



HORIZONTAL FACILITY FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TURKEY 2019-2022

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Supporting the Implementation and Reporting on the “Action Plan on Human Rights” in Turkey

The Project on *Supporting the Implementation and Reporting on the “Action Plan on Human Rights” in Turkey* is being implemented by the Council of Europe as part of the cooperation initiative of the “European Union/Council of Europe Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey” (Horizontal Facility II) for a duration of 18 months. The Horizontal Facility II program supports tailored reform processes agreed with the authorities, in line with relevant Council of Europe monitoring and advisory bodies’ recommendations in the fields of human rights, rule of law and democracy.

The Project with an overall budget of 1,200,000 EUR is co-funded by the European Union and the Council of Europe and is expected to be completed by 1 March 2021.

Human Rights Department of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) is the main partner and beneficiary institution of the Project. Human Rights Department is the core institution responsible for the coordination and monitoring of the implementation process of the “Action Plan on Human Rights” in Turkey.

Objectives

The project aims to strengthen the protection of human rights in Turkey by increasing the institutional capacity of Turkish authorities, primarily of the Human Rights Department of the Ministry of Justice to better implement, monitor and report the “Action Plan on Human Rights” in Turkey.

The first *Action Plan on Prevention of European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) Violations*, which entered into force on 1 March 2014 for five years, is the main strategic document for the protection of human rights in Turkey. The Plan was developed in order to protect fundamental rights and freedoms of Turkish citizens in a more effective way and to eliminate the reasons leading to violation of rights safeguarded by the ECHR and to reduce the number of violation judgments against Turkey rendered by the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). The implementation period of the Action Plan was ended as of 2019 and a reviewed and updated **Action Plan on Human Rights**, which will replace the existing one, is being drafted during the implementation phase of the Project.

The focus of the Project will be on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation and monitoring of the Action Plan on Human Rights on three thematic areas (the right to liberty and security, the right to a fair trial and freedom of expression), strengthening the institutional capacity of the Department of Human Rights of the Ministry of Justice and the relevant institutions, and enhancing effective

cooperation between all stakeholders, including lawyers, academics, journalists and civil society organisations.

Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior and other relevant Turkish authorities, Turkish judiciary, Justice Academy of Turkey, Equality Institutions (Ombudsperson's Office and Human Rights and Equality Institution of Turkey) lawyers, academics, journalists and civil society institutions are among the key stakeholders of the Project.

Expected Project Results

The Project's overall objective is the reduction of violations of the ECHR in Turkey. In the medium term a more effective implementation, monitoring and reporting of the Action Plan on Human Rights in line with international standards and EU best practices is expected to be introduced by relevant Turkish authorities and stakeholders.

The Project specifically aims to achieve the following immediate outcomes:

First immediate outcome: Turkish authorities and relevant stakeholders apply new knowledge and methods to better implement, monitor and evaluate the Action Plan on Human Rights in the areas of right to liberty and security, right to fair trial and freedom of expression. This specific outcome will be accomplished through the achievement of the following results:

- ▶ An assessment of implementation of selected human rights areas (the right to liberty and security, the right to a fair trial and freedom of expression) covered under the first Action Plan is prepared;
- ▶ Skills and techniques of Ministry of Justice (Human Rights Department) and relevant stakeholders to better assess and report on the implementation of the Action Plan on Human Rights are strengthened.

Second immediate outcome: Ministry of Justice applies a participatory approach and refines their reports and recommendations on the Action Plan on Human Rights in consultation with relevant stakeholders. This specific outcome will be accomplished through the achievement of the following results:

- ▶ Increased cooperation and involvement of the relevant stakeholders and civil society in the implementation of the Action Plan on Human Rights;
- ▶ Increased visibility of the Action Plan to general public and among relevant stakeholders.

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