

Peer Review of the Evaluation Function of the Council of Europe

Final report
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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are those of the Peer Review Panel on the basis of their individual capacities.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CM	Committee of Ministers
DGI	Directorate General Human Rights and Rule of Law
DGII	Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity
DIO	Directorate of Internal Oversight
DIO-ED	Evaluation Division of the Directorate of Internal Oversight
EVAL	ILO's Evaluation Office
GR-PBA	Rapporteur Group Programme, Budget and Administration
HQ	Headquarters
ILO	International Labour Organization
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
MAE	Major Administrative Entity
OAC	Oversight Advisory Committee
ODGP	Office of the Directorate General of Programmes ¹
PACE	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe of Europe
PMM	Programme Management Methodology
PO	Private Office of the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General
PR	Peer Review
RBM	Results-based management
SG	Secretary General
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

¹ The ODGP – Office of the Directorate General of Programmes is renamed as the Directorate of Programme Co-ordination, with effect from 1 November 2022.

SUMMARY

Introduction

The Council of Europe Evaluation Policy calls on the Directorate of Internal Oversight (DIO) to periodically commission an external peer review (PR) of the Evaluation Policy and evaluation function. The current exercise does not pretend to the rigour of a full-fledged evaluation. It constitutes a collective ‘opinion’ from seasoned and impartial evaluation profession colleagues, using methods and resources available in a ‘peer review’ format.

Key findings

Dimensions	Sub-dimensions	Key findings
State of implementation of the Evaluation Policy	Evaluation architecture	<i>The evaluation architecture of the Council of Europe has been strengthened since the last peer review.</i>
	Evaluation culture and enabling environment	<i>While the evaluation culture has improved, it is still not fully mature.</i>
	Nature of the Council of Europe	<i>The Council is a complex organisation with politically sensitive mandates.</i>
	Resources for evaluation	<i>Resources allocated to evaluation are modest compared to common practices of international organisations.</i>
Current set-up and functioning of the Evaluation Division	Evaluation Division of the Directorate of Internal Oversight (DIO-ED) evaluation reports	<i>Stakeholders acknowledge the quality and usefulness of the DIO-ED evaluation reports. Some concerns were expressed over lengthy reports; usefulness of recommendations; and external evaluators’ limited understanding of the nature of Council of Europe work.</i>
	Learning	<i>The existing body of evaluations is underused for learning.</i>
	Evaluation coverage and selection of subjects	<i>A more selective approach to DIO-ED’s evaluation agenda-setting and scoping could yield evaluations that are more timely and responsive.</i>
	Positioning of the Evaluation Division within the DIO	<i>Insufficient visibility and authority of the DIO Evaluation Division.</i>
Set-up and functioning of the decentralised evaluation function	Evaluation Policy and Guidelines, Quality Assurance Framework	<i>Considerable efforts have gone into strengthening decentralised evaluations.</i>
	Coverage, resources and capacities	<i>Decentralised evaluations are still underdeveloped: with limited coverage, resources, and capacities.</i>
	Quality of decentralised evaluation reports	<i>Varying quality of decentralised evaluation reports, misconception of independence.</i>
	Role of DIO Evaluation Division in decentralised evaluations	<i>Enhanced role of the DIO Evaluation Division in decentralised evaluations but limited to advisory role with no authority.</i>

Conclusions

The PR team concludes that the evaluation function in the Council of Europe has been noticeably strengthened over the past years, building on the dedication of a highly professional evaluation team. The organisation has conducted several big strategic evaluations which have contributed to learning and strategic decision making. A strong normative framework has been put in place with the new DIO Charter, the new Evaluation Policy and Evaluation Guidelines. DIO enjoys, under the authority of the Secretary General (SG), a satisfactory level of independence.

Selection and scoping of evaluation subjects: The careful selection of evaluation subjects for DIO-ED managed evaluations is essential for the utility of evaluation. The PR team concludes that a 'mechanical' emphasis on the cyclical coverage of programmes and sub-programmes risks undermining timeliness and strategic salience. Rather the PR encourages a more flexible approach driven by stakeholder demand, relevance and urgency.

Evaluation universe: As envisaged in the Evaluation Policy, all areas of the Council of Europe, including standard setting, monitoring mechanism, technical co-operation, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe of Europe (PACE) and the European Court of Human Rights (the Court) should be part of the evaluation universe, either through DIO-ED managed evaluations or decentralised evaluations. Naturally, there are certain aspects that cannot be questioned by evaluations like PACE resolutions or the Court rulings.

Resources for evaluation: The total resources available for evaluation (DIO-ED and Major Administrative Entities (MAEs)) are significantly below international common practice. Limited resources result in evaluations that are unable to bring on board the needed expertise and risk being of poor quality. This in turn affects the credibility of the evaluation and the ultimate use of the evaluation results and recommendations. To enlarge the coverage and enhance the quality of evaluations, more resources are required.

Location and visibility of the Evaluation Division: The PR team considers it unusual that the Evaluation Policy does not give any distinct identity to the DIO-ED within the overall DIO. The process and objectives of other DIO oversight disciplines, audit and investigation (i.e. controls, conduct and compliance) are very different to evaluation (results attainment and organisational learning). In addition, the PR team found that the delegation of authority from the DIO Director to the Head of the Evaluation Division is ad-hoc and at the discretion of the DIO Director. A clear delegation of authority is not formally established. The rather limited delegation of authority to the Evaluation Division is unusual compared with the practices of other international organisations.

Decentralised evaluations: The biggest potential to enhance the value of the evaluation function in the Council of Europe is with decentralised evaluations. These are still underdeveloped, both in terms of quality and coverage. The current voluntary approach to conduct decentralised evaluations, leaving the decision largely to the MAE, could be strengthened by establishing a simple criterion for mandatory evaluations.

Role of DIO-ED in decentralised evaluations: The role of DIO-ED regarding the quality assurance of decentralised evaluations must be further clarified. Beyond providing advice, DIO-ED should have formal authority in terms of reviewing selected decentralised evaluation reports.

Learning: There is an opportunity to better leverage the combined body of evaluations from DIO-ED managed and decentralised evaluations. DIO-ED should produce more learning products like meta studies and synthesise reviews. This would enhance learning from evaluations.

Recommendations

The Peer Review team makes six recommendations for areas in which there are opportunities to strengthen the evaluation function:

1. **Optimise the selection of evaluation subjects and improve the scoping of evaluation subjects**
2. **Assure coverage of the evaluation universe**
3. **Enhance resources for evaluation**
4. **Strengthen the usefulness of evaluation reports**
5. **Strengthen the visibility and authority of the Evaluation Division**
6. **Invest more in decentralised evaluations**

Under each of these headings the PR team has identified several more specific actions for Council of Europe's consideration.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Council of Europe Evaluation Policy calls on the Directorate of Internal Oversight to periodically commission an external peer review of the Evaluation Policy and evaluation function.² Such independent feedback aims to help the Council of Europe evaluation function keep abreast with international standards to enable the function to optimise its role in organisational decision making, programme effectiveness and learning and accountability for results. The evaluation function of the Council of Europe includes both evaluations managed by the DIO Evaluation Division as well as decentralised evaluations managed by the MAEs.

2. The focus of the PR is the implementation of the 2019 Council of Europe Evaluation Policy, seeking to identify options and actionable opportunities to calibrate the framework of evaluation at the Council of Europe. The direct objectives of the peer review stated in the Terms of Reference (ToR) are to assess:

- a) the state of implementation of the evaluation policy
- b) the current set-up and functioning of the Evaluation Division in DIO
- c) the set-up and functioning of the decentralised evaluation function.

3. The main assessment criteria are the ones generally used in peer reviews of evaluation functions to make a judgement on their level of maturity: (1) enabling environment, (2) independence, (3) credibility, and (4) utility.

4. As a peer review the current exercise does not pretend to the rigour of a full-fledged evaluation. It constitutes a collective ‘opinion’ from seasoned and impartial evaluation profession colleagues,³ using methods and resources available in a ‘peer review’ format. The review is based on pro bono inputs from peer panel members, supported by an independent evaluation consultant contracted by the Council of Europe.

5. The PR team has considered the comprehensive range of objectives and criteria raised by the ToR for the PR. Also, the PR team consulted the Self-Assessment Maturity Matrix for Evaluation Functions which DIO conducted in early 2022.⁴ Rather than to re-assess or validate individual items addressed by the self-assessment, the panel has chosen to zoom in on areas which are less mature, and which can be further improved to take the DIO-ED to the next level of evaluation maturity. To focus the review, an inception paper was prepared in consultation with DIO-ED ([Annex 1](#)). DIO-ED gave the PR team access to a comprehensive dossier of materials. In turn, the team undertook a more detailed and systematic document review and prepared a PR-internal ‘working paper’ in advance of the team’s visit to the Council of Europe

² Council of Europe Evaluation Policy, 2019, p.18.

³ Whilst recognising that the Council of Europe represents a truly unique stakeholder arena, the PR team members bring decades of experience from oversight and evaluation functional leadership in other multilateral organisations. Team members have engaged in evaluations of governance, policy and organisational reform processes in normative as well as more operational entities.

⁴ Self-Assessment Maturity Matrix for UN Evaluation Functions, Working Draft, DIO, Council of Europe, Updated February 28th, 2022. The Self-Assessment is available from DIO upon request.

(13-17 June 2022), during which interviews and focus group discussions were held with almost 50 key interlocutors from DIO, MAEs, senior management as well as member state representatives and Oversight Advisory Committee (OAC) members.

6. This peer review report does not seek to capture the detailed canvas of factual and testimonial material pertaining to all questions and criteria raised by ToR or that arose during its meetings in June. Instead, the report brings focus to those more select issues for which the team finds that the available body of evidence renders collective comfort in providing options and opportunities to consider in further enhancing the evaluation function at the Council of Europe.

7. While the PR team reviewed several DIO managed evaluations, it did not conduct a systematic quality assessment of individual DIO evaluation reports since DIO has – in 2020 - established an external quality assurance procedure for its own reports. The PR team reviewed the quality assurance criteria and some examples and found the procedure provides reasonable assurance of quality.

8. The peer review was undertaken during post-Covid pandemic and during the Ukraine crisis; a period raising profound questions about the Council of Europe's role and operations. A High-Level Reflection Group was tasked with issuing recommendations relating to the Council of Europe's role in responding to the new realities and challenges facing Europe and the world. The current environment brings challenges – but also opportunities – to organisational reform. The PR team believes that with relatively small calibrations the evaluation function can strengthen its capacities to better support future organisational change through learning, accountability and evidence-based decision making.

II. FINDINGS

2.1. State of implementation of the Evaluation Policy

2.1.1 Evaluation architecture

The evaluation architecture of the Council of Europe has been strengthened since the last peer review.

9. The PR team found that the evaluation function of the Council of Europe has been strengthened since the last peer review (2017). In 2019, the Committee of Ministers (CM) approved the new Evaluation Policy. The Evaluation Policy brings an overarching set of principles and aspirations that represent an appropriate normative framework. Many elements of a mature evaluation function are thus in place.⁵ The PR team notes the following improvements:

- updated Evaluation Guidelines (2020),

⁵ Global norms such as those from the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).

- a Quality Assurance Framework for decentralised evaluations (2021, [Annex 2](#)) and external quality assurance procedure for DIO-managed reports (2020),
- a process for publication of evaluation reports, alongside a management response and action plan,
- establishment in July 2021 of a pool of evaluation consultants through an organisation-wide Framework Contract valid until 30 June 2026,
- a revamped DIO website with a dedicated section on decentralised evaluations,
- follow-up of recommendations through a new IT tool (TeamMate), and
- promotion of evaluation results through videos, events and other means.

10. The evaluation function also benefits from an active, professional OAC providing advice to the Secretary General, the Committee of ministers and the evaluation function. The new DIO Charter encompassing audit, evaluation and investigation has been approved by the Committee of Ministers in 2022. The new Charter confirms the independence of the three DIO functions and strengthens it through measures such as the appointment of a Director for a non-renewable six year period.

11. In terms of *independence*, the DIO enjoys, under the authority of the Secretary General, a satisfactory level of independence, as established in the Evaluation Policy⁶ and the DIO Charter. To mitigate against risk of administrative influence, the Director of DIO has the authority to declare evaluation reports final and can transmit reports directly to the Chair of the CM. Also, whilst the Evaluation Policy states that the evaluation work programme must be formally endorsed by the Secretary General,⁷ “endorse” does not – the PR team was assured – mean “approve” or “vet” and it does not undermine the ability of the DIO Evaluation Division to establish its work plan, free of any actual or perceived interference.

2.1.2 Evaluation culture and enabling environment

While the evaluation culture has improved, it is still not fully mature.

12. The external operational environment is one of growing risk and uncertainty. At a time of some turmoil within and around the Council of Europe, evaluation can make strategic contributions by providing evidence-based analysis to support prioritisation and informed decision making. It can show what is working well or less well and point towards the factors behind success or shortcomings.

13. The PR team notes evidence of interest both at the project and programme management level and at the level of member states in learning and accountability through evaluations. The importance of an evaluation function is, in principle, not questioned.

14. However, the PR team found that the evaluation culture is not fully mature, being described by most interlocutors as still emerging or nascent. Evaluations are seen by many

⁶ Council of Europe of Europe Evaluation Policy, 2019, para.16.

⁷ Council of Europe Evaluation Policy, 2019, p. 14-16.

principally as an accountability exercise required for donors, rather than for its salience to substantive organisational learning and ongoing decision-making needs. Interviewees in several stakeholder categories were unclear in their understanding of differences between evaluation vis-à-vis audit and investigation disciplines; frequently also displaying scepticism about any unique value-added provided by evaluation.

15. The PR team gathered that, amongst staff, there is a palpable perception that when being subject to evaluation there is a potential danger of losing funding (and by extension project continuation) in case of negative evaluation results. More broadly, when evaluations raise questions that challenge strategies and priorities, - not only conduct and compliance - they are frequently met with a degree of resistance.

16. Achieving full awareness of the new Evaluation Policy among staff and embedding evaluation into the DNA of the organisation will clearly take time. Meanwhile, a positive sign of an improved culture is represented by the resonance and uptake in follow-up to the recent evaluation on results-based management.⁸ In this regard, it is worthwhile to recall the recommendation urging the Secretary General to enable a shift from accountability and communication purposes of reporting towards a more adaptive management and learning culture.⁹ At the same time, the PR team found strong advocates for evaluation as a process and the evaluation function in DIO amongst some member states. The Council of Europe's senior management publicly pronounces its appreciation for the value of evaluation. However, the panel did not find evidence of specific measures taken to champion the role of the function. High-level support in favour of evaluation (a tone from the top that more clearly advocates for evaluation) would be of immense support to the strengthening of the function.

2.1.3 Nature of the Council of Europe

The Council is a complex organisation with politically sensitive mandates.

17. The Council of Europe comprises a diverse range of mandates, functions and programmatic activity; including many with a statutory provenance tied to distinct conventions, member state agreements and decision-making bodies. The Council of Europe has three thematic priorities: human rights, rule of law and democracy.

18. In each of the three thematic priorities, financial resources are allocated to “standard setting”, “monitoring” and “technical co-operation”. The nature of the Council of Europe's work is a challenge for the evaluation function. Staff are acutely aware of the procedural complexity and political sensitivities that uniquely apply to their respective topic and stakeholder consultation as well as governance arrangements. Evaluating the standard setting and supervisory (monitoring) mechanism is fraught with potential pitfalls. Evaluations

⁸ Stipulated in the Council of Europe Programme and Budget for 2022 – 2025, CM(2022)1, Council of Europe, 10 December 2021, para.17.

⁹ Evaluation of Results-based management in the Council of Europe, Council of Europe, January 2021 (recommendation 1).

customarily take care in not questioning the legality or content of resolutions/ conventions, thus acknowledging the intrinsic limitations that evaluations have in assessing what is in practice a political process (for standard setting) or a legal compliance assessment (for supervisory and monitoring process) with possible legal implications for contravening the standards (the Court). However, even resolutions and conventions can and need to be modified, adjusted and improved over time. Evaluations can make important contributions to such processes as indeed is the case demonstrated in [Annex 3](#) which lists decisions and other policy documents which explicitly mention or, are a result of DIO-ED evaluation reports.

19. While the evaluations managed by DIO-ED seek to look at all three functions - “standard setting”, “monitoring mechanism” and “technical co-operation”¹⁰ - the decentralised MAE evaluations are to a large extent focussing on technical co-operation, and mainly as a result of donor requests. MAE evaluations of non-technical co-operation (standard setting and supervisory machinery) are rare because they are neither mandatory nor demanded. However, technical co-operation can also be very sensitive if it promotes standards in countries where those standards are alien or not respected. Value-based standards are political instruments. Other organisations face similar challenges.¹¹

20. In any case, a focus on technical co-operation alone limits the scope of the evaluation function dramatically, as co-operation with *budgetary resources* of Euro 169 M (2022-23) only represents 43% of the *budgetary resources* of the three operational pillars.¹² In principle and for the sake of internal coherence no area of the Council of Europe’s work should be exempt from scrutiny of evaluations or performance audits with the necessary caution as elaborated above. This would be in line with the Council of Europe’s call for “*closer ties between our European standards, the monitoring of these standards and co-operation programmes.*”¹³

21. Certain Council of Europe specialists and managers who engage with evaluations, shared the sentiment that – given the Council’s complexity – evaluation consultants sometimes fail to understand the nuances of individual programmatic and management arrangements. While questioning evaluation consultants’ understanding of the specific nature of work of an organisation is a well-known line of defence if evaluation findings are not liked, it was also suggested that given the limited resources DIO has at its disposal to contract consultants, an in-depth understanding of the Council’s complexity is not a realistic expectation.

¹⁰ The Prison and Police evaluation is an example of an evaluation that was looking at the standard setting, i.e. standard setting for prisons; Evaluation of the Council of Europe’s work under the programme line “Prisons and Police” 2016-2019, January 2021, Council of Europe.

¹¹ E.g. *Adapting evaluation methods to the ILO’s normative and tripartite mandate.* https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_721381.pdf.

¹² Data provided by the Directorate of Programme and Budget.

¹³ Project management methodology, Handbook, 2016, p.5.

2.1.4 Resources for evaluation

Resources allocated to evaluation are modest compared to common practices of international organisations.

22. Financial independence is important for a mature evaluation function. The PR team looked at the resources of DIO-ED and for decentralised evaluations.

23. From the outset it is apparent that in DIO-ED there is an imbalance between evaluation professionals (5) on the one hand and insufficient resources for administrative support staff (0) and evaluation consultants on the other hand. Both limit DIO-ED's capacity to fully leverage its potential. In 2022 the DIO-ED total resources are Euro 844 700 of which Euro 663 700 are staff resources (79%) and Euro 181 000 are non-staff resources (21%) to use e.g. for contracting external consultants and specialists necessary for complex and large centralised evaluations. Relative to the *ordinary* budget of the organisation (Euro 258 936 800; 2022) only, ED resources amount to 0.32%. The PR team finds that DIO-ED's professional staff resources are adequate, although it would benefit with 1-2 administrative support staff. Notably, in addition, there have recently been several long-term absences (e.g. sabbatical) which reduced the presence of professionals.

24. The apparent number and budget for *decentralised* evaluation is modest but variable; in 2022 approximately Euro 230 000 for 13 evaluations ([Annex 4](#)), with an average of Euro 18 000 (median Euro 15 000); in 2021 approximately Euro 483 000 for 27 evaluations ([Annex 4](#)), again with an average of Euro 18 000 (and median of Euro 15 000).

25. However, the exact budget or expenditure figures for the full portfolio of decentralised evaluations is not known, because (a) the Evaluation Policy does not include a mandatory percentage to be allocated for decentralised evaluations of programmes or projects and (b) the annual evaluation plan for the entire organisation is incomplete as MAEs do not always provide this information to DIO-ED and (c) there is no requirement to 'tag' or identify MAE evaluation expenditures.

26. As an example, the budget for the evaluation of the Council of Europe Action Plan Armenia 2019-2022 was Euro 30 000 which is higher than the average for other decentralised evaluations but at 0.23% of the total budget of 13 million for the Action Plan it is nonetheless small.

27. The PR team considers that these levels are not sufficient to procure the services of appropriate expertise commensurate with a solid and credible evaluation product. As a comparison, in UNESCO, a monitoring and evaluation budget for a programme of that size

would be around 3%, as stipulated in its Evaluation Policy,¹⁴ i.e., Euro 390 000;¹⁵ while in the ILO the mandatory requirement is that 2% is set aside for evaluation only, with the recommendation that an additional 3% is set aside for monitoring.

28. The combined total budget for evaluation (DIO-ED managed and decentralised evaluations) is estimated at somewhere around 1.2m per year, equal to 0.25% of the total budget of the Council of Europe of Euro 477 M (2022). Again, this is a rather modest allocation of resources to the evaluation function. At the United Nations, a 2014 report by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) concluded that organisations should consider a range of evaluation funding that is between 0.5 per cent and 3.0 per cent of combined organisational expenditure.¹⁶

29. At the Council of Europe, the PR team considers it to be particularly important to improve the quality of decentralised evaluations that their budgets be defined from the outset as a percentage of the programme/project budget and ring-fenced (earmarked) for evaluation.

30. Also, the PR team finds that if evaluation is to deliver the expected results at the Council of Europe, the organisation needs to invest *more* in evaluation, again especially for decentralised evaluations. The PR team finds that the Evaluation Policy and the DIO Charter provisions on Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General responsibility to ensure ‘adequate’ resources is vague. A clear overall spending target (e.g. 0.5% or 1.0% for evaluation) within the evaluation policy would strengthen the evaluation function of the Council of Europe and send a clear message to the organisation of the importance of evaluation for accountability, learning and evidence based decision making.

2.2. Current set-up and functioning of the Evaluation Division

2.2.1 DIO-ED evaluation reports

Stakeholders acknowledge the quality and usefulness of the DIO-ED evaluation reports. Some concerns were expressed over lengthy reports; usefulness of recommendations; and external evaluators’ limited understanding of the nature of Council of Europe work.

31. The PR team met a highly motivated, well trained and experienced team of evaluation professionals at DIO-ED. The team’s dedication to making evaluations as useful as possible to the Council of Europe is evident.

32. The PR team found that DIO-ED has conducted several big strategic evaluations which are mostly considered to be of good quality and useful for stakeholders; such as the evaluation

¹⁴ UNESCO Evaluation Policy, UNESCO, 2022, para. 41: “UNESCO sets an overall target of 3% of programme expenditure from both regular programme resources and voluntary contributions as the recommended minimum level of investment in evaluation.”

¹⁵ This amount covers both monitoring and evaluation activities. Evaluation could include both mid-term and final evaluations.

¹⁶ Analysis of the Evaluation Function in the United Nations System, JIU/REP/2014/6.

of the Venice commission (2022), the RBM-evaluation (2021), the prison and police evaluation (2021), or the evaluation of strategy development and reporting (2020).

33. DIO-ED has established an in-built external quality assurance system for all its inception reports and final reports. The *Quality Assurance Checklist for Evaluation Reports* has over 50 criteria which are being assessed by external consultants. The PR team reviewed the quality assurance system and found that the quality checklist covers all relevant aspects and that the examples shared generally provide substantive inputs to enhance quality. The PR team noted, however, that the different consultants pursue different approaches (i.e. using either checklist, text or comments embedded in documents). Also, there are no aggregated results per evaluation report. It is also not clear how the results are used to assess trends and improve overall quality over time. The latter can, in the PR team's opinion, be best achieved through an ex-post process (see [Annex 5](#) on ILO's approach to ex-post quality control).

34. In any case, the DIO-ED reports have contributed to change in the organisation. DIO-ED can cite decisions and other policy documents which explicitly mention or are a result of evaluation reports. Following a request from the PR team, DIO-ED prepared a table showing 28 decisions and other policy documents which explicitly mention or are a result of evaluation reports since 2017 ([Annex 3](#)). Similarly, the DIO Annual Report 2021 shows in Appendix II the contribution of implemented evaluation recommendations between 2018-2021. The PR team also notes that with professional formatting, the look and visual identity of reports has improved.

35. At the same time, several stakeholders view the evaluation reports as being overly long, dense and detailed. To compensate, DIO-ED has in the past two years produced infographics to aid in communicating findings. However, these infographics arguably veer to the extreme of oversimplification, neglecting the complexity and sensitivity of the subjects. The PR team suggests to tailor different products depending on the information needs of the audience.

36. An area of some concern are the *recommendations*. Several stakeholders with whom the PR team interacted are not fully satisfied with the recommendations and the process through which they are developed. Notable examples of individual feedback include "*recommendations are not consistent with findings*", "*not relevant to context*", "*too generic*", "*unrealistic and not implementable*". Given the previously mentioned quality assurance procedure, this might be seen as a surprise. However, while recommendations can meet technical quality standards, their usefulness can only be judged by the management and stakeholders of the subject programme/project. Even different categories of stakeholders may judge the usefulness of recommendations differently.

37. Still, this partial dissatisfaction with the recommendations expressed by stakeholders are somewhat at odds with statistics which shows that the majority of recommendations have

been accepted and implemented by stakeholders.¹⁷ This is not necessarily a contradiction, as the follow up to the recommendations (i.e. the implementation of the agreed actions) is considered by several stakeholders as a bureaucratic requirement; i.e. that a “pro-forma” or “tick box” way is found to respond to recommendations – even when they are seen to be poorly founded.

38. More generally, the utility of recommendations depends not only on DIO-ED but also on the engagement of managers whose activities are evaluated. DIO-ED has an inclusive approach, and each evaluation includes two reference group meetings; one for the draft inception report and one for the draft evaluation report where all the related stakeholders are invited to participate. In addition, draft reports are distributed for written comments. It is vital that Council of Europe staff engages fully with the evaluation team to maximise the utility of evaluation. The utility of the evaluations can also be improved if - in addition to tracking the implementation (through TeamMate) - the high-quality dialogue with stakeholders continues after the reports are issued as follow up on evaluations is essential for real learning.

39. Another related area of some concern addressed by interlocutors is that *external evaluators*, who are engaged for the conduct of DIO-ED evaluations often show *limited knowledge and understanding of the nature of work of the Council of Europe*. It is argued by several stakeholders that the work of the Council of Europe is uniquely complex, eluding comprehension by those from outside. Several stakeholders expressed the view that consultants repeatedly do not fully master the challenge in spite several rounds of briefings by the Council of Europe staff. This maybe partly due to the limited financial resources available for external evaluation consultants (see above) which puts a constraint on the number of workdays DIO-ED can offer to consultants thereby limiting their ability to fully immerse in the intricacies of the work of the Council of Europe. The PR team would like to stress that it is common knowledge that strong professional evaluation expertise requires competitive fees or the hiring of mixed expertise teams, the costs of which DIO-ED apparently cannot accommodate.¹⁸

40. For centralised evaluations ED is largely dependent on utilisation of its own staff resources, with some but limited facility for external consultants to help. A mixed team approach is a good practise applied in many other similarly complex organisations. It allows for compensating possible knowledge gaps of external consultants but can only be done for a limited number of evaluation exercise. It is also important to note that professional evaluators do not need to understand every detail of an organisation to assess the larger subjects at hand when undertaking evaluations.

¹⁷ For 2018-2021: out of 226 recommendations 165 have been implemented, 51 are in progress, 1 not yet started and only 6 rejected; i.e., 96% of recommendations are either implemented or in the process of being implemented; source: ED.

¹⁸ Fees for experienced external evaluators based in Europe range between Euro 650 to 1'000 per day.

2.2.2 Learning

The existing body of evaluations is underused for learning.

41. Following the exchange with many stakeholders in the Council of Europe, the PR team is of the view that the DIO-ED can help further strengthen the utility of the evaluation function through different approaches. Firstly, it can make better use of the rather small number of DIO evaluation reports. The distribution of “traditional” reports may not be sufficient and there is an opportunity to extract ‘by-products’ on specific topics with particular attention and interest.

42. Secondly, there is an opportunity to better leverage the combined body of evaluations, i.e. including decentralised evaluations; e.g. by DIO-ED distilling and analysing findings from across multiple reports (synthesis reviews and meta analyses). Currently, decentralised evaluations do not generate much interest beyond a very small audience directly linked to the activity immediately at hand. Meta studies or synthesis reviews are a way to bring findings that transcend individual evaluations to the attention of senior management. Meta analyses generate interest and contribute to learning by looking for common threads and issues in different report (e.g. lessons learned). What is more, they can generate considerable value for money as they require much less time investment compared to conducting evaluations and ensure that existing evaluation reports are used in an aggregated manner providing a broader perspective. Meta studies work well for example in ILO, UNESCO and UNDP (Box). In this regard, the PR team would like to encourage DIO-ED to pursue its intention to collect findings and lessons learned from decentralised evaluation reports.¹⁹

¹⁹ Evaluation Guidelines, Council of Europe, 2020, p. 37.

Box: Meta studies and synthesis reviews in ILO, UNESCO and UNDP

ILO: The evaluation office of ILO undertakes meta studies or synthesis reviews based on the 40 to 50 decentralised evaluations undertaken each year. The meta studies are general focussed on performance (effectiveness). Synthesis reviews are more focussed on thematic topics. Subject to topics under review by decision-making bodies or as an input into a substantial corporate evaluation the aim is to enhance organisational learning by systematically synthesising information from decentralised project evaluations on results, lessons learned and good practices.

UNESCO: The evaluation office of UNESCO prepares an annual Synthetic Report. The report aggregates, reviews and summarises evaluation reports, both at the corporate and at the decentralised level, in one year. In 2021 this included seven corporate and twenty-two decentralised evaluations. The report draws out common cross-cutting findings across the universe of reports affecting UNESCO's programming, describes contributions to various Expected Results and reflects on trends in UNESCO performance. In addition, it assesses their quality against recognised quality criteria.

UNDP: The evaluation office of UNDP produces meta studies in their 'Reflections' series. These are short (6-8 pages) and address topics chosen for their timeliness and salience to ongoing organisational decision making, with recent reports on themes such as 'Governance' or 'Electoral Processes'. These are 'rapid evidence assessment', designed to provide a synthesis of evaluative evidence accumulating from body of decentralised as well as central/independent evaluation activities. The emphasis is on identifying consistent findings, conclusions and recommendations that capture relevant lessons for UNDP.

2.2.3 Evaluation coverage and selection of subjects

A more selective approach to DIO-ED's evaluation agenda-setting and scoping could yield evaluations that are more timely and responsive.

43. In the past five years (2017-2021) DIO-ED conducted 15 evaluations, on average three evaluations per year. This is below of the four evaluations which DIO-ED is aiming at, according to the annual work programme. The PR team is of the view that three evaluations per year as a single set of deliverables is a rather modest output for an office with five professionals. The OAC has also highlighted the weak coverage of DIO-ED managed evaluations.²⁰ There are several reasons for the limited volume of DIO-ED evaluation reports. Firstly, DIO-ED worked on other areas like the new Evaluation Policy (2019), the new Guidelines (2020), the contractual framework for a pool of consultants, an e-learning tool or the support to decentralised evaluations. These are significant tasks. Secondly, the scope of DIO-ED evaluation is in general wide and require a labour-intensive effort. Thirdly, DIO-ED suffered from long absences of core evaluation staff members (e.g., sabbaticals) in 2020 and 2021.

²⁰ OAC Annual Reports 2020/21 and Annual Report 2019/20.

Fourth, the Covid pandemic (2020-21) affected productivity and the possibility to engage with stakeholders due to various emergencies in all parts of the organisation.

44. DIO-ED conducts evaluations of programmes or sub-programme (e.g., “Venice Commission”) as well as of cross-cutting issues (e.g. RBM). DIO-ED aims at evaluating at least one sub-programme under each programme in a four-year cycle. This aim is not met. The PR team’s analysis reveals that five of the 13 Programmes will not have had an evaluation in six years ([Annex 6](#)). Given the limited capacity to conduct evaluations, the PR team questions the rather ‘mechanical’ sub-programme approach. While a cyclical coverage is helpful in cementing that all management entities will ‘have their turn’ with DIO-ED scrutiny, the sub-programme approach to evaluation brings risk of lost opportunities in terms of relevance to evolving topical and strategic exigencies.

45. The PR team considers that the largest Council of Europe programmes and those with need for adjustment to changing external environment will benefit from more frequent attention than those that are smaller and that have a stable operational environment. At the same time, the sub-programme as ‘unit of account’ for topical selection may not always work as it may comprise an amalgam of decision-making pockets for which evaluation findings too wide-ranging and generic. In sum, the PR panel maintains that DIO-ED should have the authority to conduct relevant and pertinent evaluations of strategic importance for management and member states rather than follow a ‘mechanical’ sub-programme approach. The issue at hand is about a more strategic and demand driven topical selection approach to enhance the utility of the evaluation function in terms of pertinence to important decision-making processes and learning.

46. When evaluations are planned, the PR team finds from the discussions with interlocutors that the evaluations could be better *scoped* to strengthen the utility to the stakeholders’ decision making. Some evaluations are seen by stakeholders as being too ambitious (e.g. Evaluation of the Council of Europe’s monitoring mechanisms). Within the frame of a given programme or topic, it is possible to make choices – in terms of specific operational areas of activity, cross-cutting thematic issues as well as evaluation criteria to be applied. A good opportunity to sharpen the scope of an evaluation is during the *inception phase* of an evaluation as it is foreseen in the Council of Europe Evaluation Guidelines (2020). A more selective approach to DIO-ED’s evaluation agenda-setting *and* scoping could thus yield evaluations that are timelier and thematically more responsive. DIO-ED could also consider having real time evaluations or shorter advisories that are more focused on challenging issues rather than very long reports that take a time and resources to produce with a limited use. Such flexibility would not need to be to the detriment of upholding the notion that ‘no-one is exempt’ from scrutiny of DIO-ED.

47. Finally, it is crucial to explain in a clear and transparent manner why certain topics are selected and others not. While this is explained in the evaluation work programme presented to the Rapporteur Group Programme, Budget and Administration (GR-PBA) and while DIO has

established a process for preparing the evaluation plan, including considering the criteria for selecting topics outlined in the Evaluation Policy, the actual decision and selection process was cited as a “black box” to a number of stakeholders the PR team interacted with, suggesting a communication challenge. A centralised evaluation plan should also explain how DIO-ED managed and decentralised evaluations complement each other. For that, a comprehensive evaluation plan including DIO-ED managed and decentralised evaluations is essential.

2.2.4 Positioning of the Evaluation Division within the DIO

Insufficient visibility and authority of the DIO Evaluation Division.

48. At the Council of Europe, the Director of DIO is also the Director of Evaluation.²¹ The evaluation team thus comprises the Director, the Head of the Evaluation Division and evaluators. However, the PR team finds it concerning that the Evaluation Policy gives no voice, not even a single mention, to the Evaluation Division or its Head. All functions are solely projected through the DIO or the authority of the Director of DIO. The roles and responsibilities of the Evaluation Division and its Head are not specifically defined in the Evaluation Policy; they are defined for DIO. Also, in the Evaluation Guidelines the Evaluation Division has almost no visibility and is subsumed under DIO. While the head of the Evaluation Division is not mentioned at all, the Evaluation Division is only mentioned five times. DIO is mentioned over 150 times and its Director eight times.

49. The PR team also found that in practice the voice of evaluation is not the head of the Evaluation Division but rather the Director of DIO. The perception of absence of the Evaluation Division as a stand-alone ‘identity’ distinct from DIO was raised in various interviews conducted by the PR team.

50. The PR team is aware that co-location of oversight functions can at times be advantageous and does not necessarily question the placement of evaluations under the DIO umbrella and Director. In hierarchical organisations where evaluation is not yet strongly established it can help bring ‘weight’ and seniority to engagement with stakeholders and can spur interchange and collaboration between the oversight disciplines. However, UNEG Norms and Standards lean towards separate entities and a JIU study found that evaluation functions that are co-located with oversight are in general lagging behind in their level of development.²²

51. However, in other organisations in which the evaluation office is located in the oversight office,²³ the role and responsibilities of the evaluation office are much more explicit. For example, in the UNESCO Evaluation Policy, the Evaluation Office is very visible and is not subsumed under the oversight office (see Box and [Annex 7](#)).

²¹ In French the Director’s title is Director of Evaluation, Internal Audit and Investigation.

²² Analysis of the Evaluation Function in the United Nations System, Joint Inspection Unit, Geneva 2014.

²³ For example, at the Office for Internal Oversight services at the United Nations or the Division of Internal Oversight Service (IOS) at UNESCO.

52. The PR team found that within DIO staff have diverging views regarding the assessment of the level of authority and visibility given to the Evaluation Office and its head. One view is that within the DIO structure, the authority and visibility given to the Evaluation Office is adequate while another view is calling for more authority and visibility for the Evaluation Division.

53. The questions and criteria of evaluation involve a different dialogue than audit and investigation which are to a large extent confined to assessing compliance with rules and policies. Evaluation challenges strategic choices, not just 'implementation' by way of conduct, compliance and procedure. If the evaluation function is perceived as another oversight modality similar to audit and investigation with no distinct voice of engagement other than in concert with audit and investigation, the salience of strategic issues raised can be reduced to the lowest common denominator of risk tolerance. While DIO reports clearly distinguish whether they are audit or evaluation reports, the PR team finds that the Council of Europe staff perceive the distinction between audit and evaluation as blurred. Rather than a learning opportunity, the evaluation function is by many seen as a time-consuming bureaucratic chore, amplified by heavy workload.

54. Co-location of audit and evaluation can be beneficial in terms of facilitating collaboration on suitable topics (e.g. performance audits, RBM reviews, etc.). However, the PR team found that so far, the collaboration between DIO audit and DIO evaluation is in practice non-existent or very limited.

Box: Visibility of the UNESCO Evaluation Office in the Evaluation Policy

In the UNESCO Evaluation Policy (2022-2029), the Evaluation Office, which is part of the Internal Oversight Service (IOS), is mentioned 37 times. It is, for instance, the responsibility of the Evaluation Office to develop the evaluation plan. The Head of Evaluation has the primary responsibility for ensuring that the evaluation policy is upheld, and that the evaluation function is fully operational. The Head of Evaluation participates – together with the IOS Director – in the governing body sessions whenever evaluation items are tabled. The Head of Evaluation has the authority to reach out to member states and present (without the IOS Director) evaluations that might be of interest to certain groups of member states. The Head of Evaluation regularly engages with senior management (except the Director-General). In UNESCO the Head of Evaluation is the face of evaluation. Senior Management will reach out to the Head of Evaluation both from headquarters (HQ) and the field.

(See Annex 2 for more details on the UNESCO Evaluation Office).

2.3. Set-up and functioning of the decentralised evaluation function

2.3.1 Evaluation Policy and Guidelines, Quality Assurance Framework

Considerable efforts have gone into strengthening decentralised evaluations.

55. Overall, the quality of decentralised evaluations has improved.²⁴ Since the last peer review, considerable efforts have gone into strengthening decentralised evaluations, i.e., evaluations managed by entities other than DIO. The new Evaluation Policy and the new Evaluation Guidelines also give shape to decentralised evaluation practice. The Evaluation Guidelines provides a number of tools and checklists in order to enhance quality. In addition, the Evaluation Division has set up a Quality Assurance Framework for decentralised evaluation and has started to develop an e-learning tool. The Quality Assurance Framework assigns a quality control function to DIO-ED, i.e., to quality check ToR, proposals for external evaluators to be recruited and quality check of evaluation reports ([Annex 2](#)).

56. The services provided by DIO-ED are appreciated by many stakeholders. There are some highly praised decentralised evaluations like the evaluation of Eurimages.²⁵ Reportedly, the recommendations from this evaluation had considerable impact. Eurimages is a good example of a programme with a governance structure that relies on periodic evaluations for decision making. However, the evaluation of Eurimages is exceptional as it has a significant budget for evaluation.²⁶ Another decentralised evaluation report considered of good quality by DIO-ED is the evaluation of the Action Plan Moldova.²⁷

2.3.2 Coverage, resources and capacities

Decentralised evaluations are still underdeveloped: with limited coverage, resources, and capacities.

57. Despite improvements in quality, decentralised evaluations are still underdeveloped. While the evaluation of Eurimages is – in terms of length, depth and sufficient budget – a good practise, it is the exception rather than the rule. The underdevelopment of the decentralised evaluation is due to several factors.

58. The first is the *limited coverage* in terms of absolute numbers of evaluations as well as in terms of the three main Council of Europe functions. DIO-ED estimates that on average there are only 15 decentralised evaluations a year. Moreover, the analysis of planned decentralised evaluations for 2021 reveals that they are focussing on technical co-operation, with evaluations of standard setting and the monitoring functions much less frequently

²⁴ The DIO Evaluation Division contracted the Center for Evaluation (CEval) to perform an independent quality check for the period 2016-2019. 32 evaluations which were quality checked and obtained an overall satisfactory score. (The quality assessment was conducted prior to the establishment of the Quality Assurance Framework.)

²⁵ External Evaluation of the activities of the Eurimages Fund, Final Evaluation Report, EY, 28 November 2018.

²⁶ approx. Euro 80 000.

²⁷ Progress Review and Final Evaluation of the Council of Europe of Europe Action Plan for the Republic of Moldova 2017-2020 Evaluation report, Heidrun Ferrari and Britta Schweighöfer, February 2021.

chosen. The demand for evaluations of programmes and entities in these areas is variably related to perception of good quality regular monitoring reports, such as under [Group of States against Corruption](#) (GRECO). Further, the Evaluation Policy and Guidelines do not establish *mandatory criteria* for the conduct of decentralised evaluations. The Guidelines only make recommendations, leaving the decisions to the MAEs on whether to conduct evaluations (Box). In fact, the decentralised evaluations are to a large extent driven by donors, rather than by a proactive approach by the MAEs.

59. The PR team finds that an in-house demand for decentralised evaluations is limited.

Box: Voluntary approach to decentralised evaluations

Box: Box: Voluntary approach to decentralised evaluations

It may be particularly appropriate to conduct an evaluation:

- For a project or programme with unknown/unclear or disputed outcomes/results;
- For large and expensive interventions (2 Million EUR and above);
- For pilot initiatives or innovative projects or programmes;
- Where an extension or a 2nd phase of a project is being considered;
- Where Council of Europe has a strategic interest;
- Where donors/stakeholders are interested in an evaluation.

Source: Council of Europe, Evaluation Guidelines, 2020, p.29.

60. The *limited resources* available to the evaluation function contribute to its underdevelopment. The budget for the evaluations of the action plans (APs), for instance, are very small, i.e. between Euro 20 000 and 30 000. The Evaluation Policy and Guidelines do not establish a clear rule for how much financial resources should be allocated to evaluations. The Evaluation Guidelines recommend having an evaluation budget of at least 1% of the total intervention budget for decentralised evaluations²⁸ but ultimately, the MAE can decide how much to allocate to evaluation. The PR team believes the DIO should establish a clear set of criteria for when to conduct evaluations; e.g. every programme/sub-programme, partial agreement, facility, action plan or project above a certain size (e.g. above Euro 1m).²⁹ Also, a clear system for the allocation of resources to evaluation would help; e.g. every programme of a given size (e.g. above Euro 1m) needs to allocate 1-2% of the budget to evaluation. This would be in line with the practice of many international organisations. As mentioned earlier, at UNESCO, projects above USD 1.5m must allocate around 3% for monitoring and evaluations. These mandatory criteria and system must be reflected in the Evaluation Guidelines and enforced by senior management of the MAEs.

61. Finally, the MAEs' competences and capacities to *manage* evaluation is seen as modest. Only a few MAEs have appointed evaluation focal points. It appears that in general, staff responsible to manage decentralised evaluations have little or no training in evaluation.

²⁸ Evaluation Guidelines, p. 29.

²⁹ Of the 38 programmes/sub-programmes (some programmes have no sub-programmes), 33 programmes/sub-programmes have a budget above Euro 1m; source: Council of Europe Programme and Budget 2022-25.

Meanwhile, DIO points to the recently developed e-learning training intended to be available to all staff, currently being piloted and yet to be officially launched.

2.3.3 Quality of decentralised evaluation reports

Varying quality of decentralised evaluation reports, misconception of independence.

62. The PR team found that the quality of the decentralised evaluation reports varies, a finding confirmed by a DIO-ED analysis.³⁰ While some are of acceptable quality, others are done superficially and in a rush. Most evaluations culminate in findings and analyses that are timid in terms of criticism and offer recommendations that are more or less recurring truisms of multilateral organisational management – such as requiring more specificity in programme objectives and priorities, strengthened co-ordination, improved information management and emphasis on results-based management practices. Such recommendations can at times bring forth ‘pro forma’ implementation; involving actions that are nominal and perfunctory. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that engagement with evaluations is perceived as a burden and administrative chore and that responsible management are not following up most of the decentralised evaluations.

63. While certainly an improvement, the new Quality Assurance Framework ([Annex 2](#)), established in 2021, cannot compensate for the limited resources decentralised evaluations have. Evaluations are labour intensive. If too little time and resources is allocated to the process, mediocre results are inevitable. A particular challenge, as mentioned earlier, is to find – and afford - qualified external evaluators. In practice, there seems to be a tendency to repeatedly work with the same external evaluators - producing safe but analytically timid ‘template’ reports. With the new DIO framework contract for evaluation services put in place in 2021, DIO has now the possibility to make sure that MAEs make use of a diverse range of external evaluators.

64. Many of the decentralised evaluations are posited as ‘independent evaluations’. However, it is questionable if the evaluations are truly independent as they are commissioned and managed by the MAEs who themselves are the subject of scrutiny. While the use of *external* consultant evaluators enhances capacity and competencies, it does not by itself make an evaluation independent. It is the management process of the evaluation by an impartial person that ensures this. In many organisations (e.g., ILO) evaluations managed by the entities in charge of a project or programme are therefor called “self or internal evaluations”. DIO-ED’s quality advisory role does not yet ensure full independence, but it is certainly a step in the right direction (see below). DIO-ED could have an even stronger oversight role of the decentralised evaluations which would enhance the independent nature of the decentralised evaluations but that would be subject to time and resources as it can be quite a time-consuming task.

³⁰ Power Point Presentation: Decentralised Evaluations – State of Play, March 2022, ED.

2.3.4 Role of DIO Evaluation Division in decentralised evaluations

Enhanced role of the DIO Evaluation Division in decentralised evaluations but limited to advisory role with no authority.

65. The Evaluation Policy states that DIO “*is responsible for assurance of the quality of decentralised evaluations*”. In practice, one cannot hold DIO accountable because the main responsibility for the quality is with the MAEs. According to the Evaluation Policy and the Quality Assurance Framework, DIO-ED basically has an advisory role when it comes to decentralised evaluations. A strong feature of the Quality Assurance Framework to enhance the quality is the obligation for MAEs to use external evaluators from the pool of DIO-vetted consultants and companies. While the pool of consultants is widely used, the performance of the consultants is – according to stakeholders – at times unsatisfactory.³¹ In such instances, DIO-ED mediates between the service providers and the MAEs to ensure minimum quality. ED also quality checks ToRs and evaluation reports. DIO-ED refused to accept two decentralised reports so far and has advised MAEs not to pay the consultant in full. These reports will not be published and are not considered evaluation reports. However, the final authority to approve reports is with the MAEs and not with DIO-ED. DIO-ED has no authority to insist on changes or non-acceptance of evaluation reports which do not meet minimal quality standards.

66. While there is no established international standard on the role of central evaluation units in conducting respectively overseeing *decentralised* evaluations, the PR team questions if DIO-ED’s advisory role is sufficient or if DIO-ED should have some more authority to enhance quality and independence. A stronger role of DIO-ED in decentralised evaluations would boost the independent nature of the decentralised evaluations. To enforce this, an evaluation could, for instance, be labelled ‘independent’ only if endorsed by DIO-ED as meeting that standard. Strengthening the decentralised evaluations will enhance the overall stock of high-quality evaluations.

67. A particularly important manager of decentralised evaluations is the Office of the Directorate General of Programmes (ODGP). Action plans and the large funding facilities (e.g., Horizontal Facility for Western Balkans and Turkey) are managed by ODGP. The collaboration between DIO-ED and ODGP could be further intensified.

68. All decentralised evaluation reports should be shared with DIO-ED. Currently, only seven decentralised evaluation reports are accessible on the DIO website. There are many more reports which are not yet published as they are either still being revised – after being quality checked by DIO-ED - or the final versions were not provided to DIO-ED at all. Again, DIO-ED has no authority to make sure that all reports are shared. MAEs should send the final reports and management responses to DIO-ED for publication. While not all reports have to be public (i.e., on the internet), all should be stored in a central database (repository/ library).

³¹ Consultants’ performances depend on many factors not least realistic ToRs.

A searchable database is particularly important also for meta studies. DIO-ED is in the process of exploring an appropriate tool for storing evaluation reports.

69. Keeping track of decentralised evaluations requires elaborate systems and discipline. It is not an easy task for evaluation offices with limited authority. Other international organisations face similar challenges but have found ways to manage decentralised evaluations (see [Annex 8](#) for the ILO's approach to manage decentralised evaluations).

III. CONCLUSIONS

70. The PR team concludes that the evaluation function in the Council of Europe has been noticeably strengthened over the past years. The organisation has conducted several big strategic evaluations which are considered useful by stakeholders; such as the DIO-ED managed evaluation of the Venice Commission, the RBM evaluation, the prison and police evaluation or the MAE managed evaluation of Eurimages. These evaluations have contributed to learning and strategic decision making in the organisation. With the new DIO Charter, the new Evaluation Policy and the new Evaluation Guidelines, a strong normative framework has been put in place. DIO enjoys, under the authority of the Secretary General, a satisfactory level of independence.

71. The overall positive assessment mirrors to a considerable extent the self-assessment of the level of maturity of the evaluation function conducted by DIO-ED in early 2022.³² In the spirit of looking towards issues warranting amplification and/or further nuance, the PR team arrives at the following conclusions:

Selection and scoping of evaluation subjects

72. The careful selection of evaluation subjects for DIO-ED managed evaluations is essential for the utility of evaluation. This should be guided by stakeholder demand for evaluation and by strategic importance of the subject. Questions to ask include: 'What areas of the Council of Europe's work require urgent attention and high-level decision? Which areas are at a particular risk or are underperforming? Such an approach is very much in line with the selection criteria for evaluation topics as established in the Evaluation Policy.³³ However, it appears to the PR team that the strong 'mechanical' emphasis on the coverage of programmes and sub-programmes, even if this is in line with recommendations of the Oversight Advisory Committee, can diminish the value of the evaluation function. Rather the PR encourages a more flexible approach driven by stakeholder demand, relevance and urgency. For this to happen, it is fundamental that the demand for specific evaluations is expressed by those who have to take decisions, i.e., the Committee of Ministers, the Secretary-General and other

³² Self-Assessment Maturity Matrix for UN Evaluation Functions, Working Draft, DIO, Council of Europe, Updated February 28th, 2022. The Self-Assessment is available from DIO upon request.

³³ Council of Europe Evaluation Policy, DIO, Nov. 2019, Appendix 2.

senior managers of the MAEs. The evaluation function can only provide answers, if it knows the questions.

73. Maximum flexibility would also allow DIO-ED to respond to short term demands or real-time evaluations. A more agile approach provides an opportunity to conduct rapid, smaller and more focussed evaluations or reviews which would allow DIO-ED to “produce” more and different types of products rather than only the “heavy”, labour intensive evaluations which can take up to 12 months to complete.

74. In order to ensure sufficient coverage of programme and sub-programmes, the PR team suggests DIO-ED reconsiders whether sub-programme evaluations could be the responsibilities of the MAEs as part of the decentralised evaluations, thereby leaving the option for DIO-ED to evaluate sub-programmes if required. Naturally, this requires that the MAEs allocate sufficient resources and capacity for such mandatory evaluations of the sub-programmes, which would need to be reflected in the Evaluation Policy and/or Guidelines.

75. For DIO-ED managed evaluation, it is important to explain in a transparent manner and to all interested stakeholders the reasons for the selection of respective topics/entities for inclusion in the DIO-ED workplan. Selecting a subject of strategic relevance to the organisation is key to enhance the utility of evaluation. Also important is the definition of the appropriate scope of an evaluation (avoid evaluations which are very broad).

Evaluation universe

76. As envisaged in the Evaluation Policy, all areas of the Council of Europe, including standard setting, monitoring mechanism, technical co-operation, the PACE and the Court should be part of the evaluation universe, either through DIO-ED managed evaluations or decentralised evaluations. Naturally, there are certain aspects that cannot be questioned by evaluations like PACE resolutions or the Court rulings. However, it is perfectly feasible to evaluate, for example, the impact of certain PACE resolutions or the operational efficiency of the Court working methods. To strengthen the evaluation culture in an organisation it is important to send the right message: nobody is exempt from being evaluated.

Resources for evaluation

77. As shown in this report, the total resources available for evaluation (DIO-ED and MAEs) are significantly below international common practice. Limited resources result in evaluations that are unable to bring on board the needed expertise and risk being of poor quality. This in turn affects the credibility of the evaluation and the ultimate use of the evaluation results and recommendations. To enlarge the coverage and enhance the quality of evaluations, more resources are required. The PR team acknowledges that in a zero-growth-budget organisation, a call for more resources has consequences for other areas of work. If evaluation is seen as pro-forma exercises with limited added value, resources should be spent on other areas. If,

however, evaluation is seen as crucial for decision making and learning, resources spent on evaluation are seen as money well spent, enhancing the impact of core activities.

78. In a zero-growth-budget environment, the optimal use of existing resources is key. The main resources available for evaluation in the Council of Europe (DIO and MAE) is currently the DIO-ED staff. The best use of their time will maximise the value of the overall evaluation function. DIO-ED staff should focus on three priorities: (a) managing and conducting DIO-ED evaluations, (b) contributing to strengthening the quality of decentralised evaluations, and (c) contributing to learning (e.g., meta studies). All DIO-ED staff member should contribute to all three priorities. Regarding priority (a), the PR team encourages DIO-ED – as mentioned above - to adhere to an agile approach thereby conducting evaluations or reviews of varying scope and intensity, depending on the subject at hand. Finally, DIO-ED evaluation staff should have administrative support to focus on the three priorities.

Location and visibility of the Evaluation Division

79. It is important for the evaluation function to have a distinct identity different from audit. While it is not uncommon in international organisations to co-locate evaluation together with audit and investigation in one oversight office, it is rather unusual that the Evaluation Policy does not distinguish the evaluation office (DIO-ED in the case of the Council of Europe) within the overall oversight office (DIO in the case of Council of Europe). The function and connotation of “oversight” (due diligence, compliance) is very different to “evaluation” (assessment, appraisal, learning). The distinction between the two functions is important to strengthen the evaluation culture in the Council of Europe. In addition, the PR team found that the delegation of authority from the DIO Director to the Head of the Evaluation Division is ad-hoc and at the discretion of the DIO Director. A clear delegation of authority is not formally established. The rather limited delegation of authority to the Evaluation Division is unusual compared with the practices of other international organisations³⁴. Other heads of evaluation located within an oversight cluster routinely engage directly – without the director of an oversight cluster - with senior management, governing bodies or member states – and are the “face” of evaluation. The authority and visibility of the Evaluation Division and the head of the Evaluation Division should be strengthened. This may require some changes in the Evaluation Policy and possibly also the DIO Charter.

Decentralised evaluations

80. The biggest potential to enhance the value of the evaluation function in the Council of Europe is with the decentralised evaluations. Decentralised evaluations are still underdeveloped, both in terms of quality and coverage. Rather than being donor driven, the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary-General should decide on its own what are the evaluation priorities of the organisation. The current voluntary approach to conduct

³⁴ Such as UNESCO, see [Annex 7](#).

decentralised evaluations, leaving the decision largely to the MAE, could be strengthened by establishing a simple criterion for mandatory evaluations, comparable to other international organisations. A common criterion applied in many agencies is a financial threshold (e.g., programme/project above Euro 2 million must be evaluated).³⁵ Programmes/projects surpassing the threshold must plan for an evaluation with the allocation of sufficient resources. The Council of Europe Evaluation Guidelines *recommends* having an evaluation budget of at least 1% of the programme/project budget. This should not be optional but *mandatory* and could be capped for larger programmes/projects.³⁶

81. The role of DIO-ED regarding the quality assurance of decentralised evaluations must be further clarified. Beyond providing advice, DIO-ED should have formal authority in terms of endorsing selected decentralised evaluation reports. A stronger role of DIO-ED in decentralised evaluations would also enhance the independent nature of the decentralised evaluations. Building on the practice used in ILO, an evaluation could for instance only be called independent if vetted by DIO-ED as being of sufficiently quality and conducted independently. Capacity building of evaluation focal points located in MAEs should also be enhanced. Strengthening the decentralised evaluations will strengthen the overall stock of high-quality evaluations.

Learning

82. There is an opportunity to better leverage the combined body of evaluations from DIO-ED managed and decentralised evaluations. DIO-ED should produce more learning products like meta studies and synthesise reviews. This would enhance learning from evaluations.

Director of DIO

83. During the peer review, the PR team was informed that the current Director of DIO had decided to leave the organisation at the end of 2022. When embarking upon recruitment of its next DIO Director, the vacancy should also be opened to external candidates. The selection criteria should include formal competencies and experience in independent oversight leadership, preferably comprising evaluation as well as audit.

³⁵ Including sub-programmes, partial agreements, horizontal facilities, action plans, etc.

³⁶ E.g.: for programme/projects between Euro 2-10m the evaluation budget could be 1%; for programme/projects larger than Euro 10m the evaluation budget could be capped at Euro 100 000.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

84. The following recommendations from the PR team may help the Council of Europe to strengthen its evaluation function to take the organisation to the next level of evaluation maturity. The recommendations are based on the analysis and reflections offered in this report and the professional experience of the PR team in working in and with various evaluation offices of international organisations.

Recommendation 1: Optimise the selection of evaluation subjects and improve the scoping of evaluation subjects

- a) DIO-ED should move away from a ‘mechanical’ approach to cover sub-programmes and apply a flexible and transparent approach driven by stakeholder demand, relevance and urgency and based on extensive scoping or evaluability assessments. (Responsibility: DIO-ED)
- b) The Council of Europe should consider alternative ways to ensure evaluation coverage of sub-programmes by for instance making the management of sub-programme evaluations the mandatory responsibility of MAEs (decentralised evaluations) while retaining the option for DIO-ED validation exercises as required. (Responsibility: SG)
- c) CM, SG and senior management of the MAEs should more pro-actively suggest specific areas for evaluations, thereby expressing their needs for evidence-based decision making. (Responsibility: CM, SG, MAEs senior management)

Recommendation 2: Assure coverage of the evaluation universe

The Council of Europe should further expand the coverage of evaluation beyond technical co-operation and programmes/sub-programmes into the more institutional functions performed by the Council of Europe (e.g. standard setting, monitoring mechanism, the Court and PACE) while being cognisant of the political and legal nature of these very specific area of work. (Responsibility: MAEs, DIO)

Recommendation 3: Enhance resources for evaluation

- a) The Council of Europe should aim at good international practice by earmarking a percentage of the total budget of the Council of Europe to its evaluation function comprising the central budget for DIO-ED and resources ring-fenced (earmarked) in projects for decentralised evaluations. A plan should be elaborated to increase

resources over the short to medium term with a specific target percentage (e.g. 1.0%) and a target date for implementation. (Responsibility: CM, SG)

- b) DIO-ED human resources should focus on three priorities: (a) managing and conducting ED evaluations, (b) contributing to strengthening the quality of decentralised evaluations, and (c) contributing to learning (see also rec. 4.c). (Responsibility: DIO-ED)
- c) DIO-ED should aim at a better balance between administrators ('A') (professional evaluators) and administrative support staff ('B'). (Responsibility: DIO)

Recommendation 4: Strengthen the usefulness of evaluation reports

- a) Stakeholders from MAEs should better engage with DIO-ED during the different consultation steps (e.g. reference group meetings) to arrive at recommendations which are of optimal use to the MAEs (i.e. relevant, realistic, implementable, limited in number). (Responsibility: MAEs)
- b) Making best use of the big evaluation reports, DIO-ED should produce stand-alone summary papers or fact sheets of 4-5 pages of each evaluation. In addition DIO-ED should consider additional tailored by-products of evaluations highlighting selected topics. (Responsibility: DIO-ED)
- c) DIO-ED should produce more learning products (e.g. meta studies and synthesise reviews) distilling more out of existing evaluations (including decentralised evaluations). (Responsibility: DIO-ED)

Recommendation 5: Strengthen the visibility and authority of the Evaluation Division

- a) While keeping the current structure of DIO, DIO should adjust its Evaluation Policy, operating procedures and DIO Charter to strengthen the authority and visibility of the Evaluation Division, similar to other international organisations. (Responsibility: DIO)
- b) DIO should better communicate the difference between audit and evaluation, in order for stakeholders to better appreciate the two different functions (i.e. audit's focus on compliance, evaluation's contribution to learning and decision making) (Responsibility: DIO)
- c) Taking advantage of the merged co-location of audit and evaluation more collaboration should be explored. (Responsibility: DIO)
- d) When embarking upon recruitment of its next DIO Director, the vacancy should be open to external candidates. Selection criteria should include formal competencies and experience in independent oversight leadership, preferably comprising evaluation as well as audit. Applications from candidates associated with Council of Europe management and governance bodies should be avoided. (Responsibility: CM, SG)

Recommendation 6: Invest more in decentralised evaluations

- a) The Council of Europe should establish a simple criterion for mandatory evaluations, comparable to other international organisation (e.g., financial threshold triggers³⁷) and require a mandatory budget allocation (e.g., 1%) which could be adjusted based on programmes/projects.³⁸ These mandatory criteria and system must be reflected in the Evaluation Guidelines and enforced by senior management of the MAEs (Responsibility: CM, SG, MAEs senior management)
- b) The Council of Europe should introduce hybrid decentralised evaluations.³⁹ The hybrid evaluations would be decentralised evaluations managed by MAEs but overseen and formally endorsed by ED (going beyond the current DIO-ED advisory role). As it adds work to DIO-ED, hybrid decentralised evaluations should be used selectively, based on prioritisation. (Responsibility: CM, SG, MAEs, DIO-ED)
- c) All MAE's should establish evaluation focal points and DIO-ED should enhance the capacity building of the evaluation focal points. (Responsibility: MAEs, DIO-ED)
- d) All MAEs should follow the established procedures including sharing final evaluation reports and management responses with DIO-ED for publication. (Responsibility: MAEs)

³⁷ Including sub-programmes, partial agreements, horizontal facilities, action plans, etc.

³⁸ Example: for programme/projects between Euro 2-10m: 1%; larger than Euro 10m capped at Euro 100 000.

³⁹ This term was coined by ILO EVAL. The hybrid decentralised evaluation network consisted of part-time evaluation focal persons in departments at headquarters, together with the full-time regional evaluation officers. The network plays an important role in planning and co-ordinating a large number of internal and independent project evaluations each year. The hybrid system provides for central oversight of decentralised evaluations and relies heavily on evaluation managers (see also Annex 8).

Link to "A brief history of evaluation in the ILO": http://www.ilo.ch/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_692334.pdf.

V. ANNEXES

Annex 1: The inception paper

[Link to the inception report.](#)

Annex 2: The Quality Assurance Framework for decentralised evaluations

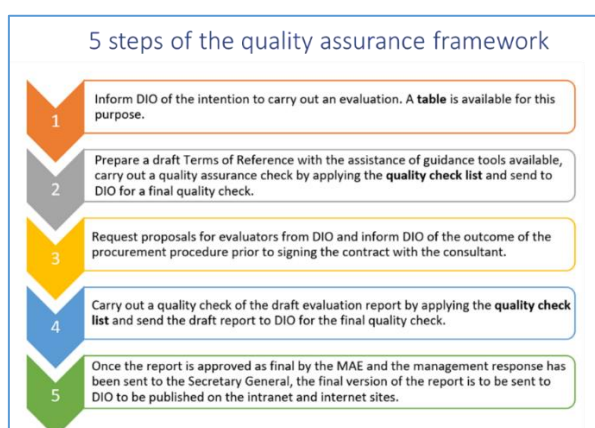
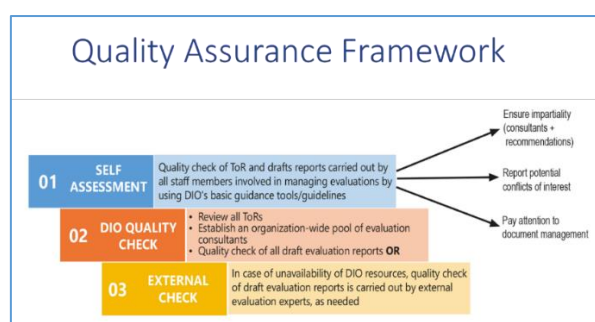
1. First level of quality assurance comprises of **self-assessment** carried out by all staff members involved in managing evaluations. Staff members will carry out quality checks of ToRs, consultants and draft evaluation reports by using the tools provided by the DIO:

- Basic guidance tools with standardised elements for all decentralised evaluations are made available on the DIO website.
- MAEs should systematically quality check ToRs at the drafting stage using checklists provided in the Guidelines, with particular attention to methodology.
- When applicable, donors should be consulted on draft ToRs, and where appropriate other relevant stakeholders.
- All staff involved in evaluations need to ensure quality assurance of evaluation reports following the procedure set out in these Guidelines.

2. Second level of quality assurance is carried out **by DIO** in terms of ToRs, consultants and draft reports:

- Staff members who are involved in an evaluation are required to contact DIO to quality check the ToR and evaluation reports.
- DIO will establish a pool of evaluation consultants who would have to meet certain quality criteria to be put at the disposal of MAEs.
- DIO will provide advice and support on the selection of consultants.

3. Third level of quality assurance concerns only draft evaluation reports and can be applied when DIO staff resources are limited. In such cases, the quality check of draft reports is provided by an **external consultant**, commissioned by DIO. DIO will maintain a pool of quality check experts for this purpose, to be renewed every two years.



Annex 3: The impact of DIO evaluations on Council of Europe

Council of Europe decisions and other policy documents which explicitly mention, or are a result of evaluation reports

Table prepared by the DIO Evaluation Division, following a request from the peer review panel, June 2022.

Date	Evaluations / evaluation work	Decisions and/or other policy documents	Link
Sept 2017	Evaluation of the World Forum for Democracy	GR-DEM(2017)CB7 - Synopsis, Meeting of 7 September 2017	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680744d7a
June 2017	Evaluation on the Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform	CM(2017)84 - 2.3 European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG), c. Activity Report 2016 of the Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680728332
Dec 2018	Evaluation of the World Forum for Democracy	GR-DEM(2018)CB8 – Synopsis, Meeting of 11 December 2018	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680902e2f
April 2018	Terms of reference for the independent evaluation of the “European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC)” in 2018-2019	CM(2017)155-final - b. Terms of reference for the independent evaluation of the “European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC)” in 2018-2019 – Outline concept	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016807b5998
March 2018	Evaluation of gender mainstreaming in co-operation	CM(2017)148-final - 4.5 Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023, Gender Equality Commission (GEC)	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016807701c0
Jan 2018	Evaluation on the Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform	CM(2018)15 - 2.4 Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform, a. Annual Activity Report 2017	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=090000168077df34
2019	Evaluation of the North-South Centre (2015)	DD(2019)1467 - 1.3 - Dialogue with the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General, 10/12/2019, pages 17 and 19.	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680993b8e
Aug 2019	Evaluation of Intergovernmental Committees; Evaluation of freedom of expression	CM(2019)124 - 5.1 Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI), (Abridged report of the 16th meeting (4-6 June 2019) page 4	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=090000168096d482
Jan 2019	Freedom of expression; Evaluation of Intergovernmental Committees; Evaluation on Council of Europe support in the fight against corruption	CM(2019)2 - 5.1 Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI) (a. Abridged report of the 15th meeting (27-30 November 2018)	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016809080a2

Date	Evaluations / evaluation work	Decisions and/or other policy documents	Link
2019	Evaluation of Intergovernmental Committees	GR-H(2019)CB8 – Synopsis Meeting of 8 October 2019 (Rapporteur Group Human rights), page 2	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680983576
April 2019	Evaluation of digital communications and access to information	CM/Inf(2019)14 - Report on the “Evaluation of digital communications and access to information on the Council of Europe and its work via internet” — Progress report on the implementation of the recommendations, 1345th meeting, 2 May 2019	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=090000168093ddd6
Jan 2019	Evaluation on the Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform	CM(2019)6 - 2.4 Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform, Annual Activity Report 2018	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680907b31
Dec 2019	Evaluation of Intergovernmental Committees	Communication on the activities of the Committee of Ministers, Statutory Report 2019	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=090000168090fcf1
May 2019	Evaluation function	CM/Del/Dec(2019)1346/1.5 - 129th Session of the Committee of Ministers (Helsinki, 16-17 May 2019) – Decisions. <i>7. acknowledging the results of the reform process achieved to date, the Committee of Ministers invited the Secretary General and the incoming Secretary General to continue the structural and administrative reforms, including further strengthening the Organisation’s independent evaluation function, to ensure even greater efficiency, effectiveness, flexibility and value for money.</i>	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680945ec8
Jan 2020	Evaluation of Intergovernmental Committees	GR-PBA(2020)2 - Intergovernmental structure; Item to be considered by the GR-PBA at its meeting on 6 February 2020	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680997ff3
Feb 2020	Evaluation of Intergovernmental Committees	CM(2020)27 - 2.4 European Committee on Democracy and Governance (CDDG); a. Abridged report of the 10th meeting (Strasbourg, 9-11 December 2019)	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016809a59b8
Feb 2020	Evaluation on the Centre of Expertise for Local Government Reform	CM(2020)28 - 2.5 Centre of Expertise for Good Governance; Annual Activity Report 2019	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016809a58e8
June 2020	Evaluation of the contribution of NGOs to standard setting and monitoring	SG/Inf(2020)8 - Follow-up to the Helsinki decisions on civil society, page 3	https://rm.Council of Europe.int/09000016809e8f6f
May 2021	Intergovernmental Committees	Resolution on intergovernmental committees and subordinate bodies, their terms of reference and working methods, CM/Res(2021)3	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680a27292

Date	Evaluations / evaluation work	Decisions and/or other policy documents	Link
Aug 2021	INGO Conference	Follow-up to the Helsinki decisions on civil society: implementation of the Secretary General's proposals	https://search.Council of Europe.int/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=0900001680a38e5b
Oct 2021	INGO Conference	SG's speech at the INGO Conference, 6 October 2021	https://www.Council of Europe.int/en/web/secretary-general/-/conference-of-international-ngos-cingo-
Nov 2021	Decentralised Evaluations website, Evaluation Policy and Evaluation Guidelines	Strategic Planning in the Council of Europe, Practical guide, page 2	https://rm.Council of Europe.int/practical-guide-strategic-planning/1680a4e082
Nov 2021	Evaluation of Strategy Development and Reporting	Strategic Planning in the Council of Europe, Practical guide	https://rm.Council of Europe.int/practical-guide-strategic-planning/1680a4e082
Jan 2022	Results-based management evaluation	Results-Based Management Approach of the Council of Europe, Practical guide page 2	https://rm.Council of Europe.int/rbm-practical-guide/16809e1bec
Feb 2022	Prisons and police evaluation	Creation of a Network of national correspondents of police authorities, CM(2022)29, page 2	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=0900001680a5a0a6
Feb 2022	Support to the implementation of the Court at national level evaluation	Creation of a Network of national correspondents of police authorities, CM(2022)29, page 2	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=0900001680a5a0a6
March 2022	Evaluation of Monitoring mechanisms	Enhancing the co-ordination, effectiveness and impact of monitoring mechanisms – Secretary General's report and proposals, SG/Inf(2022)5, page 4, (footnote)	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=0900001680a5fe62
June 2022	Evaluation of the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisation; Evaluation of the Council of Europe's work under the programme line "Prisons and Police" 2016-2019; Evaluation of Results-based Management; Evaluation of Strategy Development and Reporting	CM/Inf(2022)7 - 11.2 Progress Review Report 2021. <i>Findings and recommendations of the evaluations carried out during the biennium (Evaluation of the Conference of International Non-Governmental Organisation; Evaluation of the Council of Europe's work under the programme line "Prisons and Police" 2016-2019; Evaluation of Results-based Management; Evaluation of Strategy Development and Reporting) were taken into account and implemented as indicated in the management responses and action plans including in the preparation of the Programme and Budget 2022-2025 where relevant.</i>	https://search.Council of Europe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=0900001680a604f5

Annex 4: The planned decentralised evaluation for 2022 and 2021

Table: prepared by peer review consultant, based on data provided by DIO-ED.

	Planned decentralized evaluations for 2022	Planned budget for evaluation (€)
1	New Steering Committee monitoring	5'000
2	Children's project	15'000
3	Ilegend II Project	35'000
4	Impact evaluation and re-prioritisation of the Intercultural Cities (ICC) programme	25'000
5	Project "Promoting an integrated approach to end violence against women and reinforcing gender equality in Georgia"	6'500
6	Strengthening the Capacity of Bar Associations and Lawyers on European Human Rights Standards	20'000
7	End-of-project evaluation of the Project "Support for the execution by Armenia of judgments in respect of Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights"	10'000
8	"The Path towards Armenia's Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence" 2019-2022	8'400
9	Project on Improving the Effectiveness of the Administrative Judiciary and Strengthening the Institutional Capacity of Council of State	15'000
10	PGG Phase II	55'000
11	Project on "Education for Democracy in the Republic of Moldova"	9'200
12	Project Horizontal Facility II "HELP in the Western Balkans"	15'000
13	Human rights compliant criminal justice system in Ukraine	12'000
	Total	231'100
	Average	17'777
	Median	15'000

(2021 see next page)

	Planned decentralized evaluations for 2021	Planned budget for evaluation (€)
1	Institutional Capacity of Council of State	15'000
2	Taking action for the implementation of the RF National Strategy for Women (2017-	10'000
3	PGGII Raising awareness of the Istanbul Convention and other gender equality	8'500
4	The Path towards Armenia's Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence	10'000
5	Promoting an integrated approach to end violence against women and reinforcing	6'500
6	We CAN for Human Rights Speech	14'550
7	Fight against discrimination, hate crimes and hate speech in Georgia	29'534
8	Promoting Human Rights and Equality of LGBTI persons III (TBC)	20'000
9	Overall Evaluation of the Democratic and Inclusive School Culture in Operation (DISCO)	11'890
10	Strengthening Democratic Culture in Basic Education	11'775
11	Mid Term Evaluation - "Strengthening Democratic Citizenship Education in Albania"	7'000
12	Evaluation of the deliberative process - Citizens' Assembly - project "Building democratic participation in the City of Mostar"	14'995
13	Final evaluation - project "Strengthening the Communities Association of Armenia and transparent, participatory local governance in Armenia"	10'000
14	ROMACTED Phase 1	37'000
15	Strengthening democracy and building trust at local level in Ukraine	9'100
16	Neighbourhood Partnerships Tunisia (2018-2021)	25'000
17	Action Plan Moldova 2017-2020	25'000
18	Action Plan Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021	25'000
19	EU/CoE Joint Project "Inclusive schools: Making a difference for Roma children 2	9'000
20	Neighbourhood Partnerships for Morocco (2018-2021)	25'000
21	Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion (2020-2025)	15'000
22	(Mid-)assessment of the CoE Gender Equality Strategy	10'000
23	Action Plan for Ukraine 2018-2022	35'000
24	Action Plan for Armenia 2019-2022	28'000
25	Joint EU/CoE Project "European Union and Council of Europe working together to strengthening the protection of human rights in Ukraine"	30'000
26	Democratic Development, Decentralisation, and Good Governance in Armenia	20'000
27	EU-CoE HELP EU II project	20'250
	Total	483'094
	average	17'892
	median	14'995

Annex 5: The quality appraisal systems of evaluation reports at ILO

ILO's Evaluation Office's (EVAL) quality appraisal systems has been in place for over a decade and looks at four different dimensions *structured in four sections*, allowing the external reviewers to collect quantitative data on the quality of ILO's evaluation reports. The process is implemented as a minimum by two reviewers that appraised every single evaluation report to ensure inter-observer consistency.

- First, the tool captures descriptive data on demographic variables of each evaluation report, such as the region, department and year.
- The second section of the QA tool requires the reviewers to rate the quality of the content of the evaluation reports according to 58 different items (or criteria) grouped across the 10 standard sections that [should structure an evaluation report](#).
- Third, the comprehensiveness section of the tool ensures that data is collected on the presence or absence of key components that must be included in the report using a two-point scale (absent-present).
- Finally, the UN-SWAP assesses four different items, in alignment with the Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation.

Every year EVAL prepares a [cumulative analysis of the evaluations](#) submitted in a calendar year and assess trends and comparisons with previous quality appraisals. The results are published in the [Annual Evaluation Report](#) submitted to ILO's Governing Body.

Annex 6: The DIO evaluation coverage of Council of Europe programmes/sub-programmes 2018-2023

Table: prepared by peer review consultant, based on DIO Work Programme, DIO Annual Reports, DIO Website

- Council of Europe has 13 programmes some of which have sub-programmes; there are 31 sub-programmes
- DIO-managed evaluations of programmes and sub-programmes (2018-2023): 12
- Average: 2 per year
- 8 Programmes will have had an evaluation; 5 Programmes will not have had an evaluation
- 10 sub-programmes will be evaluated 21 sub-programmes will not be evaluated by DIO between 2018 and 2023 (six years)

	DIO-managed evaluations					
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Human Rights						
European Court of Human Rights						
Commissioner for Human Rights						X
Effective ECHR implementation						
Execution of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights						
Effectiveness of the ECHR system at national and European level						
Prevention of Torture and Degrading Treatment (CPT)						
Human rights in the fields of biomedicine and health						
Freedom of expression and information, media and data protection		X				
Equality and human dignity						
Gender Equality						
Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO)				X		
Children's right						
Anti-discrimination, diversity and inclusion						X
Antidiscrimination, diversity and inclusion - Roma and Travellers - National						
Minorities, Regional or Minority Languages - Migrants						
Secretariat to the Council of Europe Development Bank						
Social rights						
Rule of Law						
Rule of Law based institutions						
European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission)				X		
Independence and efficiency of justice					X	
Legal co-operation						
Action against crime, security and protection of citizens						
Action against crime and protection of citizens - criminal law , terrorism, money laundering, cybercrime, medicrime, trafficking in human beings					X	
Combating corruption (GRECO)	X					
Prisons and police			X			
Quality of Medicines and Healthcare (EDQM, European Pharmacopoeia)						
Drugs and Addictions (Pompidou Group)						
Sport conventions						
Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)						
Democracy						
Parliamentary Assembly						
Congress of Local and Regional Authorities						
Democratic governance				X		
Democratic participation						
Education for democracy						X
European Centre for Modern Languages						
Observatory on History Teaching in Europe						
North-South Centre						

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Youth for democracy						
European Youth Foundation						
Youth Mobility through the Youth Card						
Culture, Nature and Heritage					X	
Eurimages						
Major hazards (EUR-OPA)						
Cultural routes						
European Youth Centres - Buildings						

Annex 7: The Evaluation Office at UNESCO

The Division of Internal Oversight Services (IOS) provides the Director-General with independent, objective assurance, systematic review and advice to add value and improve programme design, delivery and operations. IOS is a consolidated oversight mechanism that covers internal audit, evaluation, investigation, and other management support.

IOS is the custodian of evaluation in UNESCO and the IOS Director is ultimately responsible for the UNESCO evaluation function. S/he approves and can modify the biennial UNESCO corporate evaluation plan before it is presented to the Executive Board. S/he is appointed for one non-renewable six-year term to ensure full independence of the function.

The Head of Evaluation has the primary responsibility for ensuring that the evaluation policy is upheld, the evaluation function is fully operational, and that evaluation work is conducted according to the highest professional standards, and in line with UNEG Norms and Standards. This responsibility is explicitly mentioned in the Evaluation Policy. (p. 11). The Head of Evaluation reports to the Director of IOS. In turn the Head of Evaluation manages a team and is the direct supervisor of five evaluation professional staff.

The Head of Evaluation participates – together with the IOS Director – in the governing body sessions (Executive Board and General Conference) whenever evaluation items are presented as well as during the annual presentation of the IOS Annual report (also with the Head of Audit and Investigation).

The Head of Evaluation has the authority to reach out to member states and informally present evaluations that might be of interest. The Head of Evaluation regularly engages with senior management. For example, he/she can have meetings with Assistant Director Generals and Directors. In UNESCO the Head of Evaluation is the *face* of evaluation. Senior Management will reach out to the Head of Evaluation both from HQ and the field.

Box: The Evaluation Office of the Internal Oversight Services at UNESCO

19. The **IOS Evaluation Office** is responsible for upholding the norms and standards as set out in this revised policy. Specifically, it:
- Conducts or commissions corporate evaluations according to a biennial evaluation plan;
 - Prepares the annual synthetic review of UNESCO evaluations;
 - Presents the results of corporate evaluations and the annual synthetic review of evaluations to the Executive Board and other Governing Bodies;
 - Develops and facilitates access to evaluation knowledge, guidance and support materials through a consolidated UNESCO Evaluation Knowledge Hub;
 - Maintains a publicly accessible repository of UNESCO evaluations;
 - Produces and updates the UNESCO Evaluation Manual, and other guidance documents including on innovative methodological approaches;
 - Nurtures links with national and regional evaluation societies and other communities of evaluation professionals to expand the pool of evaluation consultants;
 - Provides targeted, UNESCO context specific, evaluation capacity building and relevant materials;
 - Maintains and supports the Evaluation Focal Point (EFP) Network;
 - Outlines and communicates decentralized evaluation quality assurance process;
 - Communicates and disseminates evaluation findings through multiple channels;
 - Tracks the development of management responses and action plans for evaluations managed by other UNESCO entities;
 - Contributes to the UNESCO corporate register of oversight recommendations;
 - Reports on recommendation implementation and follow-up for corporate evaluations; and
 - Promotes and participates, when relevant, in system-wide and joint evaluations.

Source: UNESCO Evaluation Policy 2022-2029, p. 11, 12.

Annex 8: The planning and management of decentralised evaluations at ILO

Once a project is approved by a donor an approval minute sheet is issued by ILO's Department for Partnership and Development with copy to EVAL. **Based on that minute sheet and budget thresholds EVAL identifies projects that need to be evaluated and populates its database [i-eval Discovery](#).** All mandated independent or internal evaluations, as well as joint and external evaluations covering the ILO's work are systematically scheduled and recorded in i-eval Discovery. This information is meant to support accountability, transparency and organisational learning. The knowledge generated from these evaluations in terms of lessons learned, good practices and recommendations and can be used to inform the design and implementation of ILO programmes and projects. i-eval Discovery therefore serves as a knowledge management and as an organisational learning tool.

Twice each year, EVAL takes **a comprehensive approach to planning decentralised evaluations.** Based on lists produced by retrieving data from i-eval Discovery, evaluation focal points in each department and region are requested to develop rolling work plans to implement their respective evaluation plans. Updates are entered into i-eval Discovery to ensure that it accurately displays plans in real-time to all stakeholders. Evaluation plans should be discussed across the Office to identify opportunities for collaboration and consolidation. These work plans provide [a detailed schedule of all decentralised independent evaluations scheduled for the upcoming year](#). Annual reporting takes place on the progress made towards regional and departmental evaluation work plans in the AER.

For reasons of workload and practicality these decentralised evaluations are supported by departmental evaluation focal points (DEFPs) or regional evaluation officers (REOs) with [EVAL certified evaluation managers](#). **A senior evaluation officer in EVAL however has the responsibility for approving the final evaluation report if it concerns and independent evaluation hence the term hybrid decentralised evaluation system.**

For decentralised evaluations, active and routine follow-up of recommendations is initiated by EVAL and carried out by management. Management response to evaluation recommendation are completed via the [Automated Management Response System](#) (AMRS).

Annex 9: The peer review interviews and focus group discussions

Final agenda, 13th-17th June 2022

(Includes all persons that the peer review panel actually met)

Meeting venue: Council of Europe staff members offices, Room 15 (15th-17th June, Palais) and on BlueJeans.

N°	Time / Venue	Name	Function
Monday 13th June 2022 (Participants: Urs Zollinger, only in the afternoon)			
1	14h00-15h00 Salle DA102, D Buil.	Elena KOUDRIAVTSEVA	Head of Internal Audit Division, DIO
2	15h15-16h15 Office 4_186, Palais de l’Europe	Ulrika FLODIN-JANSON	Deputy to the Secretary to the Committee of Ministers
		Catherine VARINOT	Secretary to the GR-PBA and TC-INF, Secretariat of the Committee of Ministers
3	16h30-17h00 Salle DA102, D Buil.	Malcolm COX (presentation of follow-up recommendations IT tool: TeamMate)	Senior evaluator, DIO
Tuesday 14 th June 2022 (Participants: Urs Zollinger, Arild Hauge)			
4	10h15-11h15 Office 3_135, Palais de l’Europe	Catherine DU BERNARD ROCHY	Head of Division, Directorate of Programme and Budget
		Camille GANGLOFF	Adviser, Directorate of Programme and Budget
5	11h45-12h45 Office 3_011, Palais de l’Europe	Bjorn BERGE	Deputy Secretary General
		Matthew BARR	Deputy Director of Private Office
6	14h00-15h00 Office 2.018, Palais de l’Europe	Erik LAURSEN	Chair of GR-PBA – Programme, Budget and Administration, Ambassador Permanent Representative of Denmark
7	15h30-16h15 Salle DA102, D Buil.	Petya PESHEVA-MANOLOVA	Head of Investigation Unit, DIO
8	17h15-18h00 Office 3_006, Palais de l’Europe	Gianluca ESPOSITO	Deputy Director, Private Office of the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General
		Irene KITSOU-MILONAS	Adviser, Private Office of the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General
Wednesday 15th June 2022 (Participants: Urs Zollinger, Arild Hauge, Claudia Ibarguen, (Guy Thijs - online)			
9	9h30-10h30 Room 15, Palais de l’Europe	Geza MEZEI	Head of Division, Parliamentary Projects Support Division, PACE
		Alessandro MANCINI	Deputy to the Head of the Parliamentary Projects Support Division, PACE
10	10h45-11h45 Room 15, Palais de l’Europe	Margareta DE GOYS	Chairperson of the OAC
		Claus ANDREASEN	Member of the OAC
		Cristobal MARTIN RICO	Member of the OAC
		Per ØYVIND BASTØE	Member of the OAC

N°	Time / Venue	Name	Function
11	14h30-16h00 Room 15 Palais de l’Europe (FGD Decentralised Evaluations)	Ana OPRISAN	Programme Manager of ROMACT Joint Programme, Roma and Travellers Team, Directorate General of Democracy and Human Dignity (DGII)
		Sergei BAZARYA	Co-ordinator, Co-ordination of the EU’s Eastern Partnership region (ODGP)
		Thierry HUGOT	Financial analyst, Partial Agreement – Eurimages (DGII)
		Katerina MARKOVOVA	Co-ordinator, South-East Europe and Turkey (ODGP)
		Eva KONECNA	Secretary to the CEPEJ-GT-SATURN, Timeframes of proceedings Directorate General Human Rights and Rule of Law (DGI)
		Marité MORAS	Head of Unit, Co-operation Programmes Development and Partnerships, and Action Plans BiH, Georgia, Ukraine (Congress)
		Miguel SILVA	Partial Agreement - North-South Centre (DGII)
		Oksana OVCHARUK	Project Officer (European Union and Council of Europe Project), Human Rights Directorate (DGI)
		Amélie LEPINARD	Co-ordinator, South Programme (ODGP)
Thursday 16 th June 2022 (Participants: Urs Zollinger, Arild Hauge, Claudia Ibarguen, (Guy Thijs - online))			
12	09h00-10h00 Salle D200, D Buil.	Malcolm COX	Senior evaluator, DIO
13	10h15-11h15 Room 15, Palais de l'Europe	Teodora LUKOVIC	Senior evaluator, DIO
14	11h30-12h30 Room 15, Palais de l'Europe	Rica TERBECK	Senior evaluator, DIO
15	14h00-14h45 Room 15, Palais de l’Europe	Fredrik HOLM	Head of Division, Central Co-ordination and Risk Management Division, Office of the Directorate General of Programmes
		Tobia FIORILLI	Policy advisor, Programming Department, Office of the Directorate General of Programmes
16	15h00-17h00 Room 15, Palais de l’Europe (FGD PRs)	Erik LAURSEN	Chair of GR-PBA - Programme, Budget and Administration, Ambassador Permanent Representative of Denmark
		Mr Loek Ten Hagen	Deputy Permanent Representative, Netherlands
		Ms Tone Cecilia Lang	Chargée d’affaires a.i.; Permanent Representation Norway
		Mr Christian MEUWLY	Ambassadeur Extraordinaire et Plénipotentiaire, Switzerland
		Ms Anna ÖBERG DEGNBOL	Deputy Permanent Representative (GR-PBA, GR-DEM - Democracy), Sweden
		Ms Nadia HASHMI	Deputy Permanent Representative, United Kingdom

N°	Time / Venue	Name	Function
		Mr Faraan SAYED	Deputy Permanent Representative, United Kingdom
Friday 17th June 2022 (Participants: Urs Zollinger, Arild Hauge, Claudia Ibarguen, (Guy Thijs - online))			
17	10h30-12h30 Room 15, Palais (FGD DGI, DGII, the Court)	Roberto OLLA	Head of Department, Human Dignity and Gender Equality Department (DGII)
		Susan NEWMAN BAUDAIS	Executive Director, Partial Agreement – Eurimages, DGII
		Patrick PENNINCKX	Head of Department, Information Society (DGI)
		Johan FRIESTEDT	Executive Secretary - Head of Division, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) (DGII)
		Michael NEURAUTER	Head of Division. Deputy Executive Secretary Transversal Support Division \CPT; Deputy Executive Secretary Secretariat of the Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) (DGI)
		Raluca IVAN	Head of Section I, Co-operation in Police and Deprivation of Liberty, DGI
		Anna STEPANOVA	Senior Legal Adviser, Registrar and Deputy Registrar
18	14h00-15h00 Room 15, Palais de l'Europe	Colin WALL	Director, Directorate of Internal Oversight
19	15h15-16h15 Room 15, Palais de l'Europe	Aygen BECQUART	Head of Evaluation Division

Annex 10: The list of documents used for the peer review

Websites

Council of Europe Evaluation Website: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/internal-oversight/evaluation>

DIO Evaluation reports: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/internal-oversight/evaluation-reports>

Decentralised evaluation reports: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/internal-oversight/decentralised-evaluation-reports>

Evaluation reports managed by the Evaluation Division

Evaluation of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), final report, 14 February 2022, Council of Europe

Evaluation of the Council of Europe's monitoring mechanisms, final report, May 2022, Council of Europe

Evaluation of the Council of Europe's work under the Sub-programme "Violence against women and domestic violence", 2016-2020, Final report, 18 March 2022, Council of Europe

Evaluation of Results-based management in the Council of Europe, January 2021, Council of Europe

Evaluation of the Council of Europe's work under the programme line "Prisons and police" 2016-2019, January 2021, Council of Europe

Evaluation of the Council of Europe's Conference of International non-governmental organisations, April 2021, Council of Europe

Evaluation of Strategy development and reporting in the Council of Europe, June 2020, Council of Europe

DIO documents (general)

Work Programme 2022-2023 of the Directorate of Internal Oversight, GR-PBA(2022)3, Feb. 2022

Council of Europe Internal Oversight Charter (draft), Directorate of Internal Oversight, Item to be considered by the GR-PBA at its meeting on 2 June 2022

Directorate of Internal Oversight – Strategy 2020-2024, DIO, April 2020

Annual Report 2020 of the Directorate of Internal Oversight, CM(2021)81, May 2021

Annual Report 2021 of the Directorate of Internal Oversight, CM(2022)...., May 2022

DIO documents (evaluation specific)

Council of Europe Evaluation Policy, DIO, Nov. 2019

Council of Europe Evaluation Guidelines, DIO, Oct. 2020

Council of Europe Code of Conduct for Evaluation, DIO (date n.a.)

Code of Conduct of Evaluators (to be signed by evaluators), DIO (date n.a.)

Analyse of the results of the DIO Study on Comm (DIO survey of MAE staff), DIO, December 2020

Self-Assessment Maturity Matrix for UN Evaluation Functions, Working Draft, Evaluation Division, Council of Europe, Updated February 28th, 2022.

Decentralised evaluation reports

External Evaluation of the activities of the Eurimages Fund, Final Evaluation Report, EY, 28 November 2018

Progress Review and Final Evaluation of the Council of Europe Action Plan for the Republic of Moldova 2017-2020, Framework contract ref 2018/AO/60, EVALUATION REPORT (final report), Submitted by: Heidrun Ferrari and Britta Schweighöfer, 11 February 2021

Progress Review and Final Evaluation of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021, Final Report, William Bartlett, Max Frass, Tena Prelec, Enkeleida Tahiraj, Elisabet Vives, April 2021

Evaluation of the Council of Europe Neighbourhood Partnership with Morocco 2018-2021, Office of the Directorate General of Programmes, Council of Europe, Sept. 2021

Independent Evaluation of the European Roma Institute for Arts and Culture (ERIAC) September 2019 – July 2021, Directorate General of Democracy, Council of Europe Oct. 2021

Mid-term evaluation of the European Union / Council of Europe Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey - Phase II, Office of the Directorate General of Programmes, Council of Europe June 2021

Planned Decentralised Evaluations 2021-2022 (Excel table showing planned decentralised evaluations), DIO/ED, 2022

Decentralised evaluation methodology

Quality Assurance Framework - Support for Decentralised Evaluations, Memorandum, DIO, Feb. 2021

Decentralised Evaluations – State of Play, Teodora Lukovic, Senior Evaluator, (Power Point Presentation), DIO, March 2022

Quality Assurance Framework for Decentralised Evaluations, Teodora Lukovic, Senior Evaluator, (Power Point Presentation), DIO, July 2021

DIO Evaluation Support provided to MAE, (Excel table showing all support activities), DIO/ED, 2022

Stocktaking of Decentralised Evaluations with a view to establishing an evaluation framework and designing a quality assurance system, Final Report, DO/ED, Jan. 2020

Evaluation Matrix Template, DIO/ED

Example of Evaluation ToR (annotated), TOR for the Evaluation of the Project: HELP in the member state, DIO/ED

Quality Assurance Checklist for Evaluation ToR, DIO/ED

Quality Assurance Checklist for Evaluation Inception Report, DIO/ED

Quality Assurance Checklist for Evaluation Reports, DIO/ED

Information Note on the Procurement of Consultants for Decentralised Evaluations, DIO/ED

Oversight Advisory Committee

OAC Annual report from 1 October 2020 to 30 November 2021, CM(2022)38, Feb. 2022

OAC Draft revised terms of reference, CM(2022)39, Feb..2022

Council of Europe documents

Moving Forward 2022, Annual report of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Council of Europe, April 2022

State of Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law - A democratic renewal for Europe, Report by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe 2021, Council of Europe, May 2021

Council of Europe Programme and Budget for 2022 – 2025, CM(2022)1, Council of Europe, 10 December 2021

Progress review report 2021, Programme and Budget 2020-2021, CM/Del/Dec(2022)1435/11.2, Council of Europe, 1 June 2022

External Audit of the Council of Europe, Audit Report, Review of the Administrative and Organisational Reform of the Council of Europe, Financial years 2018 to 2021, Cours des Comptes, 2021.

Creation of a Network of national correspondents of police authorities, Item to be considered by the GR-J at its meeting on 17 March 2022, Item submitted to the Committee of Ministers for decision, CM(2022)29, (showing the use of evaluation), February 2022

Project Management Methodology, Handbook, Council of Europe, 2016

Other documents (not Council of Europe documents)

UNESCO Evaluation Policy,

Analysis of the Evaluation Function in the United Nations System, Joint Inspection Unit, United Nations, Geneva 2014

Related to peer reviews

Self-Assessment Maturity Matrix for UN Evaluation Functions, Working Draft, Updated February 28th, (self-assessment of the DIO Evaluation Division, preparatory work for this peer review) DIO/ED, Feb. 2022

Peer Assessment: The Evaluation Function of the Council of Europe – Progress on Implementation of Recommendations, March 2021

Peer Assessment Recommendations as addressed in the revised Evaluation Guidelines, DIO/ED, September 2020

Peer Assessment Mission Report, Rapid Peer Assessment of the Evaluation Function of the Directorate of Internal Oversight, Council of Europe, Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC), Bern, 2010

Final Report, Peer Assessment: The Evaluation Function of the Council of Europe, Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC), Bern, 2017.