

Horizontal Facility for Western Balkans and Turkey



Results of actions in Bosnia and Herzegovina under the European Union/Council of Europe Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey

WHAT IS THE HORIZONTAL FACILITY FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY?

The Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey is a co-operation initiative of the European Union and the Council of Europe for South East Europe. This is a three-year programme, which is being implemented as from May 2016 for a period of 36 months. The actions under the Horizontal Facility are funded primarily by the EU and are co-funded and implemented by the Council of Europe.

Through the Horizontal Facility, the European Union and the Council of Europe assist beneficiaries in South-East Europe in complying with Council of Europe standards and the European Union *acquis* in the context of the enlargement process, covering three themes: *ensuring justice, fighting economic crime and combating discrimination and protecting the rights of vulnerable groups*.

There are four beneficiary-specific actions for Bosnia and Herzegovina, with a total budget of EUR 2.69 million.

ENHANCING THE CAPACITIES OF PRISON AND POLICE INSTITUTIONS

This Action started on 1 July 2016 and will continue until 23 May 2019.

The action aims to align police and prison practices with European standards so as to ensure better reintegration of prisoners into society after their release. The recommendations of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights serve as guiding principles for the Action.

- Domestic capacities to sustainably train prison and police officers have been reinforced. Guidelines and protocols – the *Guidelines on how to deal with prisoners* and the *Protocols on health care in prison* - have been developed with a view to providing sustainable training tools to law enforcement and prison agencies. At least six agencies have included the Guidelines and the Protocols as reference materials in their annual training programmes. Similarly, *Protocols for treatment of mentally ill offenders* have been developed for medical staff at the Sokolac Psychiatric Hospital and have been included in the institutional training curriculum.

Horizontal Facility for Western Balkans and Turkey



- Police and prison training programmes have been reinforced with a qualified pool of trainers and 450 prison and police officers have been trained, so as to be able to adapt their working methods to European standards conducive to prisoners' rehabilitation rather than punishment. After the training-of-trainer sessions, 40 officers became local trainers able to transfer their knowledge and skills to their colleagues. 15 of these trainers have been accredited by the Ministry of Justice to deliver training for police and prison staff on how to treat detainees in prisons. They began transferring knowledge to their peers in a series of training sessions. This training activity was highly successful, with 82% to 100% of the participants indicating that their knowledge had been improved, depending on the thematic areas addressed.
- Steps were taken to strengthen the prison data collection system, thus improving the management of prisons in a manner conducive to improved prisoner rehabilitation. A survey to identify needs for a new computerised management information system was conducted and provided the basis for the software development work currently under way.

STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITIES OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS OMBUDSMAN TO FIGHT DISCRIMINATION

This Action ran from 1 September 2016 to 31 December 2018.

The action aimed to enhance the capacities of the Institution of the Human Rights Ombudsperson and the courts to prevent and combat discrimination, in line with the recommendations of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI).

- The Action reinforced the mechanism for data collection on cases involving hate crimes and discrimination. An anti-discrimination manual was produced so as to permit easier identification of discrimination and can be used as a tool for collecting data on hate crime, now gathered in a single database.
- Dialogue between the Ombudsman Institutions and 43 public institutions at central, regional and municipal level was reinforced, thus increasing the likelihood that the Ombudsman's recommendations on anti-discrimination will be better implemented. Closer links with the judiciary were established, and their expertise on anti-discrimination standards was reinforced through joint activities. The activities focused on analysing discrimination cases with a view to increasing the quality of national judgments.

Horizontal Facility for Western Balkans and Turkey



- Co-operation between the Ombudsman Institutions, the national Gender Equality Agency and the Gender Centres of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska was strengthened to better combat gender-based violence. As a result of a series of training sessions, the capacities of the Gender institutions, the Human Rights Ombudsman Institution and the judiciary to implement domestic legislation on the prevention of and protection from gender-based and domestic violence were enhanced.
- All staff at the Ombudsman's Institutions increased their level of expertise regarding how to handle cases of discrimination in line with European anti-discrimination standards, following a series of activities held in the context of the Horizontal Facility. Eight trainers were trained to conduct peer-to-peer training on human rights and anti-discrimination for staff of the Ombudsman's Office and other public institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Capacity-building activities included face-to-face training and distance learning through use of the Council of Europe Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP). The placement of two Ombudsman's Office staff members abroad benefited the entire office, allowing improved functioning based on practical observation of the daily work of the Office of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the European Ombudsman. The Institution further benefited from recommendations for improving its advocacy activities and upgrading efficiency.

STRENGTHENING THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES

This Action started on 1 January 2018 and will continue until 23 May 2019.

The action aims to support the authorities in enhancing the rights of persons belonging to national minorities by strengthening intercultural dialogue and institutional co-ordination among the relevant stakeholders and by increasing their capacities.

- A Minority Co-ordination Group was set up under the auspices of the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees in order to strengthen dialogue and co-operation between the authorities and civil society in respect of actions pertaining to national minorities. The Group constitutes a first formal forum for such dialogue, providing guidance to the institutions on the measures to be taken to implement the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. A number of ways of improving minority protection were identified for follow-up action so as to enhance the participation of young members of national minorities in public life and the visibility of the Roma Council.

Horizontal Facility for Western Balkans and Turkey

Funded
by the European Union
and the Council of Europe



COUNCIL OF EUROPE



Implemented
by the Council of Europe

IMPROVING QUALITY EDUCATION IN A MULTI-ETHNIC SOCIETY

This Action started on 1 February 2018 and will continue until 23 May 2019.

The action aims to support the authorities in implementing measures to address ethnic segregation in schools in line with the recommendations of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI).

- Nine pilot schools were selected to participate in the project, which includes all types of schools: “two schools under one roof”, schools with unified management but separate teaching based on language and ethnic curricula, mono-ethnic schools and mixed schools. An assessment was completed with the participation of teachers, parents and students from the pilot schools. The assessment identified shortcomings and tangible actions for overcoming ethnic segregation in nine schools. Follow-up measures are now being drawn up together with the authorities and civil society.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Website: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/horizontal-facility/home>

Nichola Howson, Communication Officer, +33 3 88 41 22 39

Marija Simic, Regional Communication Officer, +38 1 63 60 13 37