

COUNCIL OF EUROPE PROGRAMME OFFICE IN SKOPJE | RESULTS IN 2025



The Council of Europe Programme Office in Skopje has since 2012 been a trusted partner of national institutions, civil society, and international organisations. Through technical expertise and dialogue, the Programme Office **helps North Macedonia protect human rights, strengthen democracy, and consolidate the rule of law.**

Most activities are implemented through **European Union and Council of Europe joint actions part of the “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Türkiye” programme**, addressing reforms in the justice system, anti-corruption and economic crime, freedom of expression, and the protection of vulnerable groups. Together, **these efforts bring institutions and citizens closer to shared European values and standards.**

BY THE NUMBERS: A PLATFORM FOR ACTION | AS OF JANUARY 2026



17 DEDICATED STAFF MEMBERS INCLUDING 15 PROJECT STAFF.



10 REGIONAL AND 7 COUNTRY-SPECIFIC PROJECTS INCLUDING:

- 6 FLAGSHIP EU AND COUNCIL OF EUROPE “HORIZONTAL FACILITY FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS AND TÜRKIYE” ACTIONS.
- 1 PROJECT FUNDED THROUGH VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS.

WHY YOUR INVOLVEMENT MATTERS

Every reform thrives on partnership and shared purpose. The Council of Europe’s work in North Macedonia is made possible through the joint support of the European Union and the Council of Europe. Together, we are helping build stronger institutions, safer communities, and a more inclusive society rooted in justice and equality.

IMPACT OF COUNCIL OF EUROPE WORK IN NORTH MACEDONIA



ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND LEGAL EMPOWERMENT

Justice within reach for all. Across seven cities, more than 1 500 citizens learned how to access justice through free legal aid, complemented by media campaigns that reached over 200 000 people. These nationwide efforts have made justice more accessible, empowering citizens to claim their rights and reducing barriers for those in vulnerable situations.

Combating human trafficking through practice. For the first time in North Macedonia, over 70 professionals, including judges, prosecutors, lawyers, social workers, labour inspectors, and NGO representatives, took part in an innovative mock trial simulation on a human trafficking case. This hands-on experience bridged gaps between institutions, reinforced collaboration, and significantly increased participants' ability to identify and prosecute trafficking offences effectively.

EDUCATION, INCLUSION, AND SAFER SCHOOLS

Schools that champion inclusion. In 25 pilot schools, teachers and students reshaped classrooms to reflect Council of Europe standards on human rights and democratic citizenship. These environments now foster participation, inclusivity, and respect, ensuring quality education for every child.

Safer schools, stronger communities. With the help of practical guidelines and training workshops, parents, teachers, and school administrators are better equipped to prevent and respond to bullying and hate speech. These initiatives foster safer, more respectful learning environments for children and adolescents.

FIGHTING ECONOMIC CRIME

Turning the tide against economic crime. Through comprehensive National Risk Assessments, institutions improved their understanding of money laundering and terrorism financing risks across both traditional and emerging sectors such as virtual assets. This evidence-based approach paved the way for a new national strategy to combat economic crime, reinforcing integrity and institutional accountability.

MEDIA FREEDOM AND JOURNALIST SAFETY

Safeguarding media freedom. Over 120 professionals, including judges, prosecutors, lawyers, police officers, and journalists, were trained to identify and counter Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs). Their enhanced capacities have fortified protection against legal intimidation and bolstered the resilience of media.

ROMA INCLUSION

Security and dignity for the Roma community. 54 Roma families gained official home ownership, securing their legal tenure and personal dignity. For many, this marked a first step towards social inclusion, financial stability, and recognition, proof that the rule of law can transform lives at community level.