



European Union / Council of Europe Joint Programme:

“Capacity Building of the Law Enforcement Agencies for Appropriate Treatment of Detained and Sentenced Persons”

Project Aim:

The Council of Europe will assist the national authorities in overcoming the identified shortcomings, systemic weaknesses and practical deficiencies related to the treatment of detained and sentenced persons. The project comprises of two components separately addressing the police and prison related issues, aiming to:

1. Develop capacities for ensuring professionalism of the police service in guaranteeing full observance of fundamental rights through an efficient and reliable regulator and operational framework.
2. Strengthen the organizational and management capacity of the penitentiary system in the country for ensuring full protection of human rights in the treatment of the detained and convicted persons.

The project will be implemented in close cooperation and partnership with the Ministry of Justice (Directorate for Execution of Sanctions) and the Ministry for Internal Affairs (the Bureau for Public Safety and the Sector for Internal Control and Professional Standards), presenting the main project beneficiaries. It will also include a wider group of national partners and stakeholders, who will contribute towards the capacity-building of the target group and will strive to strengthen their mutual cooperation with regards to preventing ill-treatment and conducting effective investigation into reported cases. These stakeholders, among others, will include representatives from Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Office of the Public Prosecutor, Ombudsman and National Preventive Mechanism, Standing Inquiry Committee for Protection of Civil Rights and Freedoms and civil society organizations active in combatting ill-treatment and impunity.

The duration of the project is set at 24 months and is expected to be completed by 30 November 2014 and the budget is EUR 2 100 000.

Background information:

The country is party to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), as well as the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment thus prohibiting torture and other forms of inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

The country, being a candidate for full membership of the European Union (EU) since 2005, sees the “institution building” as crucial process to enhance administrative capacity in ensuring successful transition for national institutions to the standards, norms and achievements of EU member states.

However, the EC Progress reports, the reports of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT), the reports by the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) and other relevant reports produced by human rights monitoring bodies, continuously detect systematic shortcomings and identify risks that could lead to possible ill-treatment of detained and imprisoned persons. The EC Progress Report 2012 emphasizes the need for continued training, professionalization and depoliticisation of police personnel and also noted that the lack of independence of the internal control function for the police remains a concern. On the other side, the penitentiary system, remains seriously underfunded and understaffed. Although there was some progress in the area of the prison system, the EC noted that in 2012 the prisons, in general, were characterized with poor management, poor material conditions, limited health care provision, a lack of educational and rehabilitation activities. The deficiency of independent inspection mechanism to address violations and punish perpetrators remains matter of concern. A comprehensive national strategy for the prison system has yet to be drafted and specialized treatment programmes for vulnerable groups have yet to be put into practice. The CPT, in its several reports, has been pointing to a number of serious concerns in the prisons visited which required urgent action, notably: ill-treatment of inmates by prison officers, inter-prisoner violence and/or intimidation and lack of adequate healthcare services.

Expected Project results:

In order to achieve the expected results, the Council of Europe will organize and implement series of activities to meet the aim of the project:

Police (Component 1)

1. A Human Rights Concept for the police is drafted and presented to the authorities with a view to its swift adoption and implementation.
2. Regulatory and institutional/operational framework for prevention of ill-treatment and effective investigation of complaints regarding police operations is assessed, recommendations for improvement are drafted and presented to the authorities.
3. A human rights trainers' network is established and revised training programme for initial and in-service training courses on human rights with a focus on preventing and combating ill-treatment and impunity is developed.
4. The coordination and co-operation among inspection bodies and external institutions observing the human rights and their co-operation with the police is strengthened and proficiency and efficiency of handling complaints and investigation procedures is improved.
5. Public awareness regarding the developments in the oversight mechanism and in the police service concerning the observance of human rights is raised.

Penitentiary system (Component 2)

1. A comprehensive National Strategy on development of the penitentiary system is developed and presented to the national authorities.
2. The National Strategy on Health Care is reviewed and the provision of health care in prisons is improved.
3. Prison management in general, and case management and treatment of vulnerable groups of prisoners in particular, is improved.
4. Well-conceived and sustainable training structure with emphasis on two specified areas of training: human rights and management is set-up.
5. Internal inspection and external monitoring and supervision in prisons is improved and mechanisms for preventing and combating corruption of prison staff is set-up with procedures for monitoring and processing the allegations of violations of human rights in place.

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