

COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROGRAMME OFFICE IN PODGORICA

2024 AT A GLANCE

Montenegro benefits from co-operation initiatives implemented by the Council of Europe. These initiatives have played a pivotal role in supporting the country's reform agenda, aligning Montenegro with Council of Europe standards while advancing its ongoing European Union accessions process.

The Council of Europe Programme Office in Podgorica supports this effort by providing targeted assistance in the field of human rights protection; judicial reform; fight against economic crime; anti-discrimination including minority rights; education and freedom of expression and freedom of the media. Additional co-operation activities are taking place under regional programmes focusing on Roma inclusion at the local and central level, fight against cybercrime, deliberative democracy, and human rights education for legal professionals.



KEY FIGURES

AS OF 1 JANUARY 2025



18 STAFF MEMBERS

- 2 Core Staff
- 16 Project Staff



COUNTRY-SPECIFIC PROJECTS: 7

- 1 project funded through voluntary contributions
- 6 actions as part of the EU/Council of Europe Horizontal Facility joint programme



REGIONAL PROJECTS: 11

IN FOCUS: EU / COUNCIL OF EUROPE JOINT PROGRAMME

- Strengthening justice
- Fight against corruption
- Combating discrimination
- Freedom of expression
- Expertise co-ordination mechanism



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KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



Improved access to justice for citizens

Alternative dispute resolution was improved and free legal aid enhanced in particular for the most vulnerable groups, including through the establishment of a new full-fledged human rights legal clinic. This clinic brings together law students from three law faculties in Montenegro. It focuses on human rights violations affecting the most vulnerable groups, such as victims of domestic violence and human trafficking.

Enhanced safeguards for detained person

With Council of Europe assistance, a strengthened regulatory and operational framework was put in place to safeguards individuals' rights in prisons and police custody. Fully aligned with the latest European standards, the application of new procedures continues to be sustained by comprehensive training and regular updates.



Achieved major milestone in the EU accession process

The Council of Europe significantly contributed with legal expertise to align key legislative reforms with European standards, which was conducive to a positive Interim Benchmark Assessment Report (IBAR). This support contributed in particular to:

- The adoption of the Law on Prevention of Corruption and the Law on Seizure and Confiscation of Assets Derived from Criminal Activity.
- 3 main key laws pertaining to the media sector.
- As well as major judicial reforms through the adoption of the Law on the Judicial Council and Judges of Montenegro and the Law on the Special State Prosecution Service.



Increased capacity to address racism, hatred and intolerance in line with European standards

Council of Europe contributed to enhanced legislative, analytical and strategic tools and sharing good practices among European peers. Key developments include the adoption of the 2024-2028 Strategy for Improving the Quality of Life of LGBTIQ Persons, with its 2024-2025 action plan, the enhancement of hate crime provisions in the Criminal Code, and support for both the anti-discrimination law and the law on the Protector of Human Rights.



Fostered inclusiveness in schools by ensuring a supportive classroom environment for all students

Over 300 teachers, students, parents and community members were trained on recognising and addressing discrimination in online educational spaces as well as on inclusive teaching practices.

Enhanced Roma inclusion

Projects implemented by the Council of Europe contributed to an improved accessibility of educational premises, which were also better equipped to allow for appropriate learning of IT skills. Municipalities also received targeted support to develop a more strategic approach to social inclusion of Roma.



Deliberate democracy at local level strengthened

A Community of Practice enabled 18 local authorities and associations to better understand deliberative democracy and innovative citizen participation, facilitating the exchange of best practices for local governance to ensure more inclusive decision-making.

MORE INFORMATION