

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

A strategic partnership delivering results across Europe

The European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe form a long-standing, value-based partnership rooted in **human rights, democracy, and the rule of law**. This co-operation combines the Council of Europe's unique expertise in standard-setting, monitoring and implementation with the EU's political leadership and financial instruments.

At the heart of this collaboration are joint programmes, which translate European standards into laws, policies and practices that improve people's lives.

HOW WE WORK TOGETHER

TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION THROUGH JOINT PROGRAMMES

Joint programmes are co-financed actions implemented by the Council of Europe with EU funding to **help beneficiary countries and institutions in strengthening laws, policies, and practices, in line with European standards**, notably in the fields of justice, human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.

BY THE NUMBERS: DELIVERING RESULTS IN 2025



49 Joint Programmes under implementation with a **225 million euros** multi-annual cumulative budget.

12 new Joint Programmes were signed in 2025.



The EU represented **over 46.5%** of the Council of Europe's extra-budgetary receipts.

WHERE WE WORK

South-East Europe, Türkiye, Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus: Almost half of the joint programme's financial volume was channelled to these regions, supporting EU accession-related and governance reforms.

EU member States (technical assistance for structural reforms): Co-operation implemented with SG REFORM supports reforms in areas such as judicial independence, child-friendly justice, and economic crime. The seventh framework agreement was signed in May 2025, which includes three single country projects and one multi-country project in the area of children rights and economic crime.

Southern Neighbourhood and Central Asia: Joint programmes in these regions accounted for around 10% of the 2025 annual budgetary envelope.

At the global level, joint programmes cover the areas of cybercrime, constitutional law and - through the Council of Europe North South Centre - global education.

FLAGSHIP CO-OPERATION FRAMEWORKS

“Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Türkiye”: Supports EU accession-related reforms in justice, anti-corruption, freedom of expression and protection of vulnerable groups, with a total budget of 42 million euros.

“Partnership for Good Governance” (EU Eastern Partnership): Strengthens justice systems, democratic governance, equality and the fight against economic crime in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine, with a budget of 21 million euros.

Technical assistance in EU member States (with SG REFORM): Supporting reforms in 23 EU member States in areas such as judicial independence, child-friendly justice, anti-money laundering and public administration. In 2025, four framework agreements with an overall budget of 24.8 million euros were under implementation, covering 23 ongoing projects.

South Programme VI “Strengthening Euro-Mediterranean legal space for shared prosperity and human security”: Supports the progressive enlargement of the common legal space between Europe and the Southern Mediterranean region based on international human rights and rule of law standards, with a budget of 4.7 million euros.

WHY JOINT PROGRAMMES MATTER

The EU and Council of Europe technical co-operation **turns shared political commitments into practical reforms and measurable results** that strengthen democratic institutions and public trust and delivers visible impact on people’s lives. Continued **engagement and support** ensure that this co-operation remains responsive and effective, able to address Europe’s evolving challenges.

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