



ENSURING SUSTAINABLE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN

South Programme III
(2018-2020)

Legislative expertise
Capacity development
Awareness raising
Networking

Ensuring Sustainable Democratic Governance and Human Rights in the Southern Mediterranean

Funded
by the European Union
and the Council of Europe



EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Implemented
by the Council of Europe



DEEPENING EFFORTS WITH REFOCUSSED PRIORITIES

For the past 7 years, the Council of Europe and the European Union have been working in close partnership with beneficiaries from the Southern Mediterranean region to advance human rights and democratic governance based on the shared values of the two organisations, and in line with the national reform agendas.

Anchored in the Memorandum of Understanding of 2007 between the Council of Europe and the European Union, this partnership also derives from the Statement of Intent of 2014 in which both organisations recall their commitment to mobilising capacities and resources to further coordinate the implementation of their policy goals in the neighbourhood and enlargement regions. The first joint initiative in the Southern Mediterranean was rolled out with phase one of the South Programme (2012-2014).

Building on the achievements of the first period, the second phase of the programme (2015-2017) has accompanied beneficiaries in constitutional processes, supported the development of new legislation and democratic governance structures and strengthened the institutional capacities of national bodies. The South programme II fostered regional, inter-parliamentary and intergovernmental co-operation, including through the participation of beneficiaries in the relevant Council of Europe inter-governmental and experts committees and networks. It has also been key in promoting Council of Europe and other international standards on human rights, the rule of law and democracy.

The South Programme III aims to ensure the sustainability of earlier results by contributing to reinforcing human rights, the rule of law and democracy in the Southern Mediterranean region in accordance with European and other international standards based on a demand-driven approach. The programme holds as its main focus the combating of all forms of violence against women.



SOUTH PROGRAMME III AT A GLANCE

■ The programme has a time frame of 24 months (2018-2020) with a budget of € 3 334 000 funded 90% by the European Union and 10% by the Council of Europe as the organisation in charge of the implementation.

■ As a continuation of the second phase, the South Programme III is open to the partners of the Southern Mediterranean covered by the Revised European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) of the European Union and the Council of Europe's policy towards neighbouring regions (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine*, Tunisia), while further promoting regional co-operation.

■ The guidance of the South Programme III implementation is ensured by regional and bilateral steering committees composed of representatives of national authorities, the European Union and the Council of Europe.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

■ The South Programme III has 4 specific objectives. It seeks to:

- ▶ Pursue the creation of a **common legal space** between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean region through the promotion of key Council of Europe conventions, partial agreements and other European and international standards.
- ▶ Provide continued **institutional support** to democratic governance and independent instances, legal expertise, networking and capacity building.
- ▶ Promote the expansion of existing relevant **networks** between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean and support the creation of new inter and intra-regional networks. These will facilitate exchanges and the regional application of human rights, the rule of law and democracy standards.
- ▶ Contribute to the **combating of violence against women** using relevant Council of Europe standards, tools and mechanisms as a transversal priority.

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



KEY ACTIONS AND AREAS OF INTERVENTION

Depending on the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries concerned, and as part of the broader regional action, the programme works on:

- ▶ Raising awareness of core Council of Europe conventions, in particular in the area of combating violence against women, while accompanying partners in the harmonisation process.
- ▶ Supporting the establishment and effective functioning of constitutional bodies, the judiciary, human rights and independent instances including democratically elected representative instances. Special emphasis is given to supporting the preparation of legislative frameworks to combat violence against women, the setting-up and capacity building of instances fighting this phenomenon.
- ▶ Facilitating harmonisation of legislation and practice, by fostering regional dialogue, co-operation and peer to peer exchanges through new/existing networks between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean.

A UNIQUE APPROACH

A flexible instrument. The South Programme III is conceived to take into account the changing realities of a region which has been witnessing institutional reforms for the last few years. It is designed to swiftly respond to the emerging and changing needs of partners by adapting the bundle of support given in accordance with their national reform priorities.

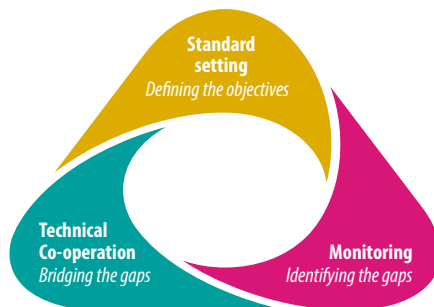
Demand-driven. From drafting of organic laws or legislative frameworks to supporting the setting up of democratic governance structures, from technical advice to tailored capacity building, co-operation with Southern Mediterranean partners is driven by demand, thus responsive to locally formulated needs. Specific regional activities or targeted bilateral support are framed in response to specific requests from national authorities, in line with the programme's objectives.

Ownership. A good level of local ownership is guaranteed as partners take an active part in the design and implementation of the programme. Key contributing factors to such country ownership are the demand-driven approach of the South Programme III and the partners' commitments to the joint efforts.



■ **A good mix of regional and bilateral action.** The South Programme III runs regional initiatives with country-specific support. It provides an unparalleled opportunity for Southern Mediterranean partners to come together, at the political and technical level, to discuss common issues, share strategies and explore areas for co-operation. Regional action promoting dialogue and raising awareness allows partners to find ways of dealing with common challenges and trans-national issues such as trafficking in human beings, violence against women, etc. These initiatives are complemented by bilateral co-operation which addresses partners' special needs based on their demand and adapted to their local realities.

■ **A unique working method, through the Council of Europe strategic triangle.** The Council of Europe is an intergovernmental organisation based on legally-binding instruments and convention-based monitoring mechanisms on a pan-European scale. The standards are monitored by independent mechanisms and supported through advisory opinion bodies while being supplemented by co-operation and technical assistance activities where necessary. The "triangle" of standard setting, monitoring and co-operation represents the Council of Europe's strongest comparative advantage. In the case of Southern Mediterranean beneficiaries, as non-member States of the Council of Europe, monitoring mechanisms will not apply until they become a Contracting Party to relevant conventions.



Council of Europe strategic triangle

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

www.coe.int

The European Union is a unique economic and political partnership between 28 democratic European countries. Its aims are peace, prosperity and freedom for its 500 million citizens – in a fairer, safer world. To make things happen, EU countries set up bodies to run the EU and adopt its legislation. The main ones are the European Parliament (representing the people of Europe), the Council of the European Union (representing national governments) and the European Commission (representing the common EU interest).

<http://europa.eu>

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