

Combating organized crime in South-east Europe

Asset Seizure, **Confiscation**,
Management and Re-use



Improving asset recovery measures to combat transnational organized crime in South-Eastern Europe

Up-to-date information can be found at osce.org/projects/asset-recovery-in-south-eastern-europe

The OSCE is implementing a cross-dimensional project to strengthen the fight against transnational organized crime and corruption in South-Eastern Europe through improved capacity building and regional co-operation in the seizure of proceeds of crime, including financial assets.

The most effective way to disrupt or dissolve all forms of serious and organized crime is to confiscate the revenues from criminal activities, since organized criminal groups survive and thrive through illicit financial gains.

This project aims at improving the fight against transnational organized crime and corruption in the OSCE region by enhancing regional co-operation among five OSCE participating States: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, and by building their capacities in this area.

The project is implemented by the OSCE's Transnational Threats Department and the Office of the Co-ordinator of Economic and Environmental Activities, in close co-operation with the OSCE field operations and governmental and non-governmental institutions.

How is the project structured?

The project adopts a comprehensive approach to asset recovery by providing support to the entire cycle of asset seizure and asset confiscation. It includes three areas of intervention:

- Financial investigations, assets seizure and asset confiscation
- Asset management
- Asset re-use

The project promotes the social re-use of assets confiscated from criminal groups and corrupt practices. Not only does the re-use of assets return to society what was taken from it, such an approach can be used to create sustainable businesses, employment opportunities, and help to improve the business climate. Most importantly the social re-use of assets sends a strong signal to citizens about

the strength and effectiveness of their public institutions.

Who are the beneficiaries of the project?

The project aims to enhance the capacities of the judiciary, relevant law enforcement institutions, asset management agencies, and civil society organizations. It also provides operational support to regional co-operation mechanisms such as the Balkan Asset Management Interagency Network (BAMIN) and the Permanent Conference of Organized Crime Prosecutor's Offices.

What are the main activities?

The project is carrying out an analysis of judicial decisions in asset seizure cases. The findings and recommendations will be used in training courses for judges and prosecutors on how to improve the application of asset recovery measures.

The project has also designed an online training and mentoring programme to prepare national officials from police and prosecution services to become internationally qualified as Certified Fraud Examiners (CFE) or as internationally certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialists (CAMS).

Operational support is also provided to Financial Investigative Units, BAMIN, and

the Permanent Conference of Organized Crime Prosecutor's Offices with the aim of increasing information-sharing and to facilitate regional co-operation in cross-border investigations and in the management of seized and confiscated assets.

Given the importance the project attaches to the social re-use of confiscated assets, a platform will be created for policy-makers and civil society in the region to discuss national experiences and identify good practices in the management of confiscated assets. Good practices in the social re-use of assets will also be promoted through awareness-raising and other public outreach activities.

What will be the project outcomes?

- Increased use and effectiveness of asset seizure and confiscation, including through enhanced regional co-operation.
- Increased efficiency and cost-effectiveness of asset management, including through improved regional co-operation when assets are located abroad.
- Increased social re-use of confiscated assets and enhanced public engagement and awareness of social re-use benefits in combating corruption and organized crime.