



# EUROPEAN UNION'S ASSISTANCE TO THE JUDICIAL REFORMS

Over the past years, the European Union has been providing significant support to the judicial system in light of its on-going reforms. The support varied from engaging experts from EU member states who assisted in improvement of the national legislation and institutional regulations, through training and improvement of the knowledge of the justice sector professionals, to donation of equipment and ICT support to the judicial institutions.

Through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA), the European Union invested in the core institutions which are main carriers of the reform process, such as the Ministry of Justice, Public Prosecutors Office, Courts, Academy of Judges and Prosecutors and State Commission for Prevention of Corruption. EU grants were awarded to CSO's which oversee the judiciary reform process. Goals and activities of the EU projects are based on the conclusions and recommendations in the EU Country Report and the needs that arise from it. The European Union has allocated 35 million EUR in the field of judicial reforms, with 32 projects as part of the IPA Programmes 2007-2020. Some of the projects are designed to provide support in achieving transparent, independent and accountable judiciary and prosecution that ensure the rule of law and provide services to the citizens efficiently, with high level of professionalism. Other projects focus on more specific issues. Significant work was done on the national legislation, which resulted in the draft of the Justice Sector Reform Strategy, adoption of the 2013 Law on Justice for Children, improvement of the national legal framework for fight against corruption, improvement of internal regulations for prevention and combating torture and ill-treatment, development of legal aid and access to justice. EU projects also assisted in preparation of the Strategy for Reform of the Penitentiary System including the Law on Probation, as well as in creation of several juvenile justice prevention programmes at local level.



In the period to come, the European Union will continue to support the national authorities in the reforms of the judiciary system in line with the EU standards and Country Report recommendations. The assistance will further focus on creating mechanisms for design, implementation and monitoring of the justice sector reforms, increased access to legal aid and improved courts administration. It will also focus on improved E-justice system and inter-connection of the judicial institutions, upgraded databases and statistics and on training for the personnel working in the judicial institutions.

Further on, EU projects will focus on improvement of the prosecution system, of the prison management and detention conditions, as well as on achieving reduced reoffending, with focus on rehabilitation and re-socialisation. Significant attention will be given to the involvement and partnerships with the relevant civil society organisations.

