

## DETAILED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

<b>Project title</b>	Towards Consolidated and More Efficient Free Legal Aid (FLA) System in North Macedonia
<b>Country/region</b>	North Macedonia
<b>Budget</b>	900 000 EUR
<b>Donor</b>	European Union/Council of Europe Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey
<b>Duration</b>	48 months (1 January 2023 – 31 December 2026)
<b>Partners and beneficiaries</b>	Ministry of Justice of North Macedonia and its Regional Offices; Bar Association of North Macedonia and the lawyers; Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) authorized for FLA; Legal Clinics authorised for FLA; the institutions that are indirectly involved in the FLA system: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Centres for Social Work, Ministry of Interior, Ombudsperson, Municipalities, Courts, CSO-s and other Networks (not registered for FLA) but providing assistance to vulnerable groups; the general population, especially vulnerable groups.
<b>Main objective and objectives</b>	<b>Main objective:</b> The action aims at supporting the main public actors and local stakeholders in ensuring efficient, accessible, and professional provision of Free Legal Aid services in North Macedonia, in line with European standards and best practices.
<b>Expected results</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional and independent functioning of the state system for Free Legal Aid, including a strengthened Central Unit for FLA;</li> <li>• A more efficient and accessible system of free legal aid in criminal proceedings in line with the European standards;</li> <li>• Improved legal aid services for the people of North Macedonia and strengthened capacities of the legal aid providers;</li> <li>• Communities and the society at large in North Macedonia are aware and informed about the provision of FLA in civil, administrative, and criminal proceedings.</li> </ul>
<b>Key activities</b>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identification, analysis and addressing of the shortcomings related to the provisions, policies and practices of free legal aid, including the practical implementation of Law on FLA</li><li>• Recommendations for improved and harmonised quality of the legal provisions, practices and policies concerning legal aid in criminal proceedings</li><li>• Development of the software solution for appointment of ex-officio lawyers in criminal proceedings</li><li>• Recommendations on the establishment and functioning of the Education Centre of the Bar Association in North Macedonia (as a mechanism for providing continuous quality education for lawyers)</li><li>• The coordination and cooperation activities among the relevant institutions in the FLA system through the work of the National Coordination Body and the Local Coordination Bodies</li><li>• Development of tools and mechanisms to improve the effectiveness, functioning and coordination of the Regional Offices (ROs) and Central FLA unit of the MoJ</li><li>• Development of recommendations on the mechanism for continuous professional development for primary legal aid providers</li><li>• Capacity building of legal aid providers, both primary and secondary (Ministry of Justice, Bar Association, CSOs, Legal Clinics) to make sure they are continuously educated and sensitised to the importance of legal aid work to meet the needs of vulnerable people.</li><li>• Awareness-raising activities and information campaigns with special focus on marginalised and vulnerable groups, to make sure people are more informed on their right to FLA.</li></ul>
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