

COUNCIL OF EUROPE OFFICE IN BELGRADE

RESULTS IN 2025



The Council of Europe Office in Belgrade has, since its establishment in 2002, been a steadfast partner in Serbia's progress towards European standards. Working closely with national institutions and civil society, it has **advanced Council of Europe principles on human rights, democracy, and the rule of law** in Serbia: from strengthening judicial independency, promoting equality and media freedom, to advancing quality education, good governance, and local self-government, while preventing corruption and trafficking in human beings. These joint efforts **directly support Serbia's reform agenda and deepen regional co-operation across the Western Balkans.**

BY THE NUMBERS: A PLATFORM FOR ACTION | AS OF JANUARY 2026



34 DEDICATED STAFF MEMBERS INCLUDING 28 PROJECT STAFF.



11 REGIONAL AND 10 COUNTRY-SPECIFIC PROJECTS INCLUDING:

- 7 FLAGSHIP EU AND COUNCIL OF EUROPE "HORIZONTAL FACILITY FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TÜRKIYE" ACTIONS.
- 2 EU AND COUNCIL OF EUROPE JOINT PROGRAMMES.
- 1 PROJECT FUNDED THROUGH VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS.

WHY YOUR INVOLVEMENT MATTERS

Every reform begins with co-operation. By supporting the Council of Europe's work in Serbia, partners and donors help ensure that justice, equality, and democracy remain not only European ideals, but tangible realities for people across the country.

Youth and decision-makers join forces against hate through dialogue and art.

At Belgrade's Silosi cultural centre, young people and policymakers joined forces for the International Day for Countering Hate Speech. Their mural of unity and inclusion symbolised a new generation standing up for dialogue, dignity, and respect. Scan the QR code to watch the video from the event.



IMPACT OF COUNCIL OF EUROPE WORK IN SERBIA



ADVANCING RULE OF LAW AND JUSTICE

Justice system built on trust. Over 1 500 judges and prosecutors build their capacity to uphold independence, ethics, and integrity, strengthening accountability and public trust in the justice system.

Reforms and stronger human rights protection in legal proceedings. Progress in implementing European Court of Human Rights judgments led to the closure of several cases that had previously remained pending before the Committee of Ministers. More than 200 legal professionals enhanced their skills in applying the European Convention on Human Rights and related procedures, contributing to more consistent and rights-compliant judicial practice.

PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE AND PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS

Stronger laws, safer victims. Over 120 professionals working to combat human trafficking were trained to deliver victim-centred support, assisted by Council of Europe HELP courses. An expert review of the draft Anti-trafficking Law brought Serbia's legislation closer to European standards for victim protection and offender accountability.

Local action for Roma inclusion. 70 representatives of local self-governments now monitor the implementation of Roma social inclusion policies more effectively. Meanwhile, 27 social workers from 23 different centres for social work improved their capacity to identify discrimination and antigypsyism, creating more responsive, inclusive communities across Serbia.

A second chance behind bars. The Prison Administration was equipped with four innovative tools that give prisoners, including those from vulnerable groups, the skills they need to reintegrate into society and reduce repeat offending.

MEDIA FREEDOM AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Defending media freedom. Judges and civil society joined forces to interpret European standards on countering Strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs) in Serbia. Their dialogue laid foundations for a more consistent, rights-based judicial decisions to protect journalists and uphold free expression.

EDUCATION AND DEMOCRATIC COMPETENCES

Schools that teach democracy. Through the National Education Portal, every teacher now accesses an AI-powered lesson-planning tool that supports democratic competences and values in classrooms. This innovation helps build a new generation of active, informed citizens.

Safe classrooms, protected children. Adoption of the first evidence-based national recommendations on child protection and student well-being has transformed how Serbia's education system prevents and responds to bullying. Schools now foster safer, kinder environments where every child can learn free from fear.