



Freedom of expression and freedom of the media in North Macedonia- JUFREX

What is the goal?

The action promotes freedom of expression (FoE) and freedom of the media (FoM) in North Macedonia and contributes in the improvement of the application of European standards in this domain. Building upon the results and experience of the previous phase, the action will continue to work with a range of actors responsible for the applications of these standards, namely: judges, prosecutors, lawyers, police officers, representatives of media regulatory authorities, journalists, students and other media actors.

Who benefits from the action?

The action supports the building of capacities of national training institutions for legal professionals, assists the Agency for Audio and Audio-Visual Media Services in enhancing the regulatory framework and engage in its activities the Faculty of Law and Journalism, the Association of Journalists as well as judges, prosecutors, police officers, lawyers and journalists.

How will the action work?

The Council of Europe intervention on freedom of expression and the media is based on a holistic approach that aims at involving and engaging all relevant actors and stakeholders in improving the application of freedom of expression, based on the European standards and best practices. To achieve this, the action will closely work with (1) legal professionals: Academy for Judges and Public Prosecutors and Macedonian Bar Association; (2) Media regulatory authorities – Agency for Audio and Audio Visual Media Services; (3) Media actors and Universities – Association of Journalists of Macedonia and Faculty of Law and Journalism 'Iustinianus Primus', building their capacities by adopting a dynamic methodology and using an inclusive approach in order to generate dialog between the different actors and relevant stakeholders.

What do we expect to achieve?

- ▶ Members of the judiciary, legal professionals and police officers will be more aware on improving the application of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Court case-law on Freedom of Expression;
- ▶ Media Regulatory authority's capacities will be further strengthened and consolidated in better exercising its authority in regard to human rights protection and freedom of expression;
- ▶ Media actors and relevant stakeholders, including Universities and Civil Society co-operate and contribute to an enabling environment for freedom of expression and freedom of the media.

How much will it cost?

- ▶ the total budget of the action is 510 000 EUR

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- ▶ the budget allocated to the overall Horizontal Facility programme amounts to ca. 41 Million EUR (85% funded by the European Union, 15% by the Council of Europe)

How do we get more information?

- ▶ Directorate General I: Human Rights and Rule of Law:
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/jufrex-2>
- ▶ Horizontal Facility website: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/horizontal-facility/home>
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About Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey

The “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey 2019-2022” is a joint initiative of the European Union and the Council of Europe that enables the Beneficiaries to meet their reform agendas in the fields of human rights, rule of law and democracy and to comply with the European standards, including where relevant within the framework of the EU enlargement process. This three-year programme covers actions in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, as well as Kosovo* and it is implemented by the Council of Europe from May 2019.

**This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.*

The Council of Europe is the continent’s leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.

www.coe.int

The Member States of the European Union have decided to link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders.

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