
Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2022-2025

Document prepared by the Office of the Directorate General for Programmes

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2022-2025 (Action Plan) is a strategic programming instrument that aims to bring Bosnia and Herzegovina's legislation, institutions and practice further into line with European standards in the areas of human rights, the rule of law and democracy. The Action Plan is intended to support the country's efforts to honour its obligations as a Council of Europe member State.

The Action Plan priorities take into account decisions, resolutions, recommendations, conclusions of reports and opinions, notably of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CM), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe (the Congress), the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe (the Commissioner), the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) and other advisory and monitoring bodies of the Organisation. It also takes into account the national reform agenda of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including² the *Justice Sector Reform Strategy (2021-2027)*, the *Bosnia and Herzegovina Migration and Asylum Strategy (2021-2026)*, the *Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2022*, the *Action Plan for improving the state of Human Rights and fundamental freedoms of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2021-2023*, the *Strategy to Suppress Trafficking in Human Beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2020-2023* and the *Policy Recommendation with a Roadmap for Improving Inclusive Education* etc. It also contributes to its European integration process.

Under this Action Plan, the Council of Europe and the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina have agreed to carry forward jointly, through co-operation programmes, reforms seeking to enhance the effectiveness of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) system (including the implementation of European standards on freedom of expression, freedom of the media, protection of journalists, social inclusion and combating hate speech); ensure social rights; improve the effectiveness of the judiciary; combat cybercrime; decrease the prevalence of trafficking in human beings and assist victims; ensure compliance of the policing and penitentiary systems with European standards; advance the electoral reforms; improve local democracy through innovative forms of deliberative democracy; foster inter-ethnic dialogue and ensure inclusive education. Emphasis will also be placed on supporting Bosnia and Herzegovina in the implementation of the recommendations of Council of Europe bodies in the field of fighting economic crime.

To assist Bosnia and Herzegovina more effectively in meeting its reform agenda, the Action Plan aims to scale up the Council of Europe's support with new areas of co-operation such as migration management and ensuring the rights of vulnerable persons in the context of migration and asylum; guaranteeing the right to information; ensuring data protection; improving access to justice for women, supporting the Constitutional Court and combating drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

The Action Plan also builds on the outcomes of the previous document which paved the way to ensuring inclusive education and enhancing legal certainty with the establishment and strengthening of case-law departments in high courts. In addition, it achieved good results regarding penitentiary reform.

¹ This document has been classified restricted until examination by the Committee of Ministers.

² Priorities were identified in adopted documents or soon-to-be adopted ones.

The Action Plan will also contribute to the implementation of the *United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* by supporting the *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs), notably Goals 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11 and 16.

The overall budget of this Action Plan is estimated at €19.1 million. While funding to the amount of €2.9 million has been secured, additional funding is essential to fully implement the priority actions identified for 2022-2025 and secure tangible results for the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACFC	Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
Action Plan	Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2022-2025
AIMMA	Academic Integrity Maturity Model
AML/CFT	Anti-Money Laundering/Countering Financing of Terrorism
APOSO	Agency for Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Education
Budapest Convention	Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime
CBM	Confidence-Building Measures
CEB	Council of Europe Development Bank
CEC	Central Election Commission
CEPEJ	European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice
CERT/CIRT	Computer Emergency Response Team/Cyber Incident Response Team
CETS	Council of Europe Treaty Series
CM	Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe
Congress	Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities
CPT	European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
CRA	Communications Regulatory Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina
CSOs	Civil society organisations
DIO	Council of Europe Directorate of Internal Oversight
DNFBP	Designated non-financial businesses and professions
ECHR	European Convention on Human Rights
ECRI	European Commission against Racism and Intolerance
ECRML	European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
ECSR	European Committee of Social Rights
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
ESC	European Social Charter
ETINED	Council of Europe Platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education
ETS	European Treaty Series
FATF	Financial Action Task Force
FCNM	Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities
FID	Financial Intelligence Department
FIU	Financial Intelligence Unit
GPR	General Policy Recommendation
GRECO	Group of States Against Corruption
GR-DEM	Group of Rapporteurs on Democracy of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe
GRETA	Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings
GREVIO	Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
HDZ BiH	“Hrvatska demokratska zajednica Bosne i Hercegovine” (Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina)
HELP	European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals
HJPC	High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council
ICRG	International Compliance Review Group
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPMIS	Integrated Prison Management Information System
ISP	Internet service provider
Istanbul Convention	Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
IT	Information Technology
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
Lanzarote Committee	Committee of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse
Lanzarote Convention	Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse
LDA	Local Democracy Agency

LGBTI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex
MCG	Minority co-ordination group
MEDICRIME Convention	Council of Europe Convention on the counterfeiting of medical products and similar crimes involving threats to public health
MLA	Mutual legal assistance
MONEYVAL	Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPO	Non-profit organisation
OB	Ordinary budget
ODGP	Office of the Directorate General of Programmes
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OHR	Office of the High Representative
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PACE	Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
PHI	Public Health Institution
PIU	Prison Intelligence Unit
PMM	Council of Europe Project Management Methodology
Pompidou Group	Council of Europe Co-operation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Drugs
RFCDC	Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture
SDA	“Stranka demokratske akcije” (Party of Democratic Action)
SDGs	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
SIPA	State Investigation and Protection Agency
SRSG	Council of Europe Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees
T-CY	Cybercrime Convention Committee
The Commissioner	Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights
Tromsø Convention	Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents
UN	United Nations
Venice Commission	European Commission for Democracy through Law
VEPs	Violent and extremist prisoners
Warsaw Convention	Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism

PART I – INTRODUCTION

1.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW

1.1.1 BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Bosnia and Herzegovina became the 44th member State of the Council of Europe on 24 April 2002. Accordingly, it has entered into, and has agreed to honour, a number of specific commitments which are listed in Parliamentary Assembly Opinion No. 234 (2002) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE).

Bosnia and Herzegovina accepted the obligations incumbent on all member States under Article 3 of the Statute:³ compliance with the principles of pluralist democracy, the rule of law and respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons placed under its jurisdiction.

To date, the country has signed 94 treaties of the Council of Europe, of which 91 have been ratified,⁴ and is subject to a number of Council of Europe mechanisms, including those of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), the Committee of Ministers (CM), PACE, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe (the Commissioner), the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT), the Group of States Against Corruption (GRECO), the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL), the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR), the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ACFC), the Committee of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection of children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Committee), the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA), the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) and the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (Congress).

The country has benefited from the co-operation programmes of the Council of Europe since 2003. The implementation of two successive Action Plans covering the periods from 2015-2017 and 2018-2021 provided a more strategic approach to the overall co-operation. Past programmes backed by the European Union were implemented to assist the country in complying with Council of Europe standards and European Union *acquis* in the context of the enlargement process, most notably in the areas of anti-discrimination, education, social inclusion, freedom of expression, penitentiary reforms, fundamental rights, combating trafficking in human beings and cybercrime. Similarly, voluntary contributions by Council of Europe member and observer States have made it possible to implement projects in the areas of reinforcing the capacity of the judiciary, disengagement from violent extremism in prisons, promoting freedom of the media and media literacy, strengthening human rights protection, providing electoral assistance, supporting reconciliation of divided municipalities while building democratic participation, and empowering young people to take a more active role in political processes.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has been a member of the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) since 2003. The CEB plays an active role in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly by supporting government investments in health and penitentiary infrastructures and through grants designed to improve the living conditions of migrants and refugees.

1.1.2 ADDED VALUE OF THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Council of Europe technical assistance programmes form an integral part of the unique strategic triangle of standard-setting, monitoring and co-operation. The development of legally binding standards is linked to their monitoring by independent mechanisms and supplemented by technical co-operation to facilitate their implementation. The Organisation's actions are developed and implemented in areas where the Council of Europe has strong expertise and added value.

³ Council of Europe, *Statute of the Council of Europe*, European Treaty Series - No. 1, London, 5.V.1949, available at <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list?module=treaty-detail&treatyid=001>.

⁴ Office of the Council of Europe's treaties, Bosnia and Herzegovina, searchable in <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list>.

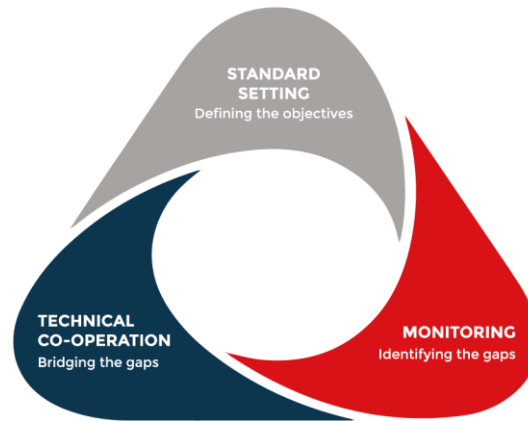


Figure 1: Council of Europe strategic triangle

1.1.3 MAIN FINDINGS OF MONITORING MECHANISMS AND EXPERT ADVISORY BODIES

This Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2022-2025 (Action Plan) builds, to a large extent, on the most recent decisions, resolutions, recommendations and findings of the Council of Europe's monitoring and expert advisory bodies in respect of the country, as enumerated above and on the results of the previous Action Plan with the Council of Europe. It also takes into account the challenges identified in the Secretary General's annual reports on the State of Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law in Europe. In addition, the Action Plan reflects the priorities of the reforms undertaken in the country, particularly those identified⁵ in the *Justice Sector Reform Strategy (2021-2027)*, *Strategy to Suppress Trafficking in Human Beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2020-2023*, the *2020–2025 Strategic Policy Document Plan for the treatment of violent prisoners in prison and multi-agency co-operation*, the *Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2022*, the *Action Plan for improving the state of Human Rights and fundamental freedoms of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2021-2023*, the *Policy Recommendation with a Roadmap for Improving Inclusive Education*, the *Common Core Curricula* developed by the Agency for Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Education (APOSO), *Bosnia and Herzegovina Migration and Asylum Strategy (2021-2026)*, *Republika Srpska Strategy to combat cybercrime for the period 2020-2024*, the *Republika Srpska Action plan to fight cybercrime*, the *Republika Srpska Action plan for protection against child pornography* and the *Republika Srpska Action Plan for digital forensics and the Priorities for 2016-2026 Higher Education Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina*.

In developing the present Action Plan and in particular designing the technical co-operation support given to reforms, the gaps identified by the following Council of Europe institutions, monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies have been taken into account:

Human rights

- **ECtHR case-law**, as regards discrimination, prohibition of inhuman and/or degrading treatment and detention of mentally ill persons; right to a fair trial/hearing; protection of property;
- **CM report on Bosnia and Herzegovina**, Compliance with obligations and commitments, 19th Report (May 2016 – May 2018); Recommendation on the application of **ECRML** (on the need to facilitate the application of the Charter, especially on minority languages (teaching, public broadcasting etc); adopting and using traditional forms of place names in the minority languages);
- **ECRI**, 2017 report and recommendations highlighting the need to further build the capacity of the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman, to advance the execution of certain judgments of the ECtHR, and work towards combating inter-ethnic tensions and hate speech;
- **PACE**, Resolution on the honouring of obligations and commitments by Bosnia and Herzegovina (2018);

⁵ Priorities were identified in adopted documents or soon-to-be adopted ones.

- **Venice Commission Opinion on the Draft Law on the Ombudsman for Human Rights of Bosnia and Herzegovina** (CDL-AD (2015)034);
- **Council of Europe Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees (SRSG)**, Report of the fact-finding mission by Ambassador Tomáš Boček to Bosnia and Herzegovina and to Croatia 24-27 July and 26-30 November 2018 (23 April 2019); Report of the fact-finding mission by Ambassador Drahoslav Štefánek to Bosnia and Herzegovina 24-30 January 2021 (28 June 2021);
- The recommendations of the **Commissioner** regarding the need to strengthen the human rights of migrants and children and the impact of national human rights actions plans;
- **ACFC**, Recommendations on supporting equal opportunities and access to services for national minorities; promoting intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding between the different ethnic and religious groups and combating hate speech;
- **ECSR** – Country fact sheet and Reports on implementation of the Charter in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Rule of Law

- **CM report on Bosnia and Herzegovina**, Compliance with obligations and commitments, 19th Report (May 2016 – May 2018);
- **European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ)** - Assessment of the capacity of Bosnia and Herzegovina to collect, process and transfer judicial statistics;
- The recommendations of the **Commissioner** (Dunja Mijatović) on ensuring justice, in particular for past crimes committed during the wars and enhancing the protection and support of witnesses; opinion on the Dayton Agreement; Report by Nils Muižnieks, (former) Commissioner, following his visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina from 12 to 16 June 2017;
- **Venice Commission** opinions on legal certainty, independence of the judiciary, legal texts on the functioning of the judiciary (draft laws on the Constitutional Court and the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council (HJPC) of Bosnia and Herzegovina) and on the prevention of conflicts of interest in the institutions; **PACE**, Resolution on the honouring of obligations and commitments by Bosnia and Herzegovina (2018);
- **GRECO** recommendations, especially on the prevention of corruption in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors;
- **MONEYVAL** Assessment visit reports and Follow-up Reports as regards supervision, sanctioning, prevention of misuse of non-governmental organisations for terrorist financing, and implementation of the asset seizure and confiscation regime;
- **GRETA** recommendations underlining the need to intensify efforts to prevent trafficking in human beings;
- **Council of Europe Co-operation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Drugs (Pompidou Group)**, Regional study on Drug-treatment systems in prisons in Eastern and South-East Europe (2017);
- **CPT**, 2017 Report and recommendations on the actions to be taken to investigate police ill-treatment allegations and to address shortcomings within the penitentiary system and in psychiatric establishments;
- **Venice Commission, Joint opinion⁶ on the legal framework governing the freedom of peaceful assembly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in its two entities and in Brčko district** (CDL-AD (2019)026).

Democracy

- **CM report on Bosnia and Herzegovina**, Compliance with obligations and commitments, 19th Report (May 2016 – May 2018) – recommendations on electoral reforms; enhancing co-operation between different levels of government and ending ethnic segregation in schools;
- **ECtHR case-law** as regard electoral rights;
- **PACE**, Resolution on the honouring of obligations and commitments by Bosnia and Herzegovina (2018) as regards the need to adopt constitutional amendments to eliminate discriminatory practices in elections; strengthen local self-governments; end segregation in education;
- **Venice Commission Amicus curiae** brief for the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the mode of election of delegates to the House of Peoples of the parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (CDL-AD (2016)024);

⁶ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) / Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

- **Congress** recommendation on Local and regional democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina (442 (2019));
- **Congress** Report on its contribution to re-establishing local elections in Mostar in view of the October 2020 general local elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina (CPL38(2020)02prov - 19 February 2020);⁷
- **ECRI** recommendations to end segregation in schools;
- **ACFC** recommendations to end segregation in schools;
- Report by Nils Muižnieks, (former) Commissioner, following his visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina from 12 to 16 June 2017.

Relevant Council of Europe conventions and other instruments of the Organisation, such as the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education, have also been used as reference material for co-operation actions included in this Action Plan.

- Main results of the previous Action Plan

In order to address the unprecedented Covid-19 outbreak and to continue implementing the previous Action Plan under these circumstances, the workplans of individual projects were modified in spring 2020 in line with overall priorities and in compliance with the restrictions in force. This involved applying mitigating measures, where necessary, focusing on both programming adaptations and technical solutions, especially in the area of IT-based solutions. The same approach will be applied to implementing this Action Plan if circumstances so require.

The main strategies/adjustments to pandemic-related restrictions can be summarised as follows:

- Programming adaptations: Setting a focus on types of activities easier to transfer to online-formats and/or using the lockdown for specific online-focused activities. This included for example distance learning, training of trainers, desk studies/work, expert analysis, online communication campaigns/events with extensive use of social media posts and newsletters, etc..
- Technical solutions: Transferring activities such as meetings, consultancies or training to online-formats. This included, amongst other things, online monitoring of the learning progress of end-line beneficiaries, development of online training materials, written procedures, questionnaire-based assessments complemented by consultations through videoconferencing, development of awareness-raising and communication material and the production of online-specific support material.
- Response to specific requests from partners to address the health crisis while upholding the objectives of the Action Plan.

The present Action Plan takes into account the outcomes of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021 such as:

- The adoption of the *Policy Recommendation with a Roadmap for Improving Inclusive Education*, by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- Strengthened Roma empowerment through awareness-raising campaigns, the implementation of small-scale immediate actions and finalisation of the drafting of the new *Action Plan for Social Inclusion of Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2021-2025*;
- The provision of a tailored methodology for the deliberative process in the City of Mostar and launching of a [website](#) with the aim of ensuring transparent communication between the citizens of Mostar and the local authorities;
- A strong focus on gender in the support provided in the field of preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, in particular the inclusion of a gender dimension under local action plans to combat trafficking in human beings;
- The track record of success and sustainability for the support provided in the penitentiary field (support for the gradual introduction of an electronic system for exchanging prison-related data; increasing the knowledge and skills of prison staff on case management of prisoners; various guidelines and strategies drafted concerning the treatment of violent and extremist prisoners (VEPs) for staff management in high security units dealing with VEPs to be adopted by the Ministry of Justice);
- The timely delivery of quality data on judicial statistics under the regional CEPEJ Dashboard exercise;
- A major contribution in the field of legal certainty with the establishment and strengthening of case-law departments in high courts;
- The establishment of "Women for Bosnia and Herzegovina", a group of women politicians and policy makers from pilot municipalities;

⁷ For the first time in over a decade, local elections were held in the City of Mostar on 20 December 2020.

- Setting up of 21 youth associations with their own premises for young people's activities to ensure that collaboration between young people and municipalities is well-grounded and viable;
- Enhanced capacities of over 170 legal professionals (judges, prosecutors and lawyers) on topics such as defamation, hate speech, the protection of whistle-blowers and the general principles of freedom of expression under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

- Consultation process

This Action Plan has been prepared following consultations with the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Consultations with international partners including the European Union, through co-ordination and project steering committees, have also taken place in the preparation of this document.

The CM, through its Group of Rapporteurs on Democracy (GR-DEM), considered the Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021 *Progress Review Report* (covering June 2018 – March 2020) at its meeting on 18 June 2020. The Deputies welcomed the progress made in implementing the Action Plan and the political agreement for the organisation of the local election in the City of Mostar. However, the Deputies drew attention to the importance of electoral reform, of the implementation of the Court's judgments, including the *Sejdić and Finci*⁸ group of judgments, of the fight against discrimination, and of justice, media freedom and combating terrorism. They encouraged the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to step up the pace of the reform implementation.

An *external evaluation of the Action Plan 2018-2021* was finalised in April 2021. The evaluation report was overall very positive and highlighted the relevance of the Action Plan which is aligned with the needs and priorities of the governmental institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the flagship initiatives of the European Union Strategy for the Western Balkans⁹ and the 14 key priorities for the country to fulfil with a view to opening European Union accession negotiations.¹⁰ The Council of Europe was encouraged to continue fostering multi-stakeholder approaches at all stages of the Action Plan cycle (planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation) and at all levels of implementation (European, national, local). The evaluation recommended that efforts be made to ensuring that projects implemented under the Action Plan are clear not only on the objectives set, but also on how to measure their achievements. The Council of Europe should continue to strengthen the mechanisms that ensure internal co-ordination and consistency across projects implemented under the Action Plan including via joint activities and the sharing of lessons learned across the pillars and sectors. The Council of Europe was also advised to continue improving linkages between projects and Council of Europe instruments. Relevant recommendations and lessons learnt were taken into account in the drafting of the present document.

1.2 ACTION PLAN GOALS

The present Action Plan is a strategic programming instrument for the period 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2025. Its goal is to support reforms in Bosnia and Herzegovina which will bring the country's legislation, institutions and practice further into line with European standards in the areas of human rights, the rule of law and democracy and therefore to support the country's efforts to honour its obligations as a Council of Europe member State. It also contributes to its European integration process.

The Action Plan areas of co-operation are the following:

- The Council of Europe will continue to support the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina in progressing with (and completing where possible) the reforms undertaken in strategic areas in line with European standards, notably:
 - Application of the ECHR and ECtHR case-law at domestic level;
 - Freedom of expression and freedom of the media;
 - Human rights protection and anti-discrimination;
 - Judicial reforms;
 - Fight against corruption, money laundering and the financing of terrorism, and cybercrime;
 - Combating trafficking in human beings;

⁸ As found by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), the electoral rules defined in the Constitution discriminate against nationals non-affiliated with the Bosniak, Serb or Croat "peoples".

⁹ European Commission, *A credible enlargement perspective for and enhanced European Union engagement with the Western Balkans*, Strasbourg, 6 February 2018, COM(2018) 65 final, available at https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/communication-credible-enlargement-perspective-western-balkans_en.pdf.

¹⁰ European Commission, *Commission Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for membership of the European Union*, Brussels, 29 May 2019, COM(2019) 261 final, available at <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/default/files/20190529-bosnia-and-herzegovina-opinion.pdf>.

- Penitentiary/police reforms, including working on the reintegration of extremist prisoners into society;
 - Electoral reforms;
 - Local democracy and self-government;
 - Inter-ethnic dialogue and reconciliation;
 - Education.
- The Council of Europe and the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina jointly identified new areas of co-operation, as well as the fields where efforts should be intensified on the basis of the recent work carried out by the Council of Europe's institutions, monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies, and new challenges, including the Covid-19 pandemic, in particular:
- Migration management and the rights of vulnerable persons in the context of migration and asylum;
 - Environment and human rights;
 - The right to information;
 - Data protection;
 - Access to justice for women and prevention of violence against women;
 - Assistance to the Constitutional Court;
 - Combating drug abuse and illicit trafficking;
 - Civil participation in democratic decision-making.

Work undertaken in these areas will be based on the Council of Europe's conventions and/or recommendations by the relevant advisory and monitoring bodies. The Action Plan will cover all three pillars of co-operation, providing expert and technical assistance in the practical implementation of the Council of Europe's standards in priority areas and in enhancing the capacity of relevant institutions to function effectively. This will also include measures for enhancing co-ordinated actions between stakeholders, which are a prerequisite for addressing complex governance challenges and for fostering dialogue with civil society.

The Council of Europe applies a human rights approach at all levels and stages of its activities. This approach incorporates human rights norms and processes into project management. At the same time, the human rights approach attempts to avoid any unintentional human rights harm, imbalance or negative impact in its work. This approach is a cross-cutting priority for the Action Plan. As part of the human rights approach, promoting gender equality remains a priority and therefore gender mainstreaming constitutes a priority of the present Action Plan. Gender mainstreaming, based on European standards and Council of Europe recommendations, will help to address more effectively the needs of individuals living in Bosnia and Herzegovina without discrimination and to enhance the quality and effectiveness of the implementation of the Action Plan.

In meeting its objectives, this Action Plan will also contribute to the implementation of the [United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).

PART II – PROPOSED ACTIONS FOR 2022 TO 2025

The actions proposed per pillar as defined by the Programme and Budget 2022-2023 are set out below.

2.1 HUMAN RIGHTS

Bosnia and Herzegovina has ratified all major European and international human rights instruments, most of which are included in its Constitution.¹¹ However, Bosnia and Herzegovina has no comprehensive policy framework for the promotion and enforcement of human rights. The Council of Europe stands ready to

¹¹ In 2020, Bosnia and Herzegovina ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the counterfeiting of medical products and similar crimes involving threats to public health (Council of Europe Treaty Series (CETS) No. 211), also known as the MEDICRIME Convention, and Protocol No. 15 amending the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (CETS No. 213) and has signed the Protocol amending the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (CETS No. 223). The aim of the amending Protocol is to modernise and improve the Convention (CETS No. 108), taking into account the new challenges to the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data which have emerged since the Convention was adopted in 1980. In 2021, the country ratified Protocol No. 16 to the Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

support the authorities in devising such a framework in line with European and international standards and to build the domestic capacities to monitor its implementation. Ethnic divisions, discrimination, and the rights of minorities and asylum seekers and migrants remain problematic.¹²

According to the Council of Europe Department for the Execution of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), there are 45 cases involving Bosnia and Herzegovina pending before the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CM).¹³ A particularly challenging and long-pending group of cases is *Sejdić and Finci* (2009), concerning discrimination against all those not willing or able to affiliate with a constituent people (*i.e.* Bosniaks, Croats or Serbs) or not satisfying a combination of requirements of ethnic origin and place of residence as regards their right to stand for election to the House of Peoples and the Presidency of the country. The ECtHR has also identified patterns of repeated violations of the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR) concerning the detention of mentally ill persons, protection of property and electoral rights. The execution of three groups of ECtHR judgments is under the enhanced supervision of the CM (protection of property and electoral rights) and six under standard supervision (on conditions of detention of mentally ill persons, excessive length of proceedings, protection of property and inconsistent case-law of domestic courts).

The Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2022-2025 (Action Plan) aims to contribute to strengthening national capacities to undertake and implement reforms and ensure the consistent application of the ECHR by national courts; strengthen the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman; enhance human rights education at university and for legal professionals, and safeguard the rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

The Council of Europe will continue to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina in enhancing the application and awareness of European standards on freedom of expression and freedom of the media and will extend its support to new areas such as access to information and data protection in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Support will also cover the need to guarantee access to justice for women and to prevent violence against women and domestic violence; further building up the sustained policy engagement of local authorities to empower local Roma communities; ensuring social inclusion of national minorities and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons, combating hate speech and hate crime and ensuring social rights.

Assistance in the field of human rights and the environment could also be considered to strengthen the capacity of relevant national and local authorities to put environmental policy into practice.¹⁴ Support could cover capacity-building activities for members of the judiciary and other legal professionals to enhance their ability to effectively apply relevant human rights legislation in environmental cases.¹⁵ Similarly, the Action Plan will strive to improve the knowledge and capacity of law enforcement agencies to effectively investigate, detect and prosecute environmental crimes, including those interlinked and associated with other serious crimes. This support will be supplemented by awareness-raising campaigns for civil society and the general population to increase their knowledge on access to judicial and other procedures available to address environmental cases.

¹² Office of the High Commissioner for Human rights, *Letter by the High Commissioner to the Foreign Minister*, 13 May 2020, p. 4-9, available at <http://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session34/BA/Letter-OHCHR-HC-BosniaHerzegovina.pdf>.

¹³ Council of Europe Department for the Execution of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), *Country Factsheet*, updated on 25 May 2021, available at <http://rm.coe.int/doc/0900001680709741>.

¹⁴ Further information can be found on the [Commissioner's web site](#) and the [thematic factsheet](#) on relevant ECtHR case-law.

¹⁵ Including through the European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals ([HELP course on Environment and Human Rights](#)).

These actions will contribute to the implementation by Bosnia and Herzegovina of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Goals 4 on quality education (target 7),¹⁶ 5 on gender equality (more specifically targets 1, 2, and C),¹⁷ 8 on inclusive and sustainable economic growth (target 8),¹⁸ 10 on reduced inequalities (target 2, 3, 4 and 7),¹⁹ 11 on inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements (target 3)²⁰ and 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions (targets 3, 7, 10 and B).²¹

2.1.1 EFFECTIVE ECHR IMPLEMENTATION

Technical co-operation to be implemented in this area has been designed taking into consideration the reports and conclusions of relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies which call on Bosnia and Herzegovina to strengthen the role of the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman; improve human rights university education and professional training, increase the safety of journalists and enhance the human rights protection of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. Support also aims to achieve the effective and timely execution of ECtHR judgments.

➤ Enhancing the effectiveness of the ECHR system at national level

Although some progress can be noted in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the execution of ECtHR judgments, there is a need to reinforce domestic capacity to execute the Court's²² judgments under supervision by the CM (*Hadžimejlić and Others (3427/13+)*, *Đokić (6518/04)*, *Mago group (12959/05+)*). The Council of Europe stands ready to provide support to the development of concrete action plans for the execution of the Court's judgments and establish an inter-agency working group to address the execution of specific judgments on non-enforcement of domestic court rulings. A legislative overview and analysis of the regulations on the execution of the ECtHR's and domestic judgments and solutions regulating the status of Government Agents from the perspective of the efficiency of the execution process could be carried out. In addition, Bosnia and Herzegovina has no comprehensive policy framework for the promotion and enforcement of human rights, including countrywide strategies on human rights, on non-discrimination, and on the protection of minorities despite the existence of an *Operational Strategy of the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the Period 2016-2021*. As raised by the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman itself, the absence of such a document is detrimental to the co-ordination of national strategic and specific documents.²³ The Council of Europe stands ready to support the authorities in devising such a framework in line with European standards and to build up domestic capacities to monitor its implementation. As stressed by *the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights* (the Commissioner), such a document could have a positive impact on improving states' alignment with international human rights standards, the creation of co-ordination mechanisms and capacity-building on human rights for the civil servants who develop and implement them, at national and local level.

¹⁶ Goal 4, target 7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

¹⁷ Goal 5, target 1: End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere. Target 2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation. Target C: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

¹⁸ Goal 8, target 8: Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.

¹⁹ Goal 10, target 2: By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status. Target 3: Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard. Target 4: Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality. Target 7: Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

²⁰ Goal 11, target 3: By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.

²¹ Goal 16, target 3: Promote the rule of law at national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all. Target 7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels. Target 10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements. Target B: Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

²² In line with the *Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers (CM) to member States on efficient domestic capacity for rapid execution of judgments*.

²³ Oral intervention of the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman representative at the second meeting of the European Union/Council of Europe joint programme Horizontal Facility Beneficiary Steering Committee held online on 30 March 2021. Please see also European Commission, *Bosnia and Herzegovina 2020 Report*, Brussels, 6 October 2020, SWD(2020) 350 final, p.26, available at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/default/files/bosnia_and_herzegovina_report_2020.pdf.

As highlighted by *the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)*, *the CM* and the *Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)*, the institutional capacity of the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman needs to be strengthened to ensure compliance with the Institution's recommendations. These monitoring bodies also recommended the adoption of the Law on Ombudsman for Human Rights of Bosnia and Herzegovina, already *reviewed by the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) in 2015*. Previous support from the Council of Europe made it possible to enhance the capacity of civil servants and staff of the Institution to recognise discrimination and deal with such cases in an appropriate manner. The Council of Europe stands ready to support the new members of the Institution once appointed, if so required.

In addition, the *CM recommended* that Council of Europe member States ensure that university education and professional training concerning the Convention system are in line with the needs and expectations of the different categories of the public, especially those active in the human rights field. The *European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) courses*, which provide training modules adapted to the national legal system, reach out to both legal professionals and students, particularly from law faculties, with the aim of integrating human rights courses in their daily practice and curricula. Moreover, the Council of Europe has fostered discussions with legal professionals from the South-East Europe region. The dialogue on good practices made it possible to create an exchange platform ("marketplace of ideas") for judicial authorities to help them respond effectively to the Covid-19 crisis while maintaining Europe's fundamental values of human rights, rule of law and democracy, including the consistency and ECHR compliance of judicial decisions. In addition, a methodology and recommendations were devised for the evaluation and impact assessment of human rights training to establish or strengthen the capacity of the Centre for Judicial and Prosecutorial Training of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Centre for Judicial and Prosecutorial Training of Republika Srpska. Support was also provided to improve the e-library resources of the Centres. Some HELP courses were included in the annual training programme of the Centres. Follow-up initiatives could be envisaged.

In addition, the number of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants arriving in Bosnia and Herzegovina increased significantly in 2018. It is estimated that around 10,000 migrants and asylum seekers are present in the country at any given time.²⁴ The surge in arrivals has placed increasing pressure on the country's reception and operational capacity. While acknowledging the significant efforts made, *the Commissioner* and the *Council of Europe Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees (SRSG)* have called for concrete measures to improve the reception and treatment of refugees and migrants, ensure effective access to asylum and individual procedures, and enhance the protection of vulnerable persons. Key recommendations from the Council of Europe bodies and entities highlight, *inter alia*, the need to strengthen the protection of refugee and migrant children, including by avoiding immigration detention and developing community- and family-based care arrangements.²⁵ The Council of Europe stands ready to support the authorities in strengthening the legislative and regulatory framework and improving capacities to address immediate challenges and forge long-term solutions in the field of migration. Targeted assistance will be provided with a view to ensuring alignment of reception, asylum and detention policies and practices with European and international standards. Special guarantees for the protection of vulnerable persons, especially children, and access to appropriate services will likewise be strengthened.

²⁴ International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Bosnia and Herzegovina Crisis Response Plan 2021*, 3 February 2021, p.3, available at https://crisisresponse.iom.int/sites/default/files/appeal/pdf/2021_Bosnia_and_Herzegovina_Crisis_Response_Plan_2021.pdf.

²⁵ Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, *Letter to Mr Zoran TEGELTIJA, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Mr Selmo CIKOTIĆ, Minister for Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 7 December 2020, available at <https://www.coe.int/en/web/commissioner/-/bosnia-and-herzegovina-must-urgently-improve-its-migrant-reception-capacities-improve-access-to-asylum-and-protect-unaccompanied-migrant-children>. Council of Europe Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees, *Report of the fact-finding mission by Ambassador Tomáš Boček, Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees, to Bosnia and Herzegovina and to Croatia 24-27 July and 26-30 November 2018*, 23 April 2019, p. 21, available at <https://rm.coe.int/report-of-the-fact-finding-mission-by-ambassador-tomas-bocek-special-r/1680940259>, *Report of the fact-finding mission by Ambassador Drahošlav Štefánek, Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees, to Bosnia and Herzegovina 24-30 January 2021*, 28 June 2021, SG/Inf(2021)19, p.16, available at <https://rm.coe.int/report-of-the-fact-finding-mission-by-ambassador-drahošlav-stefanek/1680a2fd03>.

Expected outcomes

- Bosnia and Herzegovina is supported in achieving full and effective execution of judgments focusing on enforcement of domestic court rulings;
- The draft Law on Ombudsman for Human Rights of Bosnia and Herzegovina is adopted;
- The institutional capacity of the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman to carry out its mandate effectively is strengthened;
- A comprehensive policy framework on the promotion and enforcement of human rights is devised;
- Systemic human rights education among legal professionals and law faculties is introduced;
- The digital uptake of the judicial training institutes is enhanced;²⁶
- National legislation on the human rights protection of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers is in line with relevant European and international standards;
- Specific protective measures for vulnerable persons in the context of migration and asylum²⁷ are strengthened;
- Effective alternatives to immigration detention are developed and implemented;
- Child-protection systems and procedures are strengthened in the context of migration, including by promoting family-based care for unaccompanied children.

Main national partners:²⁸ *Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ministries of Justice (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska), Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman, Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Supreme Courts (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska), Appellate Court of Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council (HJPC) of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Parliaments at all levels, National law and policy-makers, Centres for Judicial and Prosecutorial Training (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska), legal Professionals and Members of the Judiciary (judges, lawyers, prosecutors, legal aid staff), law enforcement agencies, Government Agent before the ECtHR, civil servants, law faculties, civil society organisations (CSOs).*

➤ Freedom of expression and freedom of the media

The [2020](#) and [2021](#) Annual reports of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe highlighted the strain put on the pluralism, quality and integrity of journalism in many Council of Europe member States, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Despite the existence in Bosnia and Herzegovina of an adequate legislative framework, the implementation of these standards remains a challenge.²⁹ Continuing support to further enhance the capacities of the judiciary in Bosnia and Herzegovina as the guardian authority to preserve freedom of expression in line with European standards is paramount. The protection of journalists, a pre-condition to freedom of expression as *stressed by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe*, also remains a key issue. In 2019, none of the alerts from the [Council of Europe Safety of Journalists Platform](#) was resolved or received a State reply. In 2020, the authorities provided replies to 60% of the alerts on the Platform.³⁰ According to the research carried out by the Association of Journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is high level of hatred and mistrust of and violence against journalists.

²⁶ Support could encompass the development of a digital strategy for the judicial training institutes, capacity-building on e-learning methodologies and modern techniques and possible upgrade and modernisation of digital e-library tools and e-learning platforms.

²⁷ For the purpose of this Action Plan and as defined by the Council of Europe Action Plan on Protecting Vulnerable Persons in the Context of Migration and Asylum in Europe (2021-2025), "vulnerable persons in the context of migration and asylum" are persons found to have special needs after individual evaluation of their situation and are entitled to call on States' obligation to provide special protection and assistance. In the light of the existing Council of Europe Strategic Action Plan for Roma and Traveller Inclusion (2020-2025), the scope of the present action plan does not include this group of people.

²⁸ Support in the field of migration management will focus primarily on co-operation with partners at State-level and from the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

²⁹ Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, *Report by Nils Muižnieks Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe following his visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina from 12 to 16 June 2017*, CommDH(2017)28, 7 November 2017, p. 1, available at <https://rm.coe.int/09000016807642b1>.

³⁰ In 2020, the [Western Balkans regional platform](#) promoting the safety of journalists recorded 20 attacks on journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina, of which six were death threats, 11 were other type of threats, and three were physical attacks on journalists. Concrete examples of threats and intimidation of journalists in Bosnia and Herzegovina are highlighted in the *Annual report 2021 by the partner organisations of the Council of Europe Platform to Promote the Protection of Journalism and Safety of Journalists "Wanted! Real action for media freedom in Europe"*. The report also sheds light on the introduction of new measures criminalising the spread of false or distorted information about the Covid-19 pandemic.

The *PACE recommended* ensuring that measures be taken to increase the safety of journalists who had been subjected to death threats and other intimidation measures in recent years and that the law on access to information be effectively implemented.

The Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents (Tromsø Convention, Council of Europe Treaty Series (CETS) 205), as ratified by Bosnia and Herzegovina in February 2012, entered into force on 1 December 2020. As a State Party to this convention, Bosnia and Herzegovina could initiate the further development of its legal framework and policy shaping of the rights and obligations that the treaty provides for, especially with regard to the substantive conditions for a balanced approach with other human rights, in particular the right to privacy and to the protection of personal data. Moreover, *PACE recommended* the establishment of a unified public service broadcasting system with State-level management, setting up a corporation of public broadcasting services and adopting legislation ensuring the permanent funding of the three public broadcasters and transparency in the ownership of media outlets.

Thanks to multifaceted assistance under the previous Action Plan, the capacity of legal professionals on topics such as defamation, hate speech, the protection of whistle-blowers, and on the general principles of freedom of expression, to interpret and implement national legislation in line with Article 10 of the ECHR was enhanced. Capacity-building tools and courses were developed for legal professionals and adapted to the local context. The capacities of the Communications Regulatory Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina (CRA) were strengthened in the area of combating hate speech and protecting minors.³¹ Support was also provided to strengthen the institutional and policy framework for regulation, self-regulation and co-regulation with the aim of improving the performance of and trust in the media in line with European standards. The awareness of university students and professors, policy makers, media actors and citizens of media literacy and active citizenship skills was enhanced. Support in this field was crucial in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic during which it is paramount to filter out false, misleading and inaccurate information which can lead to misinformed decisions.

Consequently, the Council of Europe strives to continue supporting the authorities in their efforts to improve the national legal framework and ensure its proper implementation. Initiatives will support priority reforms related to freedom of expression including defamation, the protection and safety of journalists, access to information, the protection of whistle-blowers, and other newly identified sectors. Assistance will seek to ensure that judges, prosecutors and lawyers have assimilated the fundamentals on freedom of expression standards weighed against defamation, and to support policy-related reforms concerning politically-led defamation cases against journalists. It is anticipated that the capacities of law enforcement agencies when faced with issues relating to the protection of journalists will be strengthened. It is also planned to carry out a policy and legislative review of the legal framework on access to information.

Expected outcomes

- Legislation to ensure transparency in the ownership of media outlets and on access to information is brought into line with the relevant Council of Europe standards,
- The public service broadcasting system and the State-level management is further enhanced and unified;
- The capacities of the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees and other institutions to organise and lead participatory legislative drafting processes on freedom of expression and freedom of the media, access to information and media literacy legislation/regulation and to monitor their implementation are increased;
- The capacities of law enforcement agencies to deal with issues of protection of journalists are enhanced;
- The capacities of the judiciary in applying rights and duties of media actors in line with European standards is strengthened;
- The importance of free, qualitative and safe journalism is further promoted among all media actors and the general public with specific consideration given to the safety of women journalists;
- The application of rights and duties concerning access to information is improved.

³¹ The Agency also benefited from support at regional level with publications on media pluralism and political campaigning and advertising from a media regulatory perspective.

Main national partners: Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federal Ministry of Education and Science (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska, Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Centres for Judicial and Prosecutorial Training (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska), CRA, Press Council, entity courts, law enforcement agencies, Bar Associations (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska), Prosecutors' offices, Journalist associations, young media professionals, civil society, media actors and other relevant stakeholders.

➤ Data protection

In 2006 Bosnia and Herzegovina ratified the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (CETS No.108) and, upon accession, its Additional Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data, regarding supervisory authorities and transborder data flows (CETS No.181). In July 2020, Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the Protocol amending the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (CETS 223). In view of the above, a draft Law on data protection in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been under preparation since late 2019/early 2020. The Council of Europe supported the review of the draft law and stands ready to provide further assistance to ensure its compliance with Council of Europe standards and its adoption. Moreover, it is important to strengthen the operational capacity of the Personal Data Protection Agency³² to carry out its mission to the best possible standards and raise the awareness of civil society and relevant professionals of the topic in various sectors. In particular, the Covid-19 crisis has shown the importance of protecting personal data in the development and setting up of digital solutions in various sectors³³ such as health, education, work, etc. The Council of Europe is ready to provide support in this regard.

Moreover, the Action Plan aims to support the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina in improving the legal framework and ensuring its proper implementation.³⁴ Efforts will be made to ensure that judges, prosecutors, lawyers and all legal professionals understand and apply the fundamental requirements of data protection and privacy.

Expected outcomes

- The legal framework on data protection is brought into line with international standards, notably with the ratified Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data;
- The requirements in terms of data protection of the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data are properly incorporated in the legal framework on access to information;³⁵
- The capacities of the Personal Data Protection Agency for improved delivery of its missions are enhanced, notably as regards awareness-raising;
- The capacities of administrations and other relevant stakeholders to give access to information while respecting the principles of personal data protection are enhanced.³⁶

Main national partners: Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federal Ministry of Education and Science (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska, Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Personal Data Protection Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, entity courts, law enforcement, Prosecutors' offices, Centres for Judicial and Prosecutorial Training (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska), Bar Associations (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska), civil society, educational staff and other relevant authorities.

³² European Commission, *Bosnia and Herzegovina 2020 Report*, op. cit., p.46.

³³ Alessandra Pierucci, Chair of the Committee of Convention 108, Jean-Philippe Walter, Data Protection Commissioner of the Council of Europe, *Joint Statement on Digital Contact Tracing*, Strasbourg, 28 April 2020, available at <https://rm.coe.int/covid19-joint-statement-28-april/16809e3fd7>.

³⁴ Such as the HELP course on privacy and data protection.

³⁵ Please see Action Plan Chapter 2.1.1 Human Rights: Effective ECHR implementation: Freedom of expression and freedom of the media.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

2.1.2 EQUALITY AND HUMAN DIGNITY

Bosnia and Herzegovina ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention - CETS No.201) in 2013. However, there is currently no mechanism in the country to ensure implementation of the Convention. Preliminary support could be considered to assess systemic issues relating to the response to child sexual exploitation and abuse and to raise awareness on preventing and combating child sexual exploitation and abuse. This would pave the way for future work in this area. Support could also cover the strengthening of child-friendly justice practices and developing interagency response mechanisms to violence against children.

➤ Gender equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

Gender equality is one of the priorities of the Council of Europe and gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures is a strategic objective of the *Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023*. The *Council of Europe Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality* invites Council of Europe member States to introduce measures to tackle the harmful impact of stereotyping in judicial decisions.

Bosnia and Herzegovina ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) in November 2013. Subsequently, the country revised its legislative framework and established the corresponding mechanisms to address gender equality and women's rights. The Law on Gender Equality defined *inter alia* the responsibilities of the relevant institutions, namely the Agency for Gender Equality of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Gender Centre of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Gender Equality Centre of the Republika Srpska. The Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted, in August 2019, the Decision on the Establishment of the Board for Monitoring and Reporting on Implementation of the Istanbul Convention and Femicide in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 2017, the Federal Ministry of Interior (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina) and the Ministry of the Interior of Republika Srpska received respectively 1,487 and 1,102 reports of cases of domestic violence.³⁷

Previous assistance provided by the Council of Europe supported the creation of a network of women policy-makers at local level to address gender inequalities through advocacy and lobbying and assisted the pre-electoral media campaign on promoting women in political life³⁸ in the context of the general elections held in October 2018. Responsiveness to victims of violence against women and domestic violence increased through high-quality human rights capacity-building sessions of legal professionals (including through the HELP courses). Recommendations to establish a functional system of data collection methods and procedures, in line with the standards of the Istanbul Convention, were provided.

As identified by the *Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2022* and the HJPC,³⁹ further efforts are still needed to enhance the implementation of the standards on access to justice laid down in the Istanbul Convention, in order to remove obstacles for women to access justice by:

- supporting the establishment of the functional system of data collection and analysis of gender-based violence and femicide cases;
- providing capacity-building activities to relevant institutions to prosecute more effectively perpetrators of gender-based and domestic violence;
- improving the response to gender-based violence,
- implementing efficient procedures in order to minimise secondary victimisation of victims and protection measures.

³⁷ Group of Experts on Action against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), *Report submitted by Bosnia and Herzegovina pursuant to Article 68, paragraph 1 of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Baseline Report)*, GREVIO/Inf(2020)12, 6 February 2020, available at <https://rm.coe.int/grevioinf-2020-12/pdfa/16809eed4a>.

³⁸ Please see Action Plan Chapter 2.3.1. Democratic governance: Elections.

³⁹ GREVIO, *Report submitted by Bosnia and Herzegovina pursuant to Article 68, paragraph 1 of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Baseline Report)*, *op. cit.* p.36.

The Council of Europe is ready to support Bosnia and Herzegovina in addressing the recommendations from the next GREVIO assessment whose final report is expected in 2022, with a special focus on promoting women's access to justice. Support could also cover the development of an effective and efficient mechanism for the empowerment of women as a means of combating the root causes of trafficking in human beings.⁴⁰ With a view to the 2022 general elections, the network of women policy-makers could be further assisted. In addition, the Council of Europe could support the promotion of women's rights to run and be elected, irrespective of their ethnic background, provided that a revised electoral legal framework is adopted.⁴¹

Expected outcomes

- Authorities, justice sector professionals, and civil society introduce measures to enhance the implementation of the standards of the Istanbul Convention, in order to remove obstacles to women's access to justice;
- Legal professionals have an enhanced understanding of and tools to foster and monitor women's access to justice in line with the Istanbul Convention.

Main national partners: Ministries of Justice, Board for Monitoring and Reporting on Implementation on the Istanbul Convention and Femicide in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Gender Equality Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees), Gender Centre of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Gender Equality Centre of the Republika Srpska, Centres for Judicial and Prosecutorial Training (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska), law faculties.

➤ Anti-discrimination, diversity and inclusion

Bosnia and Herzegovina has no countrywide strategies on non-discrimination, or on the protection of minorities. The execution of the ECtHR *Sejdić and Finci Group of judgments* is still pending. [ECRI stressed](#) the need to bring civil and administrative law into line with [ECRI General Policy Recommendation \(GPR\) No.7](#), to ensure the rights of returnees, equal opportunities for national minorities, including the Roma community, and equal rights and protection for LGBTI people. In addition, the [CM highlighted](#) the importance of ensuring adequate access of Roma persons to housing, employment, health services and increasing efforts to remedy the shortcomings faced by Roma children in accessing education. Further recommendations encompass the need to take measures to ensure that minority languages can be used when dealing with administrative authorities and in schools and through broadcasting and publications. 26% of the [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2010\)5](#) of the CM to member States on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity has not yet been implemented.⁴² Certain endeavours as regards the protection of national minorities and minority languages are to be noted. The Council of Europe stands ready to support the authorities' efforts to ensure equal opportunities for national minorities.

Assistance provided by the Council of Europe to the Roma community under the previous Action Plan contributed to the finalisation of the new *Action Plan for Social Inclusion of Roma in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2021-2025*.⁴³ Projects supported by the Council of Europe [small grant scheme](#) improved and expanded the institutions' commitment, capacities, knowledge and skills in working for Roma inclusion. Specific assistance was also provided during the Covid-19 pandemic to the Roma community rendered particularly vulnerable in these challenging times.

To raise the awareness of the general public of the negative impact of hate speech, the [first anti-racism campaign](#) bringing together well-known figures from South-East Europe was conducted, with a message of equality, combating discrimination and ultimately fostering reconciliation in the region.

⁴⁰ Please see Action Plan Chapter 2.2.2. Action against crime security and protection of citizens: Trafficking in human beings.

⁴¹ Please see Action Plan Chapter 2.3.1 Democratic governance: Elections.

⁴² Especially regarding measures to prevent the abuse of legal or administrative provisions to restrict the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, the right to respect for private and family life, employment, health and housing. Council of Europe's [Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Unit Country factsheet](#).

⁴³ The Action Plan covers four priority topics: education, housing, employment and social inclusion/anti-Gypsyism.

More generally, support was provided for the creation of an improved mechanism for monitoring and reporting on the recommendations proposed by the monitoring bodies of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML). The first Minority Co-ordination Group (MCG) was established to enhance and institutionalise the co-ordination of activities in the field of minority protection and promotion. The development of the national *Action Plan for improving the state of Human Rights and fundamental freedoms of LGBTI persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2021-2023* was supported.⁴⁴

In this context, the Council of Europe Action Plan will build on the above results on the protection of LGBTI persons' rights, combating intolerance, hatred and racism (including towards irregular migrants in the country) and stimulating the empowerment of local Roma communities.

The [2017 ECRI report](#) on Bosnia and Herzegovina noted the need to develop policies to combat hate speech in line with ECRI GPR [No. 15](#) in the media and by politicians. This is also supported by [Resolution CM/ResCMN\(2019\)8](#) on the implementation of the FCNM by Bosnia and Herzegovina. ECRI reported that hate speech is usually based on ethnic or associated religious identities. The problem is of special concern to the country because the use of such rhetoric further deepens the already entrenched enmity and mistrust between the three main ethnic groups (Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs). The 2017 ECRI report further elaborated on the need for the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to evaluate hate-crime-related training activities in order to make any necessary improvements, expand them and ensure that they cover violence against vulnerable groups such as returnees, religious communities and LGBTI persons.

There is no strategy at national and/or entity level to combat hate speech. A regional *Comparative Study on Strengthening Equality Bodies in the Western Balkan Region in the Field of Hate Speech* supported by the Council of Europe suggests that the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina devise a comprehensive communication strategy, adopt a proactive stance and carefully develop a strategic approach to addressing hate speech in Bosnia and Herzegovina and ensure continuous training of its staff on various aspects of hate speech, notably on ECRI standards and the use of human rights language and counternarratives. The support provided by the Council of Europe aimed to promote anti-hate speech tools and ensure that law enforcement bodies are able to respond to hate crimes. Assistance was also provided to enhance the capacities of legal professionals and law enforcement personnel to understand and combat hate speech. The general public's awareness of the matter was raised through various campaigns. Police officers and civil society activists held an exchange of views with counterparts from the South-East Europe region on good practices on combating hate-crimes, especially those targeting LGBTI people. The Council of Europe Action Plan will continue to enhance the capacities of the authorities to identify, investigate, prosecute and judge hate crime, including hate crime targeted at LGBTI persons. Duty bearers will be assisted in better responding to hate speech in their respective mandate, e.g. civil servants from the government, members of Parliament and law enforcement personnel.

Initiatives in this area could also assist the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman to respond to hatred, racism and intolerance in society, in line with its mandate and law enforcement agencies to improve their record of response to hatred/racism.⁴⁵ Support at national or regional level could be considered to strengthen implementation of ECRI's GPR by the Institution.⁴⁶ Regional intervention would enable the Institution to exchange views with other equality bodies from the South-East Europe region on best practices in this regard.

⁴⁴ The Action Plan aims to strengthen the protection of Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina in line with European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) recommendations. At the time of drafting of the present Action Plan, the document was not yet adopted.

⁴⁵ Please see Action Plan Chapter 2.1.1. Effective ECHR implementation: Enhancing the effectiveness of the ECHR system at national level.

⁴⁶ [GPRs No. 2](#) on equality bodies to combat racism and intolerance at national level, [No. 7](#) on national legislation to combat racism and racial discrimination, [No. 11](#) on combating racism and racial discrimination in policing, [No. 15](#) on combating hate speech and [No. 16](#) on safeguarding irregularly present migrants from discrimination.

Expected outcomes

- A structured policy on minority languages is established;
- Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina ensure that the *Action Plan for improving the state of Human Rights and fundamental freedoms of LGBTI persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2021-2023* (yet to be adopted) is implemented, in line with the ECRI standards and recommendations;
- The Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman is better equipped to respond to discrimination and intolerance, in line with its mandate as national equality body;
- The capacity of local authorities to design and implement plans, policies⁴⁷ and projects, with active inclusion measures that improve Roma integration is strengthened;
- The Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees is able to increase other institutions' and organisations' awareness of the normative framework on hate speech and to devise policy responses to curb;
- Police, prosecutors and judges enhance their capacity to identify, investigate, prosecute and judge hate crime, including targeted at LGBTI persons and other vulnerable groups, in line with ECRI country-specific recommendations.

Main national partners: Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Federal Ministry of Health (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of Republika Srpska, Ministries of Justice (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska), Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federal Ministry of Interior (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ministry of the Interior of Republika Srpska, Ministry of Administration and Local Self-Government of Republika Srpska, Federal Ministry of Education and Science (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska, Ministry for European Integration and International co-operation of Republika Srpska, Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Parliamentary Committee of Human Rights, Councils of National Minorities (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska), Agency for Gender Equality, Gender mechanisms in both entities, Agency for Civil Servants at state and entity level, Government of Brčko District, Prosecutors' offices (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska, district and cantons), CRA of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bosnia and Herzegovina Roma board, Centres for Judicial and Prosecutorial Training in both entities, Press Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina, municipalities, other relevant authorities, civil society and media.

2.1.3 SOCIAL RIGHTS

Bosnia and Herzegovina ratified the Revised European Social Charter (ESC) (CETS No. 163) on 7 October 2008, accepting 51 out of 98 provisions of the Charter. Between 2011 and 2020, the State submitted 10 reports on the application of the Charter. The repeated lack of sufficient information in the annual reports submitted by Bosnia and Herzegovina on the implementation of the ESC makes it difficult for the Committee to properly assess compliance with the Charter. Furthermore, the country has not accepted the Collective Complaints procedure.⁴⁸ The European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR) found continued non-compliance with the Charter provisions in areas such as labour rights, employment (including of minors), discrimination, gender pay gap, rights of migrants, health care and others. In particular, in its last [conclusions](#), the ECSR stressed the need to align the national legislative and regulatory frameworks and practice with European standards in the field of protection of children including migrants and protection of employed women during their pregnancy or maternity leave.

⁴⁷ Covering education, employment, healthcare, housing, urban development and culture.

⁴⁸ The Additional Protocol to the European Social Charter Providing for a System of Collective Complaints (European Treaty Series (ETS) No. 158) entered into force 1 July 1998. It has been ratified by 15 member States. Five signatures have not yet been followed by a ratification. Further information can be found on the Council of Europe Treaty Office website available at <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list?module=treaty-detail&treaty-num=158>.

The current Action Plan aims to address these issues while also placing particular emphasis on raising awareness of the need to protect social rights. Support could also strive to enhance the constitutional capacity to collect and provide the necessary data to the ECSR and promote the acceptance of additional provisions of the Charter among decision-makers.

Expected outcomes

- National legislation in the area of social and economic rights is aligned with the requirements under the ESC;
- Target professionals (judges and lawyers) have a better understanding of the ECSR's decisions and are capable of applying it in practice.

Main national partners: Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Federal Ministry of Displaced Persons and Refugees (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina, legal professionals and other responsible authorities (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska, Brčko District), general public.

2.2 RULE OF LAW

When becoming a Council of Europe member State, Bosnia and Herzegovina committed to continue reforms to establish a professional and independent judicial and prosecution system and to ensure adequate funding for the judiciary with a view to reinforcing its independence.⁴⁹ The Council of Europe stands ready to support Bosnia and Herzegovina in addressing the reported fragmentation of the judicial framework,⁵⁰ advancing the enforcement of judicial decisions,⁵¹ strengthening judicial independence,⁵² decreasing the length of proceedings and improving case management to reduce the reported large backlog of cases.⁵³ The Council of Europe will continue to support the efforts made by Bosnia and Herzegovina through multifaceted and comprehensive assistance focusing on the Constitutional Court, further ensuring legal certainty in case-law, improving the quality and efficiency of justice and strengthening the use of cyber-justice tools and other Information Technology (IT) solutions in the judicial system.

While the complex constitutional architecture already creates room for corruption,⁵⁴ the Covid-19 crisis has reportedly been even more conducive to corruption.⁵⁵ Building on the results of a previous regional initiative, the Council of Europe stands ready to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina in the implementation of the recommendations of the Group of States Against Corruption (GRECO) and the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL) through a country-specific action to foster a culture of integrity.⁵⁶ Support in the field of cybercrime will continue.

Support in the field of trafficking in human beings seeks to contribute to lowering the prevalence of this phenomenon. Building on the results of the previous Action Plan (Council of Europe Action Plan for 2018-2021) in the field of detection and identification, the Council of Europe's support will focus on addressing core drivers, including gender inequality, poverty and discrimination,⁵⁷ and ensuring a human rights approach.

⁴⁹ Committee of Ministers, *State of implementation of the commitments entered into by Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 19th report (May 2016 – May 2018), GR-DEM(2018)11-final, 27 September 2018, para 34.

⁵⁰ Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), *The honouring of obligations and commitments by Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Doc. 14465, 08 January 2018, paragraph 149, available at <https://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=24304&lang=en>.

⁵¹ Reinhard Priebe, *Expert Report on Rule of Law issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Brussels, 5 December 2019, p. 24. Available at <http://europa.ba/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/ExpertReportonRuleofLawissuesinBosniaandHerzegovina.pdf>.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 11 and 24.

⁵³ Group of States Against Corruption (GRECO), *Fourth Evaluation Round, Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors*, Second Compliance report, Bosnia and Herzegovina, adopted by GRECO at its 85th Plenary Meeting (Strasbourg, 21-25 September 2020), GrecoRC4(2020)6, pp. 25-39, available at <https://rm.coe.int/fourth-evaluation-round-corruption-prevention-in-respect-of-members-of-1680a0bb7e>.

⁵⁴ European Commission, *Economic reform programme of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2021-2023) - Commission assessment*, Brussels, 22 April 2021 SWD(2021) 91 final, p. 18, available at [https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-register/detail?ref=SWD\(2021\)91&lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-register/detail?ref=SWD(2021)91&lang=en).

⁵⁵ European Commission, *Bosnia and Herzegovina 2020 Report*, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

⁵⁶ Reinhard Priebe, *Expert Report on Rule of Law issues in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, *op. cit.* paragraphs 6 and 101.

⁵⁷ Please see the Action Plan section on human rights and more specifically Chapter 2.1.3 Social rights.

The Council of Europe's support in the penitentiary field has a track record of successful results as highlighted by the external evaluation of the Action Plan 2018-2021. The human rights competence-based training framework for custodial (police and prisons) and forensic staff established under past Council of Europe initiatives could be taken further with this Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2022-2025 (Action Plan) to enable the development of dynamic security protocols. These would focus on harmonised inter-sectoral treatment of persons deprived of liberty. Support in the field of drug treatment in prisons could also be provided.

Assistance in the field of falsification of medical products could be also considered given that in 2020 Bosnia and Herzegovina ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the counterfeiting of medical products and similar crimes involving threats to public health (MEDICRIME Convention) (Council of Europe Treaty Series (CETS) No.211) which entered into force on 1 January 2021.

These actions will contribute to achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 3 on health and well-being (target 5),⁵⁸ 5 on gender equality (targets 2 and A),⁵⁹ 8 on inclusive and sustainable economic growth (target 7)⁶⁰ and 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions (especially targets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10 and A).⁶¹

2.2.1 RULE OF LAW BASED INSTITUTIONS

Technical co-operation to be implemented in this area has been designed taking into consideration the reports and conclusions of relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms and expert advisory bodies which call on Bosnia and Herzegovina to harmonise the four existing legal systems in the country.

➤ Independence and efficiency of justice

As highlighted by the *Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)*, continuous efforts are needed to harmonise the four existing legal systems in the country. A reform of the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council (HJPC) is necessary as stressed at various occasions by the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission).⁶² In addition, the non-enforcement of the Constitutional Court's decisions diminishes the effectiveness of the Court's role as a remedy to human rights violations and as the core implementor of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) at national level. It concerns both decisions following individual applications and decisions with a review of the constitutionality of legislative acts or practice.

Within the wider context of action to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina in consolidating its judicial system, capacity building was provided to judges and judicial associates to draft and provide full reasoning for judicial decisions by taking into account the ECHR and the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). Case-law departments were established in the Supreme Courts of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska and the Appellate Court of Brčko District. The capacities of their staff on ECHR matters and case management methodology were enhanced. A new case-law database

⁵⁸ Goal 3, target 5: Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol.

⁵⁹ Goal 5, target 2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation. Target A: Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

⁶⁰ Goal 8, target 7: Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

⁶¹ Goal 16, target 1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere. Target 2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. Target 3: Promote the rule of law at national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all. Target 4: By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organised crime. Target 5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms. Target 6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels. Target 10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements. Target A: Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international co-operation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.

⁶² European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), *Opinion on the draft Law on the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, adopted by the Venice Commission at its 98th Plenary Session (Venice, 21-22 March 2014), available at [https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD\(2014\)008-e](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD(2014)008-e). Venice Commission, *Opinion on the draft Law on amendments to the Law on the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council*, adopted by the Venice Commission at its 126th Plenary Session (online, 19-20 March 2021), available at [https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD\(2021\)015-e](https://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/?pdf=CDL-AD(2021)015-e).

with human rights keywords, aligned with the approach applied by the ECtHR, is now maintained by the HJPC. The harmonisation panels, established in 2014, continue to operate, albeit in a limited manner. However, the adopted mechanisms are yet to deliver results and require further fine-tuning. This is especially true regarding the yet-to-emerge judicial practice on the laws on compensation for violation of the reasonable length of proceedings.⁶³

The authorities were able to provide answers to 97% of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) Questionnaire for its *Assessment report of the capacity of Bosnia and Herzegovina to collect, process and transfer judicial statistics*. The CEPEJ highlighted the lack of data provided in the area of budget, case flow, amount of legal aid and capacity-building. It is also to be noted that Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of the few jurisdictions of the initiative able to deliver full data about alternative dispute resolution. The assessment concluded that the country may become a regional reference in data-based objective court management.

Moreover, support was provided by the Council of Europe to enhance the understanding of media professionals and representatives of the judiciary on professional and ethical standards and obligations of journalists in reporting on the war heritage and war crimes trials. This is of particular relevance given the [call from the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human rights](#) (the Commissioner) for the effective protection of and support to witnesses in proceedings relating to crimes committed during the wars of the 1990s in the former Yugoslavia. Further support in this regard could be provided.

Under this Action Plan, the Council of Europe will adopt a multifaceted and comprehensive approach by focusing on:

- supporting the work of the HJPC and courts to improve the efficiency and quality of the justice system in accordance with the standards and tools developed by the CEPEJ and European best practices;
- tackling the issue of non-enforcement of the Constitutional Court's decisions through promotion of dialogue with parliaments, increased dialogue with general jurisdiction courts, lawyers and civil society on the nature of the Constitutional Court's decisions, improving public outreach by making the general public aware of the role and competences of the Constitutional Court;
- ensuring the principle of legal certainty in judicial proceedings in Bosnia and Herzegovina, improving the effectiveness of the judiciary and strengthening national implementation of human rights. In particular, attention is to be paid on ensuring the right to a fair trial within a reasonable time with an effective domestic remedy and consistent judicial practice.

Expected outcomes

- The effective implementation of the Constitutional Court's judgments in the field of human rights within the scope of individual application and constitutionality review mechanisms is ensured;
- The efficiency of the justice system is strengthened in line with CEPEJ standards and tools on court efficiency (*i.e.* case management, judicial statistics, time management);
- The quality of the justice system is improved in line with CEPEJ standards and tools on the quality of justice (Cyber-Justice and court users' satisfaction surveys);
- Case law departments of selected courts⁶⁴ are fully operational and function in line with European best practices;
- The functional IT tools⁶⁵ for the harmonisation of judicial practice and compliance with ECtHR judgements operated by the judiciary are enhanced;
- Legal professionals' capacities are strengthened on topics related to efficiency and quality of justice in line with CEPEJ standards and tools.

⁶³ The relevant legislation was passed in Brčko District and the Republika Srpska and is being adopted in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and at State level. Inconsistencies remain and serious discrepancies in judicial awards of relevant compensation may be anticipated.

⁶⁴ Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Appellate Court of Brčko District, Supreme Courts of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska.

⁶⁵ Databases, case management systems etc.

Main national partners: Ministries of Justice (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska), HJPC of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Appellate Court of Brčko District, Supreme Courts (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska), Parliamentary Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, National Assembly of Republika Srpska, chief judges, chief prosecutors, judges and prosecutors, court administrators, Bar Associations (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska), Centres for Judicial and Prosecutorial Training (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska), Judicial Commission of Brčko District, Law faculties of Universities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

2.2.2 ACTION AGAINST CRIME, SECURITY AND PROTECTION OF CITIZENS

➤ Fight against corruption and money laundering

Bosnia and Herzegovina has made significant progress in addressing the strategic Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) deficiencies identified by MONEYVAL and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). As a result, the country is no longer subject to the FATF's monitoring under its International Compliance Review Group (ICRG) compliance process. However, [MONEYVAL recommends](#) that Bosnia and Herzegovina strengthens the effectiveness of its AML/CFT system and undertake further efforts to ensure the practical implementation of the preventive measures.

The [GRECO Second Compliance Report of the Fourth Round Evaluation on Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) concludes that Bosnia and Herzegovina has implemented satisfactorily none of the fifteen recommendations contained in its [Fourth Round Evaluation Report](#). There is still a crucial need for the Law on conflict of interest to be passed. Further efforts are required to implement the guidelines on preventing conflicts of interest in the judiciary, on prosecutors' performance appraisals and on integrity plans, as well as the guidelines on disciplinary sanctions adopted by the HJPC of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The [Commissioner stressed](#) the need to strengthen the judiciary's response to vast corruption affairs to counter the lack of trust in these institutions.

In the last decade, there was no technical bilateral co-operation between the Council of Europe and Bosnia and Herzegovina in the area of the fight against economic crime. Bosnia and Herzegovina has benefited from support at regional level.⁶⁶ Under the Action Plan, the Council of Europe seeks to strengthen Bosnia and Herzegovina's legal and institutional frameworks in several areas including the transparency of political party financing, strengthening the system for assets declarations and verification of the income, assets and interests of public officials and the integrity of public officials, including at the highest level. Furthermore, support will be provided to enhance the effectiveness of AML/CFT policies and regulations through increasing awareness of financing terrorism risks in the non-profit organisation (NPO) sector, and the capacities of supervisory authorities to implement risk-based supervision in the financial and designated non-financial businesses and professions (DNFBP) sectors. In addition, the Council of Europe intends to provide support to enhance the capacity of institutions for financial investigation, prosecution and adjudication of economic crimes, strengthen the asset recovery legislative and institutional framework and improve the transparency of ownership and access to reliable information.

Expected outcomes

- The legal framework for prevention of corruption is enhanced with a particular focus on political party financing, assets declarations, verification of assets and income of public officials, ethics, integrity and conflict of interest;
- Transparency of beneficial ownership is increased and misuse of corporate entities is limited;
- The inter-agency co-operation and exchange of information in economic crime cases, including information contained in asset declaration forms and registries of beneficial owners, is enhanced;

⁶⁶ Focusing on the enhancement of measures to prevent corruption in public procurement; exchange of good practices on Transparency of Beneficial Ownership; and improving the capacities for identifying and managing Non-Profit Organisations' (NPOs') terrorism financing risks.

- The relevant authorities' capacities to carry out financial investigation, prosecution and adjudication of corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing are enhanced;
- The capacities of the relevant authorities to mitigate terrorist risks in the NPO sector and to implement risk-based supervision in financial and the DNFBP sectors are increased.

Main national partners: Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federal Ministry of Interior (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ministry of the Interior of Republika Srpska, Prosecutors' offices (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska), State Investigation and Protection Agency (SIPA) Financial Intelligence Department (FID) and Unit (FIU) and Central Bank of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

➤ Cybercrime

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a Contracting Party to the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention) (CETS No. 185), including its Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime, concerning the criminalisation of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems (CETS No. 189). The legislation of Bosnia and Herzegovina is partly in line with the framework provided by the Budapest Convention as assessed by international experts, with some deficiencies/gaps that need to be addressed. The country is also Party to the Council of Europe Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds from Crime and on the Financing of Terrorism (Warsaw Convention). A Strategy on cybersecurity is being drafted with preliminary support from the Council of Europe and "Guidelines for a strategic cybersecurity framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina" are available.

The capacities of relevant institutions in the fight against cybercrime and protection of cybersecurity are assessed to be at a good level despite the sometimes low number of officials involved in activities on these lines. The Council of Europe will continue to support all the respective institutions in this regard through continuous capacity-building activities and to further develop co-operation regarding national and international mechanisms.

The Council of Ministers adopted a Decision on the Establishment of a Computer Emergency Response Team in March 2017. Following the Council of Europe's support, increases are to be noted in the number of Fraud Forums, Memoranda of Understanding and interactions with financial institutions, internet service providers (ISPs) and other stakeholders and in the number of incoming and outgoing mutual legal assistance requests relating to cybercrime and electronic evidence. Progress can also be noted in strengthening the capacities of cybercrime and financial investigators, prosecutors, representatives of the FID, judges and legal associates to counter cybercrime and in strengthening inter-agency and international co-operation as well as information sharing between cybercrime units and between the competent authorities for judicial co-operation.

The Council of Europe intends to build on these results to co-ordinate more effectively cybercrime and cybersecurity policies and strategies. Assistance will also be provided to ensure compliance with the Budapest Convention of Bosnia and Herzegovina's procedural law frameworks. The Council of Europe will support the authorities in improving information sharing between private and public sectors on cybercrime and money laundering methodology and in further strengthening the capacities of specialised investigative units to search, seize and confiscate online crime proceeds, combat cybercrime and obtain and secure electronic evidence. Support is linked to the [second additional Protocol to the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime on enhanced co-operation and disclosure of electronic evidence](#) and could contribute to its future signature and ratification by Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Expected outcomes

- Co-ordinated cybercrime and cybersecurity policies and strategies are developed and implemented by the competent authorities;
- Inter-agency co-operation in order to conduct parallel financial investigation related to cybercrime cases is further increased;
- Measures to encourage information sharing and intelligence exchange mechanisms on cybercrime established between the public and private sectors are set;
- The efficiency and existing capabilities of institutions involved in the fight against cybercrime to co-operate at international level are increased;
- Capacities of authorities to search, seize and confiscate cybercrime proceeds and prevent money laundering on the Internet and to secure electronic evidence are further enhanced;
- Capacities of judicial authorities to prosecute and adjudicate on cybercrime offences and assess electronic evidence are further strengthened.

Main national partners: Ministry of Security Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federal Ministry of Interior (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ministry of the Interior of Republika Srpska, SIPA, Personal Data Protection Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, FIU, FID, Centres for Judicial and Prosecutorial Training in entities, national and sectoral Computer Emergency Response Team/Cyber Incident Response Team (CERTs/CIRTs), the judiciary, the private sector (ISPs (local and multinational), Banking Associations and information security companies).

➤ Trafficking in human beings

Bosnia and Herzegovina remains primarily a country of origin of victims of trafficking in human beings who are exploited both abroad and within the country. Due to the difficult economic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, an increasing number of people seek jobs abroad, exposing themselves to the risk of becoming victims of trafficking in human beings.⁶⁷ Data made available by the national authorities to the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) show a trend towards an increase in trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation and child trafficking (for the purposes of forced begging, forced criminality, and child marriages). Children in Bosnia and Herzegovina account for the majority of identified victims (59% in 2019,⁶⁸ 50% in 2000⁶⁹). Roma children remain particularly vulnerable to trafficking, due to chronic poverty, marginalisation and social discrimination. In January 2020, the Government adopted a new *Strategy to Suppress Trafficking in Human Beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2020-2023)* which takes into account many of GRETA's previous recommendations.⁷⁰

Drawing on the recommendations made in *GRETA's second report on Bosnia and Herzegovina*, the Council of Europe supported the national authorities in developing the capacities and knowledge of stakeholders⁷¹ to identify, assist and support victims of trafficking, as well as to improve prosecution, focusing on child trafficking and trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation. Information campaigns on trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation were conducted.

⁶⁷ Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA), *Report concerning the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Second evaluation round, GRETA (2017)15, 17 July 2017, p. 7, available at <http://rm.coe.int/greta-2017-15-fgr-bih-en/1680782ac1>.

⁶⁸ State Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, *Situation Report on Trafficking in Human Beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2019*, Sarajevo, March 2020, available at http://www.msb.gov.ba/anti_trafficking/dokumenti/godisnji_izvjestaj/default.aspx?id=19181&langTag=en-US.

⁶⁹ State Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, *Situation Report on Trafficking in Human Beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2020*, Sarajevo, March 2021 available at <http://msb.gov.ba/PDF/12082021.pdf>.

⁷⁰ The strategy pays particular attention to addressing child trafficking and trafficking for labour exploitation and envisages strengthening prevention through measures to combat discrimination, supporting the economic empowerment of women, and raising awareness of the risks of labour exploitation. It also envisages ensuring the effective application of the non-punishment principle of victims of trafficking who have been coerced into committing unlawful activities.

⁷¹ Labour inspectors, police officers, employment agencies, trade unions and civil society organisations (CSOs).

Future assistance is planned to support the authorities in the implementation of the Council of Europe Anti-Trafficking Convention, building on the results of previous activities, and on the analysis of trends and gaps that will be identified through GRETA's forthcoming third evaluation, which has a thematic focus on access to justice and effective remedies for victims of trafficking. Support towards improved prevention of trafficking, protection of victims and a strengthened criminal justice response will be provided. Policy support to improve consistency between anti-trafficking action and actions to promote gender equality, combat gender-based violence and violence against children could be envisaged.

Expected outcomes

- The criminal justice response to trafficking in human beings is strengthened, focusing on more effective investigation and prosecution of offences as well as on improving the protection of victims before, during and after proceedings;
- Prevention policies and measures that address core drivers of trafficking in human beings are strengthened, with a focus on supporting the empowerment of women, child trafficking and trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation;
- A rights-based approach, focusing on improved victim identification and referral procedures is enhanced, in particular for child victims, as well as improved access to justice and effective remedies.

Main national partners: Federal Ministry of Interior (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ministry of the Interior of Republika Srpska, Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ministry of Justice, National Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, Republika Srpska Co-ordinator for the fight against Human trafficking, Prosecutor's Office, SIPA, Border Police, Labour Inspection, Regional Monitoring teams in Banja Luka and Sarajevo.

➤ Drug abuse and illicit trafficking

In 2015, Bosnia and Herzegovina was officially admitted into the Council of Europe Co-operation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Drugs (Pompidou Group). Apart from the statutory activities, Bosnia and Herzegovina has been participating in the Pompidou Group's South-East Europe Co-operation Group.⁷² Components of regional co-operation included networking and joint operations of customs and police for tackling drug trafficking via air and a pilot project on designing online drug prevention and self-assessment tools to reduce drug-related harm. Support from the Council of Europe in the drug policy field could encompass further improving the operational capacities of police and customs officers in tackling drug trafficking.

As evidenced in the [2017 study by the Pompidou Group](#), there is a high prevalence of drug use among people who are incarcerated in the South-East Europe region. In 2020, a new initiative was launched by South-East European members of the Pompidou Group, among them Bosnia and Herzegovina, to facilitate exchanges among representatives of prison administrations on developing comprehensive drug treatment systems in prisons.⁷³ The Council of Europe stands ready to build the capacity of prison administrations regarding the treatment and rehabilitation of drug-dependent inmates in synergies with the overall support provided to prisons under the Action Plan.⁷⁴

In addition, a greater risk of substance abuse and involvement in drug-related crime has been identified among the increasingly present migrant and refugee population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In particular, reception and treatment conditions of refugees and migrants⁷⁵ act as high-risk factors increasing vulnerability to substance use⁷⁶ and involvement in drug-related crime. Moreover, limited human and financial resources, and the lack of prioritising the basic needs of migrants and refugees have led to limited

⁷² This platform aims to foster co-operation among drug policy authorities in the region by enhancing dialogue and the practical exchange of knowledge and experience and supporting the development of coherent policies on psychoactive substances.

⁷³ Such an approach complements supply reduction efforts in prison and encompasses pharmacologically assisted treatment, harm reduction programmes and drug-free treatment, along with other types of psycho-social support to meet the complex health and social care needs of detainees with substance use disorders.

⁷⁴ Please see Action Plan Chapter 2.2.2 Action against crime, security and protection of citizens: Prisons and police.

⁷⁵ Please see Action Plan Chapter 2.1.1. Effective ECHR implementation: Enhancing the effectiveness of the ECHR system at national level.

⁷⁶ The Council of Europe Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees (SRSG) reported that in the East Sarajevo Immigration Detention Centre, the most common profile of detainees was 20-40-year old men from northern Africa, with 70% of the population disclosing a problem of drug addiction. See the *Report of the fact-finding mission by Ambassador Tomáš Boček, Special Representative of the Secretary General on migration and refugees, to Bosnia and Herzegovina and to Croatia 24-27 July and 26-30 November 2018*, 23 April 2019, p. 18, available at <https://rm.coe.int/report-of-the-fact-finding-mission-by-ambassador-tomas-bocek-special-r/1680940259>.

investment in healthcare capacity.⁷⁷ There is an overall need for personnel to be able to respond to mental health issues and addiction diseases.⁷⁸ In this context, the Action Plan intends to address drug-related challenges linked to migration in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Expected outcomes

- Operational co-operation at regional level between police and customs officers working at airports to tackle drug trafficking is improved;
- Authorities adopt strategies for preventing substance use and the exploitation of migrants and refugees by criminal networks;
- Prison staff, health care professionals and social workers have the capacity to increase access to quality drug addiction treatment for inmates;
- Medical and non-medical staff working in temporary facilities for refugees and migrants improve their abilities to early detect and screen substance abuse.

Main national partners: Ministries of Justice, Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federal Ministry of Health (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of Republika Srpska and Department for Health and other services of Brčko District, prison administration, prison staff, law enforcement agencies, health and psychosocial professionals and relevant non-governmental organisations.

➤ Prisons and police

With support from the Council of Europe in the law enforcement area, operational procedures developed for all ten police agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the capacity-building of training structures paved the way for a more advanced understanding of a human rights approach. Further assistance would be beneficial to:

- embed a framework and mechanism for investigating ill-treatment (with a focus on the roles of the Professional Standards Unit in each Ministry of Civil Affairs/Interior, medical doctors in the community reporting on alleged ill-treatment and prosecutors investigating these allegations).
- build capacities for independent monitoring and supervising police work, especially with respect to interviewing techniques as highlighted by [the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment \(CPT\) latest report on Bosnia and Herzegovina](#).
- develop appropriate policy documents and a training programme for the police in charge of ensuring personal safety of judicial officials and security of the community;
- devise police agencies' protocols for dealings with migrants to enable a clear distinction to be made between irregular migrants placed in immigration centres and those who may have committed an offence.

The prison population amounts to approximately 1,813 prisoners in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and 743 in Republika Srpska.⁷⁹ Some of these prisoners are being transferred to the recently opened State Prison of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The percentage of sentenced prisoners is approximately 80% in each prison jurisdiction. With the support of the Council of Europe, pilot prisons and government data centres were partially equipped for the application of prison software (Integrated Prison Management Information System (IPMIS)) to move away from data-sharing in hard copy. The Action Plan will further support the collecting, processing and sharing of electronic prison-related data among entity prison establishments. It aims to roll out the IPMIS to all entity-prison establishments.

⁷⁷ World Health Organisation, *Bosnia and Herzegovina: assessing health systems capacity to manage large influx of refugees and migrants*, Copenhagen, 2020, p. ix, available at <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331455/9789289054867-eng.pdf>.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 17.

⁷⁹ Council of Europe, University of Lausanne, *SPACE I - 2020 – Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics: Prison populations*, Strasbourg, 2021, p. 33, available at <https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/europe-s-imprisonment-rate-continues-to-fall-council-of-europe-s-annual-penal-statistics>.

Activities under this Action Plan could also provide further impetus not only for probation work but could also embed awareness of the need to provide rehabilitative activities with purposeful regimes for sentenced prisoners, in preparation for their release and subsequent probation work with them. These strategic aims are supported also by the draft Justice Sector Reform Strategy (2021-2027),⁸⁰ as well as CPT findings and recommendations from past visits.

In the area of treatment of forensic patients, basic protocols for the most common daily work with such patients were subsequently developed and a capacity-building cycle, encompassing the full staff contingent of the Public Health Institution (PHI) Institute for Forensic Psychiatry Sokolac, improved their competencies to manage forensic patients in a safe manner. In line with recommendations from the evaluation of the Council of Europe's Directorate of Internal Oversight (DIO)⁸¹ and the CPT, the Council of Europe will provide support in further enhancing staff competence to develop resource material for the provision of humane and rehabilitative treatment of patients and post-treatment support in the community. It also aims to support the establishment of a discharge system to make sure that the pre-release process is implemented to the best possible extent through a multi-disciplinary approach.

In addition, the problem of radicalisation that leads to violent extremism has gained particular importance in the past two decades.⁸² Previously, the Council of Europe supported the strengthening of institutional capacities to ensure the rehabilitation of violent and extremist prisoners (VEPs).⁸³ The Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina has endorsed an instruction incorporating into legislation the basic screening tool for the identification of signs of radicalisation, a risk and needs assessment tool, sentence planning and treatment programmes for VEPs, which will be applied in the newly open high-security State Prison. The development of a [web-based collaboration platform](#) for inter-institutional exchange of knowledge and good practices was made available to practitioners from the South-East Europe region. The Council of Europe seeks to further strengthen the work in the multi-agency environment by establishing reliable mechanisms for information sharing between prisons (prison intelligence units) and external partners. A focus should be also placed on the establishment of the training co-ordination and provision mechanisms and harmonised training curricula for prison personnel managing VEPs at all three administrative jurisdictions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in line with the comprehensive multi-annual *2020–2025 Strategic Policy Document Plan for treatment of violent prisoners in prison and the multi-agency co-operation* and Action Plan. The support in this area will contribute towards the execution of the [Joint Action Plan on Counter-Terrorism for the Western Balkans](#) (European Union) and sets out preconditions for the practical application of the Guidelines and the [Council of Europe Handbook for prison and probation services regarding radicalisation and violent extremism](#).

As far as freedom of assembly is concerned, the [Venice Commission, together with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe \(OSCE\)](#), stressed the major responsibility of law enforcement personnel in the event of risks presented by the presence of counter demonstrators and actual sudden unrest of this kind during public gatherings. Consideration could be given to providing support to the law enforcement agencies, including newly recruited staff, to avoid the excessive use of force during public gatherings.

⁸⁰ At the time of drafting of the present Action Plan, the Strategy was not yet adopted.

⁸¹ Council of Europe Directorate of Internal Oversight (DIO), *Evaluation of the Council of Europe's work under the programme line "prisons and police" 2016-2019*, January 2021, p. 24, available at <https://rm.coe.int/dio-2021-33-evaluationreportonprisonsandpolice-en-f/1680a22465>.

⁸² From 2012 to 2015, the country faced a significant number of its citizens travelling to Syria and Iraq. According to the authorities, approximately 323 (181 men, 61 women, and 81 children) (European Commission, *Analytical Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for membership of the European Union*, Brussels, 29 May 2019, p. 63, available at <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/20190529-bosnia-and-herzegovina-analytical-report.pdf>) citizens from Bosnia and Herzegovina had travelled to foreign battlefields. Following the collapse of Islamic State, the national security agencies announced the return of approximately 178 (49 men, 49 women and 80 children) citizens. Of the 50 returned foreign terrorist fighters, 25 men were indicted, tried and convicted for terrorism-related offences (European Commission, *Bosnia and Herzegovina 2020 Report*, *op. cit.*, p. 40). As of October 2020, there were ten prisoners in Bosnia and Herzegovina serving prison sentences for the criminal act of terrorism, and three for illegal formation of and joining foreign paramilitary or para-police formations, making a total of thirteen violent extremist prisoners.

⁸³ In this context, the *Strategic Guidelines for treatment of violent and extremist prisoners in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2020 – 2025* and its accompanying Action Plan and the *Staff Management Strategy for high security units managing VEPs* were drawn up.

Expected outcomes

- Relevant staff skills on the rehabilitation and re-socialisation of forensic patients and other vulnerable groups in detention are enhanced;
- Court police personnel are equipped with policy documents and operational guidance on the safety and security of judicial officials fighting organised crime and corruption;
- Pilot probation services projects are implemented in individual prisons for the gradual establishment of probation service(s) in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- Knowledge and skills of law enforcement officers on human rights standards are embedded into practice;
- Functional Prison Intelligence Units (PIUs) for the collection, analysis and sharing of information between prisons and other relevant agencies, based on prison dynamic security principles, are put in place in the two entity jurisdictions;
- VEP-specific training for prison staff in Bosnia and Herzegovina is provided in a harmonised and sustainable manner for the uniform application of the VEP tools and rehabilitation programmes and enhancement of the use of multi-institutional co-operation mechanisms.

Main national partners: Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federal Ministry of Interior (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ministry of the Interior of Republika Srpska, Ministries of Justice (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska), Federal Ministry of Health (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of Republika Srpska, SIPA, Border Police of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Service for Foreigner Affairs, Police of Brčko District, Court Police (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska, Brčko District) and PHI Institute for Forensic Psychiatry Sokolac.

2.3 DEMOCRACY

The [latest report](#) from the Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (Congress) on Bosnia and Herzegovina expressed concerns about the lack of progress in the implementation of constitutional reforms at all levels of authority, the lack of clarity in the allocation of responsibilities between the various levels of authority, the failure to respect the principle of subsidiarity and the lack of consultation of local authorities on all issues that directly concern them. The Council of Europe stands ready to assist the authorities in ensuring the conformity of the country's electoral legislation and constitutional framework and its implementation with the European electoral heritage, especially regarding matters related to the execution of the *Sejdić and Finci* group of judgments.

The Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2022-2025 (Action Plan) strives to support the improvement of local democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina through innovative forms of deliberative democracy. These forms are not intended to replace democratic elections and existing democratic mechanisms, but rather to provide an impetus for increased citizen participation and civil society organisations (CSOs) in local decision-making. Citizen participation and citizen deliberations make it possible to redistribute authority and power, to establish mechanisms for identifying and targeting interests, to ensure the implementation of decisions, to overcome conflicts, to foster reconciliation and to depoliticise society. Fostering confidence-building initiatives along the entity boundary line will also remain important.

In the field of education, the Council of Europe will seek to support the authorities in implementing the [Policy Recommendation with a Roadmap for Improving Inclusive Education](#), adopted by the Council of Ministers under the Action Plan 2018-2021.

These initiatives also aim to contribute to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 4 on quality education (target 7),⁸⁴ 5 on gender equality (target 1),⁸⁵ 10 on reduced inequalities (target 2),⁸⁶ 11 on inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements (target 3)⁸⁷ and 16 on peace, justice and strong institutions (targets 6 and 7).⁸⁸

2.3.1 DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

➤ Elections

Following the 2018 general elections, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) Election Observation Mission concluded, together with other partners⁸⁹ that there was a lack of trust in the election administration at all levels and questions about its impartiality, including on account of numerous credible claims that contestants were trading positions to obtain control over particular polling station commissions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The remote election observation missions of the Congress regarding the local elections conducted in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 15 November and exclusively in Mostar on 20 December 2020⁹⁰ identified various issues such as trading positions on polling station commissions among political parties, the subsequent politicisation of the election administration and unbalanced coverage of the election campaign.

The Council of Europe actively worked with the Central Election Commission (CEC) on delivering better continuous training to the electoral administration and other participants in the electoral process. In preparation for the 2018 general elections, guidelines were prepared with the CEC for domestic and international observers. New voting technologies to enhance the practicability and effectiveness of the electoral process were identified, and improved voter education was advocated. The Council of Europe promoted women's political participation, which is still below the benchmark (40%) set in the relevant national legislation. A *Study on Violence against women in politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina* lays down the basics for potential future initiatives on electoral assistance/co-operation and civil society in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

With the general elections in 2022 in Bosnia and Herzegovina in mind and following up on the previous support provided, the Action Plan will focus on:

- Enhancing the capacities of the CEC of Bosnia and Herzegovina, media representatives, political parties and polling stations members to become more professional, inclusive and transparent;
- Increase awareness of the general public to ensure improved participation and representation of under-represented groups.

⁸⁴ Goal 4, target 7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

⁸⁵ Goal 5, target 1: End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

⁸⁶ Goal 10, target 2: By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

⁸⁷ Goal 11, target 3: By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.

⁸⁸ Goal 16, target 6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels. Target 7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

⁸⁹ European Parliament, Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe), OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Parliamentary Assembly, *Statement of preliminary findings and conclusions, international election observation mission*, available at <https://www.nato-pa.int/download-file?filename=/sites/default/files/2018-10/BiH%20General%20elections%20final.pdf>.

⁹⁰ Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by member states of the European Charter of Local Self-Government (Monitoring Committee), *Information report on the local elections held in Bosnia and Herzegovina (15 November 2020) and Mostar (20 December 2020)*, 9 February 2021, CG-MON(2021)18-09, available at https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=0900001680a15347.

Expected outcomes

- Media coverage on the election period is improved to be more efficient and professional;
- The capacity of the CEC and election commissions is increased to become more professional, inclusive and transparent;
- Awareness of under-represented categories of voters (especially women and national minorities) is raised in relevant municipalities.

Main national partners: CEC, electoral administration, media representatives, representatives of political parties, civil society and other electoral stakeholders.

➤ **Civil participation in democratic decision-making**

In line with the efforts to enhance democratic governance through civil participation, the Council of Europe aims to support the engagement of citizens and CSOs in political decision-making at local and regional level in Bosnia and Herzegovina by raising the awareness of public authorities, CSOs and citizens of innovative tools and approaches for civil participation. Through building the capacities of relevant stakeholders and providing technical support to establish effective dialogue platforms in municipalities and regions, which should serve specifically to promote the inclusion of young people, women and minorities, citizens will be brought closer to the decision-making and policy-making processes in their communities and regions. Subsequently, public service delivery could respond more effectively to the actual needs and demands of the population and an enhanced open dialogue between citizens and the authorities may generate more trust in the public administration.

The Council of Europe intends to deploy a range of innovative tools that can help public authorities of all levels in Bosnia and Herzegovina harness the potential of citizens and include their knowledge and experience in decision and policy-making in municipalities, cantons, and regions. A special focus will be placed on raising the awareness and enhancing the capacities for participation of children and young people through the introduction of participatory tools to be implemented in schools. Additional support will be provided to the authorities in enhancing the regulatory framework for civil participation at those levels where it is needed to provide a conducive environment for the participation of civil society in the reforms/decision-making process.

Expected outcomes

- The regulatory framework for civil participation in pilot municipalities and regions provides a conducive environment for the inclusion of citizens and CSOs in the reforms/decision-making process of their communities and regions;
- Citizens' and CSOs are actively involved in the decision-making process in pilot municipalities and regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- Effective dialogue platforms in pilot municipalities and regions contribute to dynamic interaction between citizens and public authorities.

Main national partners: Associations of municipalities and cities in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska, all Cantonal Ministries of Education, Department for Education (Government, Brčko District), Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska, CSOs.

➤ **Promoting good governance and local government reforms**

Bosnia and Herzegovina ratified the European Charter of Local Self-Government on 12 July 2002 and its implementation is to be pursued. The [Congress](#) stressed the importance of moving forward with the implementation of the constitutional reforms introducing the principle of local self-government. There is a need to ensure systematic consultation of and co-ordination with and between local authorities on all matters that concern them. The possibilities for the joint delivery of public services and co-operation across the inter-entity boundary line should be legally guaranteed, supported and promoted.⁹¹ Similarly, the [PACE strongly advocated](#) strengthening local self-government in Bosnia and Herzegovina in line with [Congress Recommendation 324 \(2012\)](#) and [Recommendation 442 \(2019\)](#).

⁹¹ Please see Action Plan Chapter 2.3.1. Democratic governance: Confidence-building measures.

Following the major breakthrough of the local elections in the City of Mostar,⁹² the Council of Europe adapted its assistance to engage citizens in the deliberative process and to build the skills and knowledge of local stakeholders as regards democratic approaches. A tailored methodology for the deliberative process in the City of Mostar was devised. It includes various important aspects such as the governance structure for deliberation, a rulebook, and steps for the random sortition of citizens and for the selection of the topic for deliberation. The first Citizens Assembly which took place in July 2021 is the first of its kind in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the region. In addition, the Centre of Expertise for Good Governance has been supporting the development of skills to engage inhabitants in the democratic process by implementing training activities for local government officials in Bosnia and Herzegovina that seek to raise awareness of the *12 Principles of Good Democratic Governance*, build leadership capacity, promote strategies for civil participation, and develop cross-border and inter-entity co-operation based on existing toolkits and best practice.

The Action Plan aims to address the above-mentioned challenges by:

- Continuing working to support the City of Mostar in implementing the recommendations stemming from the first deliberative process held in July 2021 with the Citizens Assembly and embedding deliberative processes in their public policies through a second Citizens Assembly. The support provided should make it possible to implement innovative democratic practices to increase citizen participation in local decision-making, and to make the City of Mostar an inspiring example in the South-East Europe region. Replicating the deliberative model of democracy and the respective methodology in another municipality in Bosnia and Herzegovina could be explored;
- Strengthening the skills and capacities of local elected representatives and public officials in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the associations of local authorities to foster multi-level governance, build public ethics, increase transparency and accountability, and protect human rights at local level especially in the light of the socio-economic aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Expected outcomes

- The authorities from the City of Mostar implement appropriate measures and policies to address citizens' recommendations and embed deliberative activities in their decision-making;
- In selected municipalities, local elected representatives and public officials strengthen their capacities and skills to include innovative approaches to collaborative governance, deliberative democracy and citizen engagement;
- Local authorities increase their capacities in building public ethics, transparency, advocacy and in protecting human rights at local level;
- The institutional capacities of the two main associations of municipalities and cities are strengthened;
- Inter-municipal and inter-entity networks are supported through capacity-building and peer-learning to develop place-based, transboundary co-operation.⁹³

Main national partners: Relevant ministries in charge of Public Administration and Local Self-Government of the Republika Srpska, Associations of municipalities and cities in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska, the City of Mostar and local authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, CSOs such as LDA (Local Democracy Agency) Mostar.

⁹² The fact that no local elections had been held since 2008 led the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) to deliver a judgment in 2019 (*Baralija v. Bosnia and Herzegovina*) finding a violation by Bosnia and Herzegovina of Article 1 of Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Following the agreement signed on 17 June 2020 by the leader of the predominantly Bosniak party (Party of Democratic Action – SDA) and the leader of the predominantly Croat party (Croatian Democratic Union of Bosnia and Herzegovina – HDZ BiH), citizens of the City of Mostar were able to vote at local level for the first time in over a decade on 20 December 2020. The Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (Congress) concluded a remote observation procedure of the elections.

⁹³ The approach seeks to go beyond the constraints of territorial administrative structures to promote co-operation and offer a platform for partnership and co-ordination based on geographical proximity. "Transboundary" covers both inter-entity and cross-border co-operation.

➤ Confidence-building measures

In 1995 the Dayton Peace Agreement established an inter-entity line dividing some of the municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina in two, and in some cases into four new municipalities. The boundary line did not divide only the territory of the municipalities but also common infrastructure and the legal system, which is, in most cases, different in Republika Srpska and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The boundary line was a former front line between the military formations and a place where tragic suffering occurred.

The Council of Europe confidence-building measures (CBM) assistance is aimed at enhancing inter-municipal co-operation across the entity boundary line with a view to supporting reconciliation and overall democratisation efforts. Previous confidence-building initiatives served as a framework for enhancing inter-municipal co-operation to improve basic knowledge and skills in joint project management and facilitated the implementation of practical inter-municipal projects across the entity line. In total, 24 pairs of divided municipalities have benefited through the small grant scheme and have carried out joint project proposals of common interest to their population. The projects covered a wide range of areas such as co-operation between municipalities on education and common cultural activities for children from different ethnic backgrounds, co-operation on protecting cultural heritage, small joint agricultural projects, and joint training for voluntary firemen for civil protection. Support for young people as agents of reconciliation through extensive youth-led consultations resulted in the development of a common youth policy and the establishment of a youth association in the municipalities. Co-operation between women mayors has resulted in the signing of a co-operation agreement among the seven municipalities involved with a view to practical co-operation notably on infrastructures and the encouragement of women's participation in public and political life.

The Action Plan intends to build on previously-achieved results and to continue to consolidate the network of municipalities on both sides of the entity-boundary line, and to further develop the network of women elected at local and entity levels. Special attention will be devoted to the role of women in reconciliation, especially elected women at all levels. Support could also focus on other common activities, especially for young people in the sport and cultural fields.

Expected outcomes

- Inter-ethnic dialogue at the level of local communities is further reinforced;
- Co-operation among women mayors is further strengthened;
- Young people from all divided municipalities take part in new joint projects and the youth network is further developed.

Main national partners: Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska, local self-governments especially those along entity-boundary line, Gender Equality Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Gender Equality Centres, Municipal Gender Equality Commissions, CSOs and other relevant authorities and stakeholders.

2.3.2 DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION

Due to a lack of employment opportunities and the political context in the country, the phenomenon of brain drain is of particular concern. Some progress has been made in recent years in the field of youth work by CSOs and youth councils of the two entities working on training youth workers. Youth work as an occupation was recognised within the occupational framework at national level in 2014. The Council of Europe⁹⁴ has been supporting the development of competences of youth sector professionals, ranging from civil servants responsible for youth policy implementation at national to local levels, to youth-led CSOs delivering youth work and services to young people.

⁹⁴ Through its ordinary budget (OB).

➤ Education for democracy

Despite reform and improvement attempts by both governmental and non-governmental actors, the persisting segregation in the education system comes in different shapes and forms but is a feature present in every part of the education system (separate curricula, a national group of subjects and dominantly mono-ethnic schools) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Several Council of Europe monitoring bodies (the [Committee of Ministers \(CM\)](#), the [European Commission against Racism and Intolerance \(ECRI\)](#), the [Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities \(ACFC\)](#)) highlight the need to develop an inclusive, integrated educational environment in all schools while putting an end to “two schools under one roof” and mono-ethnic schools.

A key milestone in strengthening quality education for all was achieved by Bosnia and Herzegovina with the adoption of the [Policy Recommendation with a Roadmap for Improving Inclusive Education](#) by the Council of Ministers in 2020. This forward-looking and inclusive document⁹⁵ was jointly developed and adopted by relevant ministries at State level, entity ministries of education and 10 cantonal ministries of education in 2019 with the support of the Council of Europe. In addition, work was initiated to upgrade the history and geography curricula and align them with the learning outcomes of the *Common Core Curricula* developed by the Agency for Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Education (APOS) and the *Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture* (RFCDC). A School Network supported by the Council of Europe, consisting of 29 pilot schools from 10 Cantons, Republika Srpska and Brčko District was assisted in understanding the RFCDC and its implementation in schools. In addition, in 2020 Bosnia and Herzegovina also joined the [European Qualifications Passport for Refugees](#) initiative, facilitating the recognition of refugees’ qualifications even in the absence of full documentation.

Despite the progress made, given the long-term obstacles and challenges in the education sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina, further support is needed to implement the *Policy Recommendation with a Roadmap for Improving Inclusive Education* and respond to new challenges brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, which required switching to online learning methods.

Further support could be provided to assist co-ordination among all relevant ministries and other relevant stakeholders in developing educational vision and goals in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This encompasses targeted capacity-building of the main education providers, including by supporting more structured and continuous co-ordination through the Education Policy Network. The Action Plan will further improve the competences of teachers, school leaders and other school staff to implement the *Policy Recommendation with a Roadmap for Improving Inclusive Education* objectives. The pilot schools will become Resource Centres of a school network of democratic schools with equipped Digital Democracy Classrooms, promoting a democratic school culture and inclusiveness in other schools.

Integrity in higher education still needs to be strengthened. Corruption in the education sector is a current phenomenon. Young people are particularly affected by the potential non-recognition of diplomas from Bosnia and Herzegovina in other countries over the credibility of agencies in charge of quality assurance in higher education. In this context, the Council of Europe intends to provide support to address corruption and boost the integrity of higher education institutions based on the Council of Europe platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education (ETINED) following on from a comprehensive baseline analysis conducted in 2020.

Expected outcomes

- National education decision-makers and practitioners further align Bosnia and Herzegovina's educational standards and approaches with European standards, including as regards segregation in schools;
- Higher education institutions implement mechanisms to prevent corruption and to strengthen ethics, transparency and integrity in higher education;

⁹⁵ The document aims to improve the quality of education for all in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in line with European standards and according to the vision for quality education reflected in the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers (CM) recommendations.

- Education professionals and students of higher education institutions act with integrity in their academic endeavours in accordance with international standards;
- The capacities of teachers, school leaders and other school staff to implement the *Policy Recommendation with a Roadmap for Improving Inclusive Education* objectives are enhanced;
- Society's awareness of quality education as a public good and a basic human right is raised.

Main national partners: Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Federal Ministry of Education and Science (Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska, Ministry for Scientific and Technological Development, Higher Education and Information Society Republika Srpska, APOSO, all Cantonal Ministries of Education, Department for Education (Government, Brčko District), Higher education institutions and agencies, Primary and secondary schools, local communities and CSOs.

PART III – IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 METHODOLOGY

The overall co-ordination of technical co-operation carried out by the Council of Europe falls within the remit of the Office of the Directorate General of Programmes (ODGP) which steers programming of and fundraising for co-operation actions whilst ensuring the proper functioning of Council of Europe Offices in the field.

Action Plan projects are implemented by the Council of Europe's Major Administrative Entity responsible for the relevant area of expertise. In accordance with the Organisation's process on decentralised implementation of technical assistance and co-operation, the [Council of Europe Office in Sarajevo](#) plays a key role in co-ordinating and supporting the implementation of projects in the field. As of 1st October 2021, 28 staff members worked at the Office in Sarajevo.

The implementation of Action Plan projects involves, as necessary, needs assessments, legislative expertise, capacity-building, awareness-raising and peer-to-peer reviews. Implementation methodology, in line with the [Council of Europe Project Management Methodology](#) (PMM), aims to reinforce ownership by national stakeholders and to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes. The PMM, which became mandatory as of 2017, helps enhance the quality of project implementation in terms of planning and monitoring, cost efficiency and effectiveness. It also makes for improved risk assessment, the incorporation of a human rights approach and greater attention paid to the gender dimension.

In addition, the co-operation designed by the Council of Europe follows a “multi-institutional approach”, which enables different Council of Europe institutions and bodies to target governmental stakeholders, parliaments, independent governance institutions such as the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and local and regional authorities. This creates unique leverage for comprehensive, inclusive, successful and sustainable reforms.

The Council of Europe also prioritises a human rights approach at all levels and stages of its activities. Its *acquis*, including Council of Europe legal instruments and institutions, combined with the principles of participation and inclusion (including gender-balanced participation and engagement with civil society), equality and non-discrimination, accountability, transparency and access to information, brings further added value to the Council of Europe activities. The Council of Europe's [Human Rights Approach Practical Guide for Co-operation Projects](#) is expected to contribute to improved application of a human rights approach in project management and co-operation activities.

As a component of this human rights approach, the Council of Europe emphasises gender mainstreaming throughout its project activities in line with its [Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023](#). The use of the [Council of Europe Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit for Co-operation Projects](#), which provides guidance as to the inclusion of gender aspects in project design, implementation and reporting is expected to enhance the implementation of a gender dimension in co-operation activities within the Organisation as well as by national partners. The gender mainstreaming approach will be defined as the actions associated with the Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2022-2025 (Action Plan) are developed. It will already be applied to actions regardless of the field of co-operation. For example, the standards for gender equality and women's rights will be taken into account when the various pieces of legislation and national frameworks are revised in the light of European standards. The issue of gender equality will also be incorporated into training activities and programmes. The impact of gender will be analysed when projects are designed and implemented. In addition to gender mainstreaming, specific actions will be considered in order to promote gender equality.

Similarly, the Council of Europe promotes the active participation of civil society in project activities. Inclusiveness is approached in accordance with the [Guidelines on civil society organisations' participation in the Council of Europe's co-operation activities](#).

This Action Plan will continue to address the specific needs of vulnerable people in Bosnia and Herzegovina through the implementation of projects to strengthen their rights and improve their living conditions. These projects will target, *inter alia*, women, children and young people and help to combat discrimination and hate speech, as well as to promote integration and diversity, especially through education. Particular attention will be paid to ensuring the cross-cutting nature of the inclusion by providing for balanced gender participation and by targeting all regions of the country.

In addition, the participation of civil society will be ensured by various means throughout the Action Plan, with the aim of strengthening its role in the country by promoting dialogue with the authorities and developing its capacities. Accordingly, it is planned, for example, to involve civil society stakeholders in the relevant activities of certain projects and to implement projects that specifically target them.

The Organisation is committed to protecting children from harm and ensuring that children's right to protection is fully realised in line with its Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2022-2027. The scope of the existing Child Safeguarding policy is being extended and the reporting mechanism is being revised with a view to bringing it in line with the Council of Europe Speak Up Policy.

Another cross-cutting dimension to be mentioned is the protection of the climate and the environment. Development co-operation for human rights, the rule of law and democracy makes an inherent contribution to the resolution of many political, legal and social issues that aggravate climate change. The Council of Europe has carried out a simplified environmental assessment to help highlight the main opportunities for positive impacts and the risks of environmental vulnerabilities, as well as any follow-up actions. Preliminary conclusions have shown that Council of Europe co-operation has an indirect positive impact on the environment through its support to countries in strengthening their good governance structures and thus enabling them to deal more effectively with their environmental challenges and goals. Nonetheless, there is still a need for the Council of Europe co-operation sector to increase its focus towards climate-neutral technical assistance. Follow-up steps are now being discussed within the Organisation.

The present Action Plan also takes into account relevant recommendations from the external evaluation of the Action Plan 2018-2021 and the lessons learned during the implementation of the Action Plans 2015-2017 and 2018-2021, including:

- The human rights approach to co-operation, which uses Council of Europe standards and principles both as means and goals of technical assistance, can significantly contribute to the realisation of those rights;
- Close co-ordination with the partners in Bosnia and Herzegovina at all levels and at all stages of the programmes' development and implementation is needed to ensure optimal implementation and steering of the action, helping to create shared ownership for long-term engagement in the Action Plan among the authorities;

- Effective co-ordination of projects is of crucial importance considering the multiplicity of international donors and the variety of national actors involved in new actions, as well as effective co-ordination mechanisms among both international and national partners, to avoid unnecessary overlap of interventions;
- Targeted programmes based on monitoring recommendations showed that they were an added value of the co-operation, being able to address the specific needs of the country by means of streamlined assistance and in compliance with both Council of Europe standards and the European Union *acquis* in the context of the enlargement process;
- Local capacity development remains an important component of the technical assistance programmes;
- Regional programmes and the regional dimension of country-specific projects provide significant opportunities for institutions, civil society organisations (CSOs) and other players to exchange experiences and good practices with neighbouring beneficiaries facing similar challenges, and for developing common policies in line with European standards;
- Given Bosnia and Herzegovina's decentralised legislative and decision-making process, long-term follow-up projects and activities are necessary to continue working towards reaching the desired outcomes.
- The need to diversify funding sources is paramount and remains a challenge for the Action Plan in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- The flexibility of the Council of Europe Action Plan made it possible to largely adapt work plans and working methods to the Covid-19 crisis. On the one hand, the pandemic-related restrictions triggered or accelerated innovation in some fields, especially in the area of IT-based solutions. Experience gained can be transferred to future implementation practice. On the other hand, for some activities, especially study trips and placements, some training activities and politically sensitive areas, no adequate alternative solutions have yet been found.

Due to the nature of its mandate, the Council of Europe has to operate at times in complex and unstable environments which expose it to risks. The analysis of risks relevant to the implementation of the Action Plan as well as possible mitigation strategies is set out in Appendix II of the present Action Plan on the basis of the Council of Europe *Risk Management Guidelines* and its *Risk Management Policy* adopted in June 2016. All projects implemented within the Action Plan have their own risk assessment and mitigation arrangements. In 2021, a risk management exercise was launched by ODGP to feed into the Organisational Risk Register, which is periodically brought to the attention of the Secretary General and the Senior Management Group. Internal audit, external audit and the Oversight Advisory Committee will be analysing the results.

3.2 CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Action Plan will support the efforts of the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goals 3 4, 5, 8, 10, 11 and 16, as follows:

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

The actions to counter drug abuse and increase access to quality drug addiction treatment for inmates and migrants will directly contribute to the achievement of Goal 3, target 5⁹⁶ on strengthening the prevention and treatment of substance abuse.

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Several actions that will be carried out under this Action Plan, for example on quality education for all, combating hate speech and fighting discrimination, will directly contribute to the achievement of Goal 4, target 7⁹⁷ on ensuring that relevant actors and learners acquire the knowledge and skills to promote sustainable development. The European Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP) has the potential to reach out to Universities, particularly law faculties, with the aim of integrating human rights courses in their curricula. It also enables the lifelong training of legal professionals in the field of human rights, thereby making a direct contribution to the achievement of this goal.

⁹⁶ Goal 3, target 5: Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol.

⁹⁷ Goal 4, target 7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

A number of Council of Europe instruments, such as the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention) and the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention), aim to promote gender equality and to combat violence against women and children. In addition, the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings specifically tackles this type of violence. The technical co-operation with Bosnia and Herzegovina will help the authorities in the implementation of these Conventions, to which Bosnia and Herzegovina is a party. It will also strengthen the capacities of relevant professionals and agencies to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls - including trafficking, sexual and other types of exploitation - and to combat gender-based discrimination, thus contributing to achieving Goal 5 target 1,⁹⁸ 2⁹⁹ A¹⁰⁰ and C.¹⁰¹

Gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures as well as in the implementation of the projects themselves is a priority of the Action Plan and also contributes to achieving this goal.

Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

The Council of Europe's actions aimed at ending trafficking in human beings will make a clear contribution to Goal 8, target 7.¹⁰² Indeed, trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation and child labour exploitation will be among the main focuses of co-operation activities in this area. By building the capacities and raising awareness among relevant stakeholders, the Council of Europe seeks to facilitate the detection and identification of victims of trafficking, and to strengthen the assistance provided to them. Similarly, working towards reducing the drivers of trafficking in human beings is designed to contribute to a gradual decrease in the number of victims.

Moreover, the European Social Charter (ESC) guarantees the rights to work with no discrimination, to just conditions of work, to safe and healthy working conditions and to a fair remuneration. Activities aimed at securing social rights and the application of the Charter will therefore contribute to the achievement of SDG 8 target 8.¹⁰³

Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

The Action Plan's contribution to countering discrimination, hate speech and hate crime will support the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities' efforts to get closer to achieving the objectives of Goal 10, target 3¹⁰⁴ on ensuring equal opportunity and reducing inequalities. Implementation of the Action Plan should result in increased capacity of the authorities, the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina and CSOs to monitor and deal with cases of discrimination, with a focus on protecting the rights of national minorities and Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people in line with European standards. Beyond the support provided to promote appropriate legislation, policies and action (targets 3 and 4),¹⁰⁵ projects in the areas of human rights, rule of law (in particular in the field of combating trafficking in human beings) and democracy will also strongly focus on the empowerment of national minorities and vulnerable groups, and on promoting the social, economic and political

⁹⁸ Goal 5, target 1: End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

⁹⁹ Goal 5, target 2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

¹⁰⁰ Goal 5, target A: Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

¹⁰¹ Goal 5, target C: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

¹⁰² Goal 8, target 7: Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

¹⁰³ Goal 8, target 8: Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.

¹⁰⁴ Goal 10, target 3: Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.

¹⁰⁵ Goal 10, target 4: Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.

inclusion of all (target 2).¹⁰⁶ Support to align national legislation in the area of social and economic rights with the requirements of the ESC is also linked to the achievement of this Goal.

The support to be provided to the authorities to address possible gaps in legislation and practice regarding reception, asylum and detention conditions is linked to the achievement of target 7.¹⁰⁷

Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Promoting good governance through local self-government is one of the objectives of the Action Plan. Actions in this field contribute to achieving Goal 11, target 3,¹⁰⁸ which focuses on enhancing inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and the capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management. In this regard, the Action Plan will help develop more effective co-operation between the governments in Bosnia and Herzegovina and institutions at domestic, entity and cantonal levels, while fostering dialogue between divided municipalities. It will also contribute to empowering national minorities at local level, in particular the Roma.

Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

This SDG is the cornerstone of the rule of law in Agenda 2030. Due to the nature of the Council of Europe's mandate, its technical co-operation actions bring a significant contribution to the achievement of SDG 16. Indeed, all actions undertaken somehow contribute to achieving this SDG.

Target 1¹⁰⁹ aims to reduce all forms of violence and related death rates. Actions on preventing and combating violence against children thus make a clear contribution to achievement of this target. Work to prevent ill-treatment of detained persons and to build the capacities of law enforcement agencies, police officers and health care services for inmates in safeguarding human rights should also contribute to achieving this target.

Preventing and combating trafficking in human beings targeting children is another priority of this Action Plan. It will strive to build the capacities of the relevant stakeholders to identify and prosecute perpetrators of such crimes thereby contributing to efforts to achieve Goal 16, target 2.¹¹⁰

Promoting the rule of law is one of the main objectives of the Council of Europe, and its actions therefore directly contribute to achieving Goal, target 3.¹¹¹ Through the HELP programme and other capacity-building activities for legal professionals, the Action Plan will ensure improved application of European standards and enhance legal certainty in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Similarly, the promotion of women's access to justice is linked to this Goal.

The Action Plan also seeks to counter economic crime and cybercrime. It will strengthen the co-operation between stakeholders at different levels to address these crimes and help the authorities apply more effectively the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention) and implement the recommendations of the Council of Europe's monitoring bodies in this field. This aims to significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and contribute to combating all forms of organised crime, in line with Goal 16, target 4.¹¹² Furthermore, the Action Plan will strive to fight corruption, in line with the recommendations of the Group of States Against Corruption

¹⁰⁶ Goal 10, target 2: By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

¹⁰⁷ Goal 10, target 7: Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

¹⁰⁸ Goal 11, target 3: By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.

¹⁰⁹ Goal 16, target 1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.

¹¹⁰ Goal 16, target 2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

¹¹¹ Goal 16, target 3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.

¹¹² Goal 16, target 4: By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organised crime.

(GRECO), contributing to the achievement of SDG 16, target 5¹¹³ on substantial reduction of corruption and bribery.

The Action Plan puts considerable effort into developing the capacities of public, judicial and law enforcement authorities to operate more efficiently and ethically in line with their mandates. Enhancing the capacities of the staff of the institutions to implement the reforms through enhanced skills and ensuring appropriate co-ordination among relevant institutions will contribute to the achievement of Goal 16, target 6¹¹⁴ on developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.

The Action Plan priorities pursuing the development of local self-governance, increasing civil participation including of minorities and women at all levels, and facilitating dialogue between the different levels of governments and with civil society directly contribute to the achievement of Goal 16, target 7¹¹⁵ on ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels. Enhancing election-related legislation to combat discriminatory practices and align it with international standards and the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) also contributes to achieving this target.

The Action Plan's comprehensive actions to strengthen freedom of expression, freedom of the media and access to information contribute to the achievement of Goal 16, target 10¹¹⁶ on ensuring public access to information and protecting fundamental freedoms.

Actions to increase the capacity and skills of relevant institutions to monitor and counter discrimination, hate crime and hate speech directly contribute to achieving Goal 16, target A¹¹⁷ on building capacities to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime. In addition, support provided for the adoption of non-discriminatory policies contributes to achieving SDG 16, target B.¹¹⁸

3.3 CO-ORDINATION

Co-ordination to ensure the efficient use of resources and the relevance of the Council of Europe's actions is performed at different levels and in different forums, including the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CM).

The Council of Europe's actions are determined and implemented so as to focus on areas where the Organisation has strong expertise and added value. Joint co-operation with Bosnia and Herzegovina's authorities is developed on the basis of a thorough analysis of the objectives followed by other international organisations and players in the field and their work, implemented and/or planned, to achieve these objectives.

To ensure the relevance of its actions, the Council of Europe works in close co-ordination with relevant international partners, notably the European Union and in particular the European Union Delegation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The present Action Plan will be implemented in the context of the government programme geared towards the European Union integration process and following the provisions of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement.

Since 2016, Bosnia and Herzegovina has benefited from participating in the two phases of the European Union/Council of Europe joint programme entitled "Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey" focusing on ensuring justice; fighting corruption and economic crime; combating discrimination and protecting the rights of vulnerable groups; and strengthening freedom of expression and freedom of the media.

¹¹³ Goal 16, target 5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms.

¹¹⁴ Goal 16, target 6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.

¹¹⁵ Goal 16, target 7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

¹¹⁶ Goal 16, target 10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.

¹¹⁷ Goal 16, target A: Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international co-operation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.

¹¹⁸ Goal 16, target B: Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

Co-ordination is also ensured with the United Nations (UN), the Office of the High Representative (OHR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Whenever appropriate, co-ordination platforms with other international organisations are set-up and joint activities undertaken.

To ensure efficiency and avoid the overlapping of activities, the Council of Europe also co-ordinates with member States' development agencies and the embassies of Council of Europe member States and States with observer status such as the United States.

3.4 FUNDING

The overall budget of the Action Plan is approximately €19.1 million. Funding amounts to €2.9 million (15% of the total budget).

Projects within the Action Plan are to be funded from multiple sources. Funding is to be provided mainly from voluntary contributions from donor countries and international organisations, including the European Union/Council of Europe Joint Programmes such as the Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey, as well as the ordinary budget (OB) of the Council of Europe.

The co-ordination of Action Plan implementation incurs general management costs amounting to not more than 7% of the Action Plan's direct costs.

In line with the Council of Europe resource mobilisation strategy, fundraising efforts under the co-ordination of ODGP are concentrated on the Action Plan as a whole. Action Plan-level funding, in particular, allows flexibility for allocating funds where they are most needed and where they are most likely to contribute to the sustainability of key policy and institutional reforms.

The structure of the present Action Plan is aligned with that of the Programme and Budget of the Council of Europe and its two biennial cycles in order to increase consistency, complementarity and co-ordination.

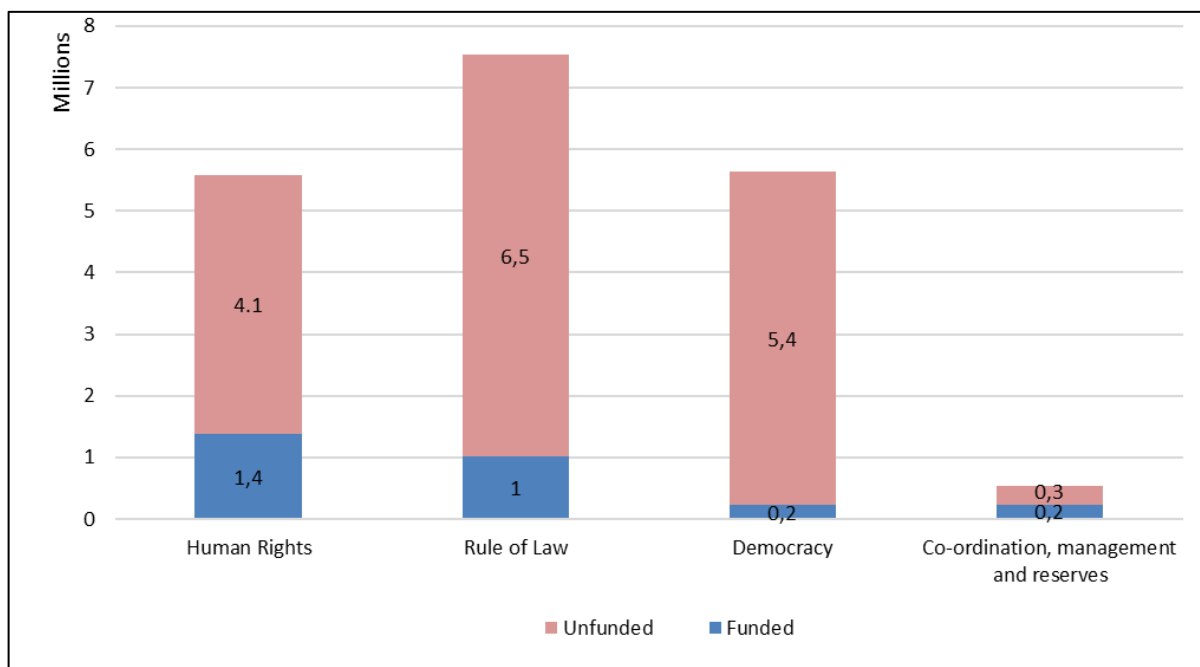


Figure 2: Estimated budget per theme of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2022-2025 (in euros)

3.5 GOVERNANCE

The CM assesses the overall results of the Action Plan, through its Rapporteur Group on Democracy (GR-DEM).

The Council of Europe will provide regular updates on the progress and outcomes of the Action Plan. To that end, ODGP will submit interim and final reports to the CM as follows:

- an oral report 12 months and 36 months after the adoption of the Action Plan to present the state of advancement after its official launching;
- a comprehensive mid-term Progress Review Report, 24 months after the adoption of the Action Plan;
- a final Progress Review Report at the end of the implementation of the Action Plan.

Progress made under the Action Plan will also be jointly assessed by the Council of Europe and the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities, under the close co-ordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in co-operation with other governmental stakeholders, parliaments, civil society and independent governance institutions, such as the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina and local and regional authorities.

In addition, ODGP will address annual Action Plan Reports to those donors contributing to the funding at the level of the Action Plan, in line with reporting requirements.

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APPENDIX I: LOGFRAME

Transversal dimensions such as **gender equality, gender mainstreaming and civil society's participation** are key components of the Council of Europe's human rights approach:

- **Gender equality** is mainstreamed throughout the Council of Europe's projects in line with the *Gender Equality Strategy of the Council of Europe* and supported by the *Council of Europe Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit for Co-operation Projects*, along with other available tools;
- **Civil participation** is promoted by the Organisation in line with *Guidelines on civil society organisations' participation in Council of Europe's co-operation activities*.

Overall goal: to ensure successful reforms in Bosnia and Herzegovina which will bring its legislation, institutions and practice further into line with European standards in the areas of human rights, the rule of law and democracy, and therefore support the country's efforts to honour its obligations as a Council of Europe member State.

Human Rights

Thematic outcomes: Human rights protection, equality and human dignity are enhanced through the well-structured and co-ordinated implementation of human rights standards, including those on gender equality, freedom of expression and freedom of the media and an improved effectiveness of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) system.

The actions in this area will contribute to the implementation of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Goals 4 (target 7),¹¹⁹ (more specifically targets 1, 2, and C),¹²⁰ 8 (target 8),¹²¹ 10 (target 2, 3, 4 and 7),¹²² 11 (target 3)¹²³ and 16 (targets 3, 7, 10 and B).¹²⁴

¹¹⁹ Goal 4, target 7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

¹²⁰ Goal 5, target 1: End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere. Target 2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation. Target C: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

¹²¹ Goal 8, target 8: Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.

¹²² Goal 10, target 2: By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status. Target 3: Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard. Target 4: Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality. Target 7: Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

¹²³ Goal 11, target 3: By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.

¹²⁴ Goal 16, target 2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. Target 3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all. Target 7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels. Target 10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements. Target B: Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

Outcomes	Indicators
<p>1.1. Effective ECHR implementation</p> <p><i>Enhancing the effectiveness of the ECHR system at national level</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bosnia and Herzegovina is supported in achieving full and effective execution of judgments focusing on enforcement of domestic court rulings; • The draft Law on Ombudsman for Human Rights of Bosnia and Herzegovina is adopted; • The institutional capacity of the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman to carry out its mandate effectively is strengthened; • A comprehensive policy framework on the promotion and enforcement of human rights is devised; • Systemic human rights education among legal professionals and law faculties is introduced; • The digital uptake of the judicial training institutes is enhanced; • National legislation on the human rights protection of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers is in line with relevant European and international standards; • Specific protective measures for vulnerable persons in the context of migration and asylum are strengthened; • Effective alternatives to immigration detention are developed and implemented; • Child-protection systems and procedures are strengthened in the context of migration, including by promoting family-based care for unaccompanied children. <p><i>Freedom of expression and freedom of the media</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation to ensure transparency in the ownership of media outlets and on access to information is brought into line with the relevant Council of Europe standards, • The public service broadcasting system and the State-level management is further enhanced and unified; 	<p><i>Enhancing the effectiveness of the ECHR system at national level</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of judgments from the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) involving Bosnia and Herzegovina under the supervision of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CM); • Number of closed cases involving Bosnia and Herzegovina; • Percentage of staff from the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman whose capacities have been enhanced; • Percentage of recommendations from the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman implemented by public and private institutions; • Number of measures taken to develop a comprehensive policy framework on the promotion and enforcement of human rights compliant with European standards; • Number of human rights modules introduced in the Centre for Judicial and Prosecutorial Training of Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Centre for Judicial and Prosecutorial Training of Republika Srpska and in law faculties; • Number of measures put in place to upgrade and modernise the judicial training institutes; • Percentage of legal professionals and student in law faculties having participated to Council of Europe human right capacity-building activities who enhanced their knowledge on the topic; • Percentage of recommendations from the Council of Europe taken into consideration in the adopted legislation and regulations on the human rights protection of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers; • Number of measures of alternatives to immigration detention developed; • Number of measures taken to ensure that unaccompanied and separated children are reunified with their primary caregiver or provided with family-based care/alternative care services. <p><i>Freedom of expression and freedom of the media</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of provisions in the adopted/amended legislation, regulations and policy documents on media regulation, access to information and media literacy taking into account Council of Europe standards and recommendations; • Number of alerts submitted and percentage of alerts involving Bosnia

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The capacities of the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees and other institutions to organise and lead participatory legislative drafting processes on freedom of expression and freedom of the media, access to information and media literacy legislation/regulation and to monitor their implementation are increased; • The capacities of law enforcement agencies to deal with issues of protection of journalists are enhanced; • The capacities of the judiciary in applying rights and duties of media actors in line with European standards is strengthened; • The importance of free, qualitative and safe journalism is further promoted among all media actors and the general public with specific consideration given to the safety of women journalists; • The application of rights and duties concerning access to information is improved. <p><i>Data protection</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The legal framework on data protection is brought into line with international standards, notably with the ratified Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data; • The requirements in terms of data protection of the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data are properly incorporated in the legal framework on access to information; • The capacities of the Personal Data Protection Agency for improved delivery of its missions are enhanced, notably as regards awareness-raising; • The capacities of administrations and other relevant stakeholders to give access to information while respecting the principles of personal data protection are enhanced. 	<p>and Herzegovina on the Council of Europe Platform to Promote the Protection of Journalism and Safety of Journalists resolved or closed with a State reply;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of cases of attacks on journalists effectively investigated; • Percentage of judgments on media-related issues which are compliant with European standards (including ECtHR case law); • Percentage of media actors participating to the Council of Europe activities demonstrating an increased awareness on the importance of free, qualitative and safe journalism; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of effective responses/actions to complaints on freedom of access to information requests; • Number of awareness-raising materials on free, qualitative and safe journalism developed and number of instances it was disseminated. <p><i>Data protection</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of provisions in the adopted/amended legislation (including on access to information) taking into account Council of Europe standards and recommendations; • Percentage of staff from the Personal Data Protection Agency demonstrating enhanced capacities to deliver the Agency's missions, notably as regards awareness-raising; • Number of <i>ex officio</i> procedures carried out by the Personal Data Protection Agency; • Number of expert opinions prepared by the Personal Data Protection Agency; • Percentage of trained staff from administrations demonstrating enhanced capacities to give access to information while respecting the principles of personal data protection.
<p>1.2. Equality and human dignity</p> <p><i>Gender equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorities, justice sector professionals, and civil society introduce measures to enhance the implementation of the standards of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), in order to remove obstacles to women's access to justice; 	<p><i>Gender equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of measures introduced to enhance the implementation of the standards of the Istanbul Convention, in order to remove obstacles to women's access to justice;

- Legal professionals have an enhanced understanding of and tools to foster and monitor women's access to justice in line with the Istanbul Convention.

Anti-discrimination, diversity and inclusion

- A structured policy on minority languages is established;
- Institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina ensure that the *Action Plan for improving the state of Human Rights and fundamental freedoms of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2021-2023* (yet to be adopted) is implemented, in line with the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) standards and recommendations;
- The Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman is better equipped to respond to discrimination and intolerance, in line with its mandate as national equality body;
- The capacity of local authorities to design and implement plans, policies and projects, with active inclusion measures that improve Roma integration is strengthened;
- The Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees is able to increase other institutions' and organisations' awareness of the normative framework on hate speech and to devise policy responses to curb;
- Police, prosecutors and judges enhance their capacity to identify, investigate, prosecute and judge hate crime, including targeted at LGBTI persons and other vulnerable groups, in line with ECRI country-specific recommendations.

- Percentage of trained legal professionals demonstrating enhanced capacity to foster and monitor women's access to justice in line with the Istanbul Convention;
- Percentage of indictment following a criminal report for domestic violence;
- Percentage of adults charged with the criminal offence of domestic violence who were found guilty.

Anti-discrimination, diversity and inclusion

- Number of measures taken to develop the policy on minority languages in line with European standards;
- Number of measures taken by the authorities compliant with the *Action Plan for improving the state of Human Rights and fundamental freedoms of LGBTI persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2021-2023* (yet to be adopted);
- Percentage of provisions of the Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 of the CM to member States on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity implemented;
- Bosnia and Herzegovina's score achieved on LGBTI human rights on the Rainbow Europe index;¹²⁵
- Percentage of recommendations from the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman on anti-discrimination implemented by public and private institutions;
- Percentage of trained anti-discrimination staff from the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman demonstrating enhanced capacities to respond to discrimination and intolerance;
- Number of local policies and initiatives put in place and implemented to improve Roma integration;
- Number of municipal officials coached/trained and working on the measures developed to address the needs of the Roma communities in the selected municipalities;
- Percentage of civil servants and public administration staff trained by Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees demonstrating increased awareness of the normative framework on hate speech and to devise policy responses to curb;

¹²⁵ Rainbow Europe – ILGA-Europe's annual benchmarking tool – is comprised of the Rainbow Map and *Index* and national recommendations. ILGA-Europe have produced the Rainbow Index since 2009, using it to illustrate the legal and policy situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people in Europe. The Rainbow Index ranks European countries and territories on their respective legal and policy practices for LGBTI people, from 0-100%.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of trained police, prosecutors and judges demonstrating enhanced capacities to identify, investigate, prosecute and judge hate crime, including targeted at LGBTI persons and other vulnerable groups.
<p>1.3. Social rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National legislation in the area of social and economic rights is aligned with the requirements under the European Social Charter (ESC); Target professionals (judges and lawyers) have a better understanding of the European Committee of Social Rights' (ECSR) case-law and are capable of applying it in practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of provisions in the adopted/amended legislations taking into account Council of Europe standards and recommendations on social rights; Number of ESC provisions for which a situation of non-conformity was found for Bosnia and Herzegovina; Percentage of trained judges and lawyers demonstrating a better understanding of the ECSR' case-law; Number of references to ESC in national judgements and legal claims.

Rule of Law	
<p>Thematic outcomes: Democratic security is strengthened by an enhanced implementation of the existing legislation and European standards, the development of an enabling legal and institutional framework for a democratic society and an improved quality of justice and efficiency in combating corruption, cybercrime and illicit trafficking.</p>	
<p>The actions in this area will contribute to achieving SDG 3 (target 5),¹²⁶ 5 (targets 2 and A),¹²⁷ 8 (target 7)¹²⁸ and 16 (especially targets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10 and A).¹²⁹</p>	
Outcomes	Indicators
<p>2.1. Rule of Law based institutions</p> <p><i>Independence and efficiency of justice</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effective implementation of the Constitutional Court's judgments in the field of human rights within the scope of individual application and constitutionality review mechanisms is ensured; • The efficiency of the justice system is strengthened in line with the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) standards and tools on court efficiency (<i>i.e.</i> case management, judicial statistics, time management); • The quality of the justice system is improved in line with CEPEJ standards and tools on the quality of justice (Cyber-Justice and court users' satisfaction surveys); • Case law departments of selected courts are fully operational and function in line with European best practices; • The functional Information Technology (IT) tools for the harmonisation of judicial practice and compliance with ECtHR judgements operated by the judiciary are enhanced; 	<p><i>Independence and efficiency of justice</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of national judgments compliant with the Constitutional Court's judgments in the field of human rights within the scope of individual application and constitutionality review mechanisms; • Number of CEPEJ indicators and tools on court efficiency (case management, time management, judicial statistics) and quality of justice (proactive case management, public communication and media relations, customer satisfaction surveys, cyber-justice tools) used by the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council (HJPC) and courts; • CEPEJ Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and dashboard; • Percentage of selected courts having a fully operational case law department; • Number of IT tools for the harmonisation of judicial practice and compliance with ECtHR judgements operated by the judiciary; • Percentage of trained legal professionals demonstrating enhanced knowledge on CEPEJ tools and methodologies.

¹²⁶ Goal 3, target 5: Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol.

¹²⁷ Goal 5, target 2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation. Target A: Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

¹²⁸ Goal 8, target 7: Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

¹²⁹ Goal 16, target 1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere. Target 2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. Target 3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all. Target 4: By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organised crime. Target 5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms. Target 6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels. Target 10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements. Target A: Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international co-operation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal professionals' capacities are strengthened on topics related to efficiency and quality of justice in line with CEPEJ standards and tools. 	
<p>2.2. Action against crime, security and protection of citizens</p> <p><i>Fight against corruption and money laundering</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The legal framework for prevention of corruption is enhanced with a particular focus on political party financing, assets declarations, verification of assets and income of public officials, ethics, integrity and conflict of interest; • Transparency of beneficial ownership is increased and misuse of corporate entities is limited; • The inter-agency co-operation and exchange of information in economic crime cases, including information contained in asset declaration forms and registries of beneficial owners, is enhanced; • The relevant authorities' capacities to carry out financial investigation, prosecution and adjudication of corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing are enhanced; • The capacities of the relevant authorities to mitigate terrorist risks in the non-profit organisation (NPO) sector and to implement risk-based supervision in financial and the designated non-financial businesses and professions (DNFBP) sectors are increased. <p><i>Cybercrime</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinated cybercrime and cybersecurity policies and strategies are developed and implemented by the competent authorities; • Inter-agency co-operation in order to conduct parallel financial investigation related to cybercrime cases is further increased; • Measures to encourage information sharing and intelligence exchange mechanisms on cybercrime established between the public and private sectors are set; 	<p><i>Fight against corruption and money laundering</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of provisions in the adopted/amended legislations for prevention of corruption taking into consideration Council of Europe standards and recommendations; • Number of measures taken for the devise of the Register of Beneficial Owners in line with the Council of Europe recommendations/standards; • Number legal persons and legal arrangements able to provide accurate and updated information on beneficial owners to the to-be-established Register of Beneficial Owners; • Number of measures taken to foster information exchanges between relevant agencies in economic crime cases; • Percentage of trained relevant staff demonstrating enhanced capacities to carry out financial investigation, prosecution and adjudication of corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing; • Percentage of trained staff demonstrating enhanced capacities to mitigate terrorist risks in the NPO sector and to implement risk-based supervision in financial and DNFBP sectors; • Number of finalised investigations on corruption initiated by the State Investigation Protection Agency (SIPA); • Number of investigations for money laundering; • Corruption Perceptions Index.¹³⁰ <p><i>Cybercrime</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of measures taken to co-ordinate the cybercrime and cybersecurity policies; • Number of requests for user information sent to multinational service providers; • Number of cybercrime investigations accompanied by parallel financial investigations and vice versa;

¹³⁰ Since its inception in 1995, the [Corruption Perceptions Index](#), Transparency International's flagship research product, has become the leading global indicator of public sector corruption. The index offers an annual snapshot of the relative degree of corruption by ranking countries and territories from all over the globe. In 2012, Transparency International revised the methodology used to construct the index to allow for a comparison of scores from one year to the next. Measurement is carried out on a scale from 0 ("highly corrupt") to 100 ("very clean").

- The efficiency and existing capabilities of institutions involved in the fight against cybercrime to co-operate at international level are increased;
- Capacities of authorities to search, seize and confiscate cybercrime proceeds and prevent money laundering on the Internet and to secure electronic evidence are further enhanced;
- Capacities of judicial authorities to prosecute and adjudicate on cybercrime offences and assess electronic evidence are further strengthened.

Trafficking in human beings

- The criminal justice response to trafficking in human beings is strengthened, focusing on more effective investigation and prosecution of offences as well as on improving the protection of victims before, during and after proceedings;
- Prevention policies and measures that address core drivers of trafficking in human beings are strengthened, with a focus on supporting the empowerment of women, child trafficking and trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation;
- A rights-based approach, focusing on improved victim identification and referral procedures is enhanced, in particular for child victims, as well as improved access to justice and effective remedies.

Drug abuse and illicit trafficking

- Operational co-operation at regional level between police and customs officers working at airports to tackle drug trafficking is improved;

- Number training modules on cybercrime and electronic evidence part of the regular curriculum of judicial training institutes;
- Number of cases where templates developed by the cybercrime Convention Committee (T-CY) for preservation and mutual legal assistance (MLA) requests have been used;
- Percentage of trained staff involved in the fight against cybercrime demonstrating increased capacities to search, seize, confiscate cybercrime proceeds and prevent money laundering on the Internet and to secure electronic evidence;
- Percentage of trained prosecutors and judges involved in the fight against cybercrime demonstrating increased capacities to prosecute and adjudicate on cybercrime offences and assess electronic evidence;
- Number of investigations in cybercrime;
- Number of convictions for cybercrime.

Trafficking in human beings

- Number of detected, identified and assisted victims of trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation;
- Number of detected, identified and assisted child victims of trafficking;
- Number of potential victims assisted in safe houses/shelters;
- Number of investigations into trafficking in human beings cases;
- Number of prosecutions in trafficking in human beings cases;
- Number of convicted perpetrators;
- Number of measure taken to ensure that prevention policies and measures which address core drivers of trafficking in human beings are put in place;
- Percentage of trained staff demonstrating enhanced capacities to identify victims (including among children, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers);
- Number of victims who received compensation.

Drug abuse and illicit trafficking

- Number of measures taken to foster exchanges of information between police and customs officers working at airports to tackle drug trafficking;

- Authorities adopt strategies for preventing substance use and the exploitation of migrants and refugees by criminal networks;
- Prison staff, health care professionals and social workers have the capacity to increase access to quality drug addiction treatment for inmates;
- Medical and non-medical staff working in temporary facilities for refugees and migrants improve their abilities to early detect and screen substance abuse.

Prisons and police

- Relevant staff skills on the rehabilitation and re-socialisation of forensic patients and other vulnerable groups in detention are enhanced;
- Court police personnel are equipped with policy documents and operational guidance on the safety and security of judicial officials fighting organised crime and corruption;
- Pilot probation services projects are implemented in individual prisons for the gradual establishment of probation service(s) in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- Knowledge and skills of law enforcement officers on human rights standards are embedded into practice;
- Functional Prison Intelligence Units (PIUs) for the collection, analysis and sharing of information between prisons and other relevant agencies, based on prison dynamic security principles, are put in place in the two entity jurisdictions;
- Violent and extremist prisoners (VEP)-specific training for prison staff in Bosnia and Herzegovina is provided in a harmonised and sustainable manner for the uniform application of the VEP tools and rehabilitation programmes and enhancement of the use of multi-institutional co-operation mechanisms.

- Number of measures put in place to prevent substance use and the exploitation of migrants and refugees by criminal networks;
- Percentage of trained prison staff, health care professionals and social workers demonstrating increased capacities to provide quality drug addiction treatment for inmates;
- Percentage of trained medical and non-medical staff working in temporary facilities for refugees and migrants demonstrating enhanced capacities to early detect and screen substance abuse.

Prisons and police

- Percentage of relevant trained staff demonstrating enhanced skills on rehabilitation and re-socialisation of forensic patients and other vulnerable groups in detention;
- Percentage of adopted/amended policy documents and operational guidance on the safety and security of judicial officials fighting organised crime and corruption taking into consideration Council of Europe standards and recommendations;
- Number of inmates covered by probation services in pilot individual prisons;
- Percentage of law enforcement officers trained on human rights standards confirming that they have applied the enhanced knowledge and skills in their everyday work;
- Number of functional PIUs for the collection, analysis and sharing of information between prisons and other relevant agencies put in place in the two entity jurisdictions;
- Percentage of similarity between training curricula for prison personnel managing VEPs and VEP tools and rehabilitation programmes in all three administrative jurisdictions;
- Number of collaboration platforms for learning, exchange of practices and information;
- Number of prisons where the developed tools and programme have been put for use.

Democracy	
Thematic outcome: The democratisation of society is fostered through electoral integrity, strengthened local democracy, civil participation in democratic decision-making and education.	
The actions in this area will contribute to achieving SDG 4 (target 7), ¹³¹ 5 (target 1), ¹³² 10 (target 2), ¹³³ 11 (target 3) ¹³⁴ and 16 (targets 6 and 7). ¹³⁵	
Outcomes	Indicators
<p>3.1. Democratic governance</p> <p><i>Elections</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media coverage on the election period is improved to be more efficient and professional; • The capacity of the Central Election Commission (CEC) and election commissions is increased to become more professional, inclusive and transparent; • Awareness of under-represented categories of voters (especially women and national minorities) is raised in relevant municipalities. <p><i>Civil participation in democratic decision-making</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The regulatory framework for civil participation in pilot municipalities and regions provides a conducive environment for the inclusion of citizens and civil society organisations (CSOs) in the reforms/decision-making process of their communities and regions; • Citizens' and CSOs are actively involved in the decision-making process in pilot municipalities and regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina; • Effective dialogue platforms in pilot municipalities and regions contribute to dynamic interaction between citizens and public authorities. 	<p><i>Elections</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of trained media representatives demonstrating enhanced capacities on professional observation of the electoral process; • Percentage of trained staff of the CEC demonstrating enhanced capacities to carry out its mandate; • Turnout of women and underrepresented citizens at the elections; • Number of positive references on the holding of the elections in international observation mission reports from European and international organisations. <p><i>Civil participation in democratic decision-making</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of measures taken to ensure that the regulatory framework for civil participation in pilot municipalities takes into account Council of Europe standards and recommendations as regard the inclusion of citizens and CSO; • Number of dialogue platforms for citizens and public authorities established in pilot municipalities and regions; • Number of local officials, citizens and CSOs whose awareness on the participatory decision-making process has been raised in pilot authorities (villages, towns and municipalities).

¹³¹ Goal 4, target 7: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.

¹³² Goal 5, target 1: End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

¹³³ Goal 10, target 2: By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

¹³⁴ Goal 11, target 3: By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.

¹³⁵ Goal 16, target 6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels. Target 7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

<p><i>Promoting good governance and local government reforms</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The authorities from the City of Mostar implement appropriate measures and policies to address citizens' recommendations and embed deliberative activities in their decision-making; • In selected municipalities, local elected representatives and public officials strengthen their capacities and skills to include innovative approaches to collaborative governance, deliberative democracy and citizen engagement; • Local authorities increase their capacities in building public ethics, transparency, advocacy and in protecting human rights at local level; • The institutional capacities of the two main associations of municipalities and cities are strengthened; • Inter-municipal and inter-entity networks are supported through capacity-building and peer-learning to develop place-based, transboundary co-operation. <p><i>Confidence-building measures</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-ethnic dialogue at the level of local communities is further reinforced; • Co-operation among women mayors is further strengthened; • Young people from all divided municipalities take part in new joint projects and the youth network is further developed. 	<p><i>Promoting good governance and local government reforms</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of measures adopted to address citizens' recommendations by the authorities from the City of Mostar; • Percentage of trained local elected representatives and public officials demonstrating enhanced capacities and skills to include innovative approaches to collaborative governance and citizen engagement and on building public ethics, transparency, advocacy and in protecting human rights; • Number of measures taken to strengthen the institutional capacities of the associations of municipalities to carry the associations' mandate; • Number of trained staff from inter-municipal and inter-entity networks to develop place-based, transboundary co-operation. <p><i>Confidence-building measures</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of inter-municipal projects implemented; • Number of participants (also considering the gender perspective) to inter-municipal projects; • Number of activities jointly organised by the women mayors network; • Number of activities organised by the youth network.
<p>3.2. Democratic participation</p> <p><i>Education for democracy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National education decision-makers and practitioners further align Bosnia and Herzegovina's educational standards and approaches with European standards, including as regards segregation in schools; • Higher education institutions implement mechanisms to prevent corruption and to strengthen ethics, transparency and integrity in higher education; • Education professionals and students of higher education institutions act with integrity in their academic endeavours in accordance with international standards; 	<p><i>Education for democracy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of measures put in place to further align Bosnia and Herzegovina's educational standards and approaches with European standards, including as regards segregation in schools; • Number of measures put in place to prevent corruption and to strengthen ethics, transparency and integrity in higher education; • Percentage of trained education professionals and students of higher education institutions demonstrating increased knowledge on the principle of integrity in education;

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The capacities of teachers, school leaders and other school staff to implement the <i>Policy Recommendation with a Roadmap for Improving Inclusive Education</i> objectives are enhanced; • Society's awareness of quality education as a public good and a basic human right is raised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Integrity Maturity Model (AIMM)¹³⁶ for Bosnia and Herzegovina; • Number of national initiatives in supporting academic integrity and transparency; • Percentage of trained teachers, school leaders and other school staff demonstrating enhanced capacities to implement the <i>Policy Recommendation with a Roadmap for Improving Inclusive Education</i> objectives; • Number of pilot schools using democratic school culture to strengthen participation of students in school life; • Number of individuals from the general public reached by awareness-raising campaigns on quality education as a public good and a basic human right.
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¹³⁶ The Academic Integrity Maturity Model (AIMM) calculates a maturity profile for a country based on nine metrics calculated from survey data. Please see Council of Europe Platform on Ethics, Transparency and Integrity in Education (ETINED), *Volume 5: South-East European Project on Policies for Academic Integrity*, January 2018, p.61, available at <http://rm.coe.int/prems-016918-gbr-2512-etined-vol-5-couv-texte-recadre-8482-bat-16x24-w/168078499c>.

APPENDIX II: RISK REGISTER

Risk description	Mitigation actions
Political related risks	
<p>Best case scenario - increased support and willingness to pursue needed reforms resulting in increased scope and pace of reforms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus on reforms is established over a broad political spectrum; • Reforms are effectively implemented and widely supported by citizens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions to be held on a possible enlargement of the scope of action resulting in: • Increased awareness raising of target groups (including citizens) about the Council of Europe involvement in the reforms process; • Extended capacity-building activities, especially for the partners promoting standards of the Council of Europe; • Stronger support to the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and other partners.
<p>Base case scenario - sustained political stability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outset and/or partial implementation of reforms and absence of opposition to their implementation in certain groups of the society; • Partial support of political forces to ongoing reforms; • Social pressure to swiftly deliver on reforms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support national authorities to ensure compliance of legislative and regulatory frameworks with the standards of the Council of Europe; • Further build capacity of institutions to implement these standards while ensuring domestic ownership of the process, enhance awareness of the population on those standards; • Facilitate contacts and co-operation between supporters of the reforms within different branches of the authorities and within civil society; • Support the government's efforts to raise the population's awareness regarding the pace of the reforms.
<p>Worst case scenario - increased political instability/absence of reforms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased polarisation of the society; • Reform process slows down or stops; • Lack of political will to implement reforms; • Lack of consensus between the entities and political parties in power; • Democratic backsliding resulting in weakening institutions and worsening situation for certain social groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness raising among target groups to inform them as to the importance of applying the standards of the Council of Europe; • Rely on and recall the relevance of the Council of Europe monitoring bodies' recommendations; • Facilitate contacts and co-operation between supporters of the reforms within different branches of the authorities and within civil society and promote dialogue between authorities and civil society on application of the standards; • Rely on the Council of Europe executive bodies' statutory decision-making power and the contacts and outreach capacity of the Council of Europe Office in Sarajevo to foster dialogue; • Increase the focus on protection of rights of the vulnerable groups; • Increase the focus on capacity-building activities less likely to be affected by political partisanship;¹³⁷

¹³⁷ The London School of Economics and political science, *Progress Review and Final Evaluation of the Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021*, final report, April 2021, p.9, available at <https://rm.coe.int/final-ap-bih-evaluationreport-2021-04-27-pdf/1680a2cbb3>.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss common mitigation strategies with international partners (notably the European Union).
Project/programme delivery related risks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of sufficient funding for implementation of the Action Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase regular resource mobilisation efforts in a co-ordinated manner at the earliest stage possible within the country and from the headquarters; • Allocate funding for programmes which have strong potential for synergy with each other, allocating available resources in the most effective manner; • Increase and improve communication of the results of previous and ongoing actions in the country; • Continue to address feedback from partners and donors to improve project design, implementation, results-based monitoring, and reporting practices, so as to attract and maintain donors' interest.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption in the implementation process due to a high staff turnover in the partner institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement procedures for supporting long-term institutional memory for partner institutions; • Ensure sustainability of knowledge accumulation in the partner institutions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of effective co-ordination mechanisms with national and international partners with a view to avoiding overlaps and ensuring synergies among programmes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of joint activities with international partners with whom co-ordination of plans is already achieved in order to strengthen a common message, achieve economic efficiency and increase acceptance of the reforms; • Design the interventions while taking into account the country's needs and priorities and with clear objectives; • Continue participation to the international community's co-ordination platforms and share lessons learnt; • Continue convening a broad range of stakeholders to project steering committees meetings; • Continue ensuring regular communication of project staff at HQ with local staff; • Maintain communication with the donor community; • Maintain communication with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina acting as an entry point; • Rely on the contacts and outreach capacity of the Council of Europe Office in Sarajevo.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of predictability and sustainability of the results due to complexity and conflicting goals of the reforms process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive results-oriented monitoring of the programmes to measure improvements in the legal frameworks, institutional settings and policies; provide relevant statistics;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure regular re-assessment of the needs and accordingly adapt intervention to the changing environment and evolving priorities; • Assess level of public awareness and allow time to adjust implementation if necessary; • Adopt a multi-stakeholder and multi-disciplinary approach notably through engagement of local institutions and the civil society; • Support networking of programmes, national and international partners adopting incremental and realistic approach to support emerging positive changes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of capacity from civil society organisations (CSOs) to be active partners in the implementation of activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional consultations with the national stakeholders and transparent and thorough selection process of CSO partners; • Close and regular monitoring of activities implemented by CSOs to be able to quickly remedy and respond to challenges with some capacity-building and awareness-raising activities; • Continue awarding grants to further empower CSOs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lengthy and cumbersome national procurement process causing delay in the implementation of the projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake prior assessment of the national capacities to ensure that the procurement procedures can be implemented within the agreed timeframe; • Put safeguards in place in case the national procurement process fails to meet the timeframe; • Explore the possibility of awarding grants for beneficiaries to undertake the procurement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender stereotypes affect negatively the project implementation. • Lack of knowledge and skills to mainstream gender among domestic partners, including to conduct gender analysis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender-sensitive communication and assessment of project materials in order to propose the appropriate language; • Conduct awareness-raising campaigns; • Support capacity building of national partners to gather, analyse and utilise relevant information, take awareness-raising measures on gender inequality and gender mainstreaming among stakeholders, cooperate with CSOs working on gender equality and women's rights, strengthen the capacities of human rights defenders, especially women.

Communication related risks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of knowledge and awareness among main international and national partners, target groups and general population about Council of Europe contribution to the reforms in the country. • Lack of understanding among target groups about the benefits of the reforms in relevant areas to the quality of life of citizens. • Lack of data collection on user numbers or refusal to disclose them from print media and television channels hindering the possibility to evaluate the impact of the visibility activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop communication strategy for programmes to foster interest in the reform process and the activities of the Council of Europe in this regards among major stakeholders for the benefit of citizens; • Increase professional and public awareness of the Council of Europe contribution to the reforms; • Increase the speed at which information is exchanged, especially making use of social media platforms; • Increase communication in local language to ensure the widest outreach possible; • Results-oriented and grassroots communication approach favoured to reach out to different target groups with a clear message on the Council of Europe contribution to change the daily lives of citizens; • Use diversified channels of communication to reach a wider audience and to facilitate access to information on the Council of Europe contribution to the reforms and on concrete changes in citizens' everyday life. Social media used as a direct and quantifiable channel of communication with the general public.
Risks related to the health situation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impossibility to conduct events due to social distancing rules and restrictions on gatherings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rely on past-experience and previously-implemented measures (e.g during the Covid-19 pandemic); • Rely on alternative methods of conducting meetings and training sessions (videoconferencing, webinars); • Closely follow the health situation to be able to hold in-person events which cannot be held online due to the sensitivity of the topic as soon as it is possible (while fully implementing social distancing measures).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in the priorities of national partners due to the unprecedented circumstances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain close communication with the national authorities and respond to the shifting needs, in order to best address the needs of the beneficiaries while maintaining a focus on the core values of the Council of Europe; • Translate and disseminate Council of Europe standards and specific recommendations to ensure that the protection of human rights, the rule of law and democracy remains in the authorities' agenda.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impossibility of conducting activities in the field due to restrictions on international and local travel. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rely on past-experience and previously-implemented measures (e.g. during the Covid-19 pandemic):<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Focus on activities that can be performed remotely, until the restrictions are lifted, such as research and desk work in the short term;- Regularly revise work plans (with possible fund reallocation) to align them with applicable restrictions;- Examine alternative methods of work: videoconferencing, online training session and surveys, etc. |
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APPENDIX III: FINANCIAL TABLE

Sectors	Total budget (amounts in euros)
Human Rights	5 462 157
1. Effective ECHR implementation	4 125 356
2. Equality and Human Dignity	936 801
3. Ensuring social rights	400 000
Rule of Law	7 493 231
1. Rule of Law based institutions	1 837 805
2. Action against crime, security and protection of citizens	5 655 426
Democracy	5 643 256
1. Democratic governance	3 320 000
2. Democratic participation	2 323 256
Co-ordination, management and reserves	539 003
TOTAL	19 137 647

ANNEX IV: SOURCES/RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Council of Europe documents**1. Technical co-operation with Bosnia and Herzegovina**

- Council of Europe Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2021
- External evaluation of the Action Plan 2018-2021
- Progress Review Report Action Plan 2018-2021

2. Secretary General of the Council of Europe

- Multilateralism 2020, Annual report of the Secretary General
- Safety of journalists, Information Documents, SG/Inf(2021)2, 4 February 2021
- State of Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law: A democratic renewal for Europe, Report by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, 2021

3. European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR)

- Department for the execution of judgments of the ECtHR – country fact sheet Bosnia and Herzegovina
- ECtHR case law in relation to Bosnia and Herzegovina

4. Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights (the Commissioner)

- Conclusions of the Workshop on the implementation and impact of national human rights action plans organised by Nils Muižnieks, (former) Commissioner– 2 June 2017
- Council of Europe Commissioner statements – Bosnia and Herzegovina section
- Letter of the Commissioner to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Minister for Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina – 7 December 2020
- Report by Nils Muižnieks, (former) Commissioner, following his visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina from 12 to 16 June 2017

5. Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe (CM)

- 13th Annual Report by the CM on the supervision of the execution of judgements and decisions of the ECtHR 2019
- Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5 of the CM to member states on measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity
- Recommendation CM/Rec(2016)4 by the CM to member States on gender equality and media
- Recommendation CM/Rec(2018) 1 [1] by the CM to member States on media pluralism and transparency of media ownership
- Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)5 of the CM on the system of the European Convention on Human Rights in university education and professional training
- Recommendation CM/RecChL(2016)4 of the Committee of Ministers on the application of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) by Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Compliance with obligations and commitments, 19th Report (May 2016-May 2018)

- Resolution CM/ResCMN(2019)8 on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM) by Bosnia and Herzegovina (fourth cycle)

6. Council of Europe Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (Congress)

- Report on the Congress contribution to re-establishing local elections in Mostar in view of the October 2020 general local elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina (CPL38(2020)02prov - 19 February 2020)

- Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by member states of the European Charter of Local Self-Government (Monitoring Committee), Information report on the local elections held in Bosnia and Herzegovina (15 November 2020) and Mostar (20 December 2020), 9 February 2021, CG-MON(2021)18-09.

- Recommendation 442 (2019) on Local and regional democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina (442 (2019))

7. Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)

- Resolution 2201 (2018) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on the honouring of obligations and commitments by Bosnia and Herzegovina

8. Monitoring and expert advisory bodies of the Council of Europe

- Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ACFC) - Fourth Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina - 9 November 2017

- Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures and the Financing of Terrorism (MONEYVAL) - Third Regular Follow-up Report of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Application to be removed from the regular follow-up process - Note by the Secretariat – 7 September 2020

- Committee of the Parties to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, Recommendation CP (2017)27 on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Bosnia and Herzegovina – 13 October 2017

- COP Convention 198 - Follow-up Report (Art. 11 and Art. 25 &2-3) – 2019

- European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) report on Bosnia and Herzegovina – fifth monitoring cycle - 2017

- ECRI conclusions on the implementation of the recommendations in respect of Bosnia and Herzegovina subject to interim follow-up – published on 19 March 2020

- European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission): Opinion on the draft law on Ombudsman for Human Rights of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Venice, 23-24 October 2015 (CDL-AD(2015)034-e)

- Venice Commission: *Amicus curiae* brief for the constitutional court of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the mode of election of delegates to the house of peoples of the parliament of the federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Venice, 14-15 October 2016 (CDL-AD (2016)024)

- Venice Commission, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) : Joint opinion¹³⁸ on the legal framework governing the freedom of peaceful assembly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in its two entities and in Brčko district - Venice, 6-7 December 2019 (CDL-AD (2019)026)

- Venice Commission, Opinion on the draft law amendments to the Law on the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina – online plenary, 19 -20 March 2021

- Venice Commission, Opinion on the draft law on the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina - Venice, 21-22 March 2014

- Venice Commission, Opinion on the draft law on the prevention of conflict of interest in the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina - 01-02 July 2021

¹³⁸ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

- Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA), Second evaluation round - Report concerning the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Bosnia and Herzegovina - 17 July 2017
- Group of States Against Corruption (GRECO) fourth evaluation round - Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors – Evaluation report Bosnia and Herzegovina 2016
- GRECO fourth evaluation round - Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors – Compliance report Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018
- GRECO fourth evaluation round - Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors – Second Compliance report Bosnia and Herzegovina 2020
- Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists, Annual report 2021 by the partner organisations of the Council of Europe Platform to Promote the Protection of Journalism and Safety of Journalists “Wanted! Real action for media freedom in Europe”
- Reports of the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR)
- Report to the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina on the visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 29 September to 9 October 2015, 2016

9. Council of Europe Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees

- Report of the fact-finding mission by Ambassador Drahoslav Štefánek to Bosnia and Herzegovina 24-30 January 2021 (28 June 2021)
- Report of the fact-finding mission by Ambassador Tomáš Boček to Bosnia and Herzegovina and to Croatia 24-27 July and 26-30 November 2018 (23 April 2019)

10. Council of Europe Co-operation Group to Combat Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in Drugs (Pompidou Group)

- Study “Drug-treatment systems in prisons in Eastern and South-East Europe” – 2017

11. Directorate of Internal Oversight

- Evaluation of the Council of Europe’s work under the programme line “prisons and police” 2016-2019 (January 2021).

12. Guidelines/Strategies

- [Council of Europe Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit for Co-operation Projects](#)
- [Council of Europe Handbook for prison and probation services regarding radicalisation and violent extremism](#)
- [Council of Europe Plan of Action on “Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality”](#)
- [Council of Europe Project Management Methodology](#)
- [Council of Europe Risk Management Policy](#)
- [Council of Europe Risk Management Guidelines](#)
- [Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023](#)
- [Guidelines for civil participation in political decision-making](#)
- [Guidelines on civil society organisations participation in Council of Europe’s co-operation activities](#)
- [Human Rights Approach Practical Guide for Co-operation Projects](#)
- Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2022-2027

13. Documents submitted by the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities

- Report submitted by Bosnia and Herzegovina pursuant to Article 68, paragraph 1 of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Baseline Report) Received by Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) on 6 February 2020 GREVIO/Inf (2020)12
- Report submitted by the Bosnian authorities on measures taken to comply with Committee of the Parties Recommendation CP(2017)27 on the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings Second evaluation round Received on 8 October 2018

- Reply from Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Questionnaire for the evaluation of the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by the Parties - 7 September 2020

14. Others (working documents)

- Assessment of the capacity of Bosnia and Herzegovina to collect, process and transfer judicial statistics – Report of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) under the Horizontal Facility action “Towards a better evaluation of the results of judicial reform efforts in the Western Balkans – Dashboard for the Western Balkans”

- Horizontal Facility II – External mid-term evaluation

- European Union/Council of Europe’s Joint Programme on Co-operation on cybercrime: Targeting crime proceeds on the internet in South-Eastern Europe and Turkey final report

- Regional Comparative Study on Strengthening Equality Bodies in the Western Balkan Region in the Field of Hate Speech under the Horizontal Facility action Promotion of diversity and equality in the Western Balkans

- SPACE I - 2020 – Council of Europe Annual Penal Statistics: Prison populations, Strasbourg, 2021

National policy documents of Bosnia and Herzegovina (adopted or pending adoption)

- Action plan for improving the state of Human Rights and fundamental freedoms of LGBTI persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2021-2023

- Bosnia and Herzegovina Migration and Asylum Strategy (2021-2026)

- Common Core Curricula developed by the Agency for Pre-primary, Primary and Secondary Education (APOSO)

- Gender Action Plan of Bosnia and Herzegovina 2018-2022

- Justice Sector Reform Strategy (2021-2027)

- Operational Strategy of the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the Period 2016-2021

- Policy Recommendation with a Roadmap for Improving Inclusive Education

- Priorities for 2016-2026 Higher Education Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina

- Republika Srpska Action Plan for countering child pornography 2020-2022

- Republika Srpska Action Plan for countering cybercrime 2020–2022

- Republika Srpska Action Plan for digital forensics 2020-2022

- Republika Srpska Strategy for countering cybercrime for the period 2020-2024

- Strategic Policy Document Plan for the treatment of violent prisoners in prison and multi-agency co-operation (2020–2025)

- Strategy to Suppress Trafficking in Human Beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2020-2023