



# HORIZONTAL FACILITY FOR WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY

## Supporting effective remedies and mutual legal assistance

As a part of the co-operation framework co-funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe, known as the “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey” (Horizontal Facility), the Council of Europe will implement the Action “Supporting effective remedies and mutual legal assistance”. The Action will be implemented in close partnership with the Judicial Academy, Supreme Court of Cassation, Ministry of Justice, High Judicial Council, State Prosecutorial Council, Republic Prosecutor’s Office and the Agent of the Republic of Serbia before the European Court of Human Rights.

The Action will contribute to the implementation of the European Union Association Agreement to support the efforts of Serbia to strengthen democracy and the rule of law, and deploy a broad range of measures to reduce the number of applications against Serbia before the European Court of Human Rights mainly on grounds of violation of the right to trial within reasonable time. The duration of the Action is set at 18 months, with an overall budget of 650,000 Euros, and it is expected to be completed by 30 June 2018.

## Objectives and expected results

The **overall objective** of the Action is to improve enjoyment by people under the jurisdiction of the Republic of Serbia of their human rights, through access to domestic remedies and better mutual legal assistance.

The **first specific objective** is to reduce systemic violations of human rights and support the provision of effective domestic legal remedies. This specific objective will be accomplished through the achievement of the following **results**:

- ▶ The co-operation and coordination between authorities and legal professionals on how to prevent systemic human rights violations and facilitate effective remedies is enhanced;
- ▶ The capacity of the Judicial Academy to support legal professionals in addressing systemic human rights violations is strengthened;
- ▶ The capacities of legal professionals, including judges, prosecutors, lawyers and legal assistants, to apply the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights is reinforced.

The **second specific objective** is to strengthen mutual legal assistance. This specific objective will be accomplished through the achievement of the following **result**:

- ▶ The capacity of the Judicial Academy to provide training to legal professionals on issues related to mutual legal assistance is enhanced through training in and application of the methodology developed under the European Programme for Human Rights Education of Legal Professionals (HELP).

Horizontal Facility for Western Balkans and Turkey

Funded  
by the European Union  
and the Council of Europe



Implemented  
by the Council of Europe

<http://horizontal-facility-eu.coe.int>

## Background information

On 11 April 2016, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Thorbjørn Jagland, and the European Union Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes Hahn, announced a new co-operation initiative of the two organisations 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 corruption, economic crime and organised crime; as well as combating discrimination and protecting the rights of vulnerable groups. It has a budget of €25 million, of which €20 million has been provided by the European Union and €5 million by the Council of Europe. 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 the 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 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.

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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