in fulfilling their statutory obligations and the specific commitments which they have undertaken. Where **Ukraine** is concerned, the Deputies examined the implementation of the Council of Europe Action Plan for the period 2011-2014.

■ Within the framework of the Council of Europe's policy regarding neighbouring regions, the Committee endorsed a number of priorities for co-operation with Tunisia, Morocco and Kazakhstan for 2012 to 2014. The Committee also invited Morocco to accede to several Council of Europe conventions. On the occasion of its 122nd Session (23 May), the Committee of Ministers held an informal discussion on the Organisation's policy towards neighbouring regions and welcomed the measures adopted in this field over the past year.

■ The Committee closely followed the situation in **Syria** during the year, strongly condemning the violations of international human rights law which had been committed since the beginning of hostilities in that country.

■ In November, high-level representatives of the Council of Europe and the European Union held an exchange of views on the state of their co-operation regarding support for democratic reforms in countries of the southern Mediterranean. They pledged to continue working together, notably in the areas of constitutional and judicial reform, as well as the holding of free and fair elections and promoting human rights.

■ The Committee of Ministers also appointed Ms Maud de Boer-Buquicchio as the independent member to sit on the bodies of the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency from July 2012.

■ During its two meetings, the Co-ordination Group between the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) reviewed the state of co-operation between the two organisations regarding the protection of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and the promotion of tolerance and non-discrimination as well as regarding the fight against terrorism and trafficking in human beings. The Committee also held an exchange of views with Mr Knut Vollebaek, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

■ In February, the Committee of Ministers, with the participation of experts from member states, held an exchange of views on the **United Nations** and human rights. A draft resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on co-operation between the two organisations, prepared by the Committee of Ministers, was adopted by the General Assembly on 12 December 2012.

■ The Committee of Ministers continued to follow closely the situation of the **Roma** in Europe; in particular it adopted a Declaration on the rise of anti-Gypsyism and racist violence against Roma in Europe. The Committee of Ministers also agreed to renew the partnership agreement between the Council of Europe and the European Roma and Travellers Forum for a further year.

■ With regard to **sport**, the Committee appointed Ms Valérie Fourneyron, French Minister of Sport, Youth, Education for All and Associations, as the European representative on the World Anti-Doping Agency's (WADA) Executive Committee and Mr Pavel Kolobkov, Deputy Minister of Sport of the Russian Federation, as the second member of WADA's Foundation Board.

■ Finally, in November 2012, the Committee of Ministers adopted the adjusted **budget** for 2013 in the framework of the first biennial programme and budget of the Organisation (2012-2013). The budget was adjusted by 2% – a reduction in real terms – taking into account the difficult economic situation in many member states. On 12 December, a set of measures were adopted to put into effect the reform of the Council of Europe's pension schemes which had been agreed earlier in the year. Implementation of the reform will continue in 2013.

Jean-Claude Mignon,
President of the
Parliamentary Assembly,
elected in January 2012
for two years



David Cameron,
Prime Minister of the
United Kingdom,
before the Parliamentary
Assembly, January 2012

Parliamentary Assembly

The texts adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly in 2012 can be found on the Assembly website: <http://assembly.coe.int>

**President of the Parliamentary Assembly
Mr Jean-Claude Mignon (France)**

During its four part-sessions, the Parliamentary Assembly discussed 61 reports and adopted 74 texts (16 recommendations, 57 resolutions and one opinion).
The Assembly's eight committees held 63 plenary meetings, seven of which took place outside Strasbourg or Paris.

The Assembly also hosted the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament. In the general context of the Strasbourg World Forum for Democracy, the Parliamentary Assembly organised, together with the European Youth Centre and Youth Foundation, a youth assembly which enabled over 150 young people from all over Europe to exchange views on topics pertaining to their future.

■ In line with the Assembly's responsibility for electing judges to the European Court of Human Rights, elections concerning Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic, the Republic of Moldova, the Netherlands, Poland, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the United Kingdom took place in the course of this year.

■ Several leading political personalities addressed the Assembly, in particular the presidents of Albania, Finland and the Republic of Moldova; the prime ministers of Albania, Croatia and the United Kingdom as well as the ministers for foreign affairs of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, the United Kingdom and Morocco.

■ The Assembly also elected Nils Muižnieks as the new Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights and Gabriella Battaini-Dragnoni as Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

■ Furthermore, the Assembly awarded its 2012 European Prize to the cities of Sighișoara (Romania) and Corciano (Italy) and the Council of Europe Museum Prize to the Rautenstrauh-Joest-Museum (Cologne).

COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND DEMOCRACY

— The committee presented to the Assembly reports on the crisis of democracy and the role of the state in today's Europe, ensuring greater democracy in elections, the promotion of active citizenship in Europe, as well as on the Council of Europe and the Eastern Partnership of the European Union. The committee prepared reports on the activities of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), with which it currently maintains regular contact. The committee continues to follow the situation in Belarus. It also continued its relations with emerging democracies in the Arab world, and presented to the Assembly reports on political transition in Tunisia, the crisis of transition to democracy in Egypt and the situation in Syria.

COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AFFAIRS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

— In 2012, the committee adopted reports on the inadmissibility of restrictions on freedom of movement as punishment for political positions, the situation of human rights defenders, the definition of the term "political prisoner"; the follow-up to the issue of political prisoners in Azerbaijan, human rights and family courts, ensuring the viability of the European Court of Human Rights and reinforcing the selection processes for experts in key human rights monitoring bodies.

COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS, HEALTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

— The committee prepared 10 reports debated by the Assembly, including on the protection of human rights and dignity of patients, policies on tax havens, decent pensions, a proposed tax on financial transactions, intercountry adoption, austerity measures versus democracy and social rights, problems of the young generation facing the socio-economic crisis and the need for objective expert assessments. The committee also organised five meetings of the Assembly's Network of Contact Parliamentarians to stop sexual violence against children in the context of the Council of Europe ONE in FIVE campaign.

COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION, REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

— The issue of massive flows of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees into Europe continued to dominate the work of the committee in 2012. One report that made the headlines during the year was: "Lives lost in the Mediterranean Sea: who is responsible?" It reminded Europe of its responsibilities and the loopholes in its search and rescue procedures.

— The rights of migrants continued to be an important issue for the committee, with reports on the portrayal of migrants and refugees during election campaigns and the situation of the Roma in Europe, their movement and migration. A report on internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the North Caucasus region was debated in the Assembly. The committee also became more involved in the issue of monitoring detention centres for irregular migrants and asylum seekers by preparing a guide for parliamentarians on the issue.

COMMITTEE ON CULTURE, SCIENCE, EDUCATION AND MEDIA

— The committee prepared reports debated by the Assembly in 2012 on the protection of freedom of expression and information on the Internet and online media; the need to combat match-fixing; good governance and ethics in sport; protection of and access to audiovisual cultural heritage; Jewish cemeteries; the consolidation and international openness of the European Higher Education Area; the right to freedom of choice in education in Europe and governance of higher education institutions in the European Higher Education Area.

COMMITTEE ON EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

— In 2012, the committee submitted six reports for debate in the plenary of the Assembly: four of them focused on violence against women and equality between women and men (to promote the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, Istanbul Convention, CETS No. 210); to advance women's rights in the world; equality between women and men: a condition for the success of the Arab Spring; political parties and political representation of women, a fifth portrait on racism and xenophobia (NGOs' role in combating intolerance, racism and xenophobia) and the last was of a cross-cutting nature (multiple discrimination against Muslim women in Europe: for equal opportunities).

COMMITTEE ON RULES OF PROCEDURE, IMMUNITIES AND INSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

— The committee presented four reports respectively on the self-evaluation by Europe's national parliaments: procedural guidelines to improve the quality of parliamentary work, on the follow-up by the Committee of Ministers to the work of the Parliamentary Assembly, on a code of conduct of members of the Parliamentary Assembly and, lastly, on the status of the chairpersons of political groups in committees.

COMMITTEE ON THE HONOURING OF OBLIGATIONS AND COMMITMENTS BY MEMBER STATES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE (MONITORING COMMITTEE)

— In addition to its annual activity report, the committee produced complete monitoring reports on Montenegro, the Russian Federation and Serbia, as well as evaluations of the functioning of democratic institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ukraine. During 2012, the rapporteurs visited 10 countries subject to the monitoring procedure (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Ukraine) and four countries engaged in the post-monitoring dialogue (Bulgaria, Monaco, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and Turkey) in the framework of fact-finding visits and/or observation of elections and, in the majority of cases, transmitted information notes with their observations to the committee for discussion.

OTHER ASSEMBLY ACTIVITIES

INTERPARLIAMENTARY CO-OPERATION AND ELECTION OBSERVATION

— The Assembly observed elections in the following member states: Armenia, Georgia, Montenegro, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Ukraine, and in one non-member state, Kazakhstan. The observation of elections involved 171 members of parliamentary delegations from 40 member states, representing the five political groups² of the Assembly.

² The five political groups are: Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD), Socialist Group (SOC), European Democrat Group (EDG), Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE), Group of the Unified European Left (UEL).



Herwig van Staa
was elected President
of the Congress of Local
and Regional Authorities
of Europe in October 2012
for a two-year mandate

Congress of **Local and Regional Authorities** of the Council of Europe

*The texts adopted by the Congress in 2012
can be found on its website: www.coe.int/t/Congress*

President of the Congress: Herwig van Staa (Austria)

CO-OPERATION WITHIN THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND WITH OTHER BODIES

■ In the spirit of the Council of Europe reform, the Congress sought to increase dialogue and close co-operation with its institutional partners within the Organisation.

■ The Congress played an active role in the Council of Europe's ONE in FIVE campaign. It developed the local and regional dimension of this issue with its Pact of Cities and Regions to Fight Sexual Violence against Children, and adopted a report on "Regional legislation and action to combat sexual exploitation and abuse of children" at its 23rd session in October 2012.

■ Representatives of the Committee of the Regions of the European Union have been invited to join the Congress' electoral observation missions and to take part in the ensuing debates held during Congress plenary sessions. Congress rapporteurs took part in meetings of the Committee of the Regions' Committee

on Citizenship, Governance, Institutional and External Affairs (CIVEX), and of the Conference of regional organisations and local authorities for the Eastern Partnership (CORLEAP). The Congress also pursued its co-operation with the Committee of the Regions through the joint Contact Group Committee of the Regions/Congress.

■ In addition, the Congress met the presidency of the Conference of European Regional Legislative Assemblies (CALRE), and the Conference of European Regions with Legislative Powers (REGLEG) in Innsbruck, and was able to identify regional institutional models and regional democracy as key areas for co-operation. It participated in several events organised by the Assembly of European Regions (AER), notably a round table on "Regionalisation and democracy" during the Strasbourg World Forum for Democracy, and attended the annual general assembly of the Association of European Border Regions (AEBR).



MONITORING LOCAL AND REGIONAL DEMOCRACY

— One of the Congress's core missions is to monitor the situation of local and regional democracy in member states. Its monitoring visits provide opportunities to strengthen political dialogue with national authorities, to address existing problems and to identify the common challenges, innovative action and new solutions which could be taken on board.

— In 2012, the Congress carried out monitoring visits in Albania, Azerbaijan, Denmark, Georgia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Spain and Ukraine. It initiated a programme of post-monitoring activities with the aim of pursuing the political dialogue with national authorities in order to better assess the follow-up given to its recommendations. This took effect in September 2012, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with a high-level meeting to discuss ways to best implement the Congress's recommendations made following the two monitoring visits carried out in the country in 2011. The meeting also aimed to agree with national authorities on a roadmap for the implementation of the main recommendations.

— As part of the monitoring of the implementation of the European Charter of Local Self-Government in the member states, at its 22nd session in March 2012 the Congress adopted recommendations on local and regional democracy in Germany, Lithuania, Portugal, the Czech Republic, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Moldova. This was followed by the adoption of recommendations on local and regional democracy in "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and Azerbaijan at its 23rd session.

OBSERVING LOCAL AND REGIONAL ELECTIONS

— Congress election observation now includes assessments on the political system, the legal conditions and the media landscape, as well as information collected at the pre-electoral stage, in particular concerning the electoral campaign. In the light of the political complementarity between monitoring of the European Charter of Local Self-Government and election observation, the Congress is also focusing more intensely on the concrete follow-up to Congress recommendations resulting from election observation missions and on regular training sessions for Congress members.

— In 2012, the Congress observed the local elections in Serbia, Armenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. A Congress delegation, including representatives of the EU Committee of the Regions, observed the local and provincial part of the elections in Serbia on 6 May 2012. This was followed by the adoption of a report and recommendation at its 23rd session. The Congress also sent delegations, again including members of the EU Committee of the Regions, to observe the partial local elections in Armenia on 9 and 23 September 2012, and the elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 7 October 2012. The reports of these two observation missions were examined at the Congress's 24th session, in March 2013.



A delegation of the Congress led by Nigel Mermagen (United Kingdom/ ILDG) observed **the local elections in Serbia** on 6 May 2012

ROMA INCLUSION

■ In 2012, the Congress was able to further develop its project on the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for Roma Inclusion. On 25 September 2012, the Congress and the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe organised a consultative meeting of cities, regions and other stakeholders, in the presence, *inter alia*, of European Commission representatives. The meeting participants concluded that the alliance should be a collaborative and flexible space where exchanges, training and mutual learning can take place, where programmes and situations can be evaluated, projects can be built and where cities and regions can increase their capacities for project implementation.

■ On 17 and 18 December 2012, the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for Roma Inclusion, together with the joint Roma mediators programme (ROMED), organised its first activity during the test phase – an international workshop on “Inclusive education: local policies and practices”, which took place in Budapest (Hungary). The official launch of the European Alliance of Cities and Regions for Roma Inclusion took place in March 2013, during the 24th Congress session.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

■ The European Local Democracy Week (ELDW) takes place every year during the week of 15 October, when local and regional authorities of the 47 member states of the Council of Europe are invited to take part and to organise events to raise citizens’ awareness of local affairs and policy issues.

■ The 2012 edition of the ELDW took place from 15 to 21 October with its main theme being “Human rights make for more inclusive communities”. Some 150 communities and partner organisations, from 29 countries, registered to participate actively in the ELDW – including 18 “12-Star Cities”, organising over 300 activities designed to bring together local elected representatives and their citizens. In 2012 the “12-Star Cities” were Brussels (Belgium), Metz and Strasbourg (France), Chania and Festos (Greece), Reggio di Calabria Province and Mola di Bari (Italy), Utrecht (Netherlands), Katowice (Poland), Amadora (Portugal), Candelaria and Malaga (Spain), Sundbyberg, Örebro and Huddinge (Sweden), Büyükçekmece and Lüleburgaz (Turkey) and Stockton-on-Tees (United Kingdom). In 2012, the Congress was also able to expand the reach of the ELDW, with the commitment to encourage participation from municipalities in Morocco and Tunisia.

TARGETED CO-OPERATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

■ The Congress joined the Council of Europe’s action plan for **Ukraine** by adding to its local democracy component, thus supporting the European reform agenda of Ukraine in the field of local and regional democracy. The Congress has also worked to create a unified platform for local and regional elected representatives of **Albania**. This aims to support the development of dialogue between local and regional elected representatives through concrete measures. To this end, the Congress and the Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform developed a joint project for 2012 to 2015 to strengthen local government structures and the co-operation of local elected representatives in Albania. The Congress was also involved in the development of an action plan for Armenia.

■ In the framework of the new Council of Europe policy towards neighbouring regions, the Congress also enlarged its action to include non-member states, especially those from the southern Mediterranean. The Congress’s co-operation with **Morocco** included assistance with regard to legislative activities, including the preparation of an organic law on regionalisation, assistance at various stages of the electoral process, and the participation of some Moroccan cities in the European Local Democracy Week. The Congress intends to offer a “special status” in the Congress to local and regional representatives from both Tunisia and Morocco.

European Court of Human Rights

www.echr.coe.int/ECHR/homepage_en
www.echr.coe.int/echr/fr/hudoc/

RATIFICATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND ITS PROTOCOLS

Protocol No. 13: Latvia – 26 January 2012

DECREASE IN THE NUMBER OF PENDING CASES

■ In 2012, the Court delivered a total of 1 093 judgments, compared with 1 157 judgments delivered in 2011. This was due to the fact that a greater number of applications were resolved by a decision. The state with the highest number of judgments finding at least one violation of the Convention delivered against it was Russia (122 judgments), followed by Turkey (117), Romania (70), Ukraine (69), Bulgaria (58), Poland (56) and Greece (52).

■ The Grand Chamber held 11 oral hearings during the year. It delivered 26 judgments (12 in relinquishment cases, 14 in rehearing cases). At the end of the year, 19 cases (concerning 22 applications) were pending before the Grand Chamber.

■ Some 65 150 applications were allocated to a judicial formation, an overall increase of 1% compared with 2011 (64 400). Of these, 48 350 were identified as Single-Judge cases likely to be declared inadmissible (an increase of 1% in relation to 2011). Another 16 800 were identified as Chamber or Committee cases (an increase of 3%).

■ A total of 87 879 applications were disposed of judicially, an increase of 68% in relation to 2011 (52 188). The number of cases disposed of therefore exceeded those allocated by approximately 22 700 (that is a monthly surplus of almost 1 900). As a result, and for the first time since 1998, the stock of allocated applications pending before the Court decreased over the year: by 16% from 151 600 to 128 100. At 31 December 2012, the majority of pending cases were against Russia (22.3%), Turkey (13.2%), Italy (11.1%) and Ukraine (8.2%).

■ During the year 86 201 applications were declared inadmissible or struck off the list of cases by a Single Judge, a Committee or a Chamber, a 70% increase compared with 2011 (50 677). The Single-Judge formation decided 81 764 cases in 2012, an increase of 74% compared with 2011 (46 930). This increase is due to the introduction of new working methods and to the fact that in 2012 more judges were appointed as Single Judges. The number of applications struck off the role, in a decision or a judgment, following a friendly settlement or a unilateral declaration, increased by 25% in 2012 (1 532 in 2011). Friendly settlements increased by 57%, but there were 14% fewer unilateral declarations.



Sir Nicolas Bratza,
President of the Court,
until October 2012

Some 5 238 applications were communicated (a decrease of 2% in relation to 2011 when 5 360 applications were communicated). This decrease can be explained by efforts to concentrate on more time-consuming priority applications, a higher number of which were communicated to the governments.

The total number of decisions on interim measures (1 973) decreased by 29% compared with 2011 (2 782). The Court granted requests for interim measures in 103 cases (a decrease of 70% compared with 342 cases in 2011) and dismissed them in 1 203 cases (33% fewer than the 1 807 in 2011). The remainder fell outside the scope of Rule 39 of the Rules of Court.

The number of priority applications dealt with in 2012 increased by 30% compared to 2011. In comparison with 2011, 16% more priority applications were communicated to the respondent governments. The number of priority applications declared inadmissible or struck off of the list of cases by a Chamber or Committee increased by 61%. The number of priority applications struck off the role following a friendly settlement or a unilateral declaration rose from 146 in 2011 to 158 in 2012. The number of priority applications giving rise to a judgment increased by 33% in 2012 and represented 33% of the total number of applications dealt with by judgments in 2012 (compared to 27% in 2011).



Dean Spielmann,
President of the Court,
since 1 November 2012

ELECTION OF JUDGES

On 24 April 2012, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe elected Mr Paul Lemmens as judge to the European Court of Human Rights in respect of Belgium.

On 26 June 2012, the Parliamentary Assembly elected Mrs Helena Jäderblom as judge to the European Court of Human Rights in respect of Sweden.

On 27 June 2012, four judges were elected to the Court: Mr Aleš Pejchal, in respect of the Czech Republic; Mr Johannes Silvis, in respect of the Netherlands; Mr Krzysztof Wojtyczek, in respect of Poland and Mr Paul Mahoney, in respect of the United Kingdom.

On 2 July 2012, the European Court of Human Rights elected its new Vice-President, Mr Dean Spielmann (Luxembourg) and Mrs Ineta Ziemele (Latvia) as a new Section President.

On 10 September 2012, the Court elected Mr Dean Spielmann (Luxembourg) as its new President, Guido Raimondi (Italy) as a Vice-President as well as Mark Villiger (Liechtenstein) and Isabelle Berro-Lefèvre (Monaco) as new Section Presidents.

On 2 October 2012, four judges were elected by the Parliamentary Assembly to the Court: Dmitry Dedov, in respect of the Russian Federation; Valeriu Grițco, in respect of the Republic of Moldova; Ksenija Turković, in respect of Croatia and Faris Vehabović, in respect of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Commissioner for Human Rights

Nils Muižnieks from 1 April 2012



Information on the Commissioner's activities, as well as reports of country visits, thematic documents, "Human rights comments", conference reports, and quarterly and annual reports, is available on the Commissioner's website: www.commissioner.coe.int

The third Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Nils Muižnieks, took up office on 1 April 2012 for a six-year term.

— The Commissioner is pursuing his continuous dialogue with member states through a series of country visits to address specific human rights issues as well as post-conflict and crisis situations. These visits result in detailed reports on priority issues or letters addressed to national authorities including recommendations for the improvement of the human rights situation. During such visits, the Commissioner meets with heads of state and members of the government, representatives of parliament, the judiciary and national human rights structures (ombudspersons, national human rights institutions and equality bodies), as well as representatives of civil society. The Commissioner also visits various sites which present issues of human rights concern, such as prisons, holding centres for migrants, police stations and Roma settlements.

Nils Muižnieks was elected Commissioner for Human Rights by the Parliamentary Assembly on 24 January 2012 and took office on 1 April

■ In 2012, Commissioner Muižnieks carried out visits to Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, Italy, Portugal and “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”. The reports published following these visits, as well as the responses of the authorities, can be consulted on the Commissioner’s website and summaries can be found in his quarterly reports. During his visit to Portugal, which took place in May, the Commissioner focused on the impact of the economic crisis and fiscal austerity measures on human rights, in particular on some of the most vulnerable groups in society: children, older persons and the Roma. In Austria, where he travelled in June, the Commissioner discussed the system for promoting and protecting human rights and the situation of human rights of vulnerable groups, in particular asylum seekers, persons with disabilities, women and older persons. The Commissioner’s visit to Finland, which took place in June, focused on systematic work for implementing human rights, non-discrimination and reform of equal treatment legislation, as well as the human rights of the indigenous Saami people. In Italy, where he went in July, the Commissioner reviewed certain human rights issues, focusing in particular on the excessive length of court proceedings and the human rights of the Roma and migrants. During his visit to the Czech Republic in November, the Commissioner focused on the protection of the human rights of the Roma and persons with disabilities. In “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, which he visited in November, he focused on certain aspects of transitional justice and social cohesion, as well as the human rights of the Roma.

■ In 2012 the Commissioner also participated in events in a certain number of countries, and at the same time used these opportunities to establish some governmental and non-governmental contacts. He travelled to Albania, Azerbaijan, Ireland, the Russian Federation and Turkey. Following his missions to Albania and Ireland, the Commissioner addressed letters to the authorities of these countries. In 2012, he also addressed letters to the authorities of Serbia and Georgia. These letters, along with the responses of the authorities, can be consulted on the Commissioner’s website.

■ In addition to his activities in individual countries, the Commissioner also gives advice and carries out awareness-raising work on different aspects of human rights. Among the main themes addressed by the Commissioner in 2012 were freedom of expression

and media freedom, with a special focus on Internet freedom and human rights; the impact of austerity measures on human rights; transitional justice and durable peace in the former Yugoslavia; children’s rights and human rights and the administration of justice in Europe. These themes were given priority in terms of the organisation of events, the drafting of thematic documents, the publication of “Human rights comments” and in speeches given by the Commissioner at conferences. Particular attention was paid to victims of discrimination, such as the Roma and other national minorities, people with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) persons, as well as migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

■ During the year, the Commissioner published almost a dozen “Human rights comments” on his website, which dealt with subjects as varied as the protection of women from violence, the effects of austerity measures on national human rights structures, the necessity to combat prejudice and discrimination against Muslims, or the situation of stateless children in Europe.

■ In the framework of his country visits, the Commissioner continued to follow the situation of human rights defenders. In October, his office organised a round table on the protection of the human rights of migrants in Europe with the participation of human rights defenders who are active in this field. The Commissioner also continued his partnerships with ombudspersons and other national human rights structures by maintaining his bilateral contacts. He met regularly with ombudspersons and representatives of national human rights institutions during his country visits and during international meetings organised by the networks of national human rights structures.

■ Throughout 2012, the Commissioner consulted his principal European and international partners and established the basis for good co-operation with them. This collaboration took the form of bilateral meetings, informal contacts and exchanges of information. The Commissioner had several working meetings with the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency as well as with the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. He also met with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and the European Union Special Representative for Human Rights with whom he had exchanges regarding their respective priorities.



UN Secretary General
Ban Ki-moon in Strasbourg
at the opening of the
World Forum for Democracy

External relations

www.coe.int/DER

POLICY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE TOWARDS NEIGHBOURING REGIONS

■ The “Neighbourhood co-operation dialogue” involved the authorities of Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, Israel, the Palestinian National Authority, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. This three-year €4.8 million EU-financed programme supporting the process of democratic transition in the southern Mediterranean was concluded in January 2012. Neighbourhood Co-operation Priorities (NCPs) were then agreed with Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan. Negotiations of NCPs were launched with Kazakhstan and targeted activities were implemented by the Venice Commission in a number of countries in regions surrounding the Council of Europe.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION

■ Co-operation and co-ordination of actions between the two organisations further intensified on the basis of the 2007 Memorandum of Understanding. High-level political dialogue continued and implementation of the memorandum was regularly assessed by the Ministers’ Deputies. Negotiations for the accession of the EU to the European Convention on Human Rights have continued. As in previous years, a substantial number of joint activities were carried out through joint programmes. In September 2012, the European Commission issued an assessment of EU funding for the joint programmes. The Council of Europe Liaison Office in Brussels and the Delegation of the EU to the Council of Europe further facilitated the reinforcement of the co-operation described above.

CO-OPERATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

■ The UN Secretary-General was a keynote speaker at the opening of the first Strasbourg World Forum for Democracy. In December, the UN General Assembly adopted by consensus Resolution A/RES/67/83 on co-operation between the UN and the Council of Europe, which illustrates the increasing co-operation between the two organisations in many areas. The opening of Council of Europe offices in Geneva and Vienna, in charge of liaison with the UN, developed several new opportunities for reinforcement of mutual contacts and interaction.

CO-OPERATION WITH THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE (OSCE)

■ The Council of Europe continued to focus its relations with the OSCE on a broad spectrum of human dimension activities in the field, at the intergovernmental and parliamentary levels or between the institutions and specialised bodies. A dialogue on ways to further enhance relations has been initiated and will continue in 2013.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS/ OTHER COUNTRIES

■ Throughout the year, the Council of Europe maintained regular contacts and relations with more than 20 other organisations active in the areas of human rights, democracy and the rule of law such as the Organisation of American States, the Community of Democracies or the Organisation de la Francophonie. Active relations with the observer states continued, with a focus on looking for new possibilities for co operation.

■ Relations with more than 70 non-member states centred on the challenges of the 21st century in fields where the Council of Europe’s strengths can be used to their advantage.



The Council of Europe Schools of Political Studies were created to provide training to future generations of political, economic, social and cultural leaders in the countries in transition

Policy planning and political advice

The Directorate of Policy Planning (DPP) has provided the Secretary General, the Committee of Ministers and the different sectors of the Council of Europe with conceptual and strategic analyses about relevant political and societal developments in Europe and beyond. This included advice on the dissemination of the Group of Eminent Persons' report on "Living together – Combining diversity and freedom in 21st-century Europe" and on the follow-up to be given to it.

■ The Organisation's co-operation with policy planners in ministries of foreign affairs and with major European think tanks was taken forward through the second meeting of policy planners and a first meeting of directors and representatives from major European think tanks.

■ Three "Democracy debates" with high-level specialists were organised for diplomats, staff and experts and the proceedings of the entire debate series were published in *Democracy on the precipice*.

■ A study on the relationship between the Council of Europe and the OSCE made a series of proposals for enhancing co-operation and complementarity between the two organisations and informed the debates at the Committee of Ministers' Rapporteur Group on External Relations on this issue. The publication of two "Open thoughts papers" provided conceptual notes based on publications and research results from the academic community.

■ As in the previous year, the DPP prepared a comprehensive outlook paper on 2013 prospects. It has continued to organise internal meetings and events aiming to stimulate innovative thinking within the Secretariat.

SCHOOLS OF POLITICAL STUDIES

■ The network of 16 Schools of Political Studies (SPS) in central and eastern European countries continued to provide high-level training on democracy, human rights and the rule of law to some 30 young political, economic, social, cultural and environmental leaders in each country.

■ The opening of new Schools of Political Studies in Tunisia and Morocco was prepared for early 2013 in order to strengthen civil society and support burgeoning democracies. Preparatory work was also begun on future co-operation with the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie.

■ A "Strategy for the Schools of Political Studies for 2012 and beyond" was drawn up in order to strengthen the capacity of the network to raise funds, reinforce co-operation with each other and build stronger links with the Council of Europe. The Ministers' Deputies took note of this document. With a view to implementing the strategy, a brainstorming workshop provided input for a "Quality and impact assessment manual for the Schools of Political Studies" which is expected to put in place systematic quality assessment procedures which can be used by all the SPS, thereby reinforcing their attractiveness to funders.

■ Over 500 participants from the Schools of Political Studies attended the first Strasbourg World Forum for Democracy (5-11 October 2012).

POLITICAL ADVICE

■ The Directorate of Political Advice contributed to the preparation of the 5th and 6th consolidated reports on the conflict in Georgia which were presented to, and debated by, the Committee of Ministers. The objective of these reports is to take stock of the situation in Georgia following the August 2008 conflict, to report on the related activities of the Council of Europe and to propose further action for the Organisation.

■ Regarding co-operation with Belarus, the renewal in November of the agreement between the authorities and the Council of Europe on the Information Point in Minsk provided the continued opportunity to strengthen visibility of the Council of Europe in Belarus.



Family photo taken during the **Brighton Conference** organised in April 2012 by the United Kingdom in the framework of its Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers

Directorate General

Human rights and rule of law

MONITORING BODIES

EXECUTION OF JUDGMENTS OF THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

■ The Department for the Execution of Court Judgments, which assists and advises the Committee of Ministers in its supervision of execution, registered some 1 438 new cases in 2012 (a decrease compared to 2011 with 1 606 cases registered). These include 251 leading cases revealing new structural problems in the countries concerned, the other cases being mainly repetitive cases. The total number of pending cases at the end of the year (11 099, including 1 431 leading cases) increased at a slower pace than in the past. This positive trend is notably linked to an increase of the number of closed cases (1 035 compared to 816 in 2011).

■ The new procedure of enhanced supervision, set up in 2011, applies to judgments requiring urgent individual measures, pilot judgments, judgments revealing important structural/complex problems and interstate cases. The 303 leading cases placed under this procedure concerned in particular prison overcrowding, non-enforcement of final domestic judicial decisions, excessive length of judicial proceedings and poor conditions of detention. After detailed follow-up to these cases, the Committee of Ministers has intervened 110 times through decisions or resolutions in order to support or encourage the ongoing execution processes.

■ The 2012 annual report of the Committee of Ministers suggests that these efforts, in particular those related to the interaction with the Court in the framework of pilot judgment procedures, are the reason for the decrease in the number of new cases. Indeed, this decrease mainly concerns repetitive cases which are in principle frozen in the context of the pilot judgment procedure, with a view to referring them back to the national level once the execution measures required to solve them have been adopted.



Seminar on the **European Social Charter** in Yerevan, Armenia (November 2012)

PREVENTION OF TORTURE AND INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT (CPT)

■ In 2012, the European Committee on the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) carried out 10 periodic visits (Croatia, Estonia, Iceland, Italy, Lithuania, Monaco, Portugal, the Russian Federation, Slovenia and the United Kingdom) and 10 ad hoc visits (Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Denmark (Greenland), Georgia, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom). The ad hoc visit to the United Kingdom marked the CPT's first examination of the treatment of foreign nationals during an operation of deportation by air. The CPT's 22nd General Report was published in November 2012; it contains a section on the CPT's relations with the National Preventive Mechanisms (NPMs) being set up under the Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Some 19 visit reports and a comparable number of government responses were also made public over the year, at the request of the national authorities concerned.

SOCIAL RIGHTS: EUROPEAN SOCIAL CHARTER AND EUROPEAN CODE OF SOCIAL SECURITY

■ The European Committee of Social Rights adopted its conclusions assessing the situation of 42 states parties in relation to issues such as the right to work, equal opportunities for men and women, vocational guidance and training, rights of persons with disabilities, movement of workers between the states parties, dismissal protection and protection in the event of the insolvency of the employer.

■ Concerning the procedure on collective complaints, the committee adopted decisions on the merits of 15 complaints, finding violations of the Charter concerning, *inter alia*, the effects of austerity measures on social rights (Greece), children's rights (Belgium), protection of the elderly (Finland) and the rights of the Roma (France, Belgium). In January, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" ratified the revised Social Charter (ETS No. 163). In April, the Czech Republic ratified the collective complaints procedure and in July Estonia accepted eight additional provisions of the revised Charter.

■ Concerning the European Code of Social Security (ETS No. 48), the 20 resolutions adopted by the Committee of Ministers (from 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011) on its application demonstrated that austerity measures taken in member states make it difficult to maintain a sufficiently high social security level in various branches such as pensions.

FIGHT AGAINST MONEY LAUNDERING AND FINANCING OF TERRORISM (MONEYVAL)

■ Moneyval launched its first report on the Holy See (including Vatican City State). This evaluation understandably attracted global interest as it was the first independent review ever undertaken of this jurisdiction.

■ The Moneyval report is neither an investigation into past or present allegations of money laundering and terrorist financing, nor an audit of a particular financial institution. However, the evaluators have intensively reviewed the effective implementation of global standards in this field, in particular by the Institute for Works of Religion.

■ The report assesses levels of compliance with the FATF (Financial Action Task Force) 49 Recommendations. The 45 recommendations applicable to the specific situation of the Holy See were rated accordingly: 23 (51%) as partially compliant (PC) or non-compliant (NC), and 22 (49%) as compliant (C) or largely compliant (LC). The evaluators welcomed as well the Holy See's decision to become a full party to the United Nations Vienna, Palermo and Terrorist Financing Conventions.

■ In October, the Committee of Ministers accepted the United Kingdom's request for Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man to be subject to Moneyval monitoring, thus bringing these important financial jurisdictions inside the global framework of anti-money laundering assessment bodies.

■ Moneyval celebrated its 15th anniversary in 2012.



The **Moneyval** Committee has published its first report on the Holy See, including the Vatican City State

FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

■ The Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) launched its 4th evaluation round devoted to the prevention of corruption in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors – matters that are at the heart of citizens' questions and concerns. The first peer evaluations carried out under this round included the United Kingdom, Poland, Slovenia, Latvia and Estonia. The reports focus on issues which will recur in the evaluations to come, such as codes of conduct, public/private interests, sanctions and public awareness. They also demonstrate how GRECO's case-by-case approach reveals problems or challenges and potential solutions that are different for each country.

■ In response to GRECO's country-specific recommendations from the 3rd evaluation round individual member states have, for instance, overhauled corruption legislation in line with the Criminal Law Convention on Corruption (ETS No. 173) (Montenegro), prompted political parties to publish annual financial accounts (Luxembourg), increased the transparency of private donations (Iceland) or consolidated the position and authority of the domestic body entrusted with the supervision of financing of political parties and electoral campaigns (Romania).

TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS (GRETA)

■ The results of the work to monitor implementation of the Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CETS No. 197) included the publication of the final evaluation reports concerning six countries (Armenia, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Romania and the United Kingdom) by the Group of Experts against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA). Visits were organised to 12 other countries (Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, France, Ireland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain).

■ The shortcomings in the prevention of trafficking observed in the evaluations relate in particular to minorities at risk, such as the Roma, and discouraging the demand that fuels human trafficking. These issues prompted the organisation of a conference in Bulgaria which allowed experts to discuss measures and policies to effectively prevent trafficking through the mobilisation of all relevant actors.



Ratification by Turkey of the Istanbul **Convention to combat violence against women**

SPECIFIC HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

REFORM OF THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS SYSTEM

Efforts to improve the effectiveness of the Convention system at European and national levels culminated in the adoption of the Brighton Declaration (April 2012) setting out a package of concrete reforms to ensure that the European Court of Human Rights can be most effective. The Steering Committee for Human Rights delivered initial results from the declaration, in particular, two draft protocols to the Convention.

The first one, to be called Protocol No. 15, provides for the insertion in the Convention's preamble of reference to the principle of subsidiarity and to the doctrine of the margin of appreciation as developed by the Court in its case law as well as the repeal of the compulsory retirement age for Court judges. It also shortens, from six to four months, the time limit within which an application can be brought before the Court after all domestic remedies have been exhausted and removes one of the limits on the Court's powers to reject a case as trivial.

A draft optional protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights relating to advisory opinions is also under preparation. According to this text, member states could optionally accept to receive advisory opinions from the Court, delivered upon request from the state's highest jurisdiction, on the interpretation of the Convention in the context of a specific case at domestic level, without prejudice to the non-binding character of the opinions for the other member states.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

In 2012, the Council of Europe achieved unprecedented mobilisation of its member states to stop sexual violence against children: after the signature of Andorra and the Russian Federation in 2012, 46 member states out of 47 have now signed the Lanzarote Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (CETS No. 201). Bulgaria, Croatia, Iceland, the Republic of Moldova, Portugal, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and Ukraine are now among the 24 countries bound to align their legislation and policies with the provisions of this convention.

The committee that monitors the implementation of the convention started operating in 2012 and decided to focus on the problem of sexual abuse of children in the circle of trust. It is the first time that governments have addressed sexual abuse of children by family members, friends, carers, teachers, coaches or priests.

The combined efforts of governments, parliaments, towns, regions and NGOs under the ONE in FIVE campaign to stop sexual violence against children resulted in important changes in legislation, increased awareness of problems and their solutions, new research efforts, training for professionals and help for parents in their efforts to prevent sexual abuse. Results were achieved in particular in Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Malta, Serbia and Spain.

The Council of Europe also partnered with the European Union and the United Nations to better respond to children's needs, in particular by helping governments to adapt their justice systems, health care and social services for children and by providing guidance on how to respect children's rights to participate in the decisions affecting them.

GENDER EQUALITY

■ After a significant contribution to promoting women's rights and mainstreaming gender equality in its member states' legislation, the Council of Europe is also now turning to the policies, practices and mentalities that need to evolve in order to reflect Europe's standards and values. In 2012, the new Gender Equality Programme aims to mobilise all its resources and partners to overcome these important obstacles to equality. A Gender Equality Commission was set up and, with the help of national contacts and strategic partnerships, it should allow the Council of Europe to combine efforts and broaden the impact of its results. The three priority areas identified in 2012 are women's access to justice, combating gender stereotypes in media and the protection of women against violence.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

■ The Istanbul Convention has become a well-known and referenced text to effectively prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence. In 2012, seven new countries (Belgium, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Serbia and the United Kingdom) signed the convention, bringing the number of signatories from 17 to 25. In 2012, Turkey was the first country to ratify it.

■ Strategic partnerships with the EU, the OSCE and the United Nations have resulted in political support and public pressure for the prompt ratification of the convention. UN Women and the Committee of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) also regularly call upon Council of Europe member countries to ratify the Istanbul Convention, and promote it in their activities. The EU does the same, regularly calling upon its member states, and even the EU itself, to ratify the convention.

■ Thanks to Council of Europe expertise, several European countries, particularly those working actively towards ratification and implementation of the Istanbul Convention, have revised their policies and legislation. As a result of this mobilisation, it seems likely that the convention will enter into force in 2013, as only 10 ratifications are needed for this to happen. A regional conference in Morocco also helped to make the convention known in southern Mediterranean countries, particularly Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia.

INFORMATION SOCIETY

■ The Council of Europe adopted an Internet Governance Strategy 2012-2015 which contains more than 40 lines of action, structured around six areas (Internet openness, the rights of users, data protection, cybercrime, democracy and culture, children and young people). It will be implemented in close co-operation with the private sector and civil society. The strategy envisages the preparation of a compendium of rights of Internet users.

■ In the media field, the Council of Europe alerted its 47 member states to the serious threat to freedom of expression and information created by "libel tourism", a practice of filing complaints in jurisdictions where it is easy to sue and which have courts thought to be the most likely to deliver favourable judgments. Some 100 co-operation activities, co-funded by the European Union, addressed needs in respect of media freedom, media pluralism, training of journalists and hate speech. The Secretary General pursued constructive dialogue with the authorities of some member states, in particular Hungary and Turkey, on media and freedom of expression issues. A high-level conference in Budapest looked at the nature and extent of hate speech in today's Europe – especially online – and discussed different ways of tackling intolerance while defending free speech. The conference was preceded by a training course on hate speech for influential young bloggers.

■ As regards cybercrime, six new parties joined the Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention, ETS No. 185) – Australia, Austria, Belgium, Georgia, Japan and Malta – further enhancing its global dimension. The convention committee assessed cybercrime legislation in the parties and agreed on norms for trans-border access to data. Some 100 technical co-operation activities supported countries worldwide in the strengthening of legislation, specialised cybercrime units, training on computer forensics for judicial and law-enforcement officials, public/private co-operation, financial investigations and international co-operation.



The plenary sessions of the Venice Commission take place four times a year at the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni in Venice

JUSTICE AND LEGAL CO-OPERATION

European ministers of justice from the 47 Council of Europe member states met in Vienna in September to discuss how to address the issue of urban violence, especially in the case of organised groups that communicate through social media. In their final resolution, they agreed to adopt rapid, adapted and efficient measures that are appropriate for juveniles as perpetrators and victims of urban violence.

Within the framework of the Conference of Ministers of Justice, the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice of the Council of Europe (CEPEJ) published its 2012 report on “European judicial systems”. This report presents quantitative and qualitative data from 46 member states (out of 47), thus providing the Council of Europe with a detailed picture of the daily operation of courts in Europe. The report contains comparative tables and relevant comments in essential fields such as public expenditure devoted to the judicial system, the legal aid system, mediation, organisation of jurisdictions and the court network, judicial staff and the gender issue, case-flow management in courts, the use of new technologies in judicial procedures (e-justice and e-court) and length of procedures.

The CEPEJ also prepared for the European Union a report on the impact of the functioning of judicial systems on the economy of the EU member states. The Consultative Councils of European Judges (CCJE) and European Prosecutors (CCPE) adopted opinions respectively on the specialisation of judges and on the management of the means of prosecution services. A Committee of Ministers recommendation on the role of prosecutors outside the criminal justice system was adopted in September.

The Council of Europe provided member states with guidance and expertise on the substantive and practical implications of an independent and efficient judiciary. The objective has been to help states improve their legislation and practice in line with the relevant standards, and to bring the justice policies and systems closer to the users. Large-scale projects have been implemented in Armenia, Georgia and Turkey, as well as for the first time in Morocco and Tunisia in the framework of the Council of Europe’s policy towards its neighbouring regions, and smaller-scale work has been carried out in Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine.



CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS: VENICE COMMISSION

■ The European Commission for Democracy through Law, known as the Venice Commission, adopted some 30 opinions and reports in 2012.

■ Throughout 2012, the Secretary General and the Venice Commission worked in close collaboration on the constitutional situation in Hungary, resulting in a critical analysis of so-called cardinal laws which were found to have diminished the checks and balances of government. According to the expert opinion, shortening the mandate of sitting judges by eight years and centralising the administration of justice in the hands of one person, the president of the newly established National Judicial Office, violated the independence of the judiciary. As an example of intergovernmental co-operation, the Hungarian Government submitted to the Venice Commission's scrutiny the two laws on the independence of the judiciary and on religion which were examined at the plenary session from 15 to 17 March. In addition, and at the request this time of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, five other laws were examined by the Commission in June.

■ Following requests by the Secretary General and the Parliamentary Assembly, the Venice Commission published recommendations urging reforms in the Romanian procedure for suspending a president, the use of the so-called emergency ordinances, the dismissal of the Advocate of the People and clarification of the powers and responsibilities of president and parliament in December.

■ In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Commission's opinion was requested on the practice in some political parties of making candidates for senior positions pre-sign letters of resignation to be used should they "betray their loyalty" to the party. The Venice Commission did not find the procedure to be "consistent with the democratic standards of a well-functioning democracy".

■ The Commission's opinion on a law in Belarus determined that restrictions in the proposed law "are neither legitimate nor justifiable." In an opinion published last year on a law in the Russian Federation, the Venice Commission called for a reduction of "obligations of the organisers" of peaceful assembly and that blanket restrictions on the time and places of public events should be narrowed.

■ The Venice Commission worked closely with members of Tunisia's National Constituent Assembly to assist in drafting that country's new constitution. Its experts also worked with the Constitutional Court of Morocco.

■ In 2012, the Commission finalised the implementation of the joint programmes with the European Union on support to the election process in Kazakhstan and on constitutional reform in Bolivia. It continued implementing the electoral part of the Eastern Partnership Facility programme and started a new joint programme for Central Asia, supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, entitled "Equal before law: access to justice for vulnerable groups".

■ The Commission also participated in the World Conference on Constitutional Justice (WCCJ), where 62 courts from around the world gathered.



Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations, and **Tawakkol Karman** (Yemen), 2011 Nobel Peace Prize, next to **Thorbjørn Jagland**, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, at the opening of the World Forum for Democracy

The first World Forum for Democracy took place in Strasbourg in October 2012



Directorate General

Democracy

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

WORLD FORUM FOR DEMOCRACY

■ Approximately 1 500 participants representing 120 countries took part in the first session of the Strasbourg World Forum for Democracy in October. The participants discussed the issue of how democracies can satisfy the expectations of citizens while fully respecting their different values and traditions. A panel on freedom of expression and media responsibility was held with the participation of high-level experts and the *International Herald Tribune*.

■ Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and Tawakkol Karman, 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, took part in the opening ceremony of the forum.

■ The Strasbourg World Forum for Democracy is organised in partnership with the City of Strasbourg, the European Parliament, the French Government, the Regional Council of Alsace and the Council of the Bas-Rhin.

THE INGO CONFERENCE

■ The more than 400 International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs), enjoying participatory status with the Council of Europe, make up the INGO Conference, which holds its two annual meetings during the Parliamentary Assembly sessions (January, June). In 2012, the conference's work priorities were the fight against extreme poverty and the expert work on NGO legislation and practice in the member states.

■ In the framework of the World Forum for Democracy, the conference organised a civil society debate on the principle of inclusive democracy under three different angles: human rights, participation of women and media.

LOCAL GOVERNANCE

■ The Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform implemented 29 individual programmes in 18 countries, covering a large part of the continent, from Armenia to Switzerland and from Turkey to France. These programmes, aimed at helping local authorities to improve their regulations or services, dealt with subjects such as leadership development, public ethics, inter-municipal co-operation, municipal planning, performance management, local finances, etc. The centre also helped central governments to revise several laws of importance for local democracy in Armenia, Serbia and Ukraine and to develop new decentralisation strategies in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova.

■ The most intensive programmes concerned Ukraine, Serbia and Albania, and brought about important reforms. For example, local authorities participating in the programmes in Ukraine adopted codes of conduct for both local elected representatives and staff, established and made use of performance indicators in three public services and revised their financial practice in the light of the results of the financial benchmarking module. In Serbia, participating local authorities revised their human resources management.

ELECTIONS

■ Pre-electoral assistance was provided in Ukraine and Georgia, with a special focus on voters lists, the use of public funds during the electoral campaign, first-time voters and women's awareness of elections. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the training of elections observers continued.

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL COHESION

■ The 2nd Conference of Ministers responsible for Social Cohesion (Istanbul, Turkey, 11-12 October) took stock of the implementation of the 2010 Council of Europe Social Cohesion Strategy and Action Plan. Ministers exchanged views and experiences on protecting and empowering groups of vulnerable persons, particularly in times of crisis, and on achieving social sustainability through intergenerational solidarity. In their final declaration, the ministers committed themselves to developing innovative solutions to social challenges, such as demographic changes, the increasing precariousness of young people and stigmatisation of migrants, the rising level of racism, the polarisation of wealth distribution and possible mistrust of the functioning of democratic institutions. The European Committee for Social Cohesion was entrusted by the Committee of Ministers with the follow-up to the conference.

SOCIETY: LIVING TOGETHER IN THE 21ST CENTURY

DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

■ A conference on the implementation of the Charter on Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education was organised in Strasbourg in November. As part of the conference follow-up, a pilot project on the charter, open to the 50 states party to the European Cultural Convention (ETS No. 18), was subsequently launched in co-operation with the European Union. Moreover, in Turkey, thanks to a Joint Programme of the Council of Europe and European Union, a new course on democracy and human rights will start in all Turkish secondary schools as of September 2013. The Pestalozzi Programme helped to train over 1 000 teachers, teacher trainers and education professionals from approximately 40 countries with a view to strengthening their competences in the field of democracy, human rights and mutual understanding.



INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

■ The Intercultural Cities Network, with 23 members, aims at better management of diversity in urban areas. In 2012, the network adopted new strategies in this field. Five cities have used an experimental model for involving citizens in the strategy-development process. The Intercultural Cities INDEX, a benchmark for measuring urban intercultural policy, includes over 50 cities.

■ In the context of the SPARDA (Shaping Perceptions and Attitudes to Realise the Diversity Advantage) programme seven cities from Cyprus, Greece, France, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain implemented innovative dialogue and communication strategies/campaigns on the advantage of diversity. A positive shift in public perceptions about migration and diversity was seen through opinion surveys conducted before and after the campaigns by the IPSOS Research Institute. The lessons from the pilot campaigns have been included in *Intercultural Cities – Step-by-step guide*.

■ The most important achievement of the MARS programme (on media and diversity) is the production of over 100 media reports which take diversity as a key angle of coverage by mixed teams of journalists (cross-national or cross-media). The media and diversity network has increased to 4 500 journalists, which demonstrates the sustained support from all the main media organisations in Europe for the development of a new approach in this field.

FIGHT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

■ The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) published 10 new reports in 2012 on the following member states: Andorra, Croatia, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Sweden and Ukraine. Another nine countries were visited (Finland, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Malta, the Republic of Moldova, the Netherlands, Portugal, the Russian Federation and San Marino). ECRI issued public statements expressing concern about events in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Greece, and published guidelines on combating racism and discrimination in employment.

■ The Council of Europe project on the improvement of the quality of life of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons supported the six participating member states (Albania, Italy, Latvia, Montenegro, Poland and Serbia) in their efforts to develop anti-discriminatory policies on the basis of the Committee of Ministers recommendation in this field. Activities included conferences to develop needs assessments between the various relevant stakeholders, the results of which are used to develop an action plan/national strategy. The Council of Europe will support over 50 activities on specific priority topics in each country.

Intercultural Cities

Network : young people from London Lewisham



Youth **Peace Ambassadors**

MIGRATION

■ The Council of Europe joined the Frontex Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights of the European Union in September. A new policy guide, *Building migrants' belonging through positive interaction*, published in four languages, offers guidance on the implementation of the Council of Europe Recommendation on interaction between migrants and receiving societies.

LANGUAGES

■ The European Centre for Modern Languages (Graz, Austria) launched a new series of activities on formal and non-formal language learning. The Learning through Languages programme, supported by 32 member states and directly involving approximately 3 000 language professionals, deals with topics such as mobility, languages for employment, migrant education and, for the first time, sign languages. The centre also introduced a new programme of training and consultancy to member states on key issues such as relating examinations to the levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and developing online teaching skills.

YOUTH

■ On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Council of Europe's youth activities, the Conference of European Ministers responsible for youth (St Petersburg, Russia) addressed the issue of young people's access to rights. Despite an agreement among member states on most of the content of the conference's final declaration, it proved impossible to arrive at a consensus on a text which would include an explicit reference to "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" in the list of discriminatory practices against young people.

■ A network of over 50 "Youth Peace Ambassadors" from across the 47 Council of Europe member states was set up in order to promote conflict prevention among young people, in particular in conflict-affected communities. The activities carried out in this context included a training seminar for the Youth Peace Ambassadors, a conference of the network and two peace camps organised in Albania and in the European Youth Centre Strasbourg.

■ The Roma Youth Action Plan in co-operation with numerous partners from civil society and other international institutions was launched with the objective of developing the participation of Roma youth in society and politics. One key activity is fighting anti-Gypsyism and engaging with youth organisations in this process.

■ Work on human rights education was pursued, in particular with a large-scale training programme on human rights education involving over 220 youth trainers and activists.

■ The international review of Ukrainian youth policy was finalised and resulted in a set of recommendations for the attention of the Ukrainian Government, on youth policy in general as well as on specific issues.

■ The European Youth Foundation awarded 306 project grants and supported 50 international youth organisations through administrative grants. It provided funds to 112 local or regional pilot projects with a European dimension dealing notably with youth participation, social inclusion, peace building, human rights education, Roma issues and online hate speech.

■ Armenia and the Republic of Moldova joined the Partial Agreement on Youth Mobility through the Youth Card.



Map of the Council of Europe
Cultural Routes

PARTIAL AGREEMENTS

■ A partial agreement allows certain Council of Europe member countries to work together in the pursuit of goals that might not necessarily be relevant or acceptable to all countries. Only those member countries involved in the agreements contribute to their financing and development.

CULTURAL ROUTES

■ Five new members joined the Partial Agreement on Cultural Routes (Germany, Andorra, Lithuania, Monaco and Serbia). Seven independent evaluations of existing Cultural Routes were carried out (the Iter Vitis Route, the Via Francigena, the Saint Martin of Tours Route, the Hansa, the Phoenicians' Route, the Routes of El Legado of Andalus and the Santiago De Compostela Pilgrim Routes). Three applications for new projects were examined (the European Megalithic Route, the Route of Huguenots and Waldesen and Odysseus, journeys of myth and imagination in the Mediterranean).

EURIMAGES

■ Grants of €21.2 million were awarded by the Council of Europe support fund Eurimages to European producers for 68 European co-productions. In 2012, the film *Amour (Love)* by Michael Haneke, supported by Eurimages, won the Golden Palm in Cannes and the Oscar for the best foreign film in Los Angeles.



SPORT

■ A joint project with Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) was carried out in order to support Poland and Ukraine in securing public order and the safety and security of spectators during the EURO 2012 football tournament. Malta acceded to the Anti-Doping Convention (ETS No. 135) in January 2012, bringing its number of signatories to a total of 51 (including all 47 member states of the Council of Europe).

■ During the Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Sport (Belgrade, March 2012), the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) prepared negotiations on a possible Council of Europe convention against manipulation of sports results and notably match-fixing. The Committee of Ministers adopted the Recommendation on the protection of child and young athletes from dangers associated with the migration of young athletes.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE DEVELOPMENT BANK (CEB)

■ In a challenging international economic and financial environment, the Bank approved 28 projects and two donations for a total amount of €1.8 billion, including 79% in favour of strengthening social integration, 4% for environmental management and 17% in support of public infrastructure with social importance. Of these projects, 23 were in favour of central, eastern and South-Eastern Europe, with a total amount of almost €862 million. The majority of the projects were approved in the field of social integration (actions in favour of refugees, migrants or displaced persons, social housing, job creation or preservation, improving living conditions in urban and rural areas). Two projects were approved for the construction and modernisation of prison facilities in Serbia.

The film *Amour (Love)* by Michael Haneke, supported by Eurimages, won an award in Cannes

NORTH-SOUTH CENTRE

■ The North-South Centre prepared a strategy and an action plan 2013-2015 on global education, which were agreed at the 2nd European Congress on Global Education. The online global education courses, developed by the centre, attracted considerable interest (the first course on intercultural dialogue received 377 applications).

■ The establishment of the Africa–Europe Youth Platform was a step forward in strengthening the democratic governance of the 2012-2015 Action Plan for Africa–Europe youth co-operation.

■ The 2012 Lisbon Forum, devoted to the Arab region, provided a major platform for analysing the ongoing reforms and challenges and formulated recommendations on intensified co-operation with southern and eastern Mediterranean countries.

■ Women's rights were promoted through activities of the North-South Process for the Empowerment of Women, bringing the number of Euro-Med Women Network members to 600.

■ Boris Tadic, former President of the Republic of Serbia, and Souhayr Belhassen (Tunisia), President of the International Federation of Human Rights (FIDH) were the laureates of the "North-South Prize" 2011.

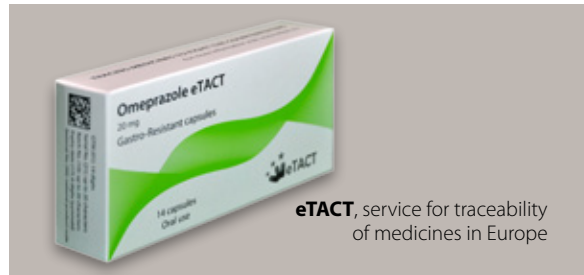
EUROPEAN DIRECTORATE FOR THE QUALITY OF MEDICINES AND HEALTHCARE (EDQM)

www.edqm.eu

■ Three supplements to the *European Pharmacopoeia* were published (more than 2 200 monographs and 340 general texts). Some 114 new reference standards and 183 replacement batches of existing standards, necessary to apply the tests described in the monographs, were established.



Souhayr Belhassen (Tunisia) and **Boris Tadić** (Serbia), winners of the North-South Prize during the award ceremony organised at the Republic Assembly in Lisbon



■ For more information on EDQM activities relating to biological standardisation, control of medicines and certification procedure, consult www.edqm.eu

■ Anti-counterfeiting efforts focused on a strategic approach to implementing the Council of Europe Convention on the Counterfeiting of Medical Products (Medicrime Convention, CETS No. 211). The convention was signed by eight new countries in 2012, bringing to 21 the number of parties. Ukraine was the first country to ratify the convention. The new signatories are Armenia, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, the Republic of Moldova, Turkey, Guinea-Conakry and Morocco.

■ In addition, the eTACT service for the traceability of medicines using mass serialisation contributed positively to the ongoing discussion on the future European traceability landscape for pharmaceuticals.

■ The European Committee on Organ Transplantation, in collaboration with the European Committee on Crime Problems and the Committee on Bioethics, was involved in the elaboration of a new legal instrument to fight organ, tissues and cells trafficking.

■ The EDQM successfully passed ISO 9001:2008 audits for a number of activities and the ISO/CEI 17025:2005 audit for the laboratory.

EUROPEAN AUDIOVISUAL OBSERVATORY

www.obs.coe.int

■ The European Audiovisual Observatory, which collects and distributes market and legal analysis of film, broadcasting, home video and on-demand audiovisual services, celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2012. Montenegro and Armenia joined the observatory, bringing the number of its members to 40.

■ The observatory published 25 different reports and newsletters on various subjects such as the protection of minors and on-demand audiovisual content, media concentration and the success of European films in major non-European markets. Most of these were made available in three languages. The observatory also published its *Yearbook – Film, television, and video in Europe*, the *FOCUS – World Film Market Trends* report (also translated into Arabic), as well as legal reports and the monthly newsletter belonging to the "IRIS" range of legal publications.



Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Deputy Secretary General, and **Rafik Abdesslem**, Tunisian Minister for Foreign Affairs, signed the first Memorandum of Understanding with a non-member state of the Council of Europe



Commissioner **Stefan Füle** (EU) and Council of Europe Secretary General, **Thorbjørn Jagland**, signed the South Programme in January 2012

Actions in the field and resource mobilisation

SOUTHERN NEIGHBOURHOOD

Following the adoption of the Council of Europe policy towards its immediate neighbourhood in May 2011, the Committee of Ministers endorsed neighbourhood co-operation priorities documents for Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan, translating this policy into concrete programmes agreed with the countries concerned in the Organisation's fields of excellence, according to a demand-driven approach.

The implementation of the European Union/Council of Europe programme "Strengthening democratic reform in the southern neighbourhood" (South Programme, €4.8 million; January 2012-December 2014), which started in 2012 following the signature of the programme at the beginning of the year by the Secretary General and Commissioner Füle, has already shown significant progress in evaluating the current situation in Morocco and Tunisia as regards key fields of reform such as justice and the fight against corruption. Furthermore, good progress is being made regarding regional co-operation to promote human rights and democratic values, also involving other countries of the region covered by this programme (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine).

In addition to the South Programme, the Council of Europe has started working on other key fields of action in the southern Mediterranean. The Venice Commission is supporting the constitutional process in Tunisia. Also, thanks to Norwegian funding, the Organisation has begun work in the region on fighting violence against women and children. The first conference organised on this subject in Rabat last September was an important success, as well as an opportunity to raise awareness about Council of Europe standards and to devise further action on preventing domestic violence in the region.

In carrying out these activities, the Council of Europe operates in very close co-operation with the EU delegations as well as with other relevant actors in the beneficiary countries. This collaboration is made easier by the fact that the Organisation has established an operational presence in Rabat and in Tunis.

SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

Over the last year, the Council of Europe's action in the South-Eastern Europe (SEE) region has focused on the fight against corruption and economic crime. In this field, a number of country-specific projects have been implemented, for example in Serbia and Albania, which were complemented by regional co-operation against cybercrime. The Council of Europe has also worked in the fields of the judiciary and human rights in prisons in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The protection of human rights, anti-discrimination and the protection of minorities have also been priorities for Council of Europe action in the region, notably through the implementation of a joint EU/Council of Europe regional programme, as well as country-specific projects, notably in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Council of Europe has continued working to promote regional co-operation in the fields of cultural heritage restoration and rehabilitation (Joint EU/Council of Europe Programme Ljubljana Process II). In Kosovo³, one project follows an integrated and inclusive approach for long-term sustainability of cultural and natural heritage. Local self-government standards and local democracy have been given increased emphasis, with Council of Europe projects implemented in Serbia and Albania.

Turkey has benefited from a number of joint programmes in the field of the rule of law: to enhance the role of the highest judicial authorities, to train military judges and prosecutors on human rights, to strengthen court management and to improve the efficiency of criminal justice systems. A project on ethics in the public sector has also been implemented. Democratic citizenship and human rights education have been an important area for the Organisation's action. The Council of Europe has also carried out a project in the field of freedom of expression and media freedom in Turkey.

There has been important co-operation between the Council of Europe and the EU in the SEE region notably through joint programmes implemented in a number of fields. Bilateral donors such as Switzerland, Norway and the United States have also contributed to the Council of Europe's action in the region.

³ All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nation's Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

EASTERN EUROPE, SOUTH CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA

A meeting of senior officials from the Council of Europe and the **Russian Federation** took place on 1 October 2012 in Strasbourg to assess ongoing co-operation and discuss future co-operation priorities for 2013 and 2014.

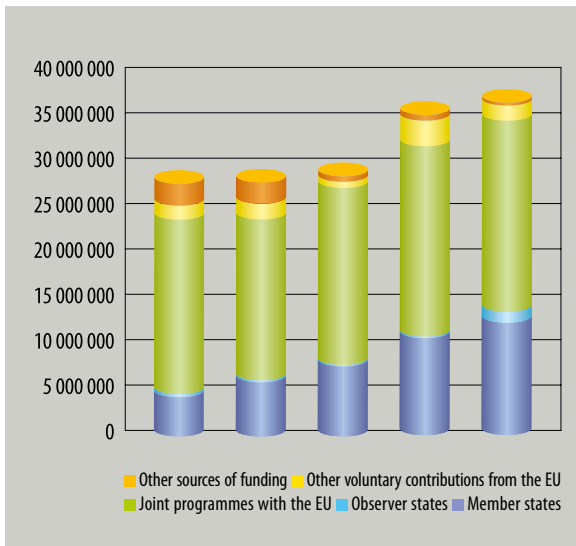
The Council of Europe Action Plan for **Ukraine** 2011-2014 continued its successful implementation during 2012. Results and achievements were assessed at a joint conference organised by the Council of Europe and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on 10 September 2012 in Kiev. The Council of Europe mobilised €8 million in additional resources for action plan projects and activities during 2012.

A Council of Europe Action Plan for **Armenia** 2012-2014, adopted by the Committee of Ministers in March, was officially launched in Yerevan in July 2012. With an overall budget of over €16 million, the action plan addresses the following priority areas: further reforms of the judiciary, reform of the penitentiary, integration of the case law of the European Court of Human Rights into domestic law, media freedom and education of journalists, combating corruption, reform in the education sector, further reform and strengthening of local self-government as well as support for free and fair elections.

Thanks to the financial support of the European Union, the Council of Europe is implementing a 2011-2013 **Eastern Partnership Facility** to provide support to reform processes in the six partner countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine) bringing them closer to Council of Europe and European Union standards. Co-operation areas include electoral standards, judicial reform, fighting cybercrime and corruption.

RESOURCE MOBILISATION AND DONOR RELATIONS

EXTRA BUDGETARY RECEIPTS 2012



2012 COMPARED TO 2011

Overall receipts increased by 3.75% to approximately €37.7 million (€36.4 million in 2011, €29.6 million in 2010).

Voluntary contributions from member states increased by 15.6% to €12.7 million.

Of the 47 member states, 33 contributed in 2012 (39 in 2011). The top 10 donors represent 86.8% of the total receipts from member states (79% in 2011).

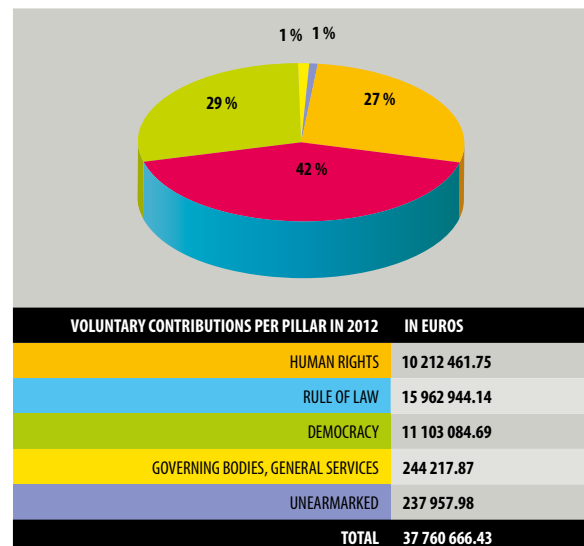
Norway, Sweden and Switzerland rank top among member states with contributions of €2.6 million, €2.5 million and €1.1 million respectively. The Human Rights Trust Fund⁴ contributed €1.7 million.

Receipts for EU/Council of Europe joint programmes are stable at €21.7 million (€21.6 million in 2011) and accounted for 57.5% of total extra-budgetary receipts.

The EU also made a number of voluntary contributions (that is, outside of joint programmes) amounting to €1.7 million (99% to the EDQM).

Contributions from non-member states that have observer status increased significantly to €1.27 million (€1.1 million from the USA representing 89%).

“Other” sources of funding (that is, not from the EU, member or observer states) contributed €300 000.



⁴ Germany, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom.



Meeting of the **Committee
of Legal Advisers on Public
International Law (CAHDI)**

Public international law

During its two meetings in 2012, the Committee of Legal Advisers on Public International Law (CAHDI) continued its work on the issue of “National implementation measures of UN sanctions and respect for human rights”. This exchange focused in particular on national case law and judgments of the European Court of Human Rights related to this matter.

■ Furthermore, the committee continued to follow the cases before the European Court of Human Rights involving issues of public international law and to examine their implications for states. The most recent cases were made public, thus highlighting the multiple interactions between public international law and the case law of the Court.

■ As regards international treaties concluded within and outside the Council of Europe, the CAHDI continued to examine outstanding reservations, co-ordinated the reactions of member states thereto and listed the objections to the aforesaid reservations. This examination includes the issue of the compatibility of certain reservations with the principle of equal enjoyment of human rights and freedoms as set out in the European Convention on Human Rights.

■ The CAHDI further pursued its exchange of views on state practice and case law regarding immunities enjoyed by states and international organisations. Discussions included the issue of the potential impact of human rights, in particular the right to a court as enshrined in Article 6 of the Convention, on the immunity from jurisdiction enjoyed by states and international organisations.

■ The committee continued to follow the latest developments concerning the International Criminal Court (ICC) and other international criminal courts (International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Lebanon and Cambodia).

■ Finally, the Directorate of Legal Advice and Public International Law provided secretariat services to the Advisory Panel of Experts on Candidates for Election as Judge to the European Court of Human Rights which examines the curricula vitae of the candidates before the governments submit their final lists of candidates to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe with a view to their election.

Round table organised by the Directorate of Communications during the **World Forum for Democracy**



Communications

Working closely with media professionals and European multipliers and networks, the Directorate of Communications (DC) generated greater visibility for the values and standards of the Organisation in 2012.

MEDIA RELATIONS

Political communications focused on key topics (media freedom, protection of minorities, judicial reform, freedom of assembly and the fight against corruption) in major international media such as the *Financial Times*, the *International Herald Tribune*, *The Guardian*, *FAZ*, *Le Monde*, *Politiken*, *El Pais* and *Vedomosti*. The reports of monitoring bodies, such as the CPT and Moneyval Committee, the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights and the Parliamentary Assembly sessions generated significant coverage along with statements from the Secretary General and other personalities. Some 20 articles were contributed to the Organisation's "Gutenberg" column in the Brussels-based *New Europe* newspaper alone.

■ The DC also used the UK Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers and discussions surrounding reform of the Court to enhance the volume and quality of coverage of the Organisation in UK media. The directorate supplied Europe's largest television news agencies with almost 100 news feeds on a wide range of stories, from major Court stories such as the Yulia Tymoshenko case, to bulletin-leading news material, including the visit of UK Prime Minister, David Cameron.

■ The DC was responsible for media relations in support of the Strasbourg World Forum for Democracy in October, and organised a central debate on freedom of expression and media responsibility, with the participation of high-profile panellists and the *International Herald Tribune*.

■ The directorate was also active in training colleagues from across the Organisation, including several VIPs, in how to handle and interact with media and social media in their daily work.

■ The DC modernised its radio production studios, updating one to include capacity for social media work. Outreach via social media made significant advances in 2012, with followers on Twitter increasing by more than 100% to over 21 000 during the year. The Council of Europe's Facebook community increased by approximately 64%. The Human Rights Blog, with 58 000 visits, saw a general increase of more than 63% and an increase of 68% in the number of first-time visitors.

■ The migration of Secretariat websites to the new CMS (Content Management System) Liferay has started. A new online graphic charter was prepared, including the modernisation of all Council of Europe websites banners with a new look and feel.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

■ The Organisation's identity and values were promoted among various target groups by means of public relations actions and events, notably the celebrations for the 40th anniversary of the youth activities and an Open Day organised at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg in September.

■ The Council of Europe was represented at the Istanbul Film Festival for the 6th award of the FACE Prize, at the Sarajevo Film Festival, and at the Forum on Internet Governance in Baku, which attracted over 1 800 participants from all over the world. A meeting of the "Strasbourg Dialogues" was organised in partnership with the City of Strasbourg on the theme of the Arab Spring, and in particular on the place of women in the democratic process, with the participation of Souhayr Belhassen (Tunisia), President of the International Federation for Human Rights. Another encounter organised in partnership with the European Parliament was attended by students and academics on the subject of EU accession to the European Convention on Human Rights.

■ For all these events the DC designed and produced graphics and information material (leaflets, booklets, posters, exhibition panels, etc.). All these documents are available on the Organisation's website and are being promoted via our contact database (over 11 000 addressees) and partner websites. The Committee of Ministers Chairs of the United Kingdom, Albania and Andorra provided opportunities to communicate on the Organisation to these countries.

■ Publishing activities reflected the Organisation's priorities for 2012, with six commercial publications, including two joint ones: *Bringing a case to the European Court of Human Rights – A practical guide on admissibility criteria* in English and French, and *Freedom of expression*. A reference title on the bodies responsible for monitoring human rights, *Standard-setting through monitoring*, was published in English, together with the English versions of the monographs on the *Council of Europe and Roma: 40 years of action* and the *European Social Charter*.

■ The many translations into non-official languages included fact sheets on human rights published and circulated in Polish, Lithuanian, Catalan and Spanish.

■ A project was launched to optimise the functions of the online bookshop site (258 000 visits in 2012) and to extend the supply of downloadable PDF-format electronic versions for users (commercial publications and information documents).

■ More than 37 000 visitors took part in the study programmes and general information visits at the Council of Europe. The Council of Europe stand attracted a huge number of visitors at the Europe Days events held in Paris, Strasbourg and Venice and during the Strasbourg Road Races in May.

■ The partnership with the ELSA network (the European Law Students' Association, covering 300 universities in 42 countries, with a membership of over 30 000 students) was further reinforced with the launch of the project "ELSA for children" based on the Council of Europe's ONE in FIVE campaign. The selections and preparations continued for the first European Human Rights Moot Court Competition in English which took place in February 2013 in the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

■ A project was launched to identify a new visual identity in order to reinforce the Council of Europe's institutional identity. A company has been selected further to a European call for tenders.



Free expression wall
at the European Youth Centre
in Strasbourg during the Open
Doors organised on the occasion
of the 40th Anniversary of Council
of Europe youth activities

2012 Budget of the Council of Europe (€)

MEMBER STATES CONTRIBUTIONS

ALBANIA	470 106.80
ANDORRA	246 707.73
ARMENIA	350 251.57
AUSTRIA	5 283 175.75
AZERBAIJAN	949 924.39
BELGIUM	6 674 839.64
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	540 783.80
BULGARIA	1 091 030.95
CROATIA	1 080 557.99
CYPRUS	495 923.93
CZECH REPUBLIC	3 021 833.19
DENMARK	4 260 568.03
ESTONIA	476 157.62
FINLAND	3 464 864.01
FRANCE	38 343 523.45
GEORGIA	493 556.23
GERMANY	35 077 047.53
GREECE	4 796 956.05
HUNGARY	2 370 708.78
ICELAND	485 720.21
IRELAND	3 397 347.30
ITALY	35 188 649.17
LATVIA	587 207.87
LIECHTENSTEIN	307 668.03

LITHUANIA	773 824.55
LUXEMBOURG	801 528.93
MALTA	365 405.45
MOLDOVA	332 789.02
MONACO	283 738.86
MONTENEGRO	365 889.78
NETHERLANDS	11 021 510.73
NORWAY	5 336 519.00
POLAND	7 987 946.29
PORTUGAL	3 589 895.44
ROMANIA	3 487 329.60
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	31 909 729.00
SAN MARINO	140 069.61
SERBIA	1 067 505.54
SLOVAK REPUBLIC	1 387 193.97
SLOVENIA	822 231.43
SPAIN	21 659 563.05
SWEDEN	6 117 314.62
SWITZERLAND	6 293 793.19
« THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA »	478 189.56
TURKEY	12 555 822.61
UKRAINE	4 129 414.12
UNITED KINGDOM	31 716 539.56

TOTAL

302 078 853.93

2012 Voluntary Contributions to the Council of Europe (€)

MEMBER STATES

1	NORWAY	2 563 697.23
2	SWEDEN	2 454 681.95
3	HUMAN RIGHTS TRUST FUND ⁴	1 693 365.00
4	SWITZERLAND	1 129 770.77
5	FINLAND	726 527.18
6	FRANCE	718 350.00
7	NETHERLANDS	685 064.50
8	DENMARK	537 318.38
9	GERMANY	285 660.00
10	LUXEMBOURG	275 168.02
11	UNITED KINGDOM	223 498.38
12	BELGIUM	179 000.00
13	ITALY	168 078.77
14	EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA ⁵ (EEA)	135 150.00
15	ROMANIA	120 000.00
16	PORTUGAL	142 582.00
17	LIECHTENSTEIN	116 461.04
18	RUSSIAN FEDERATION	111 670.20
19	MONACO	109 065.06
20	IRELAND	80 000.00
21	POLAND	70 065.44
22	AUSTRIA	57 834.83
23	TURKEY	50 000.00
24	ANDORRA	24 200.00
25	ESTONIA	17 000.00
26	CZECH REPUBLIC	16 000.00
27	AZERBAIJAN	15 775.96
28	ARMENIA	6 836.32
29	HUNGARY	6 328.22
30	CYPRUS	5 221.00
31	BULGARIA	3 000.00
32	SERBIA	3 000.00
33	SLOVAK REPUBLIC	2 000.00
34	ICELAND	1 891.07
35	CROATIA	1 000.00

TOTAL MEMBER STATES 12 735 261.32

OBSERVER STATES

1	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	1 127 690.72
2	HOLY SEE	80 393.00
3	JAPAN	45 206.00
4	ISRAEL	17 500.00

TOTAL OBSERVER STATES 1 270 789.72

EUROPEAN UNION

JOINT PROGRAMMES	21 705 963.21
VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS	1 731 275.00

TOTAL EUROPEAN UNION 23 437 238.21

OTHERS

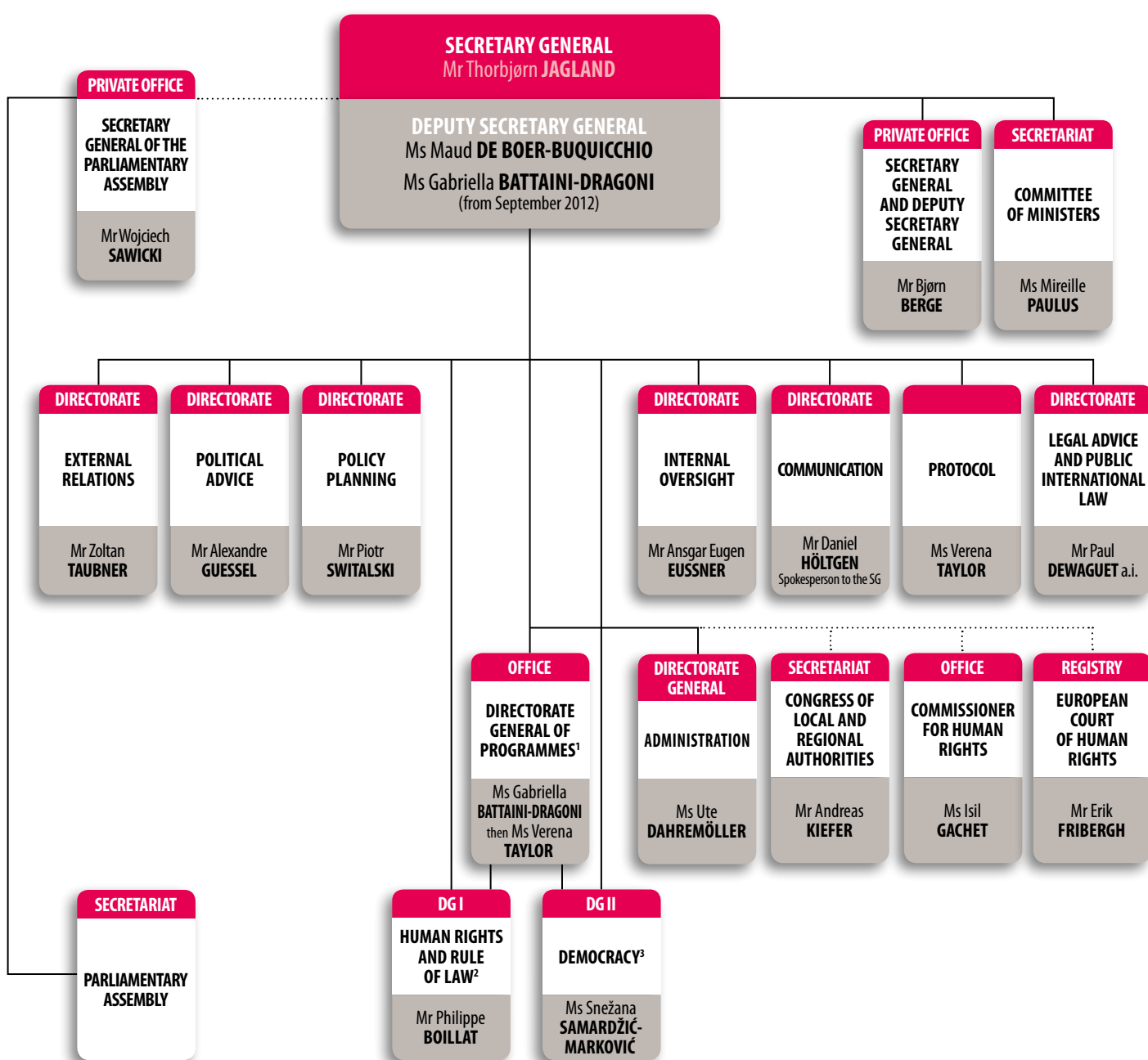
1	ORGANISATION INTERNATIONALE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE	70 500.00
2	OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS	65 921.68
3	JUGEND FÜR EUROPA	40 000.00
4	UNION OF EUROPEAN FOOTBALL ASSOCIATIONS	32 000.00
5	JAPAN FOUNDATION	31 000.00
6	VISA EUROPE	20 000.00
7	INTERNATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY (IJAB)	19 000.00
8	UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA	11 582.40
9	CASSA DI RISPARMIO DI FIRENZE	10 000.00

TOTAL OTHERS 300 004.08

GRAND TOTAL 2012 37 743 293.33

4 Germany, Finland, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, United Kingdom
5 Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway

Organisation chart of the Secretariat General of the Council of Europe



1. Office of the DG PROG co-ordinates intergovernmental activities
2 and 3. DGI, DG II report to the Secretary General

This publication
presents the work
carried out in 2012
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 includes 47 member states, 28 of which are 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.