



# HORIZONTAL FACILITY FOR WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY

## Strengthening the Human Rights Ombudsman to fight discrimination

As a part of the co-operation programme framework co-funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe, “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey” (Horizontal Facility), the Council of Europe will implement the Action “Strengthening the Human Rights Ombudsman to fight discrimination”. The Action will be implemented in close partnership with the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees, Ministry of Justice and Judges’ and Prosecutors’ Training Centres of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska.

The Action will strengthen the Ombudspersons’ role as the main human rights defender; support the implementation of its recommendations and a proper co-ordination with other public bodies and NGOs.

The Action, which started on 1 September 2016 and will be completed on 30 June 2018, has an overall budget of 800,000 Euros.

## Objectives and expected results

The **overall objective** of the Action is to ensure that the persons under the jurisdiction of Bosnia and Herzegovina better enjoy their human rights through a strengthened capacity of the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina in dealing with discrimination cases.

The **specific objective** is to strengthen the capacity of the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina to prevent and combat discrimination. This specific objective will be supported through realisation of the following **results**:

- The role of the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina to prevent and combat discrimination in line with European standards is strengthened;
- Cooperation is fostered between the Institution of Human Rights Ombudsman of Bosnia and Herzegovina and other public institutions and civil society in the fight against discrimination.

## Background information

On 11 April 2016, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Thorbjørn Jagland, and the European Union's Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes Hahn, announced a new co-operation initiative of the two organisations aimed at supporting South-East Europe and Turkey in their efforts to comply with European standards. The initiative is called the European Union/Council of Europe Horizontal Facility for Western Balkans and Turkey (Horizontal Facility). It is a three-year programme (May 2016 – May 2019), focusing on three themes: ensuring justice; fighting corruption, economic crime and organised crime; as well as combating discrimination and protecting the rights of vulnerable groups. It has a budget of €25 million, of which €20 million has been provided by the European Union and €5 million by the Council of Europe. Through the Horizontal Facility, the European Union and the Council of Europe will assist beneficiary countries to comply with Council of Europe standards and the European Union acquis in the framework of the enlargement process, through a complementary two-fold approach of technical co-operation and the provision of expertise. The Horizontal Facility relies on the Council of Europe's unique working methods, whereby tailor-made technical co-operation activities are based on conclusions and recommendations of the Council of Europe's monitoring bodies, which highlight areas where improvements are needed in the legislation and policies of the beneficiaries to comply with the Organisation's treaties and other standards.

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

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

<http://europa.eu>



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