GOOD NEWS FROM

RULE OF LAW

QUARTERLY REPORT 10



LAUNCH OF THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN '1 IN 5 – STOP SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN'

SHIFT FROM PRINCIPLES TO PRACTICE – SHAPING LAWS AND MEASURES THROUGH THE HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH (HRBA)

HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON STRENGTHENING THE EFFICIENCY AND INDEPENDENCE OF THE JUDICIARY

GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE ONLINE FRAUD INVESTIGATIONS

EU SUPPORT FOR RULE OF LAW

FEBRUARY 2026

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FOREWORD



Dieter SCHINDLAUER

Team Leader, EU Support for Rule of Law

"We use this publication to keep up a good spirit and uphold an ethic of belief in the good reason for change, reform, and a continuous improvement process. To do so, we will show steps forward and celebrate them so that they are not lost in the much more dominant noise of disheartening news."

Dear reader,

Our tenth quarterly report is a particularly substantive one. It is brimming with forward-looking events and touching upon very serious matters. One very serious statistical figure is that throughout Europe, one in five children is experiencing a form of sexual violence. This is, of course, an alarming figure, and as it concerns very unpleasant and often hushed-up issues, it needs public debate and awareness. Therefore, our project used the occasion of the World Day for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Violence against Children to launch the national campaign “1 in 5—stop sexual violence against children” in November 2025. Sexual violence was also the topic of a workshop to strengthen the capacities of thirty public prosecutors and judges in cooperation with the Academy of Judges and Prosecutors, who discussed hands-on practical approaches and solutions to enhance protection for victims. A three-day training of trainers session empowering professionals from the Centres for Social Work in protecting victims of gender-based violence was conducted with a focus on the real needs of survivors of gender-based violence. Participants particularly highlighted the effectiveness of the interactive exercises and the good atmosphere as a basis for working on heavy issues like gender-based violence.

FOREWORD

Further problem-oriented activities include trainings against illegal drug trafficking and online fraud, directly enhancing the capacities of the institutions dealing with these issues. A practical training on data analysis and data processing for the State Commission for the Protection of Corruption strengthened the Commission's ability to process large volumes of data, supporting evidence-based, proactive, and technology-enabled anti-corruption work.

I recommend reading the interview with Adem Cuculj, the newly appointed president of the State Commission for the Protection of Corruption. He explains his strategic priorities and the struggles that lie ahead of his institution while busily building trust, integrity and increased capacities. His optimistic and forward-looking words are a real boost for hope.

On a more strategic level, this report features a short report on the recent high-level conference on strengthening the efficiency and independence of the judiciary, which saw a lot of interest and a very honest assessment of current shortcomings, a range of explanations for the root causes and a path to improvement. We also held a very fruitful Forum of Impulses about the practical implementation of a Human Rights-based Approach, where the very practical handbook written by our experts was presented (can be downloaded from our website). This event shaped a very complicated-looking tool into a practical, perfectly viable tool that helps shape opinions, strategies, policies, and laws. Open days within the courts and the public prosecution, and new ideas for the use of social media by public prosecutors, enhanced the transparency of the judiciary and the public prosecution.

I hope you share the impression of progress, active efforts for improvement and honest taking on of challenges that emanate from this report.

Enjoy the good news!



Dieter Schindlauer
Team Leader

MAY WE PRESENT:

1 IN 5 – STOP SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

On the occasion of the World Day for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Violence against Children, the national campaign "1 in 5 – Stop Sexual Violence Against Children" was officially launched on 18 November 2025.

STRENGTHENING JUDICIAL EFFICIENCY AND INDEPENDENCE IN NORTH MACEDONIA

The conference served as a strategic forum for judicial leaders, the diplomatic corps, and national and international experts to discuss the concrete steps required to align the national justice system with European standards.

HUMAN RIGHTS FORUM FORUM OF IMPULSES

Shift from Principles to Practice – Shaping Laws and Measures through the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA). Participants were among the first to explore the newly published Handbook on Applying the HRBA available in Macedonian and English.

Let's talk about...

- Launch of the National Campaign ‘1 in 5 – Stop Sexual Violence Against Children’
- Guidelines for Effective Online Fraud Investigations Developed to Support Police Investigators
- High-Level Conference on Strengthening the Efficiency and Independence of the Judiciary
- Opening the Courts to the Next Generation of Legal Professionals
- Building Data-Driven Anti-Corruption Capacity at the State Commission for the Prevention of Corruption
- Shift from Principles to Practice – Shaping Laws and Measures through the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA)
- Enhancing Transparency Through Responsible Use of Social Media by Public Prosecutors
- Fight Against Illegal Drug Trafficking – II Session
- Interview: Adem Cuculj: Fighting Corruption Through Integrity, Independence, and Capacity Building
- Strengthened capacities for better protection against sexual violence
- Connecting Future Prosecutors with Practice: Open Day at the Public Prosecution Office
- Strengthening Our Support Systems to Meet the Real Needs of GBV Survivors

Launch of the National Campaign ‘1 in 5 – Stop Sexual Violence Against Children’

One in five children in Europe is a victim of some form of sexual violence, from sexual abuse and exploitation, child pornography, to online abuse and peer harassment. In the Republic of North Macedonia, the situation is also serious and concerning. Between 2020 and 2024, 508 cases of sexual violence and harassment against children were reported, according to the Ministry of Interior (MoI). These figures clearly indicate that sexual violence against children is a reality that requires timely action, clear protection mechanisms, and shared responsibility.

On the occasion of the World Day for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Violence against Children, the national campaign “1 in 5 – Stop Sexual Violence Against Children” was officially launched on 18 November 2025, with a promotional event held at Europe House – Skopje.

> “Statistics are painful and serious, but they must not remain just numbers. Behind every child is a name, a family, and trust in adults. Our duty is to do everything to ensure that this trust is never violated,” said **Dushan Tomshikj**, President of the Commission for Prevention and Protection from Discrimination.



The campaign includes educational videos, printed materials, and posters, adapted to the local context and intended for children, parents, guardians, teachers, and professionals working with children. These materials will be distributed in schools, kindergartens, and public institutions across the country, and will also be available in digital format.

The activities are implemented under the project “EU Support for the Rule of Law”, in partnership with the Commission for Prevention and Protection from Discrimination and the Ombudsman of the Republic of North Macedonia, with support from the Bureau for Development of Education.

The campaign, conducted with the authorisation of the Council of Europe, aims to raise public awareness, encourage children to speak out, and provide adults with the knowledge and tools to recognise, prevent, and protect against sexual violence against children.



Campaign Materials: “1 in 5 – Stop Sexual Violence Against Children”

Books:

- Kiko and the Hand: MK / ALB
- Kiko and the Manymes: MK / ALB

Guidelines:

- Kiko and the Hand: MK / ALB
- Kiko and the Manymes: MK / ALB

Posters:

- Kiko and the Hand_book: MK / ALB
- Touch: MK / ALB
- Secret: MK / ALB
- Talk: MK / ALB
- Taking Pictures: MK / ALB
- Digital presence: MK / ALB

Leaflet:

- So This is Sexual Abus: MK / ALB

Two Pager: Statistics from North Macedonia

- 1 in 5 – Childhood should not hurt. Listen, believe, protect: MK / ALB

Videos:

- Kiko and the Hand (3+): MK / ALB
- Kiko and the Manymes: (4+) MK / ALB
- Tell Someone you Trust (9+): MK / ALB
- So This is Sexual Abuse (12+): MK / ALB
- The Lake (14+): MK / ALB



Capturing Success:

A Visual Celebration











Guidelines for Effective Online Fraud Investigations Developed to Support Police Investigators

As part of ongoing efforts to strengthen the capacities of law enforcement institutions in North Macedonia to investigate online fraud, the Project supported the development of Guidelines for Effective Online Fraud Investigations. The Guidelines were prepared by project experts in close cooperation with the Sector for Computer Crime within the Ministry of Interior and were finalised in Macedonian and English in December 2025.

Before the development of the Guidelines, investigators—particularly police officers in local police departments—faced significant challenges in responding to online fraud cases. These investigations often require a complex combination of computer, financial, and general criminal investigation knowledge, while first-response officers frequently lack practical guidance on early identification of online fraud schemes and the immediate investigative measures that must be taken. This often limited the ability to collect sufficient digital evidence, connect related cases, and prevent the repetition of similar fraud schemes.

The Guidelines were developed as a practical tool for inspectors, supporting the early recognition of different forms of online fraud and the timely implementation of key investigative actions. They address the specific challenges posed by online fraud, including its transnational nature, the involvement of organised criminal groups, the use of advanced technologies and anonymity tools, and the fact that evidence is primarily located in cyberspace. While the document does not replace case-by-case assessment, it provides a structured framework to support more effective and coordinated investigations.

The finalised Guidelines have been officially delivered to the Sector for Computer Crime, which will disseminate them to police stations across the country. Their use is expected to contribute to more efficient investigations, improved interconnection of cases, and strengthened institutional responses to online fraud.

High-Level Conference on Strengthening the Efficiency and Independence of the Judiciary

On 3 February 2026, the project hosted a high-level conference on “Strengthening Judicial Efficiency and Independence in North Macedonia.” The event served as a strategic forum for judicial leaders, the diplomatic corps, and national and international experts to discuss the concrete steps required to align the national justice system with European standards.

The conference centered on the presentation of the Report on the Judicial Human Resources Strategy Implementation and the Roadmap for Improved Functioning of the Judiciary, both of which were prepared by the Project. By presenting these findings, we provided an analysis and a framework for addressing systemic structural challenges, including the critical shortage of financial and human resources within the courts. This initiative outlines the specific actions necessary to build a more transparent, efficient, and independent judicial system.

During the event, Michalis Rokas, EU Ambassador, underscored that independence and efficiency go hand in hand, noting that without adequate and predictable resources, quality justice cannot be ensured. Igor Filkov, Minister of Justice, emphasized the Ministry’s commitment to drafting high-quality, applicable laws that serve as instruments of justice. He noted that judicial reform is an ongoing process, with approximately 30 laws prepared to initiate systemic changes.



Aleksandar Kambovski, President of the Judicial Council, addressed the severe understaffing and funding gaps, emphasising that the current allocation of 0.29% of GDP is far below the legal requirement of 0.8% and insufficient to ensure a fully functioning judiciary. Afrim Fidani, President of the Supreme Court, highlighted that the success of these structural reforms depends on the firm ethics and professional integrity of the judiciary, which are the primary pillars for restoring public trust.





Effective and independent justice is not only a core EU value but a necessity for the citizens of North Macedonia. Through the EU Support for Rule of Law Project, we continue to advance these essential reforms by ongoing dialogue, expert guidance, and the promotion of European standards, helping to foster the public trust required for a professional and resilient legal community.





Capturing Success:

A Visual Celebration











Opening the Courts to the Next Generation of Legal Professionals

In late 2025 and early 2026, our project continued its mission to present the judiciary to the next generation of legal minds. In collaboration with the Basic Criminal Court, the Basic Civil Court, the Appellate Court, and the Supreme Court in Skopje, we organised a series of Open Days designed to promote transparency and build public trust in the justice system. These initiatives brought together 25 high school and university students, including future lawyers from the "Iustinianus Primus" Faculty of Law and students from the legal departments of the "Vasil Antevski Dren" and "Arseni Jovkov" high schools.



The Open Day program provided participants with a rare, behind-the-scenes look at the internal workings of the judiciary. During these visits, students toured court facilities and gained practical insight into the daily operations of various court departments. They had the opportunity to observe live proceedings by attending court hearings and a General Session of the Supreme Court, witnessing the judicial process in real time. The students also engaged with judges by participating in open discussions regarding the challenges facing the judiciary and the essential skills required for a successful legal career.

These events are not isolated activities but a direct result of the Communication Strategy for the Judicial Council and Courts (2024–2028), which was developed and adopted with the strategic support of our project. By opening their doors to the youth, the courts are actively implementing new standards of openness intended to strengthen judicial independence and bridge the gap between legal institutions and the citizens they serve.

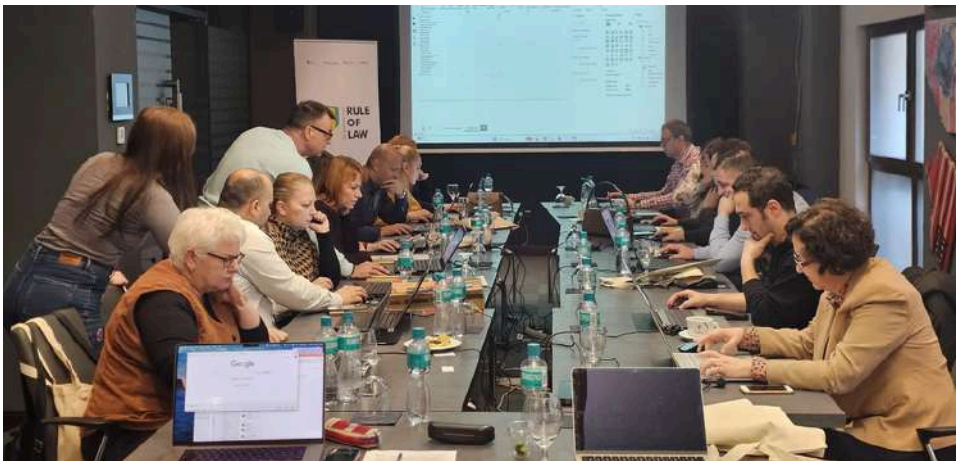
The enthusiasm shown by the students and the openness of the participating courts highlight the value of empirical learning in the legal field. By providing students with direct access to the highest judicial bodies, we are helping to promote an informed, engaged, and professional legal community for the future of North Macedonia.



Building Data-Driven Anti-Corruption Capacity at the State Commission for the Prevention of Corruption

In December 2025 and January 2026, Component 3 of the Project delivered a four-day Practical Training on Data Analysis and Data Processing. The training brought together 13 staff members of the SCPC General Secretariat, strengthening their capacity to collect, process, and analyse data in support of corruption prevention, detection, and administrative investigations.

As anti-corruption work increasingly relies on managing and interpreting large volumes of structured and unstructured data—from financial records and asset declarations to public procurement data and open-source datasets—the training combined theory with hands-on exercises. Participants strengthened their skills in data collection, data modelling, and data analysis, including linking datasets, building analytical models, and creating interactive dashboards. They also practised cleaning, merging, and reshaping datasets with Power Query, applying filtering, conditional formatting, and pivot tables to detect trends and potential red flags.



A key exercise involved analysing a sample dataset on public expenditure transparency, allowing participants to apply skills in structuring, verifying, and analysing financial data to support integrity checks and detect irregularities.
Participants reported high satisfaction, noting that using both example data and their own data helped translate abstract tools into practical applications for daily work.

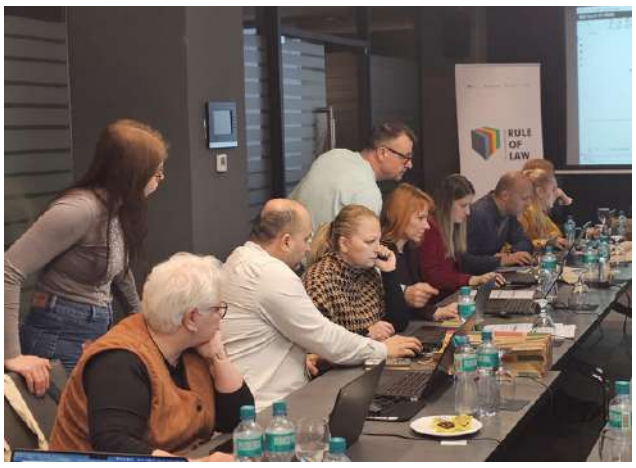
Natasha Stoilkoska, Advisor for Statistics and Analytics, said:

> The training went very well. All participants felt the progress. Using our own data alongside the exercises was very important, as it showed us how to implement the methods in our daily work."

Borce Stojanovski, Advisor in the Asset Monitoring Department, added:

> "This training is exceptionally important for our department. The daily activities in the department include recording and monitoring the assets, and we receive a large amount of data on the assets of elected and appointed persons. It helped us become more familiar with Excel and Power BI, which will support both statistical analysis and report visualisation for the SCPC."

Overall, the training equipped SCPC staff with practical, data-driven skills that enhance evidence-based, proactive, and technologically enabled anti-corruption work. The strong engagement and excellent evaluation results indicate that this initiative has laid a solid foundation for long-term institutional strengthening in an increasingly complex, data-intensive environment.





Shift from Principles to Practice – Shaping Laws and Measures through the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA)

The second Forum of Impulses brought together key human rights actors from ministries, state institutions, and civil society for a highly participatory stakeholder event. Participants were among the first to explore the newly published Handbook on Applying the HRBA **available in Macedonian and English.**

Through hands-on sessions, participants examined how human rights obligations can guide the entire policy cycle—from assessing needs and gaps to designing measures that protect the rights of every individual. The human rights–based approach was deemed as "extremely important in assessing necessary needs and gaps in the pre-drafting phase of legislation".

Participants reflected on the application of the five principles guiding the HRBA:

- all human rights for all,
- meaningful and inclusive participation,
- non-discrimination and equality,
- accountability and the rule of law,
- transparency and access to information.

The application of the principles "transparency and inclusiveness" is seen to "lead to better solutions and improved well-being for all."

A key insight of the Forum was the shared recognition that ensuring meaningful and inclusive participation remains one of the most pressing implementation challenges. Institutions often lack clear mechanisms, sufficient resources, and time to consult all affected groups—particularly those who are less visible or underrepresented.

The Forum itself demonstrated the value of participatory processes through interactive workshops, group dialogue, and peer learning across sectors. Participants highly appreciated the “well-organised event with the opportunity to exchange experiences with people from different institutions”, as well as “the moderation and the interaction in the groups”.

The 2nd Forum of Impulses demonstrated that participatory, transparent, and rights-based policymaking is both possible and highly valued by institutions and civil society alike. The event marked an important step toward turning human rights principles into practice—strengthening cooperation, building capacity, and promoting a shared commitment to ensuring human rights for all.







Capturing Success:

A Visual Celebration











Enhancing Transparency Through Responsible Use of Social Media by Public Prosecutors

As part of the joint activities aimed at enhancing communication and transparency of the Public Prosecution Office, the Project, in cooperation with the Association of Public Prosecutors, prepared and presented recommendations on the use of social media by public prosecutors. These recommendations seek to provide clear guidance in balancing freedom of expression with the responsibility of prosecutorial functions in today's digital environment.

Although this document is primarily prepared for public prosecutors, the recommendations are carefully designed so that they may also be applied and used by members of the Council, as well as by all employees within the public prosecution service.





It is a well-established fact that public prosecutors are subject to stricter limitations on their professional and private conduct compared to other professions. This is also reflected in their online activities and statements, as content that may be appropriate for members of the general public may be considered inappropriate for a prosecutor, both during and outside working hours. For these reasons, the recommendations should not be perceived as a restriction, but rather as a practical tool intended to assist public prosecutors in preserving their personal and professional integrity when using social media. In this context, the recommendations should also contribute to a clear distinction between personal views that public prosecutors may express in their private capacity and the official information and positions communicated by the institution.

Fight Against Illegal Drug Trafficking – II Session

Fight against Illegal Drug Trafficking – II Session
In line with Component 2 efforts to support the establishment of a specialised subunit for combating illicit drugs and precursors, a one-day workshop Fight against Illegal Drug Trafficking – II Session was organised in Skopje. The workshop gathered 30 Ministry of Interior investigators from central and regional levels (SVR).

The session focused on the structure and modus operandi of criminal investigations related to illicit drug trafficking, combining traditional intelligence gathering with the use of Special Investigative Measures (SIMs). Emphasis was placed on coordination and cooperation between national, regional, and local units, as well as on international police cooperation.

Through practical case discussions, participants exchanged experiences, identified common challenges, and explored solutions based on real investigations. Investigators strengthened their understanding of when and how to apply SIMs, improved their ability to respond to emerging trends such as new types of drugs on the market, and enhanced their capacity to apply shared knowledge in similar future cases.



CUCULJ Adem

INTERVIEW

THE PRESIDENT OF THE STATE COMMISSION FOR THE PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION (SCPC)

Fighting Corruption Through Integrity, Independence, and Capacity Building

1. **You have been part of the Anti-Corruption Commission for almost two decades. From that perspective, how have the challenges in the fight against corruption changed and what do you consider to be the most critical for strengthening the rule of law today?**

It is true that I have been part of the Commission for two decades and have had the opportunity to work with all the formations of the State Commission for the Prevention of Corruption. I have witnessed all the ups and downs of the Commission as well as the development and improvement of the institutional capacities of the SCPC, as well as the difficulties in implementing the legal competencies, taking into account the limited financial and personnel capacities.

I believe that with the adoption of the Law on the Prevention of Corruption and Conflict of Interest in 2019, a drastic change was made to the status and competencies of the SCPC. The method of selecting the president and members of the SCPC changed, which strengthened transparency in the selection process and, at the same time, opened the possibility for greater professionalisation, strengthening integrity, and reducing political influence.

On the other hand, improving the Commission's position and competencies without also improving its finances and staffing levels is not enough to support these changes. It is essential to approve the necessary functional analysis and systemisation of jobs and ensure greater financial independence in order to effectively implement all established competencies.

In recent years, much has been done in the area of building a legal infrastructure for the prevention and fight against corruption in the Republic of North Macedonia. Numerous legal solutions have been adopted, aligning them with European regulations, and an institutional structure has been established.

A key challenge for effective prevention and fight against corruption remains strengthening the capacities of the competent institutions for prevention and fight against corruption, strengthening personal and institutional integrity in the public sector, consistent application of relevant legislation, implementation of anti-corruption measures and activities, primarily those set out in national documents such as the National Strategy for Prevention and Fight against Corruption and Conflict of Interest, and finally, effective sanctioning of corruption.

2. **Our cooperation began at the start of the project. What forms of support and expertise have proven to be the most useful for the institution in the past period, and why?**

We extremely appreciate and value the support we receive within the framework of the EU Support for Rule of Law Project. All activities and forms of support implemented so far have been significant for us and have contributed to strengthening our capacities.

I would also like to highlight the expert support related to analysing weaknesses and needs for improving the software solution for reporting and monitoring assets and interests. In this regard, the work on establishing a methodology for detecting persons whose declarations of assets and interests will be subject to verification in accordance with the Annual Plan, through the analysis of data from declarations submitted via the software, is particularly important.



A second significant activity that I would like to mention is the expert support for the preparation of the SCPC Communication Strategy through the analysis of the detected weaknesses and the determination of measures and activities to increase the visibility of the SCPC's work and promote its activities and anti-corruption measures.

An essential aspect of enhancing our employees' capabilities is the training provided through the Project for Advanced Analysis and Data Processing, which strengthens our employees' skills and knowledge, which is particularly important in monitoring the property status of officials.

3. **What is essential for the Anti-Corruption Commission to operate independently, consistently, and achieve concrete results from the President's perspective?**

When discussing an independent SCPC, its financial autonomy is essential, particularly through the allocation of necessary budget funds to fully meet its legal responsibilities. It is essential to have a professional staff, particularly in areas where weaknesses have been identified, such as asset monitoring and overseeing the financing of political parties and election campaigns. In parallel, digitalisation is essential. Establishing a complete connection with the databases of the institutions from which we obtain data will allow us to access data in electronic form through software, significantly speeding up the collection process and expanding the range of our verifications.

In the meantime, in order to be more efficient with the current capacities, it is necessary to prioritise activities in accordance with the available financial, technical and personnel capacities.



4. **The fight against corruption is inextricably linked to the rule of law. How is this connection practically reflected in the daily work of the Commission and in the citizens' trust?**

Corruption and the rule of law are antipodes. The more we have the rule of law in a society, the less corruption there is and vice versa. In order to establish a society in which the rule of law will prevail, it is necessary to strengthen personal and institutional integrity in public sector institutions. If we have institutions with integrity led by people with integrity, we will also have the rule of law, since it is precisely the public sector institutions that are competent to apply and monitor the application of the law.

The SCPC has two main roles. First, it aims to increase awareness to strengthen both personal and institutional integrity. Second, it responds when instances of integrity violations occur by initiating the appropriate procedures.

If citizens recognise the role of the SCPC and its work in this field, it will increase trust in its efforts.

5. **Looking ahead, what are the key priorities of the Anti-Corruption Commission in the upcoming period, and how can international and project support contribute to achieving those goals in a more sustainable and efficient manner?**

As a commission, we have several priorities in the coming period.

- Adoption and promotion of the new National Strategy for the Prevention of Corruption and Conflict of Interest;
- Promotion of integrity in all public sector institutions, especially in the judiciary;
- Raising public awareness of lobbying;
- Enhanced monitoring of the asset declarations and interests and increased volume of verifications of data from the submitted declarations of assets and interests, for which the improvement and operationalisation of the existing software solution is of particular importance.

To implement the priorities and program activities of the SCPC more efficiently, the cooperation and support of our international partners and supporters are essential. Within the framework of already established cooperation and support, activities are planned that will be supported in the upcoming period, precisely for the realisation of the above-mentioned priorities. Some of these activities are continuous and span multiple years, and for these reasons, require the ongoing support from international partners to continue in the future.

Strengthened capacities for better protection against sexual violence

Thirty public prosecutors and judges had the opportunity to expand their knowledge and practical skills in handling cases of sexual violence through a carefully planned and specialised program. The training, which was conducted in collaboration with the Academy of Judges and Public Prosecutors, created a space for open discussion and work on real judicial challenges that professionals face in their daily practice.

The training included intensive work on real cases, interactive group exercises and discussions focused on:

- new forms of sexual violence and their legal and judicial processing,
- eliminating stereotypes and biases in judicial reasoning,
- the application of a consent-based approach and the handling of trauma-informed approaches,
- the need for multi-sectoral and coordinated action.

The dynamic group work made a particularly strong impression — participants actively identified indicators of agreement/disagreement, analysed judgments from the European Court of Human Rights and discussed the risk of escalation of sexual violence to femicide. The trainers' approach, which maintained the participants' interest and encouraged the exchange of views, was particularly appreciated.



The professional exchange and constructive dialogue once again confirmed the importance of continuous improvement of the institutional response to sexual and gender-based violence. Participants identified examples of what they would put into practice — such as respecting the victim at every step of the procedure, due diligence in criminal proceedings and avoiding stereotypes about the victim, which could result in an inappropriate decision.

Together we are building a system that protects, responds and provides justice.



Connecting Future Prosecutors with Practice: Open Day at the Public Prosecution Office

Students from the Master's Programme in Criminal Law at the Faculty of Law "Iustinianus Primus" Skopje attended an Open Day organised by the project at the Public Prosecution Office of the Republic of North Macedonia.

During the visit, representatives of the Public Prosecution Office, the Council of Public Prosecutors, and the Academy for Judges and Public Prosecutors engaged in discussions with the students on the institutional organisation and competencies of the Public Prosecution Office, the role of the Council of Public Prosecutors, and the Academy's contribution to professional development and career opportunities for public prosecutors. The discussions also covered the role of public prosecutors in criminal proceedings and their practical work on individual cases.

Through this direct form of communication between students and representatives of judicial institutions, participants had the opportunity to exchange experiences and views on the current state of the Public Prosecution Office and the judiciary as a whole.

This event is part of ongoing activities aimed at strengthening the transparency of the Public Prosecution Office in its relations with the public.



Strengthening Our Support Systems to Meet the Real Needs of GBV Survivors

From 2 to 4 December 2025, we successfully conducted a basic Training of Trainers in Veles, empowering professionals from the Centres for Social Work in protecting victims of gender-based violence.

Over three inspiring days, 22 dedicated professionals and three representatives from the Ministry of Social Policy, Demography and Youth strengthened their skills with the guidance of the experts Ljupka Trajanovska, Sanela Škrijelj, Karin Bischof and Natasha Boshkova.

Through interactive sessions, group exercises, case studies, and practical simulations, participants explored how to:

- **Apply a human-rights and survivor-centred approach in responding to GBV**
- **Recognise and support the intersectional dimensions of GBV**
- **Identify and prevent secondary victimisation**
- **Improve risk assessment, case management, and referrals of persons affected by GBV**
- **Enhance multisectoral cooperation for better institutional protection**



What truly made this training special?

An open, trusting space where professionals shared their experiences, challenges, and examples of successfully resolved cases in a profound, empathetic, and highly motivating way. Participants especially liked “the interactive exercises, which made it possible to visualise and better perceive the manner of their work”. They also appreciated “the new approach in transferring knowledge through playful exercises, interaction and above all, the positive approach of the trainers. Flowers and cookies contributed to a more relaxed atmosphere.” This training experience confirms the importance of continuous support and professional upskilling of first responders to GBV.





The training is another important step toward strengthening the system for the protection of victims of gender-based violence and supporting more effective, sensitive, and well-coordinated institutional responses.

We are looking forward to the upcoming training and the interaction between participants and experts to further strengthen the capacities for working with people affected by GBV.

FEBRUARY - APRIL 2026

CALENDAR
UPCOMING EVENTS

APR

Trainings on communication with the Judicial Council and the Public Prosecution Office

Component 1

MAR

Presentation of the National Strategy for Organised Crime

Component 2

APR

Roundtable on Judicial Ethics

Component 1

24 FEB

Beneficiary Human Rights Forum #3 “Learning to Un-Learn: Men Engaging for Gender Equality”

Component 4

16 APR

IACA Academic Course on Corruption and Fraud in Public Procurement

Component 3

31 MAR

Training on monitoring instrument for the National Action Plan on Children’s Rights

Component 4

EU SUPPORT FOR RULE OF LAW

IMPRINT

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