

Final Report

Final evaluation of the project

“Support for the Implementation of Judicial Reform in Serbia”

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AI	Artificial intelligence
CCJE	Consultative Council of European Judges
CCPE	Consultative Council of European Prosecutors
CEPEJ	European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice
CM	Committee of Ministers
CoE	Council of Europe
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DG ENEST	Directorate-General for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood
DoA	Description of Action
DPC	Directorate of Programme Coordination
ECHR	European Convention for Human Rights
ECtHR	European Court for Human Rights
EIDHR	European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GRECO	Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption
HELP	European Programme on Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals
HF	Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Türkiye
HJC	High Judicial Council
HPC	High Prosecutorial Council
HRA	Human Rights Approach
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IGO	Intergovernmental Organisation
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex
LMS	Learning management system
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NCEU	National Convention on European Union in Serbia
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NKEU	National Convention on EU
NPAA	National Programmes for the Adoption Of the Acquis
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PMM	Project Management Methodology
SC	Steering Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UN CEDAW	United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VC	Venice Commission
YUCOM	The Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights

Executive Summary

The Project

1. Support for the Implementation of Judicial Reform in Serbia (hereafter the project) is a partnership between the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe (CoE). It runs over 36 months (1 January 2022 - 31 December 2025) with a budget of €3,334,000 (EU (90%) and Council of Europe (10%)). The primary beneficiaries are Serbian justice institutions including, the Supreme Court, the High Judicial Council (HJC), the Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office, the High Prosecutorial Council (HPC), the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the Administrative Court, the Commercial Appellate Court, the Misdemeanour Appellate Court, and the Judicial Academy. Participation by civil society organisations (CSOs) includes professional associations of judges and prosecutors and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) engaged on justice reform issues and monitoring EU accession progress. The project is based on a commitment by the Council of Europe and the EU to co-ordinate their legal and policy frameworks in the region, based on their respective strategic frameworks.¹ The project is part of the Council of Europe's 'strategic triangle' of standard-setting, monitoring, and technical co-operation.
2. The project aims to advance judicial reforms in Serbia by strengthening judicial independence, accountability, access to justice, judicial training, and the harmonisation of judicial practice in line with European standards. The project is structured around four interconnected components:
 1. **Improved legal frameworks** through development and adoption of new laws and bylaws in line with European norms.
 2. **Enhanced judicial management:** Strengthening institutional capacities and management practices for effective and consistent judicial service delivery.
 3. **Advancing judicial training:** Improving the quality of training for legal professionals and aligning it with European standards.
 4. **Harmonising judicial practices:** Promoting consistency in case law and improving legal certainty.

Context

3. Linked to fundamental constitutional reform, Serbia has been undertaking judicial reform in recent years in accordance with national legal and strategic² frameworks and international/European legal norms. Reform is also guided by Council of Europe membership obligations and EU accession requirements. Negotiations for Chapter 23 ('the Judiciary and Fundamental Rights') were formally opened in July 2016. Progress has been made across a range of constitutional, legislative and institutional areas. However, significant reform challenges remain, including human and financial resources, case disposition rates, gaps in substantive and methodological capacity, unfilled judicial and prosecution posts and, most fundamentally, political interference in judicial independence and prosecutorial autonomy.³ Wider contextual challenges include political instability due to Russia's war against Ukraine; the demands of multiple elections and widespread public distrust in state institutions. Rule of law regression intensified in 2024, linked to the Novi Sad railway accident, with a further decline in public confidence in the state and in relations between civil society and the Government.

¹ Memorandum of Understanding between the Council of Europe and the European Union of 23 May 2007. The April 2014 Joint Statement of Intent of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the EU Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy identify "efficient and independent judiciary" as a priority.

² Including the *Judicial Development Strategy 2020–2025*, the *Strategy on Human Resources in the Judiciary 2022-2026*, *National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2024-2028*. Other related strategies include the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2030, the Strategy for creating a stimulating environment for the development of civil society, 2022-2030, National Strategy for the Prosecution of War Crimes 2021-2026.

³ The *European Council Conclusions on Enlargement* in December 2024, while noting some progress, highlight a need for "more political will [and] further accelerating reforms and delivering concrete and tangible results".

Evaluation Purpose, Objectives and Methodology

4. The evaluation was conducted during March-September 2025 with a total budget of €30,000. The **purpose of the evaluation** is to review progress made and to identify lessons for future projects. The **objectives⁴ of the evaluation** is to assess the project against the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of **Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency** and **Potential Impact** and **Sustainability** as well as the Council of Europe criteria of the **Added Value** of the Council of Europe as implementer of technical co-operation. The evaluation also assessed the project's integration of Council of Europe transversal themes, **human rights approach⁵** and **gender mainstreaming**. The evaluation followed the Council of Europe [Evaluation Policy](#) 2019, [Evaluation Guidelines](#), 2020 and [Code of Conduct for Evaluation](#) and other evaluation best practice principles,⁶ took account of Council of Europe programming tools.⁷
5. The **evaluation methodology** combined desk-based review of project documents and outputs (250+ documents); online and face-to-face interviews with key stakeholders; observation of a bi-annual project Steering Committee (SC) meeting, an online questionnaire, in-country meetings in June 2025. Discussions were conducted on the basis of non-attribution, with an option for anonymous input via the online questionnaire. An evaluation methodology and Inception Report were approved by the Council of Europe in February and March 2025. Assistance to future planning was specified as an evaluation focus, however, the opportunity for this was constrained somewhat by the evaluation team not having sight of the planned twelve-month follow-up support for 2026. This we understand, was finalised within the Council of Europe in June and is to be succeeded by a longer-term project within the Horizontal Facility.

Findings/Conclusions/Recommendations

6. The project objectives evidence strong **relevance** to Council of Europe legal norms; EU accession criteria; and Serbia's legal and strategic frameworks, and capacity support needs of the justice system, particularly key new institutions, the HJC and the HPC. The project is largely **coherent** with other justice projects and interventions in Serbia, with some scope for enhancing coordination at a strategic level. As a lead international substantive actor, the Council of Europe should, in conjunction with the EU and the MoJ, initiate more structured co-ordination of international technical co-operation. The project has evidenced good levels of **efficiency**, with a no-cost 12-month extension, with cost-effective delivery of most planned activities. Of note is the expeditious drafting of 5 laws⁸ and 37 bylaws⁹ despite serious contextual challenges. Some planned activities, e.g. on human resources, were impeded by internal sector issues and lack of engagement by partners. Reforms to mandate the HJC and HPC on responsibility for staff (planning, budgeting, hiring etc) are reported as having stalled in the absence of Ministry of Justice initiative to progress the issue.
7. There is good evidence of **effectiveness**, with most planned outputs delivered. This is linked to established working relations between the Council of Europe and partner institutions and the foundation from the predecessor Horizontal Facility project. The functioning of the project Steering Committee and Working Groups¹⁰ is reported as aiding effectiveness, despite some challenges with attendance. Overall, effectiveness has been challenged by issues of coordination and quality control of experts' inputs¹¹, low capacity of partner institutions, some opposition to reform and disruption

⁴ Following revision during the inception phase.

⁵ Including the core principles of participation and inclusion; equality and non-discrimination; accountability; and transparency and access to information. Council of Europe, [Human Rights Approach: Practical Guide For Co-Operation Projects](#), 2020.

⁶ Including the UN Evaluation Group, [Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation](#), 2024.

⁷ Council of Europe, [Project Management Methodology Handbook](#); [Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit](#), 2016; [Practical Guide on the Human Rights Approach for Co-operation Projects](#), 2021.

⁸ The Law on the Organisation of Courts, the Law on Judges, the Law on the High Judicial Council, the Law on the Public Prosecutors' Office, and the Law on the High Prosecutorial Council.

⁹ See Annex 4 for the full list of bylaws drafted, including those identified by The Project as not involving issues of Council of Europe standards.

¹⁰ Despite challenges, including frequent changes in personnel attending.

¹¹ In accordance with the Evaluation Guidelines of the Council of Europe, the Directorate of Internal Oversight has included the following feedback from the project team on the above statement: "The project team does not concur with the reference to "issues of coordination and quality control of experts' inputs." The project team maintains that this statement is not supported by specific

linked to political instability. There is also some tension between ensuring optimal adherence to European standards, while also facilitating partners' ownership of activities and outputs, given capacity and political will challenges. **Potential impact** is strongest in the case of the adoption of the 5 laws¹² and of 36 of 37 bylaws.¹³ In addition, more transparent and participatory legislative drafting and enhanced transparency and independence/autonomy of judges and prosecutors, justice institutions and decision-making processes represents an important foundation for impact.¹⁴ Some project activities present more limited potential for impact, due to the embedded nature of problems to be addressed or the relatively small scale of project activities (e.g. monitoring of undue influence, Artificial intelligence (AI)). Despite the significance of the enactment of laws and bylaws and new procedures, their application still requires significant support and resources to progress from effectiveness to impact.

8. The likely **sustainability** of some key results is strong, including outputs formally enacted/adopted with strong ownership by partner institutions. Various contributions to transparency and participatory legislative drafting etc are also likely to continue going forward. The connection between project results, the EU accession criteria and Serbia's Council of Europe obligations are key drivers of sustainability. Challenges to sustainability include human resource issues, unfilled vacancies and lack substantive and methodological expertise. Lack of high-level political will for reform is the most significant threat to sustainability. Many project results may stall or could be reversed without political and high-level judicial will to implement them. The Council of Europe, EU and other intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) have a key role to play in ensuring that addressing lack of political will is prioritised and that "*demand*" for reform is supported.
9. The Council of Europe and EU have a shared commitment to apply a **Human Rights Approach** (HRA) in external co-operation. The project prioritises participation by civil society, including input on drafting of the laws and bylaws and participation in other project events. Project results also represent a fundamental contribution to enhanced transparency and accountability. However, HRA is not applied as a uniform transversal framework in the project and awareness of the framework among many interlocutors is low. Contracts/ToRs of project experts do not stipulate that HRA is addressed in their inputs, with the result that most inputs and outputs do not address HRA or do so only partially. Similarly, **Gender Mainstreaming** in the project is weak, affected by low awareness and lack of prioritisation. While some inputs and outputs address equality/discrimination, the majority (including laws, bylaws, expert opinions) do not adequately mainstream gender. There is a general misapprehension that high numbers of women judges and prosecutors means that gender is not a concern in the justice system. Raising awareness of the difference between numbers of men/women in the justice system and gender mainstreaming needs to be integral to future project support. Going forward, application of HRA and gender mainstreaming should draw upon the Council of Europe's expertise and key tools to ensure that log frame, project monitoring/reporting, consultant contracts/ToRs and inputs/outputs systematically address HRA and gender issues as core European standards.

evidence in the evaluation report. The assessment appears to reflect a misunderstanding of the variable nature of expert support provided under the project. Depending on the objectives of individual assignments, outputs ranged from needs assessments and recommendations to facilitation, guidance, and moderation in legislative revision processes, where the project could not substitute for national authorities nor assume drafting responsibility. Accordingly, deliverables were documented and shared in different formats. The level of detail and form of analysis were tailored to the objectives of each assignment, ranging from advisory guidance and facilitation to analytical opinions and recommendations, and were subject to proportionate quality control in line with their intended purpose. Regarding coordination, the project team states that this observation is not supported by specific evidence and reflects a partial misunderstanding of the project's modalities. In certain assignments, close synergies between international and national experts were deliberately limited in order to avoid undue influence and to preserve the independence of expert inputs. Where complementarities were required and foreseen, synergies were systematically established. Quality control arrangements were applied accordingly and in line with the nature of the support provided. The approach to coordination and quality control was explained to the evaluators; however, this contextual distinction does not appear to have been sufficiently taken into account in the assessment. The above comments apply to all related references in the report."

¹² The Law on the Organisation of Courts, the Law on Judges, the Law on the High Judicial Council, the Law on the Public Prosecutors' Office, and the Law on the High Prosecutorial Council.

¹³ The failure to enact the bylaw on the Rules of Court is attributed to internal institutional issues.

¹⁴ Relevant results include the broadcasting of HJC and HPC meetings, Rulebooks elaborating merit-based criteria and processes for election, evaluation, examination etc of prosecutors and judges and Rules of Procedure regarding the work of the HPC commissioner for autonomy and disciplinary board etc.

10. The Council of Europe offers significant **added value** as a justice programme implementer. This is based on its status as an IGO and its substantive normative framework ('strategic triangle' of standard-setting, monitoring, and technical co-operation. Delivery of past projects and the Belgrade Office's track record of justice reform activities in Serbia are also highlighted as added value factors. While recognising fundamental political context challenges, and the limitations of an individual project, there is scope for this comparative advantage to be used to generate more political will for reform. There is a delicate balance between maintaining institutional cooperation, fostering ownership and ensuring that efforts are meaningful. While the project well reflected the need for flexibility to adapt to changed political and institutional circumstances, and partner institutions have ultimate ownership of the reform process there is a need for more robust discussion at the planning stage of future co-operation on feasible expectations of impact/*substantive* change and enhanced monitoring, done in conjunction with partners, which tracks the contribution to impact.

Evaluation Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

RELEVANCE

Findings/Conclusions

- ❑ Project objectives and activities are highly relevant to Council of Europe legal norms and best practice, to EU accession criteria and to identified legislative and institutional needs of the Serbian justice system, in particular, the HJC and HPC as newly established oversight institutions.
- ❑ Project outputs are broadly in line with relevant European standards, with some scope for this being enhanced.

COHERENCE

Findings/Conclusions

- ❑ The project is well aligned with other Council of Europe projects and, for the most part, with other donor projects, with only minimal duplication.

EFFICIENCY

Findings/Conclusions

- ❑ The project delivery model is fit-for-purpose, with majority of activities delivered cost-efficiently, within the allocated budget and planned timelines (including a 12-month extension). This has been achieved in the face of profound context challenges, including political instability, low capacity of partners and lack of political will for reform.
- ❑ Efficiency is enhanced by good levels of communication/co-ordination between Strasbourg HQ and Belgrade Office and the European Union Delegation (EUD), with some weakness in engagement by project partners.

EFFECTIVENESS

Findings/Conclusions

- ❑ A key aspect of project effectiveness has been its support to the drafting and adoption of an extensive framework of laws and bylaws. The project has also been effective in delivering support on working modalities of key institutions, notably the HJC and HPC, as well as provision of substantive knowledge and best practice examples. This represents an important contribution towards greater judicial transparency, independence, autonomy, capacity and substantive harmonisation.
- ❑ There is some scope to enhance the inclusion, and monitoring, of all relevant European standards in inputs/discussions and outputs including an enhanced log frame and improved tasking of experts, including terms of reference (ToR) (in addition to Acts of Engagement) for all consultant inputs.

Recommendations (to Council of Europe) (High Priority)

- ❑ Tasking of Project experts should include detailed ToRs and checklists that reference cross-cutting and other Council of Europe norms, to enhance quality and coherence and facilitate assessment of outputs against ToRs.

POTENTIAL IMPACT

Findings/Conclusions

- ❑ Despite weakness in impact monitoring, the project evidences some impact, including increased participatory decision-making and judicial transparency and enhanced election/tenure of judges and prosecutors. Potential impacts include enhanced judicial independence and prosecutorial autonomy, merit-based evaluation, harmonisation based on the enhanced legislative and

institutional framework and processes and data management. The potential for impact of project outputs on some key issues, e.g. reform of human resource management and undue influence, is weaker.

- ❑ The progression from effectiveness to impact is impeded by resource and capacity challenges of partner institutions. Most fundamentally, there is a deficit in executive respect for the separation of powers, with interlocutors expressing strong reservations regarding the political will to resource and sustain outputs. Co-ordination between projects and actors active on justice reform is key to addressing this, with the Council of Europe and EU as key actors.

Recommendations (to Council of Europe and EU) (High Priority)

- ❑ Support to the application of the legislative framework and procedures supported by the project should be prioritised, including agreed fit-for-purpose SMART indicators (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) to measure substantive change.
- ❑ Achieving impact under this, and related projects, requires a structured, justice sector reform stakeholder platform. This should enhance coordination of, and synergies between, international technical support and generate combined leverage for political will for reform. As key normative actors, the Council of Europe and EU should have a central role in such coordination.

SUSTAINABILITY

Findings/Conclusions

- ❑ Sustainability of formally enacted laws and bylaws, enhanced procedures of key oversight institutions is aided by their formal status, the process by which they were developed and, to some degree, by impetus from EU accession aspirations.
- ❑ Prospects for sustainability are challenged by low institutional capacity of partner institutions to apply new norms and procedures, and a considerable deficit in political will to resource the new legislative framework and to respect the mandate on judicial institutions.

Recommendations (to Council of Europe) (High Priority)

- ❑ Capacity building for oversight institutions (including the HJC and HPC) should be prioritised, including their capacity to apply and monitor the impact of key bylaws addressing transparency, judicial/prosecutorial independence.

HUMAN RIGHTS APPROACH (HRA)

Findings/Conclusions

- ❑ The project has progressed some key HRA principles, including rights-holders participation (via civil society actors), enhanced access to information/transparency of judicial and prosecutorial functions and justice sector accountability. However, the project's application of HRA as a comprehensive framework is weak. There is a need to enhance explicit coverage of all HRA principles in the log frame, experts' terms of reference, substantive inputs, discussions/processes and outputs and in expert and project progress reports.
- ❑ Awareness and knowledge of HRA principles and methodologies among partners and some experts is low.

Recommendations (to Council of Europe) (High Priority)

- ❑ The application of HRA as a comprehensive framework should be enhanced, by:
 - revising log frame content and ensuring consultant/project reports address progress and challenges in the application of all HRA principles
 - ensuring experts' contracts include a checklist of HRA norms and ToRs stipulate that these norms are addressed in inputs/outputs.
 - organising targeted applied capacity-building events/knowledge sharing on HRA to justice reform with other justice projects/actors. This might be linked to a small,

designated group and piloting of HRA/gender in selected future justice reform activities.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Findings/Conclusions

- ❑ Mainstreaming gender in justice sector reform in Serbia is challenged by misunderstanding regarding gender and gender mainstreaming, as well as some opposition by justice actors to addressing gender.
- ❑ Experts' terms of reference do not reflect the Council of Europe's gender obligations and commitments, and a significant proportion of project inputs, discussions and outputs do not address gender or only do so partially.

Recommendations (to Council of Europe) (High Priority)

- ❑ The application of gender mainstreaming (including issues of intersectionality) should be enhanced, by:
 - revising log frame content and ensuring consultant/project reports address progress and challenges on gender and gender mainstreaming.
 - ensuring experts' contracts include a gender/gender mainstreaming checklist and ToRs stipulate that these norms are addressed in inputs/outputs.
 - organising targeted applied capacity-building events/knowledge sharing on gender in justice reform with other justice projects/actors.

ADDED VALUE

Findings/Conclusions

- ❑ The added value of the Council of Europe as provider of technical co-operation on justice reform in Serbia derives from its IGO status and 'strategic triangle', its track record in the sector, pool of relevant qualified experts and inputs from key Council of Europe bodies.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

11. Serbia is multi-party parliamentary democracy with a formal separation of powers, an extensive legal framework. These laws are overseen by a range of oversight/accountability institutions. In addition to constitutional guarantees (including Articles 3, 4, 32-37), the Republic of Serbia's legal commitment to delivering efficient, high-quality justice based on non-discrimination also derives from a range of Council of Europe (e.g. European Convention for Human Rights (ECHR)) and United Nations (UN) treaties that the state has ratified. These treaty standards are directly applicable in domestic law¹⁵ and enforceable by Serbian Courts. Serbia has a civil law system with the justice sector comprising a range of justice institutions and non-state actors. Ongoing justice reform in Serbia is guided by several domestic strategies, including the *Judicial Development Strategy, 2020–2025*,¹⁶ the *Strategy on Human Resources in the Judiciary, 2022-2026*, *HPC Communication Strategy, 2026-2030* and the *National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2023-2028*¹⁷ and EU accession documents, including the National Programmes for the Adoption Of the Acquis (NPAA) 2022- 2025, 2024–2027.
12. Constitutional reforms in Serbia in 2022 and legislative changes in 2023 have strengthened judicial independence by transferring responsibility for appointment of judges and prosecutors from the National Assembly to the HJC and the HPC, respectively. These reforms have seen the public prosecutors' office transition from the soviet-era monocratic system to a less hierarchical structure. Various measures adopted increase the transparency of the system.¹⁸ However, ongoing concerns are identified by the EU, Council of Europe monitoring bodies, UN¹⁹ and others.²⁰
13. The [2024 EC Report on Serbia](#) notes that 2023 recommendations are only partially implemented with "some" to "moderate" level of preparation in the area of judiciary. These include the need to adopt the draft Law on the Judicial Academy, to appoint more judges and prosecutors, to progress towards a merit-based recruitment, transfer and promotion of judges and prosecutors; to improve case management and justice system efficiency. Some key observations and recommendations in the [Serbia Judicial Functional Review, 2021](#)²¹ remain valid. These include the need to enhance performance tracking of courts and prosecutors offices and case management; introduce comprehensive continuing training and realistic/transparent budgets etc. The [2025 EC Rule of Law Report](#) notes that while the justice system has undergone substantial recent reform, strengthening judicial independence requires implementing laws to be amended.²² A new appeal procedure to the Constitutional Court for judicial appointments is in place, but a significant number of vacancies for

¹⁵ Including international law generally (Article 16 of the Constitution), and more specifically, human and minority rights enshrined in international law and the practices of international institutions supervising their implementation (under Article 18 paragraph 2). The Constitutional Court of Serbia is mandated to review the compliance of laws and other legal enactments for compliance with international law and ratified international treaties.

¹⁶ Following on predecessor reform strategies for 2006–2011 and 2013–2018.

¹⁷ Other strategies relevant to the justice system include the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2030, the Strategy For Creating a Stimulating Environment for the Development of Civil Society, 2022-2030, the National Strategy for the Prosecution of War Crimes, 2021-2026.

¹⁸ These changes are noted by the Council of Europe Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) in 2023 as having implemented most of its previous recommendations. GRECO, [Fourth Evaluation Round Addendum to the Second compliance Report on Serbia, which deals with corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors](#), 2023.

¹⁹ Including in Serbia's most recent Universal Periodic Review in 2023, Human Rights Council, [Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review* Serbia, 2023](#).

²⁰ A range of other monitoring processes identify Rule of Law concerns in Serbia. The World Justice Project Rule of Law Index. [Serbia country profile](#), 2024, ranks Serbia 94 out of 142 countries, based on criteria of Constraints on Government Powers, Corruption, Open Government, Fundamental Rights, Order and Security, Regulatory Enforcement, Civil Justice and Criminal Justice. IDEA's [Global State of Democracy](#) Indices for 2024 classifies Serbia as 60th (human Rights) and 73rd (Rule of Law) out of 173 countries, drops of 2 and 14 places respectively since 2023. The Bertelsmann Stiftung Transformation Index [2024 Country Report Serbia](#) ranks Serbia 81st of 137 countries in its Governance Index.

²¹ Measuring progress against the 2014 Judicial Functional Review baseline and the 2019 Functional Review of the Prosecution System.

²² In May 2024 the UN Human Rights Committee called on Serbia to ensure effective implementation of recent legislative measures on judicial and prosecutorial independence as well as to consider amending the existing framework to ensure that prosecutors have a majority of votes on the newly established HPC. [Concluding Observations](#) on the fourth periodic report of Serbia International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 2024.

judges and prosecutors remain unfilled.²³ Despite some steps taken to reduce the space for political influence, political pressure on judges and prosecutors continues, including public comment by politicians on ongoing investigations and court proceedings, with "little or no follow-up on cases of undue influence".²⁴ Some participation and consultation by civil society actors in the justice sector takes place in a context of profound challenges to effective functioning of civil society in Serbia.²⁵

14. Serbia has been a member of the Council of Europe since April 2003. Membership obligations include compliance with the principles of a pluralist democracy and the rule of law, as well as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons placed under its jurisdiction. Serbia has also benefited from Council of Europe co-operation support since 2002, including justice reform projects.
15. Justice sector reform is also addressed by projects and other activities of a range of other donors/IGO agencies. Serbia receives budget support Under Instrument for Pre-Association (IPA) III (2021-2027), aimed at strengthening the justice system and aligning it with EU standards on judicial independence, efficiency, and public trust. Currently a range of EU-funded rule of law projects in Serbia, address judiciary, fundamental rights, media, and fight against corruption and money laundering, including "EU 4 Justice – Complementary Assistance to Budget Support and Capacity Building for Justice Sector" managed by KPMG²⁶, and "Strengthening of the Rule of Law in the Republic of Serbia," managed by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and others, "Support to Serbia in the area of justice, freedom and security" led by the Lithuanian agency CPMA and "EU for Fight against Corruption and for Fundamental Rights" and "Strengthening the Rule of Law" managed by GIZ. Other EU justice sector support areas are channelled through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) to civil society organisations and media. Current World Bank sector activities²⁷ include *ad hoc* support to the HPC, on their Action Plan and on technical requirements for HPC case management system. Serbia also features in its regional justice project which surveys perception of justice in six Western Balkan countries. Due in October 2025, survey results will document experience of justice system users over the past 3 years, including undue influence. The World Bank has also concluded a needs assessment for a large scale 2026-2030 commercial justice project.²⁸ Other projects by Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), UN agencies and bi-lateral donors in the sector includes support on training, independence of prosecutors, corruption, free legal aid etc.

1.2 Support for the Implementation of Judicial reform in Serbia

16. As part of the Council of Europe's combined 'strategic triangle' of standard-setting, monitoring, and technical co-operation, the project supports the implementation of decisions of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR); recommendations of Council of Europe monitoring and advisory bodies; as well as Beneficiaries' sectoral and thematic strategies and priorities.
17. The project seeks to advance judicial reforms in Serbia by strengthening judicial independence, accountability, access to justice, judicial training, and harmonising judicial practice. Funded jointly by the European Union (90%) and the Council of Europe (10%), the project is being delivered from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2025,²⁹ with a total budget of €3,334,000. The project is situated

²³ As of July 2024, there were 384 vacancies out of 3,102 judges' positions and 210 vacancies out of 894 public prosecutors' positions. The perceived low status of judicial careers and low salary rates are also identified as deterring lawyers from pursuing judicial careers.

²⁴ Concerns of the Serbian Bar Association about unauthorised phone surveillance and threats against lawyers are highlighted in the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe (CCBE), [Contribution for the 2025 Rule of Law Report](#).

²⁵ The Council of Europe's Conference of INGOs (CINGO) visited Serbia in September 2025 to discuss democratic participation with authorities and CSOs. The visit report will be presented and discussed at CINGO's General Assembly in Spring 2026.

²⁶ In terms of its specific focus on justice efficiency and effectiveness, this project is most directly related to The Project being evaluated.

²⁷ Having previously led the *Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Justice Sector Support in Serbia*, which concluded mid-2022.

²⁸ With potential elements including digitization. E-auctions, improving liquidation proceedings, upgrading case management and piloting of commercial court video hearings.

²⁹ Initially planned for 36 months, The project timeline was amended in September 2024 with a 12 months no-cost extension to December 2025.

outside of the Horizontal Facility (HF) due to the scale of sector needs and the need for a project team larger than HF actions.

18. The project supports Serbian justice institutions in addressing key challenges to improve their functionality and align the judicial system with European standards, including Council of Europe norms³⁰ and Chapter 23 EU *acquis*. The primary beneficiaries include the Supreme Court of Cassation, the HJC, the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office, the HPC, the MoJ, the Administrative Court, the Commercial Appellate Court, the Misdemeanour Appellate Court, the Judicial Academy and professional associations of judges and prosecutors. The judges and prosecutors associations are observers on the project Steering Committee and other civil society organisations are observers on project Working Groups and participate in consultations and events and as project consultants.
19. The project is structured around four core components:
 1. **Improving legal frameworks:** Supporting the drafting of new laws and bylaws to facilitate judicial reform in line with European standards. In addition, this component provides support to enhance the capacity of the Judicial and Prosecutorial Councils.
 2. **Enhancing judicial management:** Strengthening institutional capacities and management practices for effective and consistent judicial service delivery. This component addresses issues including artificial intelligence, monitoring of selected aspects of undue influence on the judiciary and support for the preparation and implementation of IPA III Sector Budget Support.
 3. **Advancing judicial training:** Strengthening the operational capacity of the Judicial Academy, including support to training, enhanced work planning, and the development of ICT solutions.
 4. **Harmonising judicial practices:** Supporting civil and criminal court case law departments, strengthening visibility and transparency of prosecutorial and judicial practice, including enhancement of Supreme Court and public prosecutor electronic databases.
20. Project co-ordination includes a management team based in Belgrade and Strasbourg and Steering Committee,³¹ the Council of Europe's Directorate of Programme Coordination (DPC); Directorate-General for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood (DG ENEST)³² and a designated project coordinator in the Serbia EU Delegation also responsible for other EU-funded justice projects.

1.3 Evaluation Objectives, Purpose, and Scope

21. The **original proposed objectives of the evaluation** outlined in the ToR (see Annex 1) were:
 1. To provide a detailed assessment of progress with regards to the project's objectives and indicators of achievement.
 2. To reflect on strengths and weaknesses in the project's design which may have affected the measurement of success.
 3. To assess the relevance and added value of the Council of Europe with regards to the implementation of the project.
 4. To assess the effectiveness, efficiency, results, and sustainability of the project.
 5. To formulate recommendations to all partners for sustaining the results achieved by the project, including through follow-up interventions.
22. Following inception phase discussions³³ and the approval of the Evaluation Inception Report the agreed final evaluation objectives addressed **Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Potential Impact, Efficiency** and **Sustainability** of the project. In addition, the Council of Europe's criteria of

³⁰ Including case law of the European Court of Human Rights and recommendations of the Council of Europe monitoring and consultative bodies - Venice Commission, the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), the Consultative Council of European Judges (CCJE), the Consultative Council of European Prosecutors (CCPE).

³¹ Including representatives of the Council of Europe, EUD, MoJ, Supreme Court, Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office, HJC, HPC, Judicial Academy, Ministry of European Integration. The Judges' and Prosecutors' Associations are SC observers.

³² On 1 February 2025, DG NEAR, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations was succeeded by Directorate-General for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood (DG ENEST).

³³ For consistency with other Council of Europe evaluations, the evaluation team proposed the addition of **Potential Impact, Coherence** and the transversal themes of **Human Rights Approach** and **Gender Mainstreaming**, as a distinct headings. The original ToRs had proposed addressing the project's "*contribution to gender equality*" as a question under effectiveness.

Added Value of the Council of Europe as a project implementor and the transversal themes of a **Human Rights Approach** and **Gender Mainstreaming** were addressed. The purpose of this final end-of-project evaluation is to review progress made and to identify lessons for future similar projects. The primary intended users of the evaluation are the Council of Europe in Strasbourg and Belgrade Office, the European Commission and EU Delegation and Serbian partner institutions.

23. The evaluation has been mindful of the difficult financial climate of technical co-operation. Some recommendations, addressing capacity gaps, entail short-term resource demands, e.g. on impact monitoring. However, they have the potential to save money in the longer term if sustainable capacity of key duty-bearers is enhanced. Other recommendations, including those relating to tasking and coordination of experts and their inputs, have only minimal cost implications and have potential replicability across Council of Europe projects.

1.4 Evaluation Methodology

24. The evaluation comprised of **inception phase** discussions with the project team, revision of ToRs and Evaluation Questions, mapping of key issues addressed by the project; initial review of data/documentation; compilation of interlocutors and liaison with Council of Europe Office in Belgrade on visit schedule.³⁴ The evaluation was conducted in line with norms set out in the Council of Europe [Evaluation Policy](#) 2019; the [Evaluation Guidelines](#) 2020 and the Council of Europe [Code of Conduct for Evaluation](#)³⁵ and other standard best practice evaluation principles,³⁶ taking account of relevant principles in other Council of Europe programming tools³⁷ and DG ENEST³⁸ [Guidelines on planning/programming, monitoring and evaluation](#) (M&E). Insofar as resources allowed, the evaluation sought to be participatory, in line with a human rights-based approach.
25. An **online confidential questionnaire** in English and Serbian was disseminated by the evaluation team to Council of Europe staff; relevant EU personnel, project partner institutions, Steering Committee members and other stakeholders active on justice reform in Serbia. Of 429 interlocutors emailed, 30 responses (7%) were received. The majority of responses were from Council of Europe personnel and representatives of partner institutions. The depth of responses varied, with only a minority providing substantive elaboration on their scoring of the evaluation headings. Given these limitations on its evidential value, questionnaire responses were discounted in the evaluation.
26. **Data collection** included **review of documentation** (see Annex 6) included the project Description of Action (DoA), revised log frame, progress reports, consultant contracts/ToRs, laws, bylaws and other project inputs and outputs.³⁹ Monitoring reports and opinions of Council of Europe bodies, UN Treaty Bodies/Special Procedures and INGOs were also reviewed.
27. **Online and face-to-face meetings** were held with 56 interlocutors. These included the project team, the Head and Deputy Head of the Belgrade Office, other Council of Europe secretariat personnel, representatives of the EUD and DG ENEST and project partners, CSOs, consultants and other stakeholders (embassies, IGOs, INGOs etc.). A translated introduction to the evaluation, privacy statement and key questions were shared with all interviewees in advance of meetings. Meetings were conducted on the basis of non-attribution with data stored in compliance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) legislation and Council of Europe, [Regulations on the Protection of Personal Data](#).
28. Evaluation meetings with Council of Europe personnel, the EUD, project partners and other stakeholders were conducted in a **Belgrade visit during 9-12 June 2025**. Online de-briefing with

³⁴ It was initially planned that the evaluation visit would coincide with the Steering Committee meeting, but a change to that date meant the meeting was observed online.

³⁵ Council of Europe, [Code of Conduct for Evaluation](#).

³⁶ Including the UN Evaluation Group, [Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation –Towards UNEG Guidance](#), 2011.

³⁷ Council of Europe, [Project Management Methodology \(PMM\) Handbook](#); [Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit](#), 2016; [Practical Guide on the Human Rights Approach for Co-operation Projects](#), 2021.

³⁸ As of 1 February 2025, the Directorate-General for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood (DG ENEST).

³⁹ In all some 250 documents were provided by the project team. There is scope for more systematic structuring of project documents with uniform identification of author, date, status (draft/final) and shorter file titles.

the project team was held after the Belgrade visit. The 7th project **Steering Committee meeting was observed** online.

1.5 Evaluation Limitations and Mitigation

29. Despite advance alert of the process by the project team and multiple requests for meetings, the evaluation experienced considerable difficulty securing engagement from some key interlocutors, beyond the normal challenges of evaluation fatigue and time constraints. Discussions with those who did engage suggested that uncertainty around political unrest, low levels of interest in reform and capacity challenge of partner institutions were possible factors in this lack of engagement. The project strength of multiple actors involved in some processes also presented scheduling challenges, including Working Group and Steering Committee meetings. The fact that a follow-up project was taken as a given by partners and the proposal for the 2026 phase finalised during the evaluation may also have been a factor. Requests for data regarding the application of bylaws from the HJC yielded some information, but not from the HPC.
30. Focus group discussions were requested with all partner institutions in advance of the Belgrade visit. In most cases meetings were confined to one or two senior individuals and not the requested wider pool of project participants. In the case of the Judicial Academy, key focal points were unavailable due to appointment of the Director as Minister of Justice, maternity leave etc, though other representatives were met. Less than half of the 22 members of the HJC and the HPC contributed to the process. Combined with limited questionnaire responses, this means that inputs received may not be representative of the wider membership of key institutions. Detailed inputs were received from a number of judges and prosecutors with direct experience of new project-supported processes.
31. The evaluation terms of reference provided for use of a questionnaire. This was translated and disseminated via a secure platform to Council of Europe personnel, project partners and consultants, participating and other CSOs and a range Intergovernmental agencies and other justice sector project teams. Of 429 interlocutors emailed only 30 responses (7%) were received, despite multiple calls for inputs and a deadline extension. The majority of inputs were from individuals involved in actual project delivery. Substantive comments in responses by partner institutions highlighted some degree of misunderstanding of key concepts (impact, gender mainstreaming, HRA etc.) and were used to inform interview discussions. While the questionnaire responses had limited evidential utility, the questionnaire was important as a matter of principle, to facilitate inputs from a wider pool of interlocutors than could be interviewed directly, including inputs from actors outside of Belgrade Judges' and Prosecutors' Associations disseminated the questionnaire to regional members. In response to the limited engagement by the general cohort of prosecutors and judges, round-table discussions were requested with partners during the Serbia visit to broaden the pool of inputs. However, the numbers attending these meetings were less than optimal.
32. A significant evaluation constraint arises from the limited utilisation of the log frame in project monitoring. Problems acknowledged by the project team include indicators that are too vague for effective application or require significant time demands to apply etc. Partners and consultants are generally not familiar with log frame objectives/indicators relating to their specific activities or inputs. Evaluation discussions highlighted gaps in understanding (by project partners and some consultants) of some core programming concepts; the distinction between effectiveness/impact as well as HRA framework and gender mainstreaming. This impacts to some degree on the evidential use of responses to evaluation questions but also identifies priorities to be addressed in future project support.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ A similar issue arises in the context of some project consultations. The project expert opinion on Rules on Evaluation of Cases By Complexity in Public Prosecutor's Offices, for example, notes in relation to input from public prosecutors' offices on the final draft of the Rules, that "some prosecutors' offices did not fully understand the purpose of these Rules".

2. Findings and Conclusions

2.1 Relevance

Evaluation Questions

To what extent is the project aligned with relevant Council of Europe and international norms; national laws/strategies and EU accession criteria?

To what extent is the project aligned with the priorities and needs of justice institutions (duty-bearers) and of rights-holders?

To what extent is project design appropriate and realistic (in terms of technical, organisational and financial aspects)?

33. The project is **explicitly premised on Council of Europe legal and best practice norms** with a central focus on supporting reform towards greater judicial independence and prosecutorial autonomy in Serbia. Relevant Council of Europe norms, include ECHR jurisprudence,⁴¹ opinions and recommendations of advisory and monitoring bodies.⁴² The project is also relevant to other Council of Europe normative frameworks and best practice⁴³ and to Serbia's UN treaty obligations.⁴⁴
34. The intervention logic of the project Facility and its design/delivery as a substantive and financial partnership between the EU and Council of Europe, means that actions are also **highly relevant to EU norms**, including the *Strategy for the Western Balkans*, the "Copenhagen" political criteria of democracy, rule of law, human rights and protection of minorities and EU acquis. Key project activities are aligned with annual EC assessments of Serbia's EU accession progress, in particular Chapter 23 criteria. The project's focus on legislative change is highly relevant to EU benchmarks, including the IPA III Thematic Priority 1, "*improving the independence, accountability, quality and efficiency of the judicial system*", Chapter 23, "*Judiciary and Fundamental Rights*",⁴⁵ and Chapter 24, "*Justice, Freedom, and Security*" and their Action Plans".⁴⁶ The project's prioritisation of support to drafting of laws and bylaws in line with European standards is also logical, given that some legislative changes are overdue since 2017.⁴⁷ The project is also relevant to Serbia's UN legal and policy commitments (including the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)⁴⁸ obligations as well as recommendations from the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), Treaty body and Special Procedures, the UN Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyer etc. However, the project's contribution to the SDG and other UN recommendations is not addressed in progress reporting. Specific substantive project themes are also relevant a widely acknowledged problem, in

⁴¹ Including the requirements of Article 6 ECHR that judicial appointment procedures be independent and impartial, *Reczkowicz v Poland*, (application no. 43447/19), judgment of 22 July 2021 and that "*judicial independence demands that individual judges be free not only from undue influence outside the judiciary, but also from within*", *Parlov-Tkalčić v Croatia* (Application no. 24810/06), judgment of 22 December 2009. The project is also relevant to other thematic treaties, with guarantee of rights dependent upon the right to an effective domestic remedy.

⁴² Including opinions and recommendations of treaty standard-setting and monitoring bodies such as CCJE, CDCJ, CEPEJ, GRECO, and the Venice Commission.

⁴³ E.g. Council of Europe, 2016 *Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality*.

⁴⁴ In its 2024 *Concluding Observations* on Serbia's 4th Periodic ICCPR Report of Serbia, the Human Rights Committee welcomed recent constitutional and legislative reforms as strengthening the independence of the judiciary and public prosecution, but expressed concerns that prosecutors not having a majority of votes on the HPC may undermine its independence.

⁴⁵ The majority of project activities and outputs directly relate to benchmarks of the *Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23* adopted in 2020. These include participatory enactment of laws and bylaws on judiciary, prosecution and Judicial Academy in line with Venice Commission recommendations and other European standards.

⁴⁶ Serbia commenced EU accession negotiations in January 2014, with negotiations open in 22 out of 35 chapters. EU Member State consensus on Rule of law reform in Serbia is a key requirement for the opening of negotiations of remaining chapters.

⁴⁷ Project activities included support to MoJ preparation of a Sector Reform Performance Contract for the Judiciary as part of the IPA Annual Action Programme for Serbia. SRPC indicators informing the project include (1) Degree of influence on the judiciary by the central government officials outside the remits of their mandate measured by newly agreed methodology; (2) Ratio between number of officially reported cases of undue influence on the Councils and their reactions.

⁴⁸ In particular, SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) but also SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 10 (inequality), etc.

the case of undue influence and a potential contribution to efficiency in the case of AI in the justice system.⁴⁹

35. Project objectives and activities are highly relevant to national laws and strategies, including the judicial reform strategy. Various outputs were produced in line with relevant domestic Law on the Planning System which regulates public policy system management and medium-term planning. Interlocutors uniformly confirm the project's **alignment with priorities and needs of partner institutions**, with partners involvement in the Steering Committee and ownership of Working Groups key to this. **Relevance to the needs and rights of rights-holders** engaged in, and affected by, the justice system is less explicit. The project prioritised participation by, and consultation of, civil society. However, there are strongly expressed CSO criticisms regarding the extent to which their inputs are given serious consideration by drafting Working Groups, which were in the purview of partner institutions. Some civil society interlocutors question the relevance of new institutions and procedures to the underlying political challenges to judicial independence and prosecutorial autonomy. Project processes had only limited input by civil society representatives of minorities and vulnerable groups such as detainees, trafficking victims, LGBTI, Roma communities and others.
36. The project's **intervention logic is appropriate and cogent**, based on identified needs and context assessment and providing a combination of administrative, substantive and financial support. The project's partnership approach strikes a balance between partners' ownership of the reform process (including leadership of Working Group processes) with external advice/capacity-building support to address partner's capacity limitations. In some respects, project inputs compensate for lack of core funding. While necessary, given EU accession timelines, this is not optimal in terms of sustainability.
37. The Strasbourg/Belgrade based project team, partnership approach and combined inputs by international and local experts and Council of Europe bodies means that the overall **project model is appropriate and realistic**. There is, however, a need to enhance synergies between international and national experts and their inputs and for more quality control⁵⁰ by the Council of Europe.

⁴⁹ This focus is also relevant to Serbia's [Strategy of Development of Artificial Intelligence 2020–2025](#) and the Council of Europe, [Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law](#), 2024.

⁵⁰ See footnote 11.

2.2 Coherence

Evaluation Questions

To what extent is the project aligned with other relevant Council of Europe projects?

To what extent is the project aligned with relevant projects funded by the EU-IPA and other bilateral or multilateral donors?

38. Justice reform in Serbia is supported by a range of projects and other activities. While some projects have different primary partners and thematic foci, there are nevertheless key interconnected issues that make coherence a priority.⁵¹ The extensive range of individual projects also means that coherence is necessary to take account of the capacity and human resource demands on justice institutions involved in multiple projects.
39. The project has **strong connections with other Council of Europe projects** in Serbia and in the Western Balkans.⁵² While the project is situated outside of the Horizontal Facility,⁵³ (it commenced in the final year of HF II), a senior project officer moved from a HF II action to design and manage the project (until April 2023). The HF II action and the project ran in parallel for a year, but with project teams reporting good coordination and communication between them. In addition to communication with Council of Europe projects, some joint activities and cost sharing of events are also present.⁵⁴ The project also has strong links with Council of Europe monitoring and advisory bodies, particularly the Venice Commission (VC), and the Council of Europe Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP).⁵⁵
40. Interlocutors identify **generally good alignment between the project and other justice/Rule of Law projects** funded by the EU and by other donors.⁵⁶ This is based on formal and informal communication/reporting between the project team, EUD and other projects and some participation in activities of the various projects and the EUD project coordinator also having responsibility for other EU-funded justice projects. Some planned division of labour is also reported, e.g. GIZ taking the lead in support on public debate on criminal code and criminal procedure code and the Council of Europe leading on the law on Judicial Academy. The project team has also briefed relevant actors and projects e.g. the UN country team and the Flexible Facility for Chapter 23 team. The project team participates in Steering Committee meetings of the Flexible Facility for Chapter 23 project, but other justice projects do not attend the project's Steering Committee (SC) meetings. Project teams of all EU-funded justice projects have participated in launches of each others' projects. The EUD notes the support of the project team in providing insights and information and the project team and EUD have also met jointly with project partners to give impetus to legislative drafting. Substantive co-operation includes experts support to drafting by the Working Group on sector budget support for the judiciary within National programme for IPA 2022.⁵⁷ Coordination is also aided by Serbia's relatively small local pool of specialist consultants and consultancy firms being engaged in multiple justice reform projects.

⁵¹ Including multiple projects engaging with the Judicial Academy, for example.

⁵² This includes a range of prior projects, including "Strengthening Legal Guarantees for Independent and Impartial Tribunals", "Supporting effective legal remedies and mutual legal assistance" "Strengthening Independence and Accountability of the Judiciary", "Strengthening the effective legal remedies to human rights violations", "Strengthening the judiciary reform process in Serbia" and the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) regional project "Towards a better evaluation of the judicial reforms in the Western Balkans – Dashboard Western Balkans".

⁵³ The required scale of the project being larger than HF actions is reported as the reason for this. In part The Project was conceived as a means of providing support to preparation for sector budget support that later followed.

⁵⁴ E.g. joint organisation of conferences with Council of Europe Horizontal Facility projects, "Strengthening the effective legal remedies to human rights violations" and "Strengthening human rights protection in Serbia".

⁵⁵ The project also supported partners' participation in Annual *HELP Network* Conference in Strasbourg in July 2023.

⁵⁶ Though views vary, with one international project team characterising justice reform projects as "*essentially working in parallel*".

⁵⁷ A number of project results are specifically linked to disbursement under EC Sector Reform Performance Contract for Justice Reform, including indicators "*Number of Laws adopted fully in compliance with the Venice Commission Opinion*", "*Percentage of by-laws adopted fully in compliance with the Venice Commission Opinion provided for the laws*" and "*Ratio between number of officially reported cases of undue influence on the Councils and the number of cases followed up by the Councils*".

41. Only minimal substantive duplication is reported, though Council of Europe project components on human resources and the Judicial Academy were initially included in the design of another EU-funded project. However, some gaps in information sharing are also noted. Management of some other justice projects, while aware in general terms of the project's legislative drafting activities, are not familiar with the deliberations of bylaw Working Group (led by partner institutions) and did not input on drafts.⁵⁸ Several project components concern issues also addressed by other actors/projects (artificial intelligence, undue influence, etc.). Management teams of other projects are not uniformly aware of the detail (and in some cases the existence) of relevant Council of Europe project activities.⁵⁹
42. There remains scope for more visible, formal substantive co-operation. In past years the Ministry of European Integration hosted coordination meetings, but these have not taken place for some time. There appears to be limited interest or capacity by the MoJ to coordinate activities in the sector. The absence of a functioning regular justice sector platform (as is reported to have taken place under the *Multi Donor Trust Fund for Justice Sector Support*) means some opportunities for synergies between projects and exchange on substantive themes may be missed. A formal donor platform the "*Friends of the Rule of Law*" is mentioned by some interlocutors, though others are unaware of it. It appears to be dormant for some years.⁶⁰ There is merit in the EU, Council of Europe and (as part of fostering duty-bearer ownership) the MoJ, activating a sector platform at which relevant actors might share plans, challenges/successes and enhance collective leverage on reform momentum.

⁵⁸ There is significant lack of awareness among interlocutors regarding the operation of the 27m EU justice sector budget support, which is integral to all other reform projects in the sector.

⁵⁹ The World Bank and GIZ, for example, were not aware of project activity on AI. AI is a focus of GIZ work on data protection, privacy and access to information and support on drafting of an AI law and has also featured in World Bank activities and plans including support to the 2020-2025 Strategy for the Development of AI in the Republic of Serbia. Some project representatives were also not aware of the project's undue influence monitoring, its specific focus or had not seen monitoring findings.

⁶⁰ The platform is reported to be a successor to an informal coordination platform established under the World Bank-led *Multi Donor Trust Fund for Justice Sector Support in Serbia* that was handed over to the MoJ on the conclusion of that project.

2.3 Efficiency

Evaluation Questions

To what extent has the Council of Europe's organisational structure, managerial support and coordination mechanisms supported efficient delivery of the project?

Have appropriate inputs (financial, human and material resources) been selected and used economically in relation to the outputs delivered?

43. The project has been delivered with considerable efficiency in the face of political challenges that have disrupted the functioning of many institutions, including project partners. Partners express a **high degree of satisfaction regarding the project's organisational structure, efficiency of decision-making and delivery of activities**. Project team staffing is adequate for the scale of the project.⁶¹ Strasbourg-Belgrade communication and decision-making are reported as functioning well. Significant changes to the composition of the project team over the course of the project is reported to involve effective handover procedures, aided by past project personnel remaining with the Council of Europe. Project reporting included quarterly reports to the Council of Europe Office in Belgrade, b-annual and annual progress reports to the EU as well as *ad-hoc* reports to the Council of Europe headquarters and the EU Delegation. All partners report that Steering Committee meetings make for efficient decision-making, though the June 2025 SC meeting observed by the evaluation team was not attended by representatives of the HPC or HJC.⁶² Discussion primarily addressed activities and outputs delivered and planned, as opposed to substantive debate on reform achieved, challenges to be addressed etc.
44. **Financial and material resources** have been efficiently utilised. Funds have been disbursed in line with planned activities, and the project budget has been adequate to cover scheduled activities, including the 12-month extension. The project has shared some event costs with other projects, including shared funding of the annual judges' conference, with the former USAID project "Justice for all". Partner institutions' financial circumstances and workspace constraints mean that there was no in-kind contribution to the project from partners. With project consultancy rates below other projects, consultants provide significant cost-effective inputs. Some consultants involved in the project flag that time spent on their inputs exceeded contracted days. Only in a minority of cases was this addressed by revision of contract terms, though consultants do not always raise the issue with the project team. While there are no indications that this has resulted in any unwillingness by experts to engage in Council of Europe projects, it is something that should be reviewed going forward. Efficiency of management of experts can be enhanced by more standardised organisation and formatting of project experts' outputs, including a standardised file title, format and template or, at a minimum, identification of the author, date, purpose of the document and its status⁶³.
45. Most project activities have been delivered within expected timelines, with a 12 month no-cost extension to December 2025.⁶⁴ This achievement is noteworthy in the face of the capacity and resource limitations of partners, the impact of elections and other political events in Serbia and the overarching political climate. Of note is the drafting and enactment of the 5 laws and 37 bylaws within the prescribed year of the establishment of the Councils. This was achieved despite the extended series of Working Group meetings required. Working Group meetings are reported as being mainly efficient, though frequent changes to composition of membership presented some challenges in terms of logistics and functioning. Delays in the process were addressed by joint interventions by the Council of Europe and the EUD and the provision of additional expertise to ensure that drafting met

⁶¹ A project manager and part-time project assistant in Strasbourg, two senior project officers, two project assistants and a part-time financial assistant in Belgrade.

⁶² Due to holidays, health and other factors. Nevertheless, with 22 members of both Councils some representation should have been possible or the meeting rescheduled, though it is noted that the date had been set after some difficulty coordinating all member diaries.

⁶³ E.g. Draft or final, internal project briefing note or formal project output etc.

⁶⁴ With project funds reallocated from the travel budget heading to staff and experts' costs.

the EU accession timeline. The most significant exception to expected project delivery relates to support on judicial human resources. Progress on a law has been affected by lack of prioritisation by partners but may be addressed in the context of future drafting of the new judicial strategy. A range of outputs, including assessments of the existing strategy and normative framework and comparative European analysis are in place to inform this process, once partners act.

46. An initial roster of international and national consultants meant that procurement of substantive, methodological and IT inputs were efficiently delivered. This was aided by some consultants having been involved in the predecessor project and other work with the Council of Europe. A third of some fifty-two rostered consultants were not utilised.⁶⁵ In some this was due to consultants' non-availability, and some contracted consultants were retained for multiple inputs which meant that others were not required.⁶⁶
47. Addressing capacity limitations of key partner institutions, in terms of substantive knowledge, methodologies and IT capacity is central to all project components. On legislative drafting, for example, some Working Groups did initial drafts followed by expert inputs. In other cases, local project consultants produced initial drafts. A range of activities IT (assessments, development and training) addressed partners' capacity gaps that have impeded efficiency and harmonisation. Inputs by international experts, Council of Europe bodies and project funding of connection with international counterparts through meetings, conferences, study visits etc. has addressed knowledge gaps on European standards and best practice in other jurisdictions. Some project activities have essentially involved providing core funding for activities not adequately funded by the central budget. This is identified as a sustainability concern. See further below.

⁶⁵ One Serbian organisation and one individual consultant accounted for the majority of local expert inputs.

⁶⁶ Some roster experts who not called upon for project inputs would appreciate updates on the likelihood of their services being called upon.

2.4 Effectiveness

Evaluation Questions

To what extent has the project delivered results including:

Improved legal framework, legislation and regulations of judicial institutions, in line with European standards;

Enhanced management practices for effective, consistent and transparent delivery of judicial services;

Enhanced judicial and legal professional training in line with European standards;

Enhanced harmonisation of judicial practice and legal certainty?

48. Evaluation of project effectiveness needs to be understood in the overall context of the project partnership approach, with justice institutions having ownership and final decision-making authority on a range of outputs. Combined with competing interests of institutions, this has meant that final versions of some outputs are to some degree a matter of compromise. The project has been **very effective in contributing to expeditious legislative reform**.⁶⁷ This has included administrative and substantive support to the Ministry of Justice Working Groups in the drafting of the 5 new judicial and prosecutorial laws, and to HJC, HPC and Joint MoJ-Council Working Groups on the 37 bylaws. This component represents a significant proportion (an estimated 54%) of project resources.⁶⁸ The achievement needs to be viewed in light of the scale of the bylaw drafting exercise, with up to 10 Working Group meetings required in some cases. Drafts were adopted by Working Group consensus/compromise with a vote taken only in exceptional cases. Project experts and civil society act as non-voting observers. Working Groups were also provided with Council of Europe publications on judicial independence, impartiality and accountability, including opinions of relevant standard-setting bodies.
49. Opinions on draft bylaws identified as being relevant to Council of Europe standards were provided by experts drawn from a roster of international and Serbian individual consultants and organisations. These included consultancy firms such as the Institute for Comparative Law and NGOs and NGO networks such as The Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights (YUCOM) and the National Convention on EU (NKEU). Written and oral inputs by project experts address relevant European standards, including Venice Commission, CCPE and Consultative Council of European Judges (CCJE) opinions and practice of the ECtHR and Council of Europe member states. Local individual experts and consultancy organisations bring substantive expertise and key local knowledge that has enhanced effectiveness. Expert reports and opinions, however, are variable in quality⁶⁹, in terms of the detail of analysis and recommendations. Some background reports and commentaries address key European standards with clear tailored recommendations. Some bylaw commentaries are confined to a more factual description of the instruments, with only generic reference to relevant Council of Europe instruments, Venice Commission Opinions etc. As addressed below on coverage of transversal norms, observations on gender and HRA norms only feature in a minority of substantive outputs. A number of reports (including some substantive commentaries) do not outline the purpose and status of the document, Council of Europe disclaimer or specify date, author etc.⁷⁰ There is scope for commentaries on final versions of laws/bylaws and policies to include more detail as to recommendations made and adopted, partially or fully. Reports that cover both a process as well as a resulting document should comment on the quality of the process. A minority of reports offer observations on process but there is scope for this to be enhanced and include recommendations to

⁶⁷ In addition to the volume of laws and bylaws drafted, the effectiveness of this component also needs to be viewed against the complexity of some bylaws. The Court Rules of Procedure, for example, contains over 400 articles and has already been amended fourteen times since its adoption in 2008.

⁶⁸ The estimated budgetary allocation across the 4 components is 54% on Component 1, 8% on Component 2, 13% on Component 3 and 20% on Component 4 with 5% on General Costs.

⁶⁹ See footnote 11.

⁷⁰ Or simply state "Expert report".

enhance this. While experts' outputs serve a range of different purposes,⁷¹ there is scope for some standardised templates or guidance. Combined with more detailed terms of reference, this can enhance consistency across outputs and enhance quality control.

50. Public consultation on the 5 laws included two rounds of consultations in 2022. Some Working Groups also held joint meetings with civil society to discuss some substantive Rule books (undue influence, discipline, ethics etc).⁷² While the [2024 EC Report on Serbia](#) notes that “[i]n general, the new by-laws [judicial] have been developed through a participatory approach”. The report also notes that public consultations carried out in 2023 on 53% of draft laws and 31% of draft regulations, is “insufficient” and that “[civil society] comments on draft laws of public interest are not sufficiently taken into account”. CSO interlocutors highlight that only 5% of proposed CSO amendments to the 5 laws were accepted,⁷³ and that the parliamentary enactment procedure commenced just 36 hours after public consultations concluded.⁷⁴ See further below on participation in the project, Section 1.7 on HRA.
51. Laws and bylaws drafted are well-written and clear, with VC and project expert inputs ensuring that final versions are broadly in line with European standards. However, there is a noticeable absence of explicit reference to human rights, gender etc. in some key instruments, e.g. the coverage of attributes of judges and prosecutors, etc., in Rulebooks on Election, Evaluation and Discipline of judges and prosecutors. There is also some disconnect between related bylaws. The extensive list of moral qualities, for example, identified as necessary for election as a judge are not reflected in the Rule Book on the evaluation of a judge's performance.
52. While the adoption of VC recommendations in enacted versions of the 5 laws are not monitored item by item by the VC or the project, an *Information Note* by the VC in March 2023 observes that the final versions enacted saw the “overall direction of the amendments corresponds to the recommendations of the Venice Commission”.⁷⁵ However, the Note also highlights examples of recommendations not sufficiently addressed, including clarity regarding the interrelation between dismissal and disciplinary procedures and the role of the HPC and the HJC in those proceedings. While, experts and project team report significant adoption of recommendations, some Working Group members speak of a minimalist approach to adopting European standards, with explicit recommendations presented in clear terms, mostly adopted, in contrast to those identified as “to be considered” etc.⁷⁶ While in some cases there are no specific European standards,⁷⁷ there is still scope for more proactive approach to recommendations by the Council of Europe, even with the margin of appreciation doctrine. Project monitoring of the adoption of expert recommendations would benefit from a specific section in each report/opinion (as a minority of reports have), itemizing recommendations, possibly classified as required, recommended etc. Similarly reports of discussions should identify recommendations made, adopted, in full or part, with reasons given.
53. The project also facilitated a series of conferences and workshops for judges, prosecutors and others addressing the content and implications of the new laws and bylaws and other themes. These included an international conference organised by the Judges' Association on limitations of rights

⁷¹ Including academic/legal background overviews (in some case comparative), notes of Working Group meetings, substantive analysis of draft laws/bylaws and strategies/policies and tools. Some appear to be more informal briefing notes for project team.

⁷² This working level participation is an exception to suspended cooperation with legislative and executive authorities by 28 civil society organisations (including several project participants), for reasons including, there being “no real opportunity to influence decisions regarding projects and activities”. European Western Balkans, [Leading Serbian CSOs suspend cooperation with authorities](#), 4 February 2025.

⁷³ Captured in project document, Responses to Comments, Proposals and Suggestions on the Draft Judicial Laws Submitted to the Ministry Of Justice.

⁷⁴ NCEU, [Judicial Laws Entered the Parliamentary Procedure only 36 Hours after Closing the Public Debate](#), Press Release, 18 January 2023.

⁷⁵ Venice Commission, [Information to the Follow-up on three previous opinions on Judiciary](#) (CDL-AD(2022)030, CDL-AD(2022)042, CDL-AD(2022)043), 2023.

⁷⁶ One interlocutor characterised it as “a tendency to apply European standards more conservatively, that is, it seems that only what clearly had to be accepted was accepted”.

⁷⁷ Or evidence gaps in substantive coverage. The European Networks of Councils for the Judiciary, [Model Code of Conduct](#), 2023 for judicial councils, for example, is silent on gender, equality and discrimination.

and freedoms of judges and a Prosecutors' Association conference on election, and freedom, of expression of public prosecutors. International counterparts participated in both events. The project also facilitated awareness of European standards and approaches through commissioned comparative studies on substantive issues, e.g. on undue influence on the judiciary and cooperation between prosecutorial councils and professional associations etc. Partner institutions report that participation in these activities would not have been feasible without the project's financial support and that participation enhanced their knowledge of European standards and experience in other jurisdictions.

54. The Law on Human Resources in the Judiciary and the Law on the Judicial Academy are key exceptions to the progress on legislative reform. The former is reported as stalled due to lack of prioritisation by the MoJ and divergent views on where responsibility for personnel management should reside. The failure since 2022 to enact a Judicial Academy law also relates to institutional has impacted on reform of judicial training, including safeguards against undue influence and the Academy's autonomy.⁷⁸ The consultation process on the draft Law is ongoing, with the project supporting a second round of public debate on the draft law in its final months, following earlier support to the MoJ in organising public roundtables on the draft Law and possibly work on associated bylaws.
55. Project partners are uniformly of the view that the project has been critical in the establishment of new Judicial and Prosecutorial Councils with updated procedures. This represents a key contribution to **enhanced transparency and judicial independence and prosecutorial autonomy**. In addition to the procedural and decision-making clarity provided by various bylaws, the project also enhanced transparency of the legislative processes. This includes support to drafting Working Groups (including civil society participation), and consultation processes with regional appellate courts and the wider public. The support to the development of Judicial and Prosecutorial Councils websites and to streaming of meetings of the Councils also lays a foundation for more accountability from media scrutiny of decision-making and enhanced public awareness and discussion. The effectiveness of support to transparency represents a significant cultural shift. The importance of enhancing public confidence is reflected in statistics that only 30% of the public perceive independence of courts and judges as "*fairly or very good*".⁷⁹ Increased transparency and various bylaws⁸⁰ also contribute to addressing undue influence in the judiciary which is also addressed under component 2.
56. **Component 2** accounts for an estimated 13% of the overall budget, addressing human resources in the Judiciary as well as two substantive themes, artificial intelligence⁸¹ and monitoring of undue influence. Effectiveness of this component has been affected by lack of progress by partners on the human resources legislative framework. Project outputs, which may be characterised as preparatory, include outputs aimed at guiding the drafting of a new law on Human Resources in the judiciary. These include a comparative analysis of normative frameworks in Council of Europe member states on Human Resource Strategy in the judiciary and assessments of the implementation of Human Resource Strategy and the human resources normative framework of courts and public prosecutors' offices. Work environment issues were also addressed via an analysis of the labour status of judiciary staff, a comparative analysis of Council of Europe states on the financial status of Judges and

⁷⁸ The delay is reported to be linked to divergent opinions on whether the Academy should be the sole entry channel for training of judges and prosecutors. However, professional communities and CSOs express concerns regarding the independence of the current Academy. The VC opinion is that both options are viable within the broad national discretion in this area. The Commission expressed qualified approval for the Academy as the sole entry route, but with recommendations to enhance oversight and independence of the Academy. Venice Commission *Opinion on the Draft Law on The Judicial Academy and Draft Amendments to the Law On Judges and the Law on the Public Prosecutor's Office adopted by the Venice Commission* at its 141st Plenary Session (Venice, 6-7 December 2024).

⁷⁹ [EU Justice Scoreboard](#), 2025. Aside from the fundamental human rights issue that justice should not only be delivered, but be *seen* to be delivered, this is also relevant to business confidence and investment, with only 36% of companies regarding judicial independence as "*fairly or very good*". Lack of confidence in justice institutions is also an issue amongst judicial personnel, NI Belgrade, [Judges call on High Judicial Council, Supreme Court President to resign](#), 24 June, 2025.

⁸⁰ E.g. The Rules of Procedure on the work of the HPC for deciding on objections against mandatory instructions on prosecutors by higher level prosecutors in a particular case.

⁸¹ The log frame mentions artificial intelligence under Component 1.

prosecutors and an expert opinion on salaries for the HPC in the context of Article 78 of the Law on Public Prosecution on pay increases for prosecutors in offices with unfilled positions.

57. Two specific substantive themes are addressed within Component 2; artificial intelligence and monitoring of undue influence. Both themes are relevant to the sector, and the latter is a priority concern. The relatively small scale of these activities and other actors/projects also addressing these themes, means that Component 1 might have been a priority for the time and resources involved.
58. The former has included panel discussion and “master class” training of the judiciary on artificial intelligence, including legal and ethical issues and a Follow-Up Strategy; a commissioned expert report on the role of AI in the judiciary, the normative framework, attitudes and usage of AI in Serbia. These activities are delivered in a context where solutions are needed to address efficiency and human resource challenges, but also with some judges’ reservations regarding the ‘threat’ of AI to the judicial function. The *The Analysis of the Situation and Perspectives of the Use of Artificial Intelligence Systems in the Judiciary in Serbia*, for example, provides a useful overview of AI issues in the context of judiciary and recommendations that address these reservations and offers a basis for developing concrete steps.
59. Component 2 activities on monitoring undue influence are linked to support under Component 1 on legislative developments and HJC/HPC mandates on the issue. Undue Influence is a fundamental challenge to judicial independence and prosecutorial autonomy in Serbia.⁸² Project-supported monitoring of UI, linked to an EC Sector Budget Support indicator, is based on a comprehensive expert overview report on relevant European standards,⁸³ a methodology drafted by a contracted company and monitoring and quarterly/annual reporting by an NGO since January 2023.⁸⁴ The methodology and parameters are based on agreement of the EC and Republic of Serbia, There is some disconnect between the various project elements. The methodology does not reflect the full European legal content outlined in the comparative study⁸⁵ and lacks some key detail, including the parameters/limitations of “*how*” the monitoring is done, what is encompassed within ‘*daily media monitoring*’ etc.⁸⁶ The Methodology “risk” scale also requires clarification. It appears to be premised on the seniority of the politician involved, missing a range of other possible risk factors, including, for example, the seniority or otherwise of the targeted judge/prosecutor. The methodology provides for tracking of “*who*” (from a given list) reacted to statements made and “*number of reactions*” (1 to 5+), but not substantive response/corrective action taken. However, the actual monitoring report template does include a section noting “*Activity taken to mitigate damage*”. Other inconsistencies include “*physical assault*” and “*other acts of bad governance*” in the methodology, while monitoring reports cover *statements*, with one case of an *action* by a politician.⁸⁷ Most fundamentally, findings are not accompanied by analysis of the balance between statements that constitute undue influence and those protected under freedom of expression.⁸⁸

⁸² A shared concern of various actors, including judges and prosecutors who recently established an informal group of judges and prosecutors, “Defense of the Profession”.

⁸³ Based on Council of Europe, Committee of Ministers, Recommendation No.R(2000)10, 2010 “On Codes of Conduct for Public Officials” and relevant ECtHR jurisprudence.

⁸⁴ Further publications on undue influence by an international and by local experts are underway, expected before project end and undue influence is also key issue for the law on the Judicial Academy.

⁸⁵ Additionally, note might be taken of the concept of undue influence in the UN Judicial Group on Strengthening Judicial Integrity, [Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct](#), “...any extraneous influences, inducements, pressures, threats or interference, direct or indirect, from any quarter or for any reason” and elaboration of the concept in the [Commentary On The Bangalore Principles Of Judicial Conduct](#), para 30.

⁸⁶ Numbers of monitors, the channels/platforms monitored, their ownership etc. For example, there are some 220 radio stations and over 200 TV stations in Serbia.

⁸⁷ E.g. Minister’s reassignment of drug enforcement inspectors.

⁸⁸ E.g. Venice Commission, [Follow-Up Opinion to the Opinion on Three Draft Laws Implementing The Constitutional Amendments On The Judiciary](#), (CDL-AD(2022)030) that “...only a virulent criticism of judges combined with threats and baseless accusations can be prohibited and treated as “undue influence”, whereas respectful critical analysis and even strong disagreement with the judicial decisions is, in most contexts, a normal part of the public discussion, irrespective of whether the proceedings are over or not.”.

60. Aside from any debate of the conclusions drawn from the examples documented, there is a question mark regarding this small-scale monitoring,⁸⁹ of some media coverage of some (public) statements by politicians (at some, but not all levels)⁹⁰ as reflective of the overall situation of undue influence in the judiciary.⁹¹
61. In addition to pressure from politicians some interlocutors also highlight concerns regarding internal interference, including inappropriate exercise of discretion and bias. An identified factor in this regard is mind-set opposition to new practices among some senior judges and prosecutors, an issue emphasised by the Venice Commission and possibly included in the 2026 project given its focus on legal culture.⁹²
62. **Component 3** aims to advance the **quality of judicial training** in line with European standards, though Components 1 and 4 also included training activities. Support included a grant to the Judicial Academy to develop ICT on judicial training methodologies, including revision of Academy's *Learning Management System* (LMS) which enhances access of trainers to European and international human rights standards. Needs assessment included teaching methodology, entry exam and evaluation of training and a proposed model of education evaluation and impact assessment. A high-level study visit to Rome explored best practices in training to judges and prosecutors. The project also funded Academy participation in the Themis 2024 Competition on EU and European Civil Procedural Law in Italy and the Annual *HELP* Conference in Strasbourg. While outputs under this component are largely technical in nature there remains scope for more systematic coverage of European standards, including gender and relevant human rights in training. Overall, this component has been constrained by lack of progress on the law on the Judicial Academy.
63. While **harmonisation of judicial practices** to enhance consistency in case law and legal certainty in mainly addressed under project **Component 4** the visibility and transparency elements of other components also contribute to this objective. Enhancing case law harmonisation, has included support to the use of technology in the judiciary, including developing HJC and HPC websites and grant support to the Supreme Court electronic database of judicial decisions, with some 8,000 decisions entered. The new prosecution case management system⁹³ finalised in 2024 is being implemented, while a new case management system for courts is still pending. Outstanding IT issues include prosecution offices and courts not being comprehensively connected by a uniform case management system.
64. IT support included training of users and the development of curriculum on Supreme Court staff training on data entry and use.⁹⁴ Project support to publications of partner, including the Supreme Court Newsletter and Bulletin of the Supreme Public Prosecutors' Office increased visibility and contributed to harmonisation. Funding of partners' participation in international events, including the Network of Public Prosecutors for the European Union and Supreme Court judges meeting with Albanian and North Macedonia judge on case-law harmonisation. The project has provided administrative support for a series of 15 meetings of Criminal and Civil Departments of Appellate Courts, though this support did not include substantive inputs.
65. The project delivery model sees a preponderance of inputs delivered by contracted independent experts, drawn from a roster of experts. Consultants speak highly of dialogue with, and support from, the project team. With consultants in effect acting as agents of the Council of Europe, coordination

⁸⁹ During 1 January to 31 December 2024, 5 high-risk incidents of undue influence on the judiciary in the media are noted.

⁹⁰ Covering only the Prime Minister, Ministers of State, Secretaries & Assistant Ministers.

⁹¹ The monitoring does not, for example, survey the experience/perceptions of judges and prosecutors, their ability to recognise undue influence, their direct/indirect experience, their robustness in withstanding attempted undue influence, and their confidence in new complaints procedures. While perception as an evidential source has inherent limitations, it is nevertheless a relevant indicator of the state of play, trends etc. It would also contribute to the project log frame indicator "*public and professional perception of judicial independence, efficiency and quality*".

⁹² Illustrated in a reported assertion by a council member that "I can choose the best candidate. I don't need to elaborate my reasons for this".

⁹³ Software Application for Prosecutor's Office (SAPO).

⁹⁴ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), "Strengthening the Rule of Law" and the OSCE Mission to Serbia supported the Court's on enhancing the Legal Practice Database, integrated into the Supreme Court's framework.

and quality control of their wide range of inputs is critical. This can be strengthened, including more detailed expert ToRs⁹⁵ and templates for their reporting partners' take up of recommendations etc. While local consultants generally know each other from their work in the sector, and some outputs were co-authored by national and local consultants,⁹⁶ more can also be done in terms of networking experts. In some cases, international and national consultants working on the same components (sometimes on the same output) did not have direct contact. The disconnect between outputs on undue influence are illustrative. A comparative European study and other outputs prepared by an international expert, the methodology prepared by a contracted company and the monitoring undertaken by an NGO, with some disconnect between the different outputs.

66. The project's roster of international and national consultants bring different strengths to the process of project inputs. The former tend to have more comparative knowledge and expertise on European standards, while the latter add local knowledge concerning Serbian law institutions and insights on issues of institutional dynamics etc. A corollary of this is that some interlocutors suggest international expert inputs are less relevant to Serbian realities. At the same time local consultants highlight that in some cases international experts' recommendations have added influence in WG deliberations. The possibility also exists that local consultants' need to maintain good relations with justice institutions for future work may reduce their willingness to push for optimum take up of recommendations in Working Group discussions. The priority should be for substantive inputs to be tabled as combined considered position of the Council of Europe, including international and national experts and the project team.

⁹⁵ For example, the assigned task of the consultant assessing the human resource strategy simply requires them to "Analyse the implementation of the Human Resource Strategy in the Judiciary based on reports submitted by the institutions implementing the Strategy", without detail as to the criteria and standards to be applied. Meanwhile, the ToRs for the comparative analysis of court human resources and budget management ToRs specify that "best practices across the CoE with recommendations based on relevant CoE and EU standards" be addressed.

⁹⁶ E.g. The assessment of the effectiveness of the existing system of human resource planning in the judiciary.

2.5 Potential Impact

Evaluation Questions

What evidence exists that project results are likely to contribute to a more independent, effective, efficient, accountable and transparent justice system, in line with European standards?

67. Expectations of project impact need to reflect the fundamental challenges in the sector. In addition to human resources and capacity challenges, many interlocutors highlight inadequate high level political momentum on reform and political interference in the sector. This impedes progress from legislative and institutional change to actual application of procedures and norms and substantive impact. One interlocutor characterised the situation as one where “*formal changes are not matched by willingness for real change*”.
68. A number of project-supported reforms have had immediate impact, including judges and prosecutors now elected by the HJC⁹⁷ and HPC and judges being appointed for life (rather than for a three-year probationary period) in line with Venice Commission and UN Human Rights Committee recommendations. The project’s fostering of participatory legislative drafting sets an important precedent that impacts on future drafting. Judges and prosecutors professional associations in particular attribute their greater involvement in decision-making as being due to the project.⁹⁸ The streaming of HPC and HJC has increased transparency⁹⁹ and is reported as having led to more media coverage of debates and decision-making.¹⁰⁰ However, the extended duration of these meetings, in one case reported to have lasted 8 hours, presents a challenge in terms of viewers capacity to observe meetings in their entirety and there still remains a risk that decisions may be made “off-camera”.
69. Various factors make assessment of impact or potential impact a challenge, including interlocutors’ understanding of impact. Some partners identify capacity-building, for example, as a key “impact”. Some concrete project outputs (including the laws and bylaws) will require time for any impact to be observable. Based on their overall quality and their formal status, impact (including more independence, effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and transparency) is logical and possible, though not guaranteed.
70. This reflects observations that “*Legal reform is only the beginning*”¹⁰¹ and that the creation of the HJC and HPC are a “*good foundation*” etc. Apart from laws outstanding on human resources and the Judicial Academy, the impact of the new legal framework has yet to be tested, with some bylaws yet to start (e.g. the Rulebooks on new procedures for election of Judges and prosecutors). IT advances, including key databases, are likely to make an impact contribution on harmonisation of judicial processes.
71. Other activities are more foundational, with impact dependent on significant further input. Activities and outputs on artificial intelligence, for example, if acted upon and adequately resourced can

⁹⁷ As of 11 July 2025, 309 judges have been appointed under the new procedure. In the same period, the HJC Disciplinary Commission received 10 disciplinary proceedings cases. 4 cases were rejected; warnings issued in 2 and disciplinary measures imposed in 1 case. This was a 30% salary reduction for 6 months and a ban on election to a higher court for a period of 3 years.

⁹⁸ On contrast the Judges and Prosecutors associations withdrew from the consultation process on constitutional amendments which the GRECO characterised as involving a “*rather acrimonious environment*”. Greco, RC4(2020)12, Fourth Evaluation Round, [Corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors](#), 2020.

⁹⁹ As of 10 September 2025, the [HPC YouTube Channel](#) had posted 44 videos with some channel 823 subscribers and 1,867 views of the 5th Regular HPC session streamed live on 5 September 2025. The [HJC YouTube Channel](#) has posted 3 videos (1 one which is a meeting postponement decision) with 250 channel subscribers. 4,600 views of its 9th regular session on 15 May 2025 and 1,600 views of a 5-minute broadcast from the 10th regular session.

¹⁰⁰ E.g. Coverage of the streamed Extraordinary HPC session on 7 May 2025, by the weekly news magazine VREME “[Prosecutors without protection from Vučić’s pressures](#)”, 15 May 15 2025.

¹⁰¹ Giovanni Battista Celiento, Head of Cooperation Programmes Division, Department for the Implementation of Human Rights, Justice and Legal Co-operation Standards, DGI, Council of Europe, and Assistant Minister Stojanovic, respectively, speaking at the 7th Project Steering Committee meeting.

improve efficiency and ultimately yield a positive impact in terms of more accessible and prompt justice. Progress towards impact on some issues face greater challenges. Most notably, in the case of undue influence, where challenges applying new procedures are compounded by executive disregard for fundamental separation of powers norms. As of July 2025, less than 10 cases of undue influence were filed with the HJC, since the bylaw entered into force on 16 December 2023.¹⁰² Of these, 3 cases were upheld. The Council has yet to issue a public statement on the possible existence of political influence on the work of the judiciary.¹⁰³

72. The potential impact of project outputs aimed at strengthening institutional capacities and management practices on human resources is dependent on partners' initiative and commitment to address stalled progress. Project outputs are still valid contributions to this, if human resource issues are addressed in the context of the next Judicial Strategy. The issue of impact is intrinsically linked to monitoring and evaluation.

Monitoring and Evaluation

73. Effective monitoring and evaluation are key to moving from presumed or likely impact to *verified* impact. There is a need for stronger project monitoring and evaluation,¹⁰⁴ including a Log Frame that is, to measure the project's progress towards enhanced capacity but ultimately greater independence, accountability, harmonisation etc. in compliance with relevant international legal norms and best-practice. Currently the revised Log Frame indicators do not meet all or most of the SMART criteria.¹⁰⁵ A majority are indicative of activity and outputs,¹⁰⁶ with some proposed means of verification impractical as project indicators.¹⁰⁷ There is some inconsistency in indicators across the 4 components¹⁰⁸ and HRA principles and gender issues are not reflected in indicators. Overall, there a sense of some disconnect between monitoring/reporting of project delivery by the current team and the log frame developed by others. Project reporting is focused on documenting inputs, outputs and outcomes, with limited links to log frame indicators that can potentially signpost substantive change.
74. Evaluation inputs suggest that consultants are not all familiar with the detail of the project log frame and benchmarks and indicators relevant to their specific inputs. With a significant percentage of substantive inputs delegated to consultants, there is a need for explicit linkages between the log frame (objectives, benchmarks and indicators) and their contracts/ToRs¹⁰⁹ and their reporting to the project team on completion of their contracted inputs.
75. Beyond project monitoring, there is an acknowledged need for greater capacity by justice institutions, particularly oversight bodies such as the HJC and HPC, to monitor the application and impact of new bylaws and procedures. This includes both the gathering and analysis of relevant data.¹¹⁰ The Belgrade Court pilot monitoring of the bylaw on evaluation of judges offers a potential contribution towards this and an approach for testing other selected bylaws, but this evaluation has not had sight of the details of this exercise.

¹⁰² This low rate of complaint merits analysis, given the reported widespread nature of the problem.

¹⁰³ In April 2025 twenty-six Belgrade prosecutors addressed an open letter to the HPC Commissioner for Independence requesting a reaction to statements made by the President.

¹⁰⁴ Project evaluation ToRs can also be enhanced, with a standard template regarding the objectives/criteria to be applied, unless there are specific reasons for omitting any particular objectives. See comments above regarding the proposed and final objectives for this evaluation.

¹⁰⁵ Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Some 'indicators' are actually means of verification e.g. "*The efficiency of a national mechanisms for the harmonisation of case law is confirmed by external observers*".

¹⁰⁶ E.g. numbers of judges/prosecutors trained manuals, guides, laws and regulations published, etc.

¹⁰⁷ E.g. the indicator of harmonisation of judicial practice, the "Number of applications before the ECtHR from Serbia concerning the violation of the Article 6.1 related to the divergence in the case-law of the domestic courts" even if applied will not correlate with the project's timeline.

¹⁰⁸ E.g. Component 1 training indicator "*satisfaction rate of participants in the trainings*", is not mirrored in component 3.

¹⁰⁹ Some, but not all, experts are provided with terms of reference in addition to contracts.

¹¹⁰ The [2024 EC Serbia Report](#) notes "*a need to improve the analytical and statistical capacity*" of the HJC and HPC.

2.6 Sustainability

Evaluation Questions

To what extent has the project contributed to enhancing the capacity of partner institutions?

What evidence is there of partners ownership and political commitment to apply Project outputs and results?

To what extent are Project outputs and results likely to be applied/resourced/ updated beyond the project implementation period?

What evidence is there of rights-holders representatives' (lawyers/ justice sector CSOs) capacity/freedom to advocate for/monitor ongoing delivery of project outputs and results?

What would be required to enhance the sustainability of results?

76. The project includes **a range of results that by their nature are likely to continue beyond the implementation period**, including enacted laws, adopted bylaws, new institutions and procedures, IT systems etc. Sustainability is also enhanced by linked between project results and EU accession criteria. Key project outputs are also linked to Council of Europe monitoring/advisory mechanisms and reporting and evaluation within these frameworks is likely incentivise efforts for sustainability. Some project activities that have essentially involved core funding of sector activities, such as publications, judges and prosecutors conferences etc, are by definition not sustainable without future government funding commitment.
77. All components have included a **focus on capacity building**, provision of substantive and methodological knowledge, comparative examples, networking with counterpart institutions etc. Most fundamentally, the process by which many outputs have been developed, including by Working Groups led by sector institutions, has enhanced capacity. This has resulted in a **good level of ownership by partner institutions of project outputs** relating to their mandates and functions. This can aid sustainability, but it is not uniform across all membership and, fundamentally is dependent upon adequate resources. Human and financial resource challenges include demands linked to the expected new wave of judicial appointments. In this context, planned future support to the Judicial Academy will be critical.¹¹¹ Concerns regarding future adequate financing of the justice sector is fundamentally linked to concerns regarding **high-level political will to sustain results**. Particular concerns are expressed that this political will has declined. Nevertheless, some civil society and project experts are of the view that combined Council of Europe and EU leverage in the context of EU accession remains key.
78. Many project-supported **outputs are formally adopted (legislative and institutional practices)**. This increases their likely sustainability. High-level judicial commitment is also required to ensure new procedures are applied, adhered to, and monitored and recommendations of the Councils (e.g. in the context of undue influence) respected. This commitment is linked to the political impetus for EU accession, which some interlocutors question.
79. Evaluation inputs highlight an assumption that amendment of some bylaws will be required once their implementation has been tested. In part this is linked to the rapid pace at which drafting had to proceed. Working Group discussions on new procedures did not include analysis of cost or human resource implication, though standards set by some bylaws recognise resource challenges.¹¹² With lessons learned from the project, and partners' established relations with local consultants, in particular, revision of bylaws should be less onerous than the original drafting and achievable by the relevant institutions independent of, or with minimal, donor support.

¹¹¹ Some project activities have specifically addressed financial management, e.g. project expertise to the HPC Working Group on a Multiannual plan for efficient management of financial resources of public prosecutor' offices.

¹¹² E.g. The rules on disciplinary proceedings exonerate public prosecutors for disciplinary offences that are due to *"insufficient number of public prosecutors in the public prosecutor's office, an increased flow of cases in the public prosecutor's office, an insufficient number of staff in the public prosecutor's office, unsatisfactory spatial and technical conditions for work or other reasons that prevent the effective action of the holder of the public prosecutor's office."*

80. The project also supported the enhanced use of IT systems, including the Supreme Court judicial caselaw database, randomised allocation of cases to judges and prosecutors, and development of ICT on training methodologies. These IT enhancements are likely to be sustainable, though there are some ongoing resource challenges, including data entry and analysis, technical updating, and ongoing and new staff training.
81. Project results on transparency and communication by duty-bearers' institutions are in principle sustainable. This support encompassed developing institutions' websites and publications, public consultation on draft laws and some civil society involvement in bylaws drafting,¹¹³ public events and the streaming of HPC and HJC meetings. These enhance access to information and visibility and potentially greater awareness of rights-holders and media scrutiny. The overall climate of state-civil society co-operation, however, means this transparency does not necessarily guarantee space for effective 'demand' for reform' with **rights-holders, media and other CSOs facing challenges in holding duty-bearers to account**.¹¹⁴ Going forward, civil society's role in both the project and project-supported processes can be enhanced. This should include specific focus on the *meaningfulness* of consultation (including advance information, adequate timelines for inputs and substantive discussion and responses to submissions etc). Review of the implementation of laws and bylaws and the drafting process on Judicial Academy law and bylaws should take account of civil society concerns regarding consultations to date. The addition of CSOs (beyond professional associations) as observers in Steering Committee meetings should also be considered. The Bar Associations' peripheral involvement in the project¹¹⁵ and its disengagement from international justice reform initiatives generally is a significant deficit, given that practicing lawyers are key stakeholders in sector reform.

¹¹³ Representatives of the NCEU participating as observers on the Working Groups report to other coalition members.

¹¹⁴ The October 2024 EC Report characterises the climate of civil society in Serbia as "*difficult*". The CIVICUS [Monitor Report, 2025](#) described Serbia's civic environment as "*obstructed*", due to state interference, excessive force against protestors, and limitations on non-state media. On 29 April 2025, the ECtHR granted [interim measures](#) in *Đorović and Others v. Serbia* (App.no. 8904/25) concerning alleged use of sonic weapons by the authorities at civil society demonstrations amid concerns regarding their future use.

¹¹⁵ The Association contributed to the consultation on the 5 laws but did not participate in Venice Commission consultation visits to Serbia. Multiple requests to participate in this evaluation went without a response.

2.7 Human Rights Approach

Evaluation Questions

To what extent does the project address HRA principles in implementation methodologies, project inputs and outputs?

Are HRA principles captured in project monitoring (baseline studies/indicators)?

81. The HRA is a stated transversal project theme, reflecting a shared commitment of the Council of Europe and the European Union.¹¹⁶ The log frame, project outputs and project reporting address some, but not all HRA principles. Generally, inputs by international experts are strongest in their coverage of some HRA principles, but a uniform, consistent application of HRA as a unified framework is lacking. Even where recommendations on human rights are made these were not always adopted in final versions.¹¹⁷ Evaluation inputs indicate weak levels of understanding among many partner institutions and some project experts of HRA (as distinct from human rights). Consultants involved in several bylaws note that apart from the focus on judicial independence, other human rights were not explicitly addressed in discussion on draft laws/bylaw, with, for example, no specific discussion on vulnerable groups.
82. Overall, substantive outputs vary in their human rights content, with considerable scope for improvement. “Citizen” is used routinely in instruments that are applicable to all “rights-holders” in Serbia. Among bylaws, which do make some reference to human rights, the Code of Ethics for Public Prosecutors includes a range of illustrations, though the Code for Members of the HPC has just a single generic reference. The criteria in the Rulebook on evaluation of judges includes some human rights standards,¹¹⁸ though the counterpart Rule Book on evaluation of prosecutors has no equivalent references.¹¹⁹ Various other outputs e.g. on human resources, judicial education evaluation etc. make no reference to relevant human rights issues. The Rule Book on election of prosecutors speaks of “*account being taken*” of minority representation and knowledge of minority languages in the election of prosecutors. However, the only explicit reference to human rights as an election criterion, is in the case of special jurisdiction prosecutors on War Crimes. This criterion is not mentioned in the case of organised crime and corruption prosecutors or general jurisdiction prosecutors.¹²⁰ This indicates a misunderstanding of the universal application of human rights. The nature of some outputs is such that they have no obvious or potential human rights implications, positive or negative. However, the default approach needs to be that the core questions are posed. Thus, for example, in the context of the Business Assessment of Judicial Academy ICT, transversal application of HRA means that “user-friendly” should address human rights questions.
83. The project’s human rights approach includes participation of civil society in activities, including inputs by the Judges’ and Prosecutors’ Associations. Other civil society participation includes the involvement by the National Convention on European Union in Serbia (NCEU) Coalition¹²¹ as observers on Bylaw Working Groups and the prEUgovor coalition and other civil society organisations in public consultations on the 5 judicial laws. Some joint meetings of Working Groups

¹¹⁶ Outlined in the Council of Europe’s [Practical Guide on the Human Rights Approach for Co-operation Projects](#), 2020, and the EC tool box revised in 2025, [COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Applying the Human Rights Based Approach to international partnerships An updated Toolbox for placing rights-holders at the centre of EU’s Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation](#), SWD(2021) 179 final.

¹¹⁷ E.g. The International experts’ analysis of the draft Rulebook evaluation prosecutors highlights that qualitative provisions could include “*further criteria such as impartiality and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms*”.

¹¹⁸ “*the number of decisions in which a violation of human or minority rights was established in the procedure for constitutional appeal before the Constitutional Court and in the procedure before the European Court of Human Rights, in relation to the total number of resolved cases*” and “*respecting the procedural rights of the parties and participants in the procedure.*”

¹¹⁹ Other than some implicit reference, e.g. the criteria of “ability to conduct evidentiary actions at a high professional level with respect for the personality and dignity of participants in the proceedings”.

¹²⁰ “*Preference shall be given to the candidate possessing the necessary professional knowledge and experience in the field of international criminal law, international humanitarian law and the protection of human rights and freedoms*”.

¹²¹ Established in 2014, the coalition of 700 members seeks to ensure involvement of civil society in EU accession negotiations across 35 negotiation chapters.

with civil society were also held on some Rule Books.¹²² Other events included civil society attendance, including presentation of experts of comparative analysis of cooperation between prosecutorial councils and professional associations and the on standards of AI in the judiciary. Time constraints are identified as resulting in less civil society input to the Working Group drafting of the Law on Judicial Academy, but four round tables were held and the project facilitated online consultations between the Venice Commission and civil society and other actors. CSO inputs also include consultancy organisations contracted as project consultants.¹²³

84. Perspectives on the effectiveness of civil society participation vary. Judges' and prosecutors' Associations are highly appreciative of the opportunity to input on drafting. The Council of Europe is recognised as key to ensuring this. However, as noted above under effectiveness, NGOs who participated in the consultation process on the 5 laws are profoundly sceptical of the meaningfulness of their consultation. Some CSOs indicate that they participate in such processes for reasons of appearance, rather than any expectation of influencing the process. Civil society participation in the procedure by which the HJC and HPC present themselves at a National Assembly hearing was rejected, with limitations of space at the House of the National Assembly given as the reason. Combined with the involvement of some government-aligned organisations, the participation of rights-holders via CSOs falls short of the legal test of being "*active, free and meaningful*".
85. While the project DoA¹²⁴ identifies **vulnerable groups** in the justice sector as key beneficiaries, there is no explicit focus on such groups. CSOs representing vulnerable groups and the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue are not represented in bylaw Working Groups. Suspects/defendants, detainees, victims of crime, court users with vulnerabilities based on education levels, disability age etc, are all beneficiaries of the project's delivery of reformed procedures, enhanced judicial and prosecutorial independence etc. However, more can be done to address specific needs of vulnerable groups,¹²⁵ including their participation in the reform process.
86. On the HRA focus on **gender**, see the following section.
87. The project is fundamentally about enhancing **accountability** of duty-bearers through support to reformed procedures and oversight mechanisms. A range of outputs under, particularly under Component 1, contribute to transparency, clarity of mandates and decision-making and the functioning of the HJC and HPC as steps towards accountability. Support on websites, publications etc also contribute to access to information and project visibility is addressed by internet dissemination and events. However, more systematic application of HRA as a transversal priority can enhance access to information for all. Thus, for example while the checklist for the project's support on the updating of the websites of the HJC and HPC includes the sites being "user-friendly," it does not address key human rights issues, including minority languages and accessibility for persons with disability.¹²⁶ Though as noted above on coherence, there is scope to enhance sharing of substantive detail with other relevant actors. The weakness in application of HRA means that the project's significant contribution to enhanced transparency/accountability are not well captured in documented results. Project accountability is reflected in public events, financial and substantive reporting, but with scope for improvements on monitoring and reporting of impact/substantive change, as distinct from outputs/outcomes.

¹²² Civil society participation in WG meetings is not paid, but the demands of multiple meetings are shared across several NGOs.

¹²³ A clear distinction needs to be made between the HRA principle of participation (i.e. of rights-holders via representative civil society organisations) and participation by CSOs contracted for service delivery. More fundamentally, participation by government controlled or aligned civil society organisations does not meet the HRA test.

¹²⁴ "*The final beneficiaries of the project are citizens and residents of Serbia, including disadvantaged and vulnerable persons who benefit from the equal access to justice, such as women, ethnic and linguistic minorities, disabled people.*"

¹²⁵ Access to justice remains a fundamental barrier for many, with only limited state provision of legal aid, and proposed amendments to the Law on Court Fees in 2025 envisaging an average increase of around 30%.

¹²⁶ Including standards captured in various Council of Europe instruments such as the [Disability Strategy, 2017-2023](#), Council of Europe (Committee of Ministers), [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2014\)6](#), Guide to human rights for Internet users, 2014, and EU [Directive 2016/2102 on the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies](#).

88. There is scope for more explicit integration of HRA as a transversal theme and enhanced understanding by all partners of HRA principles as an integral part of European standards. This requires that all principles are addressed into core project documents (log frame, progress reports, contracts/ToRs etc), activities and substantive outputs. This is likely to require capacity-building, but use of checklists in the Council of Europe's HRA Guide and EU Toolbox would represent a first step. The aim should be to build partner institutions' capacity to independently integrate the framework in their application and monitoring of project outputs.¹²⁷

¹²⁷ There appears to no obvious reason for the various barcoded checklists in the Guide not being public access documents.

2.8 Gender Mainstreaming

Evaluation Questions

To what extent does the project mainstream gender in implementation methodologies, project inputs and outputs?
Is gender mainstreaming captured in project monitoring (baseline studies/indicators)?

89. **Gender mainstreaming** is a shared legal and policy commitment of the Council of Europe and the European Union.¹²⁸ The project's stated commitment to mainstream gender takes place in a context of limited understanding of and some opposition to gender. Serbia enacted a Gender Equality Law in 2021 with Council of Europe input.¹²⁹ The law provides for horizontal gender mainstreaming across all policy areas and measures to ensure *de facto* equality between women and men. This is in line with the dual approach recommended by the Council of Europe and required by the UN CEDAW Convention. However, traditional academics, right-wing parties and some religious leaders, have campaigned against the Act, including its legal obligation to use gender-sensitive language. In June 2024, the Constitutional Court suspended private and public bodies' obligations under the Act, pending a final decision on its constitutionality.
90. Women are well represented in the project activities.¹³⁰ Gender is addressed in 2 of the 4 components in the project log frame.¹³¹ However, these indicators are not documented in project reporting.¹³² The project has available to it gender analyses from prior projects within the Horizontal Facility.¹³³ Their findings and recommendations remain valid and should be incorporated into future project interventions. Evaluation interviews and questionnaire responses confirm that gender and gender mainstreaming are not widely understood.¹³⁴ Serbia's high representation of women among prosecutors and judges¹³⁵ is widely viewed as meaning that the system does not present any gender deficits. However, annual reports of Serbia's Commissioner for the Protection of Equality note prevailing gender prejudice and stereotyping in the justice system.¹³⁶ Representation of women in the system also needs to be read on light of widespread acknowledgment of the lack attractiveness of judicial careers. Factors including, but not confined to, low pay, need to be part of a gender analysis of the profession and human resource issues.
91. Laws and bylaws vary in their addressing of gender, equality and discrimination as matters of procedural or substantive focus.¹³⁷ A range of bylaws provide that "*The generic use of the masculine gender in this text does not preclude gender-sensitive language*". Those that explicitly address discrimination have a range of formulations of varying degrees of coherence with the Council of

¹²⁸ Including the Council of Europe [Gender Equality Strategy, 2024-2029](#) and [Plan of Action on Strengthening Judicial Independence and Impartiality, 2016](#) which addresses gender issues, including stereotyping in judicial decisions. Mainstreaming of gender equality is also required by EU instruments, including the [Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Action 2021–2025](#) and the [LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#).

¹²⁹ In 2016, Serbia was the first country outside the European Union to launch a Gender Equality Index.

¹³⁰ As representatives of partner institutions and making up a majority of the project team and pool of consultants.

¹³¹ Component 3 (Enhanced judicial and legal professional training) references gender sensitive training courses, while Component 4 (harmonisation of judicial practice) indicators include "*Number and level of the Council of Europe standards integrated, including those on gender equality into case-law harmonisation mechanisms*" and "*Number of gender-neutral recommendations from the structural analysis developed*".

¹³² The 2024 progress report states "all the aspects of gender equality in the judiciary sector are integrated in the project activities", including "encouraging the WGs to incorporate gender balance and gender perspectives in their discussions" and "working groups, considered gender implications in the drafting and implementation of new laws and bylaws".

¹³³ "Strengthening Independence and Accountability of the Judiciary", "Strengthening the Effective Legal Remedies to Human Rights Violations in Serbia" and "Promotion of Diversity and Equality in Serbia".

¹³⁴ The undue influence monitoring methodology uses "gender" of document source and target, when what is meant is "sex".

¹³⁵ Women account for over 70% all judges and 60% prosecutors in Serbia, 6 of 11 members of the HJC and 8 of 11 members of HPC. Representation of women in senior positions is higher on the case of the judiciary compared with the prosecution. Women also represent over 80% of non-judicial court staff.

¹³⁶ The UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has highlighted lack of knowledge of the CEDAW Convention among the judiciary and lawyers, [Concluding Observations on the Fourth Periodic Report of Serbia, 2019](#).

¹³⁷ The RULEBOOK on the Work of the HPC Budget Committee, for example, provides for a "gender analysis of expenses and expenditures under the Guidelines for the introduction of gender-responsive budgeting issued by the minister responsible for financial affairs" as part of preparing HPC budgets.

Europe definition. The law on judges uses a generic “*discrimination on any basis is prohibited*”, while the more elaborated formula in the HPC Code of Ethics obliges members to act without “*discrimination based on national, religious, ethnic, racial affiliation, political orientations, gender, age, social origin, property status or other personal characteristics and preferences, as well as to maintain confidence in his impartiality.*”

92. While some bylaws are technical in nature, others address issues with fundamental gender issues. The Rulebook on evaluation of work of prosecutors, for example, while noting that “*The generic use of the masculine gender in this text does not preclude gender-sensitive language*” does not otherwise address gender, including gender-sensitivity¹³⁸ among criteria for performance evaluation.
93. The composition of partner institutions, the project team and consultants means that women are well represented in project activities.¹³⁹ However, significant gaps are evident in incorporating gender considerations in substantive outputs. This is linked to gender not being explicitly stipulated in consultants’ ToRs/Contracts, on support to Working Groups and commissioned studies etc.¹⁴⁰ The result is that minutes of WG discussions and various outputs, including commentaries on relevant draft laws do not address gender adequately, or at all.¹⁴¹
94. An extract from a report of the drafting process of the Rule Book on election of prosecutors concerning the international experts’ recommendations on discrimination is illustrative of the challenges and the need for project response. The national expert report on Working Group deliberations notes that “*The [international expert’s] comments on the provisions on prohibition of discrimination were considered as good guidelines for the future, but not necessary in the current situation. Complaints on discrimination based on minority, gender or any other base have never been filed so far. That issue also has never been raised in experts’ debates, or by professional associations. It was emphasized that the female gender is more represented than the male in the prosecutor’s office.*”
95. Separate from any project’s responsibility for ensuring consultants have gender mainstreaming knowledge, at a minimum all consultants should be provided with a core Council of Europe checklist of key issues are addressed.¹⁴² Some local consultants state that they seek to raise gender in their contribution to discussions, despite it not being specifically mandated in their ToRs. However, they highlight that project partners’ reticence/opposition requires the Council of Europe to do more to ensure gender is adequately addressed. Currently staff gender training is available, but not compulsory. It is understood that the Council of Europe regional gender focal point appointed in 2024 led a gender training session in the Belgrade Office in Summer 2025.¹⁴³
96. Apart from transversal gender mainstreaming, there is a need for enhanced quality control on core concepts, gender/sex, equality, prohibited grounds of discrimination etc. Future project activities on human resources and the law on the Judicial Academy should prioritise gender mainstreaming, including issues of intersectionality. The imperative that gender is addressed and visible in international technical co-operation projects is raised by some a range of interlocutors, including some justice institution personnel, who highlight the need for international support to counter resistance to addressing gender.

¹³⁸ Or wider human rights awareness.

¹³⁹ Evaluation discussions with some women participating in the project highlight that participation of women cannot be presumed to mean gender mainstreaming is properly understood or prioritised.

¹⁴⁰ The Council of Europe, [Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit For Co-Operation Projects](#), 2019 stipulates that “*For analyses of draft legislation/strategies/policies, experts’ Terms of Reference should include a specific action to perform analyses from a gender equality perspective, including a focus on the integration of victim-oriented approaches and programmes with survivor centered outcomes*”. Council of Europe (European Committee on Legal Co-operation), [Mainstreaming Gender In Public And Private Law Reform Processes: Practical Guide](#), 2023. A range of relevant guides by other actors include International IDEA, *Gender-Sensitive Scrutiny: A Guide to More Effective Law-Making and Oversight*, 2022 and others by OSCE, UN Women etc

¹⁴¹ The technical nature of some bylaws means there is no gender aspects, but the starting premise should in any event be that gender questions are posed.

¹⁴² Some consultants are unaware of the Council of Europe’s [Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit for Co-operation Projects](#), 2019.

¹⁴³ Other entry points to enhance gender focus include Serbian judges involved in the HF regional action *Women’s access to justice in the Western Balkans*, the HELP online course on *Women’s Equal Access to Justice* and the Council of Europe, [Guide for Developing a Mentoring Programme on Women’s Access to Justice for Legal Professionals](#), 2019.

2.9 Added Value

Evaluation Questions

To what extent has the Council of Europe a comparative advantage vis-à-vis other actors (IGOs, bi-lateral donors, INGOs) in supporting justice sector reform in Serbia?

97. The Council of Europe is widely recognised as a logical lead actor on judicial reform in Serbia. This is linked to its IGO status, its 'strategic triangle' of standard-setting, monitoring, and technical co-operation and synergies between Council of Europe norms and EU accession criteria. The Belgrade Office's established relations with justice institutions from previous justice sector support is also identified as a key advantage. Interlocutors suggest Council of Europe projects have an advantage over projects by commercial actors. Added value also includes the key inputs of the Venice Commission, partners' participation in HELP events, the involvement of ECtHR Judges in project capacity-building etc. Despite these advantages, some interlocutors are of the view that with Serbia's Council of Europe membership secured, there is less "*space for boldness*" and influence by the Council of Europe. The combined substantive and financial partnership of the Council of Europe and the EU is seen as affording political leverage for reform, though some interlocutors express concern that this is diminishing.
98. The Council of Europe's access to consultants with knowledge of other jurisdictions and European standards is a key aspect of its comparative advantage. As a representative of one justice institution noted, partnership with the Council of Europe means a "*large number of different judicial models of member states are available, [and] the opportunity to choose the most adequate and compatible one for our judicial system.*" Several of the project's international consultants also serve on Council of Europe bodies and have extensive experience with other justice reform projects, which adds weight to their inputs. A number of cases are highlighted where international consultants' opinions carried more influence than national counterparts on Working Group deliberations.
99. Judges' and Prosecutors' professional associations highlight the advance made in their participation in drafting processes as attributable to Council of Europe influence, though some NGOs express a view that this influence has not secured substantive consideration of their inputs. The legal framework and policy commitment of the Council of Europe on HRA and gender offers added value in terms of its leverage to integrate these principles in reform, but this has not been optimally applied in the project. CSO and IGO interlocutors also highlight potential of the Council of Europe (in conjunction with the EU) to deliver more structured coordination of justice projects and actors for long term application of the results of technical co-operation.

3. Lessons Learned

100. Based upon the evaluation process and findings, the following key lessons are identified for future phases of the project and for similar justice sector interventions in Serbia.

- ❑ Evaluation timelines should be in synch with the formulation of follow-on phases or successor projects. Where successor projects are formulated while an evaluation is ongoing, draft proposals should be shared with evaluators so that preliminary evaluation recommendations might inform project design.
- ❑ The status of the EU and Council of Europe and the combination of EU accession momentum and Council of Europe normative standards/expertise are key drivers of justice sector reform in Serbia. Nevertheless, Serbia and its justice sector represent a challenging reform environment, with capacity, resource and mindset challenges impeding progress towards European standards.
- ❑ The combination of inputs by the project team, contracted international and national experts has added knowledge and capacity to Serbian justice institutions, and enabled extensive and timely adoption of an array of laws and bylaws. These represent key contributions to transparency, independence merit-based decision-making and accountability in the justice sector. The effectiveness and impact of this project expertise can be enhanced by more detailed experts' terms of reference, standardised templates and checklists and enhanced networking of international and national experts.
- ❑ Measurement of the substantive impact of project supported outputs is a fundamental challenge. There is a need for enhanced focus on monitoring and monitoring capacity, including revision of log frame and impact indicators.
- ❑ As transversal commitments of the Council of Europe, human rights approach and gender mainstreaming require more systematic integration. This requires enhanced awareness and capacity and monitoring of their implementation.
- ❑ Context factors mean that sustainable impact is largely outside of the control of any individual project. Technical co-operation needs to be accompanied by a parallel focus on political leverage. A justice sector platform for coordination of reform efforts is critical to ensure ongoing implementation and resourcing of project results by the state. Sector reform coordination should include Serbian duty-bearing institutions and the Council of Europe and the EU as key reform actors.

4. Annexes

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

Final Evaluation of The Project

“Support for the Implementation of Judicial Reform in Serbia”

BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

The “[Support for the Implementation of Judicial Reform in Serbia](#)” project is a comprehensive initiative aimed at advancing judicial reforms in Serbia by strengthening judicial independence, accountability, access to justice, judicial training, and the harmonisation of judicial practice. Funded jointly by the European Union (90%) and the Council of Europe (10%), The Project was initially planned to run for 36 months from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2024, with a total budget of 3 334 000 €. However, a one-year extension was approved on 5 September 2024, extending The Project until 31 December 2025 to ensure the finalisation of key activities and sustain the momentum achieved under the initiative.

The Project supports Serbian judicial institutions in addressing key challenges to align the judicial system with European standards and improve its functionality. The primary beneficiaries include the Supreme Court of Cassation, the High Judicial Council, the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office, the High Prosecutorial Council, the Ministry of Justice, the Administrative Court, the Commercial Appellate Court, the Misdemeanour Appellate Court, the Judicial Academy, professional associations of judges and prosecutors. Civil society and media organisations are also engaged, particularly in aspects of judicial training and outreach.

The Project is structured around four core components:

- 1. Improving legal frameworks:** Supporting the development and adoption of new laws and regulations to facilitate judicial reforms.
- 2. Enhancing judicial management:** Strengthening institutional capacities and management practices for effective and consistent judicial service delivery.
- 3. Advancing judicial training:** Improving the quality of training for legal professionals and aligning it with European standards.
- 4. Harmonising judicial practices:** Promoting consistency in case law and improving legal certainty.

Since its inception, The Project has achieved significant milestones, including the adoption of five new judicial and prosecutorial laws in 2023, the establishment of new Councils under updated procedures, and the development of more than 37 bylaws with the support of the Judicial and Prosecutorial Councils. The Project has also facilitated judicial training, enhanced case law harmonisation, and improved the use of technology in the judiciary. Key achievements include increasing transparency of the legislative process, strengthening protection from internal and external undue influence, creating a robust methodology for monitoring undue influence on the judiciary, upgrading the ICT systems of the Judicial Academy and the Supreme Court, and supporting the entry of over 7 000 judicial decisions into an electronic database, complemented by targeted training sessions.

This final evaluation, planned tentatively for April to October 2025, will assess The Project’s relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. It will inform recommendations for ensuring the long-term impact of its outcomes and identifying areas for follow-up actions.

PURPOSE, SCOPE, AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

Purpose:

As The Project is nearing its end, the purpose of this final end-of-project evaluation is to review progress and to identify lessons for future similar projects, in accordance with the funding agreement signed with the EU.

Scope:

The evaluation will cover the entire duration of The Project and all components, focusing on activities, outputs, and outcomes.

Objectives:

The objectives of the final evaluation are:

- To provide a detailed assessment of progress with regards to The Project's objectives and indicators of achievement.
- To reflect on strengths and weaknesses in The Project's design which may have affected the measurement of success.
- To assess the relevance and added value of the Council of Europe with regards to the implementation of The Project.
- To assess the effectiveness, efficiency, results, and sustainability of The Project.
- To formulate recommendations to all partners for sustaining the results achieved by The Project, including through follow-up interventions.

Intended Users

The evaluation results will serve the following stakeholders:

- **The European Union**, including the Delegation of the European Union to Serbia (EUD).
- **Council of Europe** management in general, and the DGI Co-operation Programmes Division in particular.
- **Policymaking authorities**: Ministry of Justice of Serbia.
- **Judicial institutions**: Supreme Court¹⁴⁴, High Judicial Council, Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office¹⁴⁵, High Prosecutorial Council, appellate courts, Administrative Court, Commercial Appellate Court, Misdemeanour Appellate Court.
- **Judicial training entities**: Judicial Academy, professional associations of judges and prosecutors.
- **Broader stakeholders**: Civil society organisations (CSOs) and media representatives engaged in monitoring judicial reform and promoting transparency.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Relevance

To what extent has The Project addressed needs of target groups in relation to The Projects' thematic areas?

Added Value

Has there been a substantial added value in the Council of Europe implementing this project when compared with activities carried out by other international organisations in this field or compared to non-intervention?

Effectiveness

To what extent has The Project achieved its expected results? What have been the reasons for achievement or lack thereof?

To what extent have adjustments during the implementation phase contributed to reaching better results?

To what extent has The Project contributed to gender equality?

Efficiency

To what extent could alternative working methods have led to the achievement of more qualitative or cost-effective results?

To what extent has the Council of Europe's organisational structure, managerial support and coordination mechanisms effectively supported the delivery of the outputs?

Potential Impact and Sustainability

To what extent has The Project contributed to strengthen the Serbian judiciary and to render it more efficient, effective, and visible?

What changes have occurred among target groups as a result of The Project's activities, particularly in connection with the Council of Europe's standards? Has there been any negative or unintended effect of The Project?

To what extent has The Project been supported and owned by institutional project partners and stakeholders?

What is the likelihood that the benefits from the intervention will be maintained in the mid-term (3-5 years) after The Project ends? What would be required to increase the sustainability of results?

¹⁴⁴ Supreme Court of Cassation, under previous legal framework

¹⁴⁵ Republic Public Prosecutor's Office, under previous legal framework

METHODOLOGY

To answer the above evaluation questions, a mixed-methods approach will be used, entailing:

Desk research and review of project documentation, including The Project's inception report, progress reports, expert or meeting reports, activity reports, any training assessment report, guides, training modules and material.

An online survey completed by Serbian judges, prosecutors, staff of the Judicial Academy and individual experts who took part in The Project's activities (target: 100 survey recipients), as well as relevant NGO representatives.

▪ **In-depth semi-structured interviews with:**

- a. The Council of Europe project team in Belgrade and in Strasbourg.
- b. Representatives of the European Union Delegation in Belgrade
- c. Consultants and experts who worked on The Project.
- d. Representatives of Ministry of Justice (MoJ).
 - Representatives of the High Judicial Council.
 - Representatives of the High Prosecutorial Council.
 - Representatives of the Supreme Court.
 - Representatives of the Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office.
 - Representatives of appellate courts.
 - Representative of the Judicial Academy.
- e. Representatives of relevant non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

The precise evaluation approach is to be defined by the consultant(s) in a methodological brief (max. 5 pages), which may reformulate or propose additional evaluation questions as necessary. The evaluation should use a gender-responsive methodology and comply with the Council of Europe Evaluation Guidelines.

The draft and final evaluation reports shall include:

An executive summary (max. 2 pages).

An introduction, including the purpose and scope of the evaluation; a description of the intervention; a presentation of the evaluation methodology including its limitations; a description of difficulties encountered during the evaluation if any.

Analysis and main findings of the evaluation, including good practices.

A summary of lessons learned.

Conclusions and recommendations.

Annexes, including the list of people interviewed, data collection instruments, the list of documents reviewed, etc.

The Final Evaluation Report shall be produced in a reader-friendly format illustrating the correlation between findings, conclusions, and recommendations. It shall also fulfil the Quality Assurance Checklist provided in Annex 15 of the Council of Europe Evaluation Guidelines.

TIMELINE AND SUBMISSION OF METHODOLOGICAL BRIEFS AND FINANCIAL PROPOSALS

By 16th February 2025, consultant(s) shall confirm their interest and submit:

A financial proposal, where prices are stated in Euros, and the amount of VAT is indicated separately. The proposed budget shall include a breakdown of the costs per deliverable, including travel costs.

A methodological brief (max. 5 pages) outlining how they will approach this evaluation and proposing a work plan and calendar.

The actual evaluation may take place from the 1st of March to the 30th of October 2025. Possible changes in dates may occur if a project extension is granted.

LOGISTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

The consultant(s) will be responsible for the dissemination of any questionnaires and surveys, the organisation of his/her travels, and for covering any costs related to office space, administrative support, telecommunications, or printing of documents for the entire duration of the evaluation process.

The evaluation will be facilitated by the Council of Europe Co-operation Programmes Division (DGI), which will provide the consultant(s) with all documentation related to The Project, assist with the scheduling of online interviews or meetings, and organise and bear costs related to the translation of documents and interpretation during official meetings.

DELIVERABLES AND WORKPLAN

Please see the next page for the foreseen delivery schedule.

Deliverables ▼	Deadline for delivery ▼
An inception report , including a plan for the collection of quantitative and qualitative data and clear methodology for evaluation	31 st March 2025
Completion of online interviews with Serbian judges, prosecutors, lawyers, Judicial Academy staff, individual experts involved in The Project's activities, and relevant NGO representatives (as evidenced by a list of interviewees and interview transcripts or summaries)	30 th June 2025
Completion of an online survey with Serbian judges, prosecutors, lawyers, Judicial Academy staff, individual experts, and relevant NGO representatives (survey responses collected and summary report prepared)	
A draft evaluation report including initial findings, analysis of data, and feedback from key stakeholders	30 th September 2025
A final evaluation report , incorporating feedback from the draft report, with a detailed assessment of project outcomes, lessons learned, and recommendations	30 th October 2025

Annex 2: Evaluation Matrix

These evaluation questions are a revised version of indicative questions in the ToR.

OECD DAC Criterion Relevance: Is The Project doing the right things?						
Assessment dimensions	Evaluation questions	Bases for assessment /judgement criteria and indicators	Evaluation design /methodology	Data sources	Data quality and limitations	Comments
Alignment with relevant international and national laws/strategies	To what extent is The Project aligned with relevant Council of Europe and international norms; national laws/strategies and EU accession criteria?	Evidence that project is aligned with international and national justice norms and the recommendations of relevant oversight/monitoring bodies.	Desk review Online questionnaire Semi-structured Interviews and FGDs Triangulation	Documentation (primary and secondary - i.e. project outputs; EU annual reports; national/international monitoring reports and analyses etc.) Justice sector strategies e.g. National Judicial Development Strategy 2020-2025; Strategy of Human Resources in the Judiciary 2022-2026; Action Plan for Chapter 23 etc. Relevant Council of Europe/EU personnel, justice institution partners, consultants and other relevant experts and stakeholders.	Expected to be good	Given the focus of the four project components and well documented justice system reform needs this dimension is likely to be confirmed from The Project documentation.
Alignment with the priorities and needs of justice institutions (duty-bearers) and rights-holders (including justice system users and others unable to access the system)	To what extent is The Project aligned with the priorities and needs of justice institutions (duty-bearers) and of rights-holders?	Evidence that project objectives, design and delivery are aligned with legal, political, social context and justice reform priorities and needs. Evidence of effective consultation and participation by justice system institutions (duty-bearers) and different justice system users (right-holders, including men/women, vulnerable groups).	Desk review Online Questionnaire Semi-structured stakeholder interviews and FGDs Triangulation	Project and other analyses/baseline studies relevant to the four project components. Findings and recommendations of relevant national/international monitoring bodies and EC progress reports	Expected to be good	

				Relevant Council of Europe/EU personnel, justice institution partners, consultants and other relevant experts and stakeholders.		
Strengths and weaknesses of project design	To what extent is project design appropriate and realistic (in terms of technical, organisational and financial aspects)?	Project goal intervention logic and Theory of Change is strategic and realistic in view of key objectives, available resources (time, finances, partner capacities etc).	Desk review Online questionnaire Semi-structured stakeholder interviews and FGDs Triangulation	Project log frame and theory of change, risks and assumptions matrices/frameworks, indicators Relevant Council of Europe/EU personnel, justice institution partners, consultants and other relevant experts and stakeholders.	Expected to be good	

OECD DAC Criterion Coherence – How well does The Project fit with other relevant interventions in the justice sector in Serbia?

Assessment dimensions	Evaluation questions	Bases for assessment	Evaluation design/methodology	Data sources	Data quality and limitations	Comments
Internal Coherence	To what extent is The Project aligned with other relevant Council of Europe projects?	Projects have been designed and implemented in a complementary manner.	Desk review Online questionnaire Semi-structured stakeholder interviews and FGDs Triangulation	Project progress reports, outputs. Relevant Council of Europe/EU personnel, justice institution partners, consultants and other relevant experts and stakeholders.	Expected to be good	
External Coherence	To what extent is The Project aligned with relevant projects funded by the EU-IPA and other bilateral or multilateral donors?	Synergies between The Project and relevant interventions of other actors in Serbia.	Desk review Online questionnaire Semi-structured stakeholder interviews and FGDs Triangulation	Project Progress Reports, outputs. Relevant Council of Europe/EU personnel and justice institution partners, consultants and other relevant experts and stakeholders, including UN agencies, OSCE, bi-lateral donors	Expected to be good	

OECD/DAC Criterion Efficiency: How well are Project resources being used?

Assessment dimensions	Evaluation questions	Bases for assessment	Evaluation design/methodology	Data sources	Data quality and limitations	Comments
Efficiency of project management and delivery	<p>To what extent has the Council of Europe's organisational structure, managerial support and coordination mechanisms supported efficient delivery of The Project?</p> <p>Have appropriate inputs (financial, human and material resources) been selected and used economically in relation to the outputs delivered?</p>	<p>Evidence that project coordination between the Council of Europe Secretariat and Country Office project team and project management structures (including SC and WGs) are functioning efficiently, with timely decision-making.</p> <p>Evidence that The Project management structures, methodologies and activities represent value for money.</p>	<p>Desk review</p> <p>Semi-structured stakeholder interviews and FGDs</p> <p>Minutes of Steering Committee and Working Group meetings</p> <p>Triangulation</p>	<p>Documentation (Documentation (project documents, progress reports, financial/budget data)</p> <p>Relevant Council of Europe/EU personnel, justice institution partners, consultants and other relevant experts and stakeholders.</p>	Expected to be moderate	.

OECD/DAC Criterion Effectiveness: Is The Project achieving its objectives?

Assessment dimensions	Evaluation questions	Bases for assessment	Evaluation design /methodology	Data sources	Data quality and limitations	Comments
Achievement of the intended results	<p>To what extent has The Project delivered results including:</p> <p>Improved legal framework, legislation and regulations of judicial institutions, in line with European standards;</p> <p>Enhanced management practices for effective, consistent and transparent delivery of judicial services;</p>	<p>Evidence of laws, bylaws and working practices/ databases/ICT systems etc in line with European standards adopted via inclusive consultation processes with expert advice incorporated and being implemented.</p> <p>Evidence of enhanced working methods, human resource and budget management, communication and inter-institutional collaboration and adequate capacity of partner institutions to apply outputs.</p>	<p>Desk review of project monitoring (e.g. Project supported monitoring of undue influence, of case weighting and proper case allocation and of application of ECHR standards in case law merit-based management/professional performance system on recruiting, evaluating and promoting judges and prosecutors etc.).</p> <p>Online questionnaire</p>	<p>Documentation (project documents, progress reports, operational plans, SC and WG meeting minutes, outputs etc)</p> <p>Relevant Council of Europe/EU personnel, justice institution partners, consultants and other relevant experts and stakeholders</p>	Expected to be good	<p>Note: The evaluation will focus on <i>contribution</i> as opposed to <i>attribution</i>, given activities by other actors addressing judicial efficiency/effectiveness, notably "EU 4 Justice - Complementary Assistance to Budget Support and Capacity Building for Justice Sector Reforms in Serbia.</p>

	Enhanced judicial and legal professional training in line with European standards; Enhanced harmonisation of judicial practice and legal certainty?	Evidence of enhanced judicial and legal professional training in line with European standards, including operational capacity of the Judicial Academy (to undertake training needs assessment/planning, delivery and quality control). Evidence of enhanced harmonisation of judicial practice, including inter-institutional consultation fora, mechanisms and IT solutions established and functioning effectively. Evidence of effective participation by partner institutions? Evidence of effective project monitoring of progress towards intended results.	Semi-structured stakeholder interviews and FGDs Triangulation			
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OECD DAC Criterion Potential Impact - What difference does the intervention make?

Assessment dimensions	Evaluation questions	Bases for assessment	Evaluation design/ methodology	Data sources	Data quality and limitations	Comments
Achievement of the intended objectives Project DoA Impact <i>“Justice system reforms have advanced in line with European rule of law standards for the benefit of all</i>	What evidence exists that project results are likely to contribute to a more independent, effective, efficient, accountable and transparent justice system, in line with European standards?	Evidence of laws and bylaws drafted in line with European standards and being implemented and being monitored effectively by HJC and HPC. Evidence of timely efficient, independent and transparent prosecutorial/judicial management processes Evidence that project support to training has resulted in judges and prosecutors functioning in line with applicable European	Desk review Online questionnaire Semi-structured stakeholder interviews and FGDs Outcome harvesting (where any gaps in Monitoring and evaluation) Triangulation	Documentation (project documents, progress reports, operational plans, SC and WG meeting minutes, and monitoring outputs (e.g. Project supported monitoring of undue influence, of proper case allocation and of application of ECHR standards in case law merit-based management/professional performance system on recruiting, evaluating and	Expected to be weak/moderate	The fact that project is ongoing at time of evaluation poses a challenge for assessing impact. In addition, possible gaps in project baselines and qualitative impact measurement of project monitoring may mean that evaluation impact assessment is

<p><i>Serbian population”</i></p>		<p>standards, including application of ECHR and other Council of Europe norms in jurisprudence.</p> <p>Evidence that prosecutorial/judicial decision-making is harmonised, consistent and ensures legal certainty.</p>		<p>promoting judges and prosecutors etc.).</p>		<p>somewhat speculative.</p> <p>Log frame refers to participant training evaluation questionnaires and experts’ assessment of “understanding and application of the ECtHR and EU standards”. This may not capture actual impact in terms of application of European standards in judicial decision-making etc.</p> <p>Some component activities/outputs may not include targeted monitoring mechanisms, such as those listed in data sources.</p>
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OECD DAC Criterion Sustainability - Will project results continue into the future?

Assessment dimensions	Evaluation questions	Bases for assessment	Evaluation design/ methodology	Data sources	Data quality and limitations	Comments
<p>Likelihood of results continuing beyond The Project implementation period</p>	<p>To what extent has The Project contributed to enhancing the capacity of partner institutions?</p> <p>What evidence is there of partners ownership and political commitment to apply Project outputs and results?</p>	<p>Evidence that project results and outputs are adopted and being applied.</p> <p>Evidence that project capacity support is targeted and embedded in relevant institutions (training, oversight etc)</p>	<p>Desk review</p> <p>Online questionnaire</p> <p>Semi-structured stakeholder interviews and FGDs</p> <p>Triangulation</p>	<p>Documentation (project documents, progress reports, operational plans, SC and WG meeting minutes, outputs etc)</p> <p>Relevant Council of Europe/EU personnel and justice institution partners, consultants and other</p>	<p>Expected to be moderate</p>	<p>Sustainability of some project outputs is dependant on adequate future budget allocation.</p> <p>Confirmation of this future commitment of resources is likely</p>

<p>To what extent are Project outputs and results likely to be applied/resourced/ updated beyond The Project implementation period?</p> <p>What evidence is there of rights-holders representatives' (lawyers/ justice sector CSOs) capacity/freedom to advocate for/monitor ongoing delivery of Project outputs and results?</p> <p>What would be required to enhance the sustainability of results?</p>	<p>Evidence of commitment of adequate future resources to ensure to mechanisms, processes, tools etc, developed by The Project are maintained/updated.</p> <p>Evidence that representatives of rights-holders (Lawyers, CSOs etc) are aware of new/revised standards and practices and have capacity to monitor and advocate for their ongoing application.</p>			<p>relevant experts and stakeholders</p>		<p>to present a challenge.</p>
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Cross-Cutting Criterion - Is a Human Rights Approach being mainstreamed in The Project?

Assessment dimensions	Evaluation questions	Bases for assessment	Evaluation design/ methodology	Data sources	Data quality and limitations	Comments
<p>HRA core principles are effectively addressed in The Project</p>	<p>To what extent does The Project address HRA principles in implementation methodologies, project inputs and outputs?</p> <p>Are HRA principles captured in project monitoring (baseline studies/indicators)?</p>	<p>Evidence of project partners understanding of, and capacity to, apply principles of HRA.</p> <p>Evidence that project objectives, methodologies and outputs apply HRA, principles.</p> <p>Evidence that project monitoring captures application of HRA principles, measuring both the quality and results of activities.</p>	<p>Desk review</p> <p>Online questionnaire</p> <p>Semi-structured stakeholder interviews and FGDs</p> <p>Triangulation</p>	<p>Documentation (Project documents, progress reports, operational plans, consultant terms of reference, SC and WG meeting minutes, outputs etc)</p> <p>Relevant Council of Europe/EU personnel and justice institution partners, consultants and other relevant experts and stakeholders</p>	<p>Expected to be moderate</p>	

Cross-Cutting Criterion - Is Gender being mainstreamed in The Project?						
Assessment dimensions	Evaluation questions	Bases for assessment	Evaluation design/ methodology	Data sources	Data quality and limitations	Comments
Gender mainstreaming is effectively addressed in The Project	<p>To what extent does The Project mainstream gender in implementation methodologies, project inputs and outputs?</p> <p>Is gender mainstreaming captured in project monitoring (baseline studies/indicators)?</p>	<p>Evidence of project partners understanding of, and capacity to, apply gender mainstreaming principles.</p> <p>Evidence that project objectives, methodologies and outputs apply gender mainstreaming, principles.</p> <p>Evidence that project monitoring captures application of gender mainstreaming principles, measuring both the quality and results of activities.</p>	<p>Desk review</p> <p>Online questionnaire</p> <p>Semi-structured stakeholder interviews and FGDs</p> <p>Triangulation</p>	<p>Documentation (Project documents, progress reports, operational plans, consultant terms of reference, SC and WG meeting minutes, outputs etc)</p> <p>Council of Europe/EU and justice institution partners, consultants and other relevant experts, stakeholders.</p>	Expected to be moderate	
Council of Europe Criterion Added Value - The benefits of The Project being implemented by the Council of Europe						
Assessment dimensions	Evaluation questions	Bases for assessment	Evaluation design/ methodology	Data sources	Data quality and limitations	Comments
What are the Council of Europe's advantages as implementer of support to justice sector reform in Serbia, by comparison with other actors and reform modalities.	To what extent has the Council of Europe a comparative advantage vis-à-vis other actors (IGOs, bi-lateral donors, INGOs) in supporting justice sector reform in Serbia?	Evidence that project delivery by the Council of Europe provides added value in comparison with other project implementors.	<p>Desk review</p> <p>Online questionnaire</p> <p>Semi-structured stakeholder interviews and FGDs</p> <p>Triangulation</p>	Council of Europe/EU and justice institution partners, consultants and other relevant experts, stakeholders.	Expected to be good	

Annex 3: Online Evaluation Questionnaire

Final Evaluation of The Project Support for the Implementation of Judicial Reform in Serbia

1. Your Name/Organisation/Position/Email address (optional)

Your involvement in The Project

Please list The Project activities you are involved in and give details of your role.

2. Relevance: Is The Project *relevant to the context*?

Please score the relevance of The Project, including its relevance to:

- National, European and international justice sector standards;
- Serbian justice sector strategies/action plans;
- Needs and priorities of the justice sector institutions in Serbia;
- Needs and priorities of the rights-holders in the justice sector.

1. *Excellent* 2. *Very Good* 3. *Good* 4. *Poor* 5. *Very Poor* 6. *Don't Know*

Please comment on your score. Please give examples of the relevance of The Project to your work and any suggested changes that would enhance this.

3. Coherence: Is The Project *coherent with other justice reform projects*?

Please score the coherence of The Project including coordination and complementarity with other justice sector projects (by the Council of Europe, UN, OSCE, bilateral donors etc.);

1. *Excellent* 2. *Very Good* 3. *Good* 4. *Poor* 5. *Very Poor* 6. *Don't Know*

Please comment on your score. Please give examples of The Project's coherence with other projects and any suggested changes that would enhance this.

4. Efficiency: *How well are project resources being used*?

Please score the efficiency of the management and delivery of The Project, including:

- Planning and decision-making (including Steering Committee and Working Groups);
- Cost-effective delivery of project activities (value for money);
- Communication between project partners; between the Council of Europe Secretariat and Offices/Programme Offices; and between Council of Europe and EU Delegations/Offices.

1. *Excellent* 2. *Very Good* 3. *Good* 4. *Poor* 5. *Very Poor* 6. *Don't Know*

Please comment on your score. Please give examples of The Project's efficiency and any suggested changes that would enhance this.

5. Effectiveness: *Is The Project achieving its intended objectives*?

Please score the effectiveness of The Project in reforming law and practice, enhancing judicial management, knowledge and training capacity, and harmonising judicial practice, including:

- Suitability of activities (expert advice, technical assistance, events etc.);
- Quality of participation and inputs by partners and external experts;
- Quality of measurement of project progress and results.

1. *Excellent* 2. *Very Good* 3. *Good* 4. *Poor* 5. *Very Poor* 6. *Don't Know*

Please comment on your score. Please give examples of The Project's effectiveness and any suggested changes that would enhance this.

If relevant to your project role, please comment on the effectiveness of project management, communication, organisation of activities, partnership between the Council of Europe and your institution, coordination/communication between the Council of Europe secretariat in Strasbourg and Offices/Programme Offices.

6. Potential impact: Will the Project results produce concrete change to address the identified reform needed?

Please score the potential impact of:

- Laws/bylaws drafted and implemented in line with European norms;
- Enhanced judicial management practices;
- Enhanced knowledge/training judicial practice;
- Enhanced consistency/certainty of case law.

1. *Excellent* 2. *Very Good* 3. *Good* 4. *Poor* 5. *Very Poor* 6. *Don't Know*

Please comment on your score. Please give examples of The Project's impact or potential impact, and any suggested changes that would enhance this.

7. Sustainability: Will project results continue after The Project concludes in December 2025?

Please score The Project results, in terms of:

- Laws/bylaws drafted in line with European norms and will continue to be implemented;
- Judicial management practices are becoming more effective and consistent and continue to be applied;
- Knowledge/training etc. improves the quality of judicial practice and continues to be applied and adequately financed;
- Harmonisation measures will improve consistency/certainty of case law and will continue to be implemented and adequately financed.

1. *Excellent* 2. *Very Good* 3. *Good* 4. *Poor* 5. *Very Poor* 6. *Don't Know*

Please comment on your score. Please give examples of The Project's results that will continue into the future, and any suggested changes that would enhance this.

Human Rights Approach:¹⁴⁶ *Is a Human Rights Approach being applied in The Project?*

Please score the application of the core principles of a human rights approach (Participation and Inclusion; Equality and Non-discrimination; Accountability; Transparency and Access to Information) in project methodologies and in results.

1. *Excellent* 2. *Very Good* 3. *Good* 4. *Poor* 5. *Very Poor* 6. *Don't Know*

Please comment on your score. Please give examples of how gender is mainstreamed in The Project and any suggested changes that would enhance this.

Gender Mainstreaming:¹⁴⁷ *Is gender being mainstreamed in The Project?*

Please score the quality of gender mainstreaming in The Project, including how the different justice needs, challenges of men and women are addressed in project activities and results.

1. *Excellent* 2. *Very Good* 3. *Good* 4. *Poor* 5. *Very Poor* 6. *Don't Know*

Please comment on your score. Please give examples of the application of the Human Rights Approach principles in The Project and any suggested changes that would enhance this.

Added Value: What are the benefits of The Project being implemented by the Council of Europe?

Please score the added value of the Council of Europe as implementer of justice reform co-operation (in comparison with other donors and organisations active in the sector in Serbia).

1. *Excellent* 2. *Very Good* 3. *Good* 4. *Poor* 5. *Very Poor* 6. *Don't Know*

Please comment on your score. Please give examples of the added value of the Council of Europe in delivering reform projects and any suggested changes that would enhance this.

11. Any additional observations/recommendations that you wish to make.

¹⁴⁶ Participation and Inclusion; Equality and non-discrimination; Accountability; Transparency and access to information - Council of Europe, [Human Rights Approach: Practical Guide for Co-operation Projects](#), 2020.

¹⁴⁷ "Gender mainstreaming" means integrating a gender perspective at all stages and levels of policies, programmes and projects. Women and men have different needs, experiences and living conditions, including unequal access to and control over power, money, human rights, justice, resources and decision-making. The needs of women and men also differ by age, ethnicity, disability, class, economic status, sexual orientation or gender identity and even by country and/or area within a country. It is important to take this intersectionality of factors into account when designing policies, programmes and projects." - Council of Europe, [Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit For Co-Operation Projects](#), 2019.

Annex 4: Bylaws Drafted/Supported by The Project

BYLAW	PROJECT EXPERT SUPPORT	COMPLIANCE ANALYSIS
MOJ/Councils joint WG		
Rulebook on administration in PPOs	Yes	Local Expert Input
Court Rules of Procedure	Yes	Local Expert Input
HPC		
Rules of Procedure of the High Prosecutorial Council	Yes	Local Expert Input International Expert Input
Rules of Procedure of the Ethics Committee of the High Prosecutorial Council	Yes	
Rules of Procedure of the Commission for Deciding on Complaints Against Mandatory Instructions for Work and Proceedings in a Single Case, Complaints Against Decisions on Substitution and Complaints Against Decisions on Devolution	Yes	Local Expert Input
Rules of Procedure of the High Prosecutorial Council in Relation to undue Influence on the Work of Public Prosecutors and the Public Prosecutor's Office	Yes	/
Rules of Procedure on Disciplinary Bodies of the High Prosecutorial Council and Disciplinary Proceedings	Yes	Local Expert Input
Rules of Procedure of the Budget Commission of the High Prosecutorial Council	Yes	No No standards linked to the topic
Code of Ethics for Public Prosecutors, with Guidelines for the Application of Ethical Principles	Yes	Local Expert Input
Code of Ethics for Members of the High Prosecutorial Council	Yes	Local Expert Input
Rules of Procedure on Criteria and Indicators for Performance Evaluation Chief Public Prosecutor and Public Prosecutor	Yes	Local Expert Input International Expert Input *Compliance report by international consultant also available for part of the rulebook on case weighting
Rules of Procedure of the Election Commission of the High Prosecutorial Council	Yes	Local Expert Input
Rulebook on the procedure for electing members of the High Prosecutorial Council from among public prosecutors	Yes	Local Expert Input
Rulebook on deciding on an objection against the decision on the annual work schedule in the public prosecutor's office or the decision on amending the decision on the annual work schedule of the Public Prosecutor's Office	Yes	Local Expert Input
Rules of Procedure of the Commission for the Evaluation of the Work of the Chief Public Prosecutor and Public Prosecutor	Yes	Local Expert Input
Rulebook on criteria and measures for assessing the expertise, competence and worthiness of candidates and the procedure for electing the Chief Public Prosecutor and	Yes	/ International Expert Input

Public Prosecutor and proposing candidates for election to the Supreme Public Prosecutor		
Rulebook on taking the examination to test the expertise and competence of candidates who are elected for the first time or proposed for election to the public prosecutorial position	Yes	/
Rules of Procedure of the Commission for Monitoring the Case Allocation	Yes	Local Expert Input
Rules of Procedure on the Method of Keeping and Form of the Personal Information Sheet of the Holder of the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Staff Employed in the Public Prosecutor's Office	No	/
Decision on the organization and work of the Administrative Office of the High Prosecutorial Council	No	No - No Council of Europe standards relevant to the topic
Rulebook on filling executive positions and positions in the Administrative Office of the High Prosecutorial Council	No	No - No Council of Europe standards relevant to the topic
HJC		
Rules of Procedure of the High Judicial Council	Yes	International Expert Input
Rules of Procedure on the Protection of Judges and the Court from Undue Influence.	Yes	Local Expert Input
Rules of Procedure of the Budget Committee of the Supreme Judicial Council	Yes	No - No Council of Europe standards relevant to the topic
Rules of procedure of the Ethics Committee		Local Expert Input
Rules of Procedure before the High Judicial Council Commission for deciding on an objection of judicial assistant to a decision on a court evaluation		Local Expert Input compliance report
Rulebook on the evaluation of the work of judges and court presidents	Yes	International Expert Input
Rulebook on the procedure for the election of judges and court presidents	/	Local Expert Input
Rulebook on the Procedure for Establishing Disciplinary Responsibility of Judges and Court Presidents	Yes	Local Expert Input
Rulebook on the procedure for complaints	/	Local Expert Input compliance report
Rulebook on the manner of work of the election commission	/	
Rulebook on Monitoring the Work of Courts	/	
Rulebook on the procedure for the election of a lay judge	/	Local Expert Input compliance report
Decision on the organization, affairs and manner of work of the Administrative Office of the High Judicial Council	/	No - No Council of Europe standards relevant to the topic
Decision on the Use and Safekeeping of Seals and Stamps	/	No - No standards linked to the topic
Rulebook on pseudonymization of data	/	Local Expert Input
Rulebook on the method of keeping and form of the personal record -	/	No - No standards linked to the topic
Form for the personal record of a judge	/	No - No standards linked to the topic
Personal information form for a lay judge	/	No - No standards linked to the topic
Personal information form for court personnel	/	No - No standards linked to the topic

LINKS TO ADOPTED BYLAWS

MP - MoJ

Pujt - RULES ON ADMINISTRATION IN PUBLIC PROSECUTOR'S OFFICES

Sudski poslovnik (Court Rule Book)

VST - HPC

1. [Пословник о раду Високог савета тужилаштва](#)
2. [Пословник о раду Етичког одбора Високог савета тужилаштва](#)
3. [Пословник о раду Комисије за одлучивање о приговору против обавезног упутства за рад и поступање у поједином предмету, приговору против решења о супституцији и приговору против решења о деволуцији](#)
4. [Правилник о поступању Високог савета тужилаштва у вези са непримереним утицајем на рад носиоца јавнотужилачке функције и јавно тужилаштво](#)
5. [Правилник о раду Буџетске комисије Високог савета тужилаштва](#)
6. [Правилник о дисциплинским органима Високог савета тужилаштва и дисциплинском поступку](#)
7. [Етички кодекс јавних тужилаца, са Смерницама за примену Етичких начела](#)
8. [Етички кодекс чланова Високог савета тужилаштва](#)
9. [Правилник о критеријумима и показатељима вредновања рада главног јавног тужиоца и јавног тужиоца](#)
10. [Пословник о раду Изборне комисије Високог савета тужилаштва](#)
11. [Правилник о поступку избора члана Високог савета тужилаштва из реда јавних тужилаца](#)
12. [Одлука о организацији и раду Административне канцеларије Високог савета тужилаштва](#)
13. [Правилник о попуњавању извршилачких радних места и положаја у Административној канцеларији Високог савета тужилаштва](#)
14. [Правилник о критеријумима и мерилима за оцену стручности, оспособљености и достојности кандидата и поступку за избор главног јавног тужиоца и јавног тужиоца и предлагање кандидата за избор Врховног јавног тужиоца](#)
15. [Правилник о полагању испита за проверу стручности и оспособљености кандидата који се први пут бира или предлаже за избор на јавнотужилачку функцију](#)
16. [Правилник о одлучивању о приговору против одлуке о годишњем распореду послова у јавном тужилаштву или одлуке о измени одлуке о годишњем распореду послова у јавном тужилаштву](#)
17. [Пословник о раду Комисије за праћење правилне расподеле предмета](#)
18. [Правилник о начину вођења и обрасцу личног листа носиоца јавнотужилачке функције и особља запосленог у јавном тужилаштву](#)
19. [Пословник о раду Комисије за вредновање рада главног јавног тужиоца и јавног тужиоца](#)

VSS - HJC

2023

1. [Правилник о раду Етичког одбора - Објављен у "Службеном гласнику РС" бр 116/2023 од 26.12.2023. године.](#)
2. [Правилник о псеудонимизацији података - Објављен у "Службеном гласнику РС" бр 116/2023 од 26.12.2023. године.](#)
3. [Правилник о начину вођења и обрасцу личног листа - Објављен у "Службеном гласнику РС" бр 116/2023 од 26.12.2023. године.](#)
4. [Образац за лични лист судије - Објављен у "Службеном гласнику РС" бр 116/2023 од 26.12.2023. године.](#)
5. [Образац за лични лист судије поротника - Објављен у "Службеном гласнику РС" бр 116/2023 од 26.12.2023. године.](#)
6. [Образац за лични лист за судско особље - Објављен у "Службеном гласнику РС" бр 116/2023 од 26.12.2023. године.](#)
7. [Пословник о раду ВСС - Објављен у "Службеном гласнику РС" бр 110/2023 од 08.12.2023. године](#)
8. [Правилник о заштити судије и суда од непримереног утицаја - Објављен у "Службеном гласнику РС" бр 110/2023 од 08.12.2023.](#)
9. [Правилник о раду буџетске комисије ВСС - Објављен у "Службеном гласнику РС" бр 110/2023 од 08.12.2023. године](#)
10. [ПРАВИЛНИК О СПРОВОЂЕЊУ И ВРЕДНОВАЊУ РАЗГОВОРА СА КАНДИДАТИМА ЗА ИЗБОР СУДИЈЕ](#)
11. [ИЗМЕНА ПРАВИЛНИКА О КРИТЕРИЈУМИМА И МЕРИЛИМА ЗА ОЦЕНУ СТРУЧНОСТИ, ОСПОСОБЉЕНОСТИ И ДОСТОЈНОСТИ ЗА ИЗБОР СУДИЈЕ](#)
12. [ПОСЛОВНИК О РАДУ ВИСОКОГ САВЕТА СУДСТВА ОБЈАВЉЕН У "СЛУЖБЕНОМ ГЛАСНИКУ РС", БР. 29/2013, 4/2016, 91/2016, 24/2017, 7/2018, 69/2018, 38/2021, 90/2021 И 48/2023.](#)

2024

1. Правилник о поступку пред комисијом ВСС за одлучивање о приговору на решење о оцени суд. помоћника („Сл.гл. РС" 37/2024)
2. Правилник о поступку за избор судије поротника („Сл.гл. РС" 37/2024)
3. Одлука о организацији, пословима и начину рада Административне канцеларије Високог савета судства („Сл.гл. РС" 37/2024)
4. Правилник о вредновању рада судије и председника суда („Сл.гл. РС" 34/2024)
5. Правилник о поступку за избор судије и председника суда („Сл.гл. РС" 34/2024)
6. Правилник о поступку по притужбама („Сл.гл. РС" 34/2024)
7. Правилник о начину рада изборне комисије („Сл.гл. РС" 34/2024)
8. Правилник о праћењу рада судова („Сл.гл. РС" 30/2024)
9. Правилник о поступку за утврђивање дисциплинске одговорности судија и председника судова (“Сл.гл. РС” 24/2024.)
10. Одлука о употреби и чувању печата и штамбиља

Annex 5: Interlocutors

Organisation/Institution	Title/Function
Ministry of Justice	Assistant Minister, Co-Chair of the Steering Committee, Project Partner
Ministry of Justice	Head of Programming, Project Partner
High Judicial Council	President, Member of Steering Committee
Supreme Court of Serbia	Member of Steering Committee, Project Partner
Supreme Court of Serbia	Member of Steering Committee, Project Partner
Supreme Court of Serbia Judges Association of Serbia	Member of Steering Committee, Project Partner
High Judicial Council; Judges Association of Serbia	Deputy Head of HJC, Member of Steering Committee, Project Partner
Prosecutors' Association of Serbia	President, Project Partner
Prosecutors' Association of Serbia	Member, Project Partner
High Prosecutorial Council	Head of HPC, Member of Steering Committee, Project Partner
High Prosecutorial Council	Substitute Member of Steering Committee, Project Partner
High Prosecutorial Council	HPC International Project Senior Advisor, Project Partner
Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office	Member of Steering Committee, Project Partner
Judicial Academy	Head of the Department for Continuous Training, Project Partner
Judicial Academy	Department for Research and Improvement of Education, Project Partner
Judicial Academy	Department for International Cooperation and Projects, Project Partner
Lawyer	Local Consultant
Lawyer	International Consultant
Institute of Criminological and Sociological Research (IKSI)	Local Consultant
Institute of Comparative Law ICL	Local Consultant
Institute of Comparative Law ICL	Local Consultant
Institute of Comparative Law ICL	Local Consultant
Institute of Comparative Law ICL/HPC member	Research Fellow, project partner
Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights YUCOM, Advocacy Director	Local Consultant
YUCOM, Legal Advisor	Local Consultant, WG Observer
YUCOM, Legal Advisor	Local Consultant, WG Observer
Council of Europe	Head of Council of Europe Office Belgrade
Council of Europe	Deputy Head of Council of Europe Office Belgrade
Council of Europe	Previous Council of Europe project manager now head of Co-operation Unit Gender Equality Division
Council of Europe	Previous Senior Project Officer for related Council of Europe project
Council of Europe	Project Coordinator since 1 January 2023
Council of Europe	Senior Project Officer – 13 April 2022
Council of Europe	Senior Project Officer – 15 May 2023
Council of Europe	Project Assistant (Belgrade) – 6 February 2023
Council of Europe	Project Assistant (Belgrade) – 3 March 2025
Council of Europe	Venice Commission, Head of Division I (Opinions and Reports)
PrEUgovor (CSO)	Coordinator NGO coalition, Senior Researcher
EU-Serbia Joint Consultative Committee (JCC), YUCOM (CSO)	Council of Europe Expert
Institute of Comparative Law (CSO)/HPC Member	Director/project partner
Transparency International Serbia Chapter	Executive Director
Delegation of the European Union to Serbia	Project Coordinator
Delegation of the European Union to Serbia	Political Section
European Commission	Policy Officer - Rule of Law desk DG ENEST

OSCE	Senior Legal Adviser, Judicial Reform Judicial & Legal Reform Team
OSCE	Judicial Reform, Judicial & Legal Reform Team
OSCE	Judicial Reform, Judicial & Legal Reform Team
Justice for All (closed USAID Project)	Former Project Manager
GIZ	Project manager, Flexible Facility for Chapter 23/Support to Rule of Law in Serbia
UK Embassy	Rule of Law portfolio
UK Embassy	Rule of Law portfolio
UK Embassy	Rule of Law portfolio
UN	Human Rights Adviser, UN Resident Coordinator and UN Country Team in Serbia
Fundación para la Internacionalización de las Administraciones Públicas	Judicial Expert, Support to Serbia in the area of justice, freedom and security project
Fundación para la Internacionalización de las Administraciones Públicas	Manager, Support to Serbia in the area of justice, freedom and security project
World Bank	Senior Public Sector Specialist (World Bank in Governance Global Practice)
Lawyer	International Consultant
Lawyer	Member of Venice Commission, International Consultant

Annex 6: Documentary Sources

Project documents insert inception report list and Council of Europe publishing style

Project Description of Action, Revised log frame, consultant contracts/ terms of reference, Minutes of Working Group meetings, Outputs (including laws, bylaws, comparative studies and expert opinions/assessments/reports).

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Websites/Social Media

Council of Europe Office in Belgrade [website](#), [Facebook](#)
Project [Website](#)
[High Prosecutorial Council website](#)
[High Judicial Council website](#)
[HPC YouTube Channel](#)
[HJC YouTube Channel](#)