



# HORIZONTAL FACILITY FOR WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY

## Increasing judicial capacity to safeguard human rights and combat ill-treatment and impunity

This Action is co-funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe as part of the “Horizontal Facility for Western Balkans and Turkey” (Horizontal Facility) and is implemented by the Council of Europe. Through the implementation of this Action, the Council of Europe aims to assist the authorities in overcoming the identified shortcomings and practical deficiencies related to training by conducting a needs assessment and developing a comprehensive training curriculum for judges, prosecutors and other legal professionals, and for Constitutional Court judges on selected thematic areas of the European Convention on Human Rights. The Council of Europe will implement the Action in close cooperation and partnership with the Academy for Judges and Public Prosecutors “Pavel Shatev”, the Constitutional Court, the Ministry of Justice (the Office of the Government Agent before the European Court of Human Rights), the Supreme Court, the Appellate Courts and the Ombudsman Institution. The duration of the Action is set at 18 months, and is expected to be completed by 31 May 2018, with an overall budget of EUR 700,000.

### The Objective of the Action:

The **overall objective** of the Action is to contribute to domestic efforts to strengthen the capacities of legal professionals to safeguard human rights and combat ill-treatment and impunity.

The Action aims at accomplishing the following **specific outcomes**:

- ✓ Improve the capacities of the judiciary to apply and safeguard European human rights standards;
- ✓ Improve the capacities of the judiciary to combat more effectively ill-treatment and impunity;

Accordingly, the **outcomes** of the Action will be achieved through realisation of the following expected results:

- ✓ Strengthened and sustainable in-house capacity of the Academy to deliver human rights training to judges and prosecutors;
- ✓ Judges and prosecutors better interpret and apply the provisions of the ECHR and the ECtHR case law;



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- ✓ The Constitutional Court is able to more effectively apply European human rights standards to individual complaints;
- ✓ Strengthened capacities of the Academy for Training of Judges and Prosecutors to train legal professionals on combating ill-treatment and impunity;
- ✓ Enhanced capacities of legal professionals to combat ill-treatment and impunity in line with the ECHR and the ECtHR case law.

## Background information

On 11 April 2016, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Thorbjørn Jagland, and the European Union's Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes Hahn, announced a new co-operation initiative of the two organizations aimed at supporting South-East Europe and Turkey in their efforts to comply with European standards. The initiative is called the European Union/Council of Europe Horizontal Facility for Western Balkans and Turkey (Horizontal Facility). It is a three-year programme (May 2016 – May 2019), focusing on three themes: ensuring justice, fighting economic crime as well as combating discrimination and protecting the rights of vulnerable groups. Through the Horizontal Facility, the European Union and the Council of Europe will assist beneficiary countries to comply with Council of Europe standards and the European Union acquis in the framework of the enlargement process, through a complementary two-fold approach of technical co-operation and the provision of expertise. The Horizontal Facility relies on the Council of Europe's unique working methods, whereby tailor-made technical co-operation activities are based on conclusions and recommendations of the Council of Europe's monitoring bodies, which highlight areas where improvements are needed in legislation and policies of the beneficiaries to comply with the Organisation's treaties and other standards.

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organization. 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.

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).

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