GOOD NEWS FROM

RULE OF LAW

QUARTERLY REPORT 11



STRONG PROGRESS AND SHARED COMMITMENT HIGHLIGHTED AT SIXTH STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

CONFERENCE ON "TRANSPARENCY AS A KEY FACTOR IN THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL OF PUBLIC PROSECUTORS OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA"

"HAVING A COFFEE WITH A PURPOSE" – MEN ENGAGING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

CAMPAIGN FOR TRANSPARENT AND LEGAL LOBBYING LAUNCHED IN NORTH MACEDONIA

EU SUPPORT FOR RULE OF LAW

MAY 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 eleventh quarterly report comes at an important time for our project. We are now three years into the implementation phase. The cooperation with all final beneficiaries is well established, tested, and activities are running like a well-oiled machine. No wonder, therefore, that this report again tells stories about successful events and activities as well as awareness-raising campaigns that involve the general public. It is not always the most obvious, loud and widely visible events that we should draw our attention to. For me, a few lines in this report were particularly heartwarming. On page 17, you find a story about professional staff from kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, who, after having participated in workshops organised by our project, have started to share their knowledge and skills with their peers and other stakeholders on their own initiative. They do this on a very complicated subject: the prevention of sexual abuse of children. So, on this subject, we started with a public campaign, followed up by targeted workshops, and now we see institutional change coming—driven by committed professionals. This is truly encouraging!

The reporting period also saw other strong activities: A successful public awareness-raising campaign on lobbying, a topic still widely unfamiliar or misunderstood; very well appreciated workshops for first responders to gender-based violence, which also had a focus on their own wellbeing;

FOREWORD

an analysis highlighting the importance of doing more against sexual abuse of children; an engaging event on the role of men in enhancing gender equality, and our very own Project Steering Committee Meeting.
You will also find a very interesting interview about the role and work of the Agency for Management of Confiscated Assets.
Another focus during this period was put on the interlinked issues of institutional transparency and communication. Discussions took place regarding how the judiciary, public prosecution, and the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption could effectively communicate with the public in a transparent manner. Strategies were also developed to improve this communication. All agreed that public trust heavily relies on good communication and transparent and reliable ways of reasoning and explaining decisions or developments. As this is definitely easier said than done, I am very proud that our project could provide the necessary support to these efforts and very practical results.
There is much more to discover in this edition, so I recommend reading it with pleasure. Remember: this report is also meant as an antidote to all the negative news and the pessimistic views. There is progress; people are active, and challenges are accepted and tackled with commitment.

Enjoy the good news!



Dieter Schindlauer
Team Leader

MAY WE PRESENT:

CAMPAIGN FOR TRANSPARENT AND LEGAL LOBBYING LAUNCHED IN NORTH MACEDONIA

In cooperation with the SCPC, the campaign "Lobbying in North Macedonia" has been launched. The goal of this campaign is to raise public awareness of the importance of transparent and lawful lobbying and to inform and educate the public about the role of lobbying in democratic processes.

"HAVING A COFFEE WITH A PURPOSE" – MEN ENGAGING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

The Human Rights Forum brought together key stakeholders to explore gender equality from a male perspective. 50% of participants were men, highlighting the importance of engaging men.

TRANSPARENCY AS A KEY FACTOR IN THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL OF PUBLIC PROSECUTORS OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

The conference is a result of previously undertaken key steps following the adoption of the Communication and Transparency Strategy and the Rulebook on the Protection of Public Prosecutors from Undue Influence.

Let's talk about...

- EU Support for Rule of Law: Strong Progress and Shared Commitment Highlighted at Sixth Steering Committee Meeting
- Analysis Reveals 604 Cases of Child Sexual Abuse in 6 Years and Ongoing Gaps in Victim Protection
- Campaign for transparent and legal lobbying launched in North Macedonia
- First Responders to GBV from the Centres for Social Work: From Strengthened Victim Response to Caring for Their Own Resilience
- Conference on “Transparency as a Key Factor in the Work of the Council of Public Prosecutors of the Republic of North Macedonia”
- Strengthening the Judiciary and Public Prosecution Through Transparent Communication
- “Having a Coffee with a Purpose” – Men Engaging for Gender Equality
- Strengthening Transparency and Public Trust: Supporting SCPC in Building Strategic Communication
- Workshops held for the prevention of sexual violence against children
- Interview with Arita Hadzieva: Building a Modern System for Confiscated Asset Management Aligned with EU Standards

EU Support for Rule of Law: Strong Progress and Shared Commitment Highlighted at Sixth Steering Committee Meeting

The EU Support for Rule of Law project held its sixth Steering Committee Meeting on 26 March 2026 at the premises of the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption (SCPC). The meeting focused on presenting project results from August 2025 to February 2026 and outlining next steps.

The Team Leader, **Mr Dieter Schindlauer,** opened the meeting and welcomed participants, inviting **Mr Adem Chuchulj,** President of the SCPC, to address the audience. Mr Chuchulj expressed his appreciation for hosting the meeting and highlighted the significant benefits the SCPC has gained from the project. He noted that greater emphasis will be placed on lobbying in the upcoming period, as an important but under-promoted area, and acknowledged the strong support provided under Component 3.



Ms Marzia Palotta, Attachée at the Delegation of the European Union to North Macedonia, reaffirmed the EU's continued support for the country's EU accession path. She underlined that rule of law reforms are fundamental to the enlargement process and will determine the pace of accession. She encouraged stakeholders to make strategic use of the project, maintain strong coordination, and focus on achieving concrete results.

Ms Agnes Taibl, Project Director from the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Fundamental and Human Rights, thanked the SCPC for hosting and noted that the project is entering its final phase, with completion expected in early November. She emphasised the importance of intensive implementation and future planning, including an upcoming impact evaluation to assess results at individual, organisational, and system levels. She highlighted the evaluation as a key learning tool to identify successes, challenges, and sustainability prospects, and expressed appreciation to all partners and beneficiaries for their cooperation.

During the reporting period, the project achieved substantial progress across all four components.







Component 1 strengthened the judiciary by advancing the human resource strategy and defining a roadmap for its improvement. In cooperation with the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Council of Public Prosecutors, it enhanced transparency through a new communication strategy, supported digitalisation in five institutions, and provided IT training with the Academy of Judges and Public Prosecutors. A semi-annual review of the action plan was also completed with the Ministry of Justice.



Component 2 strengthened the capacities of the Ministry of Interior through targeted trainings in crime intelligence, financial investigations, drug-related crimes, and anti-corruption. Activities included specialised workshops on OSINT and cryptocurrencies, as well as a counter-terrorism exercise. The Sector for Undercover Operations further enhanced its capacities through trainings and exchanges on witness protection, while a high-level workshop on policing reform supported improved coordination and organisational efficiency.



Component 3 delivered strong results in cooperation with the SCPC, including the finalisation of the ICT Strategy and development of key communication documents. Progress was made in strengthening the asset declaration system and its digitalisation, while support was provided for drafting the National Anti-Corruption Strategy 2026–2030. Additional activities included trainings on crypto assets and data analysis, as well as preparations for specialised anti-corruption training and a public awareness campaign on lobbying.



Component 4 strengthened human rights and professional capacities across institutions, training around 600 professionals and reaching over 100,000 individuals through awareness campaigns. It enhanced inter-institutional cooperation through a human rights-based approach, supported improvements in victim protection, contributed to legal reforms in child protection, and advanced probation services, exceeding planned targets ahead of schedule.



Representatives of partner institutions expressed appreciation for the project's continued support and its contribution to strengthening the rule of law.

The meeting, attended by 43 representatives from the EU Delegation, consortium partners, beneficiary institutions, and experts, reaffirmed the shared commitment to building a more just and transparent society in North Macedonia.



Capturing Success:

A Visual Celebration











Analysis Reveals 604 Cases of Child Sexual Abuse in 6 Years and Ongoing Gaps in Victim Protection

The system for protecting children from sexual abuse needs to be more efficient, better coordinated, and fully focused on the needs of the child. This was highlighted during the presentation of the new Analysis of Child Sexual Abuse in the Republic of North Macedonia: Status, Institutional Response, and Challenges, prepared with the support of the project "EU Support for Rule of Law".

> "Child sexual abuse is a form of violence that is often difficult to recognise. It frequently occurs in silence, as victims tend to remain quiet due to fear, shame, and a lack of trust—particularly when the abuser is someone close to them. However, the issue doesn't stop there. When cases are brought to the attention of institutions, the response is often fragmented. The system typically lacks sufficient coordination and fails to adopt an approach tailored to the needs of the child. Appropriate, timely, and effective institutional protection of children from sexual violence is needed, i.e., a system and approach that puts the child at the centre, emphasised Vaska Bajramovska-Mustafa, State Counsellor at the Office of the Ombudsman, at the press conference held to present the analysis.



The analysis covers the period from 2020 to 2025 and represents one of the most comprehensive reviews of this issue in the country to date, examining international and national legal frameworks, institutional practice, available data, and key systemic challenges, with a special focus on vulnerable categories of children.

Girls are most commonly the victims

Of the total 508 victims recorded in the 2020–2024 period:

- 455 are girls (90%)
- 53 are boys (10%)

Although girls are the more common victims, there is a reasonable suspicion that the actual number of male victims is higher, as stigma and stereotypes often prevent reporting. This is valid in broader terms—the actual number of victims in all categories is likely to be significantly higher than recorded.
In 2025, out of 96 registered child victims, 88 were girls and 8 were boys. The most frequently registered crime was rape of a child under 15, with 48 victims.

Girls are most commonly the victims

In the 2020–2024 period:

- 153 victims were aged 11–13
- 139 victims were aged 14–15

This means that over 57% of all victims are children aged 11 to 15. The analysis also shows existence of cases with children younger than 10, including one child under 3 years of age, which is a serious alarm for the child protection system.

Children are often interviewed multiple times

Although the law stipulates that a child be interviewed only once, in practice, they are often questioned multiple times – by the police, social work centres, the prosecutor's office, and the court. This means that the child is retraumatised, which is a serious form of secondary victimisation.

Roma children are a particularly vulnerable group

Of the recorded cases, 145 victims (28%) were Roma children, which indicates a connection between sexual abuse and factors such as poverty, social exclusion and limited access to institutional care.

Systemic changes are needed.

According to the analysis, there is a significant gap between laws and their practical implementation. Key recommendations include the following:

- The child should be heard only once
- more child-friendly interview rooms
- continuous training of professionals
- long-term psychosocial support for children and families
- better coordination between institutions
- introducing the "Barnahus" model[3], which enables the child to receive legal, psychological, and health support in one place.

Scan the QR CODE for the full analysis

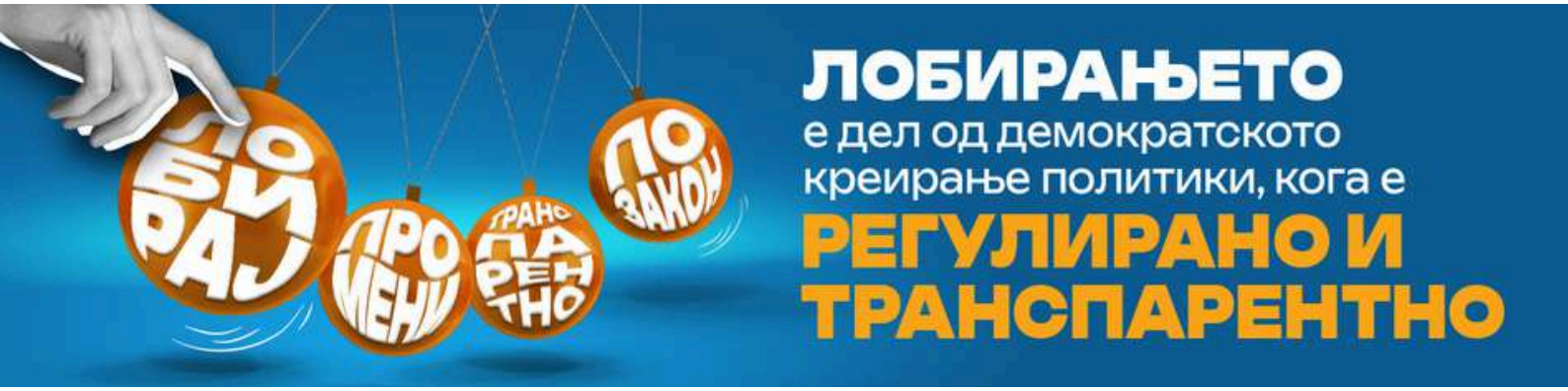
Campaign for transparent and legal lobbying launched in North Macedonia

In cooperation with the State Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (SCPC), the campaign “Lobbying in North Macedonia” has been launched. The goal of this campaign is to raise public awareness of the importance of transparent and lawful lobbying and to inform and educate the public about the role of lobbying in democratic processes.

Under the slogan “Lobby, Change, Transparently, By Law,” the campaign highlights lobbying as a legitimate and important component of democratic policymaking when conducted in a regulated, ethical, and transparent manner. This initiative enhances the understanding of decision-making processes and strengthens accountability and trust in institutions.

As part of the campaign, a series of roundtables was organised to raise awareness among private sector stakeholders, institutions at central and local levels, CSOs, and the media about transparent and ethical lobbying practices, while also promoting compliance with the legal framework governing lobbying activities in North Macedonia. In addition, informative video materials have been prepared and made publicly available, explaining in a simple and understandable way the concept of lobbying, its significance, and the challenges related to transparency and the prevention of undue influence.
The video materials are available in Macedonian and Albanian.

Find out more: LINK





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First Responders to GBV from the Centres for Social Work: From Strengthened Victim Response to Caring for Their Own Resilience

Within the framework of the project “EU Support for Rule of Law," two consecutive Training of Trainers sessions were delivered for employees of the Centres for Social Work and representatives of the Ministry of Social Policy, Demography and Youth. These trainings form part of the ongoing efforts to strengthen the capacities of first responders to gender-based violence (GBV) in the areas of human rights, equal treatment, and professional ethics.

The first training – “Responding to the Needs of Victims of Gender-Based Violence (Basic Level)” – focused on strengthening the personal and professional competencies of first responders, with an emphasis on a human rights-based approach, gender sensitivity, and the prevention of secondary victimisation.

“This training had many WOW moments”

For Grozdanka Milovski from the CSW Berovo, the first training represented a significant professional turning point.

> “I have always loved my profession, and I strive to learn something new every day. Many times, I have caught myself thinking, ‘I already know this.’ But this training had many WOW moments. This is new; this is something I did not recognise or address in this way before.”

She highlighted that it was particularly important to deepen the understanding of sexual violence and online sexual harassment, as well as the concept of due diligence and protection from secondary victimisation:

> “What mattered most to me was the explanation of ‘due diligence’ and, above all, the protection of victims from secondary victimisation – something that institutions do not always give sufficient attention to in our procedures.

International standards as a practical tool

Nebahat Imeri from the CSW Tetovo emphasised the practical applicability of the knowledge gained in real casework.

> "In practical work, I applied the knowledge I gained when drafting and justifying proposed protective measures for a victim of domestic violence, referring to the standards established in CEDAW documents, as well as the concept and risks related to femicide."

This approach enabled her to argue in a more structured and systematic way for the need for an urgent and coordinated institutional response, with a clear emphasis on protecting the life and safety of the victim.

> "The training significantly contributed to a more effective, sensitive and equal approach towards victims, as it encouraged us to work in line with international human rights and gender equality standards and to recognise the seriousness of the risk of femicide as the ultimate consequence of continued violence."

The second training – "Practising Stress Management and Burnout Prevention" – focused on personal resilience, emotional self-regulation, setting professional boundaries, and ensuring sustainability in emotionally demanding work environments.



Empathy with professional boundaries

Ivana Stojova from the CSW Delchevo emphasised that already the first training had a positive impact on her professional relationship with victims:

> "In practice, I enhanced my skills in active listening, empathetic communication, and a structured approach to assessing the individual needs of service users. I am already noticing more effective cooperation from clients during the process of professional assistance and support."

Equally significant was the second training – dedicated to stress management and burnout prevention.

> "The training helped me become more aware of the need for self-care and timely boundary-setting in order to preserve my professional stability."

She noted that breathing techniques, affirmations, and the "butterfly hug," a self-soothing grounding method designed to calm the nervous system during stress, are already being applied as brief stabilisation techniques after working on difficult cases.

In addition, Nebahat Imeri from the CSW Tetovo underlined the importance of mental health as an essential precondition for delivering quality services.

> "The training further increased my awareness of the importance of self-protection and mental health care as a prerequisite for professional effectiveness and long-term support to victims."

Working with victims of violence carries a significant psychological burden. The participants openly spoke about the challenges of their profession.

> “In our daily work, many things happen very quickly… But when stress becomes overwhelming, it negatively affects our ability to dedicate ourselves to daily tasks,” shared Grozdanka Milovski.

This reflection underscores the core message of the second training – that self-care is not a luxury, but a prerequisite for professional effectiveness and long-term support to victims. Only a stable professional, aware of their own boundaries, and capable of managing stress can provide consistent, sensitive, and high-quality support to individuals who have survived violence.

From individual awareness to institutional culture

Together, the two trainings create a comprehensive cycle of professional development: from understanding subtle forms of violence, through applying international standards and a victim-centred approach, to developing personal resilience and preventing burnout.

As demonstrated by the participants, change begins with awareness – but continues through practical application in everyday work.
This integrated approach – from quality support for victims to caring for professionals – conveys a fundamental message: effective protection cannot exist without stable and supported professionals.

The trainings form part of the broader activities of the project “EU Support for Rule of Law”, aimed at strengthening the institutional response to gender-based violence and building a professional culture grounded in human rights, equal treatment, and service sustainability.



Conference on “Transparency as a Key Factor in the Work of the Council of Public Prosecutors of the Republic of North Macedonia”

In cooperation between the Project and the Council of Public Prosecutors, a conference was organised on the topic “Transparency as a Key Factor in the Work of the Council of Public Prosecutors of the Republic of North Macedonia.”

The conference is a result of previously undertaken key steps following the adoption of the Communication and Transparency Strategy and the Rulebook on the Protection of Public Prosecutors from Undue Influence, two key documents through which the work of the Council has been elevated to a higher level within the judicial sector and aligned with European standards and practices.

The conference addressed topics such as the Mission of Protecting the Independence of Public Prosecutors and Independence and Accountability – Transparency as a Key Factor in the Daily Functioning of the Council of Public Prosecutors of the Republic of North Macedonia. Various speakers, including representatives of the Council of Public Prosecutors, the Public Prosecution Office, international experts, professors, journalists, and representatives of civil society, shared their views and perspectives on the role of the Council.

The conference focused on discussions regarding the importance of transparency in the daily operations of the Council of Public Prosecutors of the Republic of North Macedonia as one of the main factors in regaining public trust. The event drew public attention to the Council’s most important task — safeguarding the independence of public prosecutors — as well as to European standards in the area of prosecutorial self-governing bodies, with a particular focus on the need to maintain accountability in all operations of the Council.

This was the first conference organised by the Council since its establishment, attended by representatives from the Ministry of Justice and the entire judicial sector, as well as international experts, judges, public prosecutors, lawyers, and legal professionals.





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Strengthening the Judiciary and Public Prosecution Through Transparent Communication

In April 2026, the EU Support for Rule of Law Project, in cooperation with the Academy for Judges and Public Prosecutors, conducted three specialised trainings on practical skills for transparent and proactive communication with the public. The capacity-building events were designed for court presidents, judges, public prosecutors, judiciary spokespersons, and members of the Judicial Council and the Council of Public Prosecutors. The focus of the trainings was to support the implementation of both the judicial and prosecutorial communication strategies, which aim to establish a unified communication policy, improve transparency, and professionalise public relations within the justice system.

To build better relationships between the justice system and the media, the events covered topics such as the importance of transparency, understanding journalistic practices, and the skill of translating complex legal terminology into clear messages that the general public can easily understand. Furthermore, participants engaged in targeted modules focused on navigating media realities, establishing guidelines on what information can and cannot be legally disclosed, and managing sensitive, high-profile cases.



Practical exercises included crisis communication simulations, delivering statements to the camera under pressure, and strategies to improve cooperation between justice institutions and the media. The training also covered how to communicate effectively within the institutions themselves, giving leaders practical ways to deliver tough news and handle internal disagreements.

The training modules were developed and co-delivered by a team of international and local experts, ensuring an integration of European standards with the specific legal frameworks and practical realities of the Macedonian media landscape.

Enhancing the capacities of justice institutions to operate in a transparent and accountable manner is one of the main objectives of the Project. By equipping judiciary and prosecutorial leaders and spokespersons with modern, proactive communication tools, this initiative plays an important role in improving and maintaining public trust, helping to build a more open and resilient legal community.





“Having a Coffee with a Purpose” – Men Engaging for Gender Equality

On 24 February 2026, the Human Rights Forum brought together key stakeholders to explore gender equality from a male perspective. 50% of participants were men, highlighting the importance of engaging men.
The discussion addressed a key challenge: gender equality is often framed as women’s responsibility.

Bojan Jovanovski, local gender expert, emphasised:

> “There is a need to change the perspective and focus on men as both part of the problem and part of the solution.”

While men benefit from privilege, they are also harmed by patriarchal norms — often without realising it. Research shows that men in more gender-equal societies are less likely to experience depression, commit suicide, or die violent deaths. Gender equality benefits everyone.

Tim Peute, international human rights researcher, highlighted practical solutions:

> “Funding grassroots initiatives to train young men as role models can make a real difference in advancing gender equality.”

The forum also highlighted worrying trends: low solidarity toward victims of gender discrimination and the rise of anti-gender and authoritarian narratives —particularly among younger men.

The message was clear: engaging men is not optional—it is essential for advancing gender equality and safeguarding democracy.



Capturing Success:

A Visual Celebration









Strengthening Transparency and Public Trust: Supporting SCPC in Building Strategic Communication

Effective communication is a cornerstone of transparency, accountability and public trust, especially for institutions at the forefront of preventing and combating corruption. Recognising this, the Project provided support to the State Commission for the Prevention of Corruption (SCPC) in developing comprehensive Communication Strategy and Communication Action Plan, marking a significant milestone in further strengthening the institution's visibility, credibility and public engagement.

The strategy provides a structured and strategic approach to both internal and external communication, aligned with SCPC's mandate and institutional priorities.

Through close cooperation with SCPC leadership and its Secretariat staff, the project supported a thorough analysis of existing communication practices, identification of key stakeholders, development of tailored messages and communication tools. The newly developed Communication Strategy establishes clear objectives, defines target audiences, introduces modern communication channels and methodologies. It enables the SCPC to proactively inform and engage with citizens, media, civil society and international partners.

A key achievement of this process was the establishment of a dedicated strategic communication position within SCPC, ensuring sustainability and long-term impact. The appointment and mentoring of a Strategic Communicator strengthened the institution's capacity to manage both routine communication and crisis situations, improving consistency and responsiveness in public messaging.

"With the support provided through the new Strategy, we now have the tools and mechanisms to engage more effectively with citizens and stakeholders. This is essential for reinforcing our role as a credible and proactive institution in the prevention and fight against corruption", stated the President of SCPC Adem Chuchulj.



The Communication Action Plan further operationalises the strategy by setting concrete activities, timelines, and responsibilities, while introducing tools such as standardised messaging, media engagement protocols and internal communication procedures. This enables SCPC to present its work in a more structured, transparent and accessible manner.

The Deputy President of SCPC, Sofija Medarska Spasova said: "The Communication Strategy allows us to communicate our work more clearly, strengthen the public trust and demonstrate our commitment to transparency and accountability."



As a result of this support, SCPC strengthens the strategic, transparent approach in regard to communication, which is well-coordinated internally and externally. The Communication Strategy not only enhances the institution's public image but also contributes to greater citizen awareness, improved stakeholder cooperation and increased confidence in anti-corruption efforts in North Macedonia.

The strengthened communication also means reinforcing integrity, accountability and trust in public institutions.

Workshops held for the prevention of sexual violence against children

As part of the "1 in 5" campaign aimed at preventing sexual violence against children, 17 training sessions have been conducted so far, training 346 professionals. These sessions mark a significant step towards strengthening the system to prevent and recognise risks early on.

As a result of this process, the professional staff from kindergartens, primary and secondary schools — including pedagogues, psychologists, social workers, sociologists, special educators and rehabilitators, special education teachers, speech therapists, educators, caregivers, medical personnel and others — who were part of these trainings, continue to transfer knowledge further. Many participants have already organised, and some of them are currently running workshops, creating opportunities for awareness, recognising signs of abuse, and encouraging timely responses.





It is through this approach - promoting the sharing and dissemination of knowledge - that the Project contributes directly to fostering a more informed and vigilant community.
The activities will continue in the upcoming period, with new workshops with students and cooperation with parents, as part of the continuous efforts for prevention and support.



HADZIEVA Arita

INTERVIEW

COORDINATOR FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AT THE AGENCY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF SEIZED ASSETS

Building a Modern System for Confiscated Asset Management Aligned with EU Standards

The event "Operational Functioning of the AMCP and the New Legal Amendments", organised with the support of the project "EU Support for Rule of Law – Component 2", brought together representatives of relevant institutions to discuss the operational work of the Agency for Management of Confiscated Property and the latest legal developments in the area of asset recovery and confiscation management. On this occasion, we spoke with Arita Hadzieva, Coordinator for International Cooperation at the Agency for Management of Confiscated Property (AMCP), who shared more about the agency's ongoing activities, challenges, and priorities in aligning its work with EU standards.

1. **At a recent event, the new systematisation was discussed. What specific changes does it bring to the organisation of work, and what will it mean for a more efficient functioning of the Agency?**

The new systematisation represents a fundamental reform in the organisational setup and functioning of the Agency. It was developed based on a functional analysis and is fully aligned with the new Law on Management of Confiscated Assets, Proceeds and Seized Items in Criminal and Misdemeanour Proceedings.

Specifically, the new systematisation brings a clearer distribution of competencies, responsibilities and work processes between organisational units. For the first time, the processes are set up in an integrated manner – from the acquisition of property, through records, assessment and storage, to its management; electronic sales and leases, social reuse, as well as financial monitoring.

The new organisational structure also introduces new job positions and functional units that directly arise from the new legal obligations, especially in the areas of records, assessment, traceability, risk management, inter-institutional coordination, and international cooperation and coordination.

This will mean more efficient functioning of the Agency through faster processing of court decisions, improved coordination with courts and other institutions, increased transparency and greater accountability in the management of seized and confiscated assets.

At the same time, the new systematisation allows for better utilisation of human resources, clearly defined competencies and more efficient internal communication, which is particularly important in conditions of expanded competencies and increased workload.

Looking at the long term, we expect this reform to significantly contribute to the institutional strengthening of the Agency and more effective protection of the public interest through successful results in the execution of confiscation and the clear message that crime does not pay.

2. **The new legal solutions are at the centre of the reforms. Which segment of them do you think will have the greatest impact on the efficiency and transparency of the management of confiscated assets?**

The new law creates the basis for a modern, functional and more sustainable system of management of confiscated property, aligned with European standards and recommendations, but also with the real needs arising from practice.



I believe that one of the most significant new legal solutions is the introduction of a more clearly defined and integrated system for managing confiscated and confiscated property, with clearly established competencies, processes and traceability mechanisms.

The new law emphasises the mandatory electronic registry, aligning with the new EU Directive. This ensures improvements in records, transparency, and control right from the moment assets are temporarily seized. Each case will have a clearly defined process, covering acquisition, assessment, storage, location, management, and final realisation. This approach significantly reduces the risks of inefficiency, loss of value, and insufficient oversight.

It is also significant that the law provides for better inter-institutional coordination and data exchange between all competent institutions, which is crucial for faster processing of court decisions and more efficient property management.

From the perspective of transparency, the improvement of electronic records and mechanisms for monitoring property and procedures, as well as the electronic sales system, is particularly important. Public electronic auctions allow every citizen to follow the progress of the sale through the Agency's website, which contributes to greater accountability, better control and stronger trust in institutions.

At the same time, the law also brings modernisation in the area of electronic sales, management of temporarily seized assets, social reuse, as well as the introduction of additional mechanisms for preventing procedural misuse.

3. **As you mentioned, the law also provides for better inter-institutional cooperation. What are the most common challenges that the Agency faces, and how does it function in practice?**

Yes, the management of seized and confiscated assets is a complex process that by its nature requires constant coordination between multiple institutions – courts, public prosecutors' offices, the Ministry of Interior, enforcement officers, inspection bodies, the Cadastre Agency, the National Bank, the Central Registry, the Customs Administration, financial institutions and other competent authorities.

One of the most common challenges is the timely exchange of information and documentation, especially in cases where the procedures are complex and involve different types of assets.

In practice, it is very important to timely submit final decisions, accurately record the assets and quickly coordinate their acquisition, storage and further management. A particularly sensitive segment is ensuring traceability and preserving the value of the property until its final realisation.

That is why, within the framework of the reform processes and with the support of the EU and the IPA project "EU Support for Rule of Law", significant emphasis is placed on strengthening inter-institutional cooperation, standardisation of procedures and digitalisation of processes and records. The new systematisation and organisational set-up allow for more clearly defined contact points, better coordination between sectors and more efficient communication with external institutions. In practice, this means faster action, greater transparency and more efficient management of confiscated assets.

4. **The project supports the work of the Agency. What specific activities or tools contributed the most to improving your work?**

The project "EU Support for Rule of Law" played a crucial role in the institutional strengthening and development of the Agency. It should be taken into consideration that the Agency was established in 2009, and for years, its capacities were not at the required level. The staffing level was around 40%, and the institution did not have sufficient institutional recognition, nor a full understanding of its competencies by other institutions.

It was through the support of the "EU Support for Rule of Law" project that the key needs of the Agency were mapped out and identified. With this support, a comprehensive analysis of the situation in the Agency was prepared, which represented a strategic document and roadmap for its further development.



It also provided a foundation for launching activities within the reform agenda, particularly concerning the complete staffing of the institution—a process that is currently at an advanced stage of implementation.

As a result of this support, the new Rulebook on Internal Organisation and the Rulebook on Systematisation of Job Positions were developed, fully aligned with the new Law on Management of Confiscated Assets, Proceeds and Seized Items in Criminal and Misdemeanour Proceedings.

The Agency operates as an institution responsible for executing final court decisions, but it is not involved in financial investigations. In practice, we frequently encounter challenges related to the unenforceability or lack of clarity in court rulings. Although the Agency acts based on the final judgment, it often conducts additional operational investigations into assets to ensure the effective implementation of the decision. These additional investigations presented the most significant practical challenges we faced.

Through workshops, trainings and the Agency's involvement at the inter-institutional level, the practical gaps in the system were significantly improved. We often say that in order to have a quality confiscation, a quality and enforceable court verdict is also needed. Today, thanks to the Project's support, inter-institutional cooperation has been significantly strengthened and the role of the Agency in the entire system is better understood. Additionally, with the support of the project, by-laws and standard operating procedures were developed in accordance with EU standards, which enabled greater standardisation, clear procedures and more efficient handling. It is also particularly important that, through these activities, the Agency has become much more recognisable – not only at the national, but also at the international level, as an institution that actively works to improve the system for managing seized and confiscated assets. Over the years, the support from the project has not only been technical assistance, but a real driver of reforms, institutional strengthening and professionalisation of the Agency.

5. **Looking ahead, what would a "successful system" for managing confiscated assets mean to you – what results would show that the reforms have really had an effect?**

For me, a successful system for managing confiscated assets would mean a system that is efficient, transparent, functional and fully compliant with European standards, but at the same time practically applicable in our institutional context.

This would primarily mean that court decisions are quickly, clearly and fully enforceable, and that the Agency acts on them in a timely and efficient manner, without administrative obstacles and institutional inconsistencies.

A successful system also means full traceability of assets – from the moment of temporary seizure, through assessment, storage and management, to final sale or other form of realisation. This is why the electronic registry, digitalisation, and standardised procedures are extremely important.

At the same time, one of the most important indicators of success would be significantly strengthened inter-institutional cooperation and a clear understanding of the role of each institution in the process. Today, we already have positive developments in that area, but the goal is to build a system in which institutions will function in a coordinated and timely manner.
A successful system also means preserving the value of property, reducing the risks of abuse, and ensuring greater transparency and public trust in institutions. Citizens need to see that there is a clear, controlled and accountable system for managing seized and confiscated property.

I believe that a key indicator of success would be the implementation of a “track record” system and an inter-institutional registry. These tools would allow us to gather real statistical indicators regarding the effects of confiscation and asset management. If we can demonstrate, through these mechanisms, a percentage reduction in certain types of crime, it would provide compelling evidence that the system is working effectively.

The message must be clear – crime does not pay. The essence of confiscation is to take away the economic power acquired through crime and to show that no one can benefit from illegally acquired property.

For me, a true indicator that the reforms have had an effect will be the moment when the Agency functions as a fully equipped, professional and institutionally recognisable institution, with clear procedures, trained professional staff and modern management mechanisms, which is recognised as a trusted partner both nationally and internationally.

MAY - AUGUST 2026

CALENDAR
UPCOMING EVENTS

6 MAY

Conference: Transparency as a key factor in the work of the Council of Council of Public Prosecutors

Component 1

18 - 22 MAY

Workshop Fight against illegal drug trafficking III Session

Component 2

1-2 JUNE

Workshop on data analysis and data processing

Component 3

16 - 18 JUNE

Study visit in MoI Ljubljana for the Sector for International Police Cooperation (SIPC)

Component 2

17 - 19 JUNE

Training on "Strengthening Police Response to Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence (Victim-Centred, Human Rights-Based and Multisector Coordination Approach)"

Component 4

20 -21 MAY

Presentation and discussion of the draft methodology for conducting visits of the Ombudsman in the field of combating trafficking in persons

Component 4

IMPRINT

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