

## Highlights 5 April - June 2024



*Illustration: Shutterstock*

### Equal rights for all: EU and Council of Europe support 1st LGBTI shelter in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The European Union and the Council of Europe have provided a grant to the Wings of Hope Foundation from Sarajevo, for the opening of the first LGBTI shelter in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This shelter is open to LGBTI victims of domestic violence from all parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who need a swift relocation outside their household and a professional and sensitised psycho-social support within a safe environment.

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## STRENGTHENING JUSTICE

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*Training of Trainers on the "Provision of free legal aid in North Macedonia"*

### Protecting human rights in line with European standards

Protecting human rights in line with European standards and executing the judgements of the European Court of Human Rights are among key priorities for the Horizontal Facility actions in the field of justice. By providing technical expertise,



*Training seminar with High Judicial Council / Albania*

### Towards more independent and accountable judicial systems

Ensuring the independence and accountability of judicial systems in the Western Balkans is crucial for guaranteeing access to justice and equal protection of human rights, in line with European standards. The

capacity building, and support to public actors, the programme has significantly contributed to the process of enhancing the application of case-law of the European Court of Human Rights in the judicial systems in the Western Balkans.

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programme continues to advance the collaboration and joint work with public actors and related stakeholders in the field with the aim to improve the efficiency and quality of justice by enhancing the accountability and professionalism of judges and prosecutors

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*Training on Trauma-Informed Therapy / Albania*

## Enhancing prison safety and security in the Western Balkans

One of the main priorities of the programme is to strengthen safety and security in the Western Balkans Beneficiaries by improving management and rehabilitation of prisoners, with a particular focus on violent extremist prisoners and other marginalised and vulnerable prisoners at risk of radicalisation. Through multiple level interventions the actions are continuing to promote and reinforce co-operation, professional networking and exchange of knowledge and best practices between prison, probation practitioners and other stakeholders in the field.

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## Increasing legal literacy of women in the earthquake-affected regions of Türkiye

A total of 87 women affected by the earthquakes of February 2023 attended a training aiming at empowering them to claim their rights and increased their knowledge on how to access support services.

The trainings were organised in the container cities - housing more than 600.000 people displaced by the earthquakes - of the provinces of Malatya, Adıyaman, Hatay, and Kahramanmaraş.

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## Conference on “Human rights & migration in the context of natural disasters situations” held in Ankara

Sixteen lawyers from the İzmir Bar Association were introduced to the international and European human rights standards with a focus on the case-law of the European Court of Human Rights on the right to liberty and security, lawfulness of detention, alternatives to immigration detention, and safeguards for the protection of vulnerable persons in the context of migration.

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## FIGHTING ECONOMIC CRIME & CORRUPTION

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*Consultative roundtable on draft National Strategy on Prevention of Money Laundering & Terrorist Financing / Albania*

## Strengthening the fight against corruption, economic crime, and money laundering

The fight against corruption, economic crime, money laundering and the financing of terrorism remains a crucial focus for all programme Beneficiaries. This is why the programme has been continuously supporting the authorities and civil society organisations in strengthening their capacities to achieve their reform agenda in this area and promote the values of good governance and integrity.

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## PROMOTING DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY

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Photo: Horizontal Facility III

## Fighting discrimination and hate speech

The main goal of anti-discrimination actions is to empower authorities, civil society organisations and people of the Western Balkans to combat all forms of discrimination, hate speech, hate crimes

and racism. In this process, the programme provides expertise, capacity building and it raises awareness about dangers of discrimination and of the need to have the rights of everybody equally protected but paying special attention to vulnerable groups.

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## Council of Europe HELP course on women access to justice launched for judges & prosecutors from the Western Balkans

In a significant step towards enhancing gender-sensitive legal practices and strengthening the capacity of judges and prosecutors in addressing gender bias in the judiciary in the Western Balkans, the regional HELP course on Access to Justice for Women was launched with the support of the EU and Council of Europe.



Illustration: Council of Europe

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Training workshop on child trafficking / Serbia

## Advancing detection of child trafficking instances in schools in Serbia

The role of schools in detecting instances of child trafficking, and the co-operation between the education system and key anti-trafficking actors from different ministries and anti-trafficking NGOs was the focus of the training workshop organised in Vrnjacka Banja. The 37 participants, representatives of 13 regional school districts, related ministries and public institutions, and two anti-trafficking non-governmental organisations, exercised the



Training on victim-oriented reporting related to human trafficking cases / North Macedonia

## Public reporting on human trafficking in North Macedonia through a victim-centred approach

Twelve communication officers from the Ministry of interior and journalists participated in a training on victim-oriented and gender-sensitive public reporting related to human trafficking cases. The aim of this activity was two-fold: to increase the capacities of the participants on public reporting about complex human trafficking cases based on victims' perspective, as well as to stimulate a networking between the Mol communication officers and



application of “warning signs” for preliminary identification of students who are potential victims of human trafficking.

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journalists of public and private media with respect to fight against human trafficking.

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*Award ceremony for the Podcast contest / Türkiye*

## Ensuring quality education for all

The programme has been supporting authorities, civil society organisations, schools, students, their parents, and broader local communities in achieving

better education for all. The actions engaged in the field of education have been working on having schools free from discrimination, nurturing inclusive and supportive environment, where democratic culture and education for democratic citizenship are valued by everybody.

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## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND MEDIA

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*Training on freedom of expression with magistrates / Albania*

## Protecting freedom of expression and freedom of the media in the Western Balkans

Freedom of expression and freedom of the media are essential freedoms of the people of the Western Balkans that need to be protected in line with European standards. The programme has been working together with the beneficiary institutions, civil society organisations and media associations, so they continue building their capacities to better protect these two rights.

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## EXPERTISE CO-ORDINATION MECHANISM

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Venice Commission / Photo: Council of Europe

## Venice Commission publishes several opinions supported through the Expertise Co-ordination Mechanism

The [Expertise Co-ordination Mechanism](#) (ECM) continued to enable the provision of legislative expertise and policy advice in the areas covered by the Horizontal Facility programme, as well as on constitutional issues falling within the mandate of the European Commission for Democracy through Law, known as the Venice Commission. In this context, the Venice Commission has adopted several opinions supported through the Expertise Co-ordination Mechanism during its 139th plenary session, held on 21-22 June 2024.

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## NEW PUBLICATIONS

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**Get to know the most recent publications published under the Horizontal Facility programme!**



Illustration: Shutterstock

In this edition of Highlights, we are bringing you three publications published in the framework of the Horizontal Facility III programme to enhance knowledge and bring the European standards in various areas closer to the beneficiaries in the Western Balkans and in Türkiye.

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