



Supporting Structural Reforms in EU member States

Overview 2018-2024



Council of Europe and
European Union

April, 2025

Co-funded
by the European Union



EUROPEAN UNION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE



CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Co-funded and implemented
by the Council of Europe

KEY INSIGHTS ABOUT THE CO-OPERATION:

Since 2018, the European Commission and the Council of Europe worked together, to support EU member states on implementing structural reforms in the areas of human rights, rule of law, and democracy.

The support is fully demand-driven and linked with national or key EU priorities. The projects are financed by EU mechanisms, including the Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP) from 2017 to 2021, and its successor the Technical Support Instrument (TSI), which is currently underway.

Every year, the Commission launches call for requests from EU member states to benefit from this assistance. The Commission can either provide support directly through its in-house expertise or in partnership with other technical support providers in a co-implementation basis

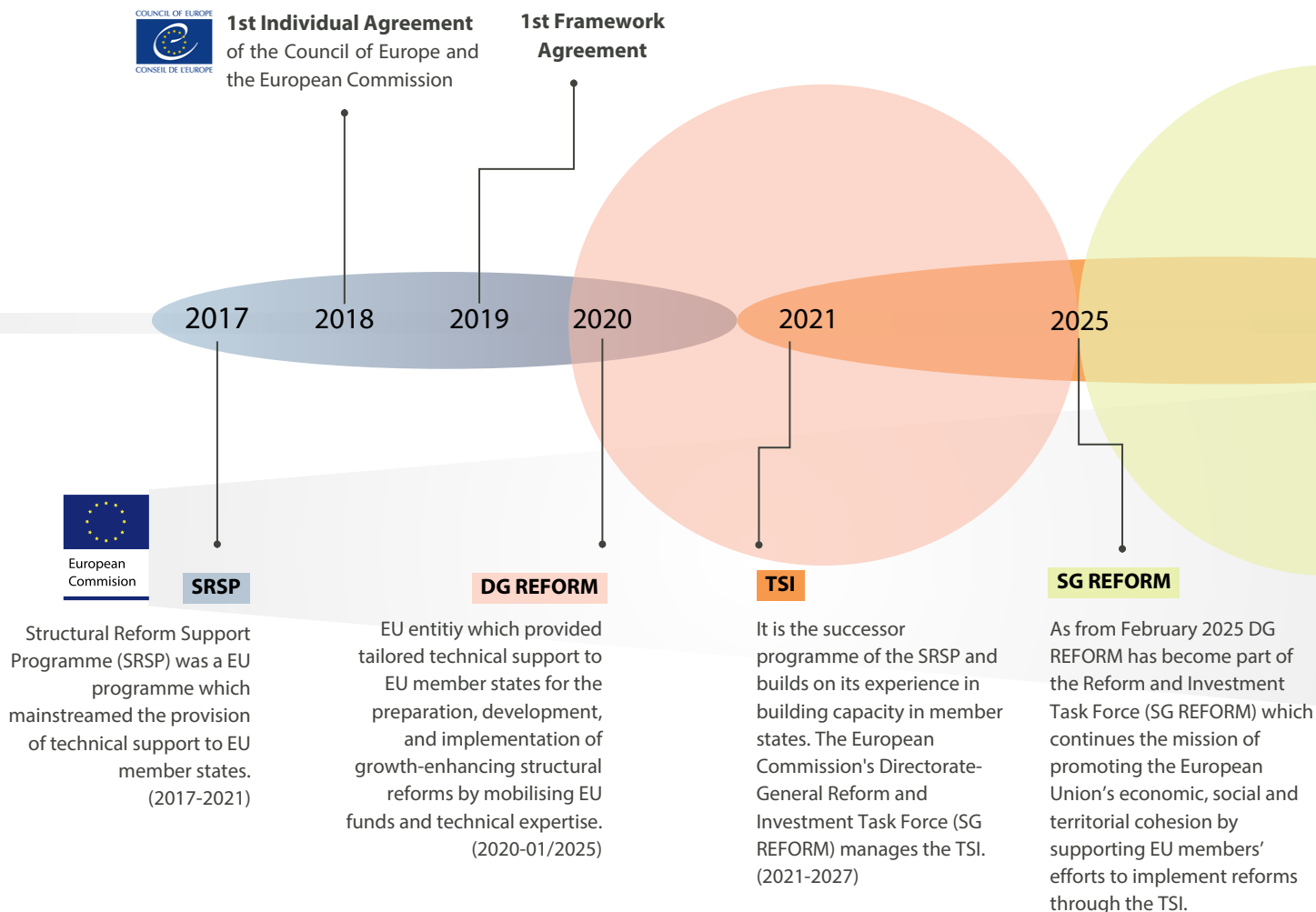
and, in the case of the Council of Europe, also in a co-financing scheme. The Council of Europe is an enduring key strategic partner to the European Union, providing essential policy and implementation support for co-operation in these three areas of shared interest.

The main entities of Commission supporting these projects were DG REFORM (Directorate- General for Structural Reform Support) from 2020 to January 2025, and now, the Reform and Investment Task Force (SG REFORM), which took over in February 2025.

All joint projects are co-funded by both organisations. Also, they can be either country specific, or multilateral, focused on shared needs and challenges within the EU.

The member states authorities are fully involved in their design and implementation along with the European Commission and the Council of Europe.

TIMELINE STRUCTURAL REFORMS IN EU MEMBER STATES:



NUMBER OF PROJECTS WITHIN COUNCIL OF
EUROPE'S PILLARS

61

TOTAL NUMBER OF
STRUCTURAL REFORM
PROJECTS

9

DEMOCRACY

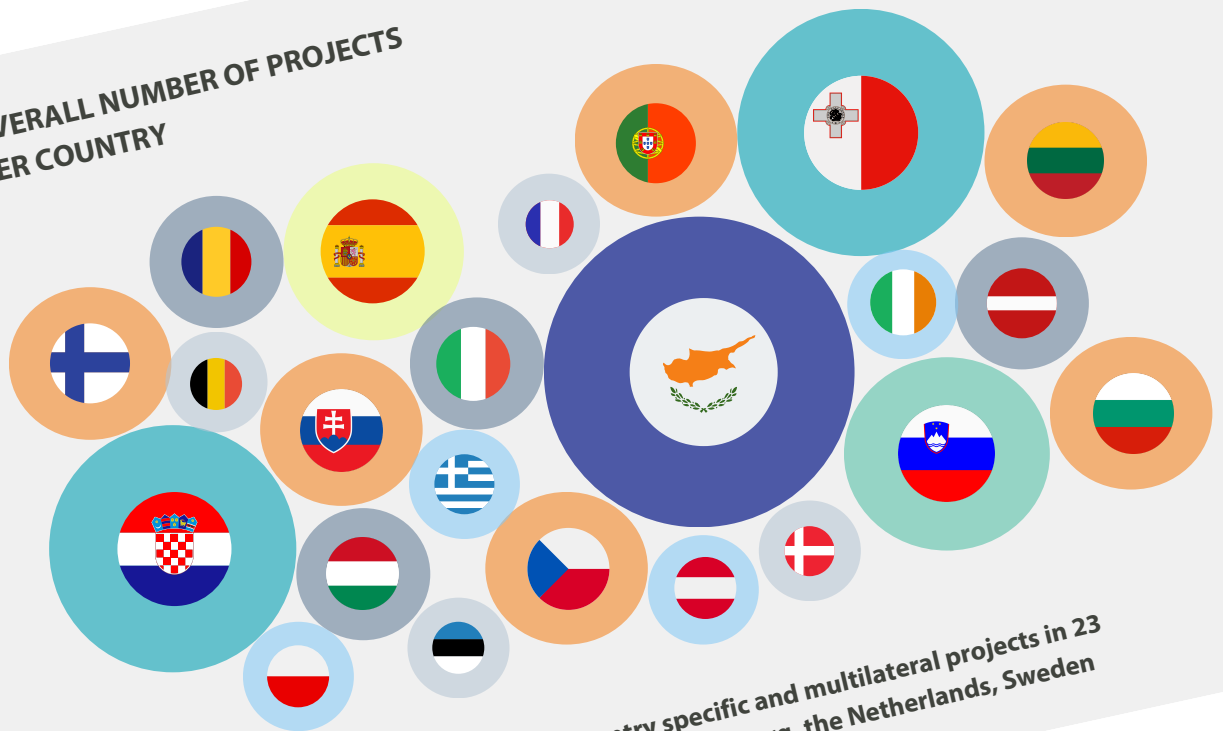
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HUMAN RIGHTS

27

RULE OF LAW

OVERALL NUMBER OF PROJECTS
PER COUNTRY



*Number of projects per country including country specific and multilateral projects in 23 EU countries. No projects until 2024 in Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden

TOTAL BUDGET
IN EUROS



AVERAGE DURATION
OF PROJECTS



*The duration of
structural reform
projects ranges from
12 to 36 months

RULE OF LAW

Between 2018 and 2024, the Council of Europe and the EU worked on 27 rule of law projects across 19 EU member states. The co-operation resulted in vital reforms in combating crime, especially economic crime, and enhancing citizen protection.

The reforms addressed key areas such as money laundering, criminal law and corrections, human trafficking, and the independence and efficiency of the justice system. Further results expected as ongoing initiatives continue to progress.

REFORMS IN:

- Austria
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- France
- Greece
- Hungary
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Malta
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain



HIGHLIGHT PROJECTS:

Modernising the Civil Procedure Rules in Cyprus

This project, implemented in 2022, allowed Cyprus to modernise the Civil Procedure Rules, marking the first major reform of civil procedure in Cyprus in 60 years. The key achievements were:

- the successful adoption of the new Civil Procedure Rules (CPR) by the Supreme Court of Cyprus
- the preparation for the application of the new CPR, through communication strategy, awareness raising events and training programmes, particularly for legal professionals

HUMAN RIGHTS

Between 2018 and 2024, the Council of Europe and the EU worked on 25 human rights projects across 20 EU member states. The collaboration led to significant reforms on the protection and promotion of human rights.

The reforms focused on children's rights, anti-discrimination, diversity and inclusion, gender equality, health and human rights, and the effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights. Additional outcomes anticipated as current initiatives advance.

- Austria
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- France
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Malta
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain



Barnahus: Supporting child victims of sexual abuse in Slovenia

Barnahus, a leading European initiative dedicated to supporting child victims of sexual abuse, has opened its doors in Ljubljana, Slovenia, with a goal of addressing 200 cases annually. The project:

- addressed legislative gaps through advocating for a Barnahus-specific bill
- improved the quality of the judicial system's response to child sexual exploitation and abuse
- equipped professionals with the tools to respond to and manage cases in a child-friendly manner

DEMOCRACY

Between 2018 and 2024, the Council of Europe and the EU worked on 9 initiatives focused on democracy across 7 EU member states, resulting in important reforms in democratic governance, including education for democracy, intercultural cities and local governance.

- Bulgaria
- Finland
- Greece
- Hungary
- Italy
- Lithuania
- Slovakia



Delivering Good Governance in Slovakia

Supported by the Council of Europe and the European Union, Slovakia developed a more robust legislative framework in order to reinforce institutional structures and enhance collaboration between local, regional, and central authorities.

Co-funded by the European Union via the Technical Support Instrument, and implemented by the Council of Europe, in co-operation with the European Commission.



More about
Reform support projects

The member states of the European Union have decided to link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

<http://europa.eu>

The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all 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

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