

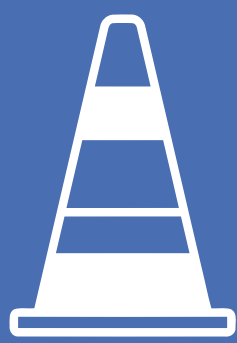


**REPORT ON DIGITAL
NEWS in Serbia**

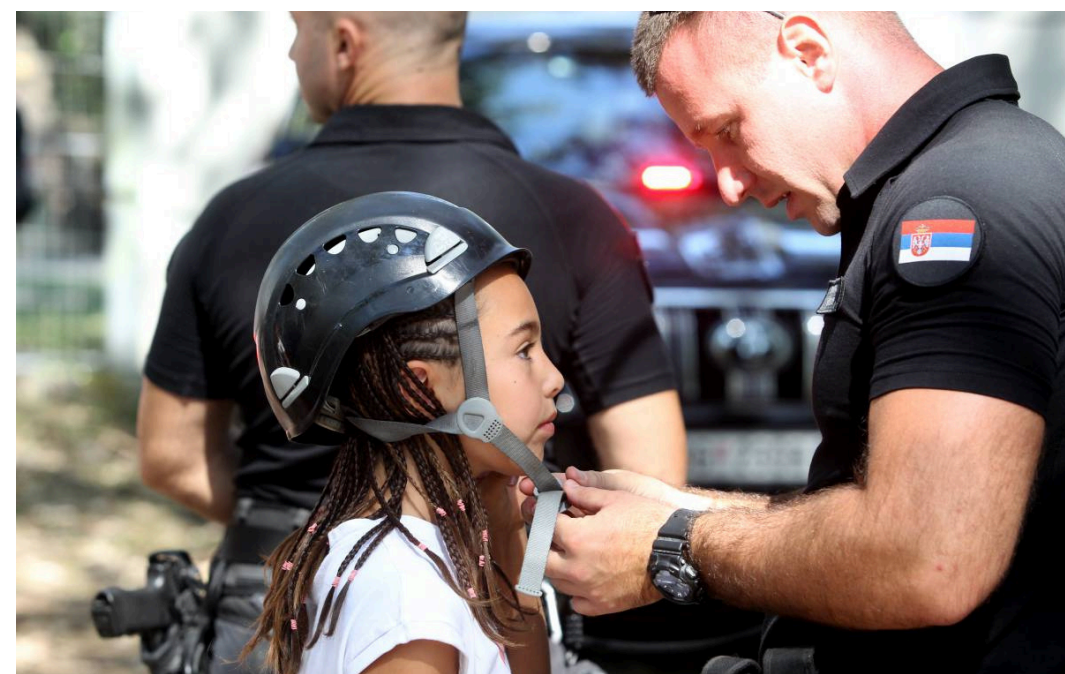
IMPACT STORIES

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Mission Impact Stories



Improving the safety of school children

Following the tragic mass shootings in May 2023, the Mission supported a multi-stakeholder approach to counter peer violence and improve child safety.

Results

- Facilitated and participated in multi-stakeholder protocol “Together and Safely Through Childhood” with the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education, Commissioner for Protection and Equality, the Road Traffic Safety Agency, CARITAS in Serbia, and the University of Criminal Investigation and Police Studies (acceded in December 2023).

- In the first semester of 2023/2024, 17,799 workshops encompassing all primary schools across Serbia for 231,555 students 7-14 years old on peer and digital violence, and basic safety in emergency situations were held.

- Provided interactive online platform Kahoot! Used to resolve peer conflict situations in real and virtual environments, under the guidance of teachers, school psychologists, and police officers.

Framework

- 2023-2024 “Together and Safely Through Childhood” Protocol
- 2023-2026 Action Plan for the Implementation of the Government Programme



Mission Impact Stories



Supporting preliminary identification of THB victims

Aiming to increase Serbia's ability to combat trafficking in human beings (THB), the Mission has worked with law enforcement and CSOs to address this phenomenon comprehensively.

Serbia: Smederevo, Trstenik, Pančevo, and Zrenjanin.

Results

- Since 2021 until the end of 2023, organized 12 training courses for social workers on conducting preliminary identification of THB victims since 2021, with the Centre for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings (Centre)
- Supported the Centre in developing official indicators for the formal identification of THB victims in 2021
- Organized four training courses in 2023 on preliminary identification of THB victims in 4 cities in

- A total of 97 employees of local social welfare centres, shelters for elderly people, and shelters for children (89 women, 8 men) successfully attended these courses
- According to the Centre's annual reports, the number of alerts of potential THB victims coming from social workers almost doubled since the onset of these courses (from 22 in 2021 to 43 in 2023)

Framework

- OSCE Ministerial Council Decision No. 2/03 on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
- OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings 2003
- OSCE Ministerial Council Decision No. 6/17 Strengthening Efforts to Prevent Trafficking in Human Beings



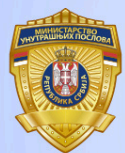
Mission Impact
Stories

ПРЕДАЈ ОРУЖЈЕ БЕЗ:

1. питања о пореклу

2. страха од кривичне
одговорности и последица

3. обавезе да се легитимишеш



oebs

Организација за европску
кооперацију и развој
Београд и Београд



Police Force Office



MINISTRY
OF DEFENSE
OF THE REPUBLIC
OF SERBIA



Ministry of Foreign
Affairs of the Slovak
Republic



Ministry of Internal
Affairs of the Slovak
Republic



#EY
ZA TEBE



Supporting voluntary surrender of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)

Following the tragic mass shootings in May 2023, the Mission supported a nation-wide campaign to collect small arms and light weapons and ammunition.

- Collected:
 - 108,883 pieces of SALW, including 26,485 mines and explosive devices
 - 4,243,139 pieces of ammunition

Results

- Contributed to the 8 May to 30 June 2023 nationwide voluntary firearm surrender campaign by the Ministry of Interior, renting 125 billboards, designing campaign materials for national and local broadcasters, and for social media

Framework

- Serbia's 2019-2024 Strategy for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons
- 2012 OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons
- 2003 OSCE Document on Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition



Mission Impact Stories



Training police and prosecutors to efficiently collect lawful and reliable evidence

To improve the efficiency of proceedings and avoid retrials, the Mission, together with the Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office (SPPO) and the Ministry of Interior's (MoI) national forensics center, developed a training program for police forensic technicians and prosecutors.

Results

- The set of training courses started in 2019 and completed in 2023, based on the Mission-commissioned Guidelines for police forensic technicians and prosecutors.

- The courses provided practical exercises where participants examine a mock crime scene and collect various evidence, including biological, toxicological and evidence originating from firearms.
- Since the first pilot workshop in late 2019, to date 778 prosecutors, police officers, and forensic experts (357 women, 421 men) completed the 26 training seminars across the country.

Framework

- The 2011 Criminal Procedure Code
- OSCE Commitments from Copenhagen 1990 and Moscow 1991
- 2020-2025 Strategy for Development of the Justice System in Serbia



Mission Impact Stories



Supporting the High Judicial and High Prosecutorial Councils to implement the 2022 constitutional amendments

On 9 February 2023, Serbia took an important step to ensure independence and accountability of the judiciary with the adoption of five important laws implementing the 2022 constitutional amendments. On 8 May 2023, the High Judicial Council (HJC) and High Prosecutorial Council (HPC) were established under the provisions of the new laws.

- In the period ahead, the Mission will continue to work in partnership with the Serbian authorities, professional associations, and civil society on strengthening judicial independence and accountability system for judges and prosecutors, to operationalize these by-laws, based on European and international rule-of-law standards.

Results

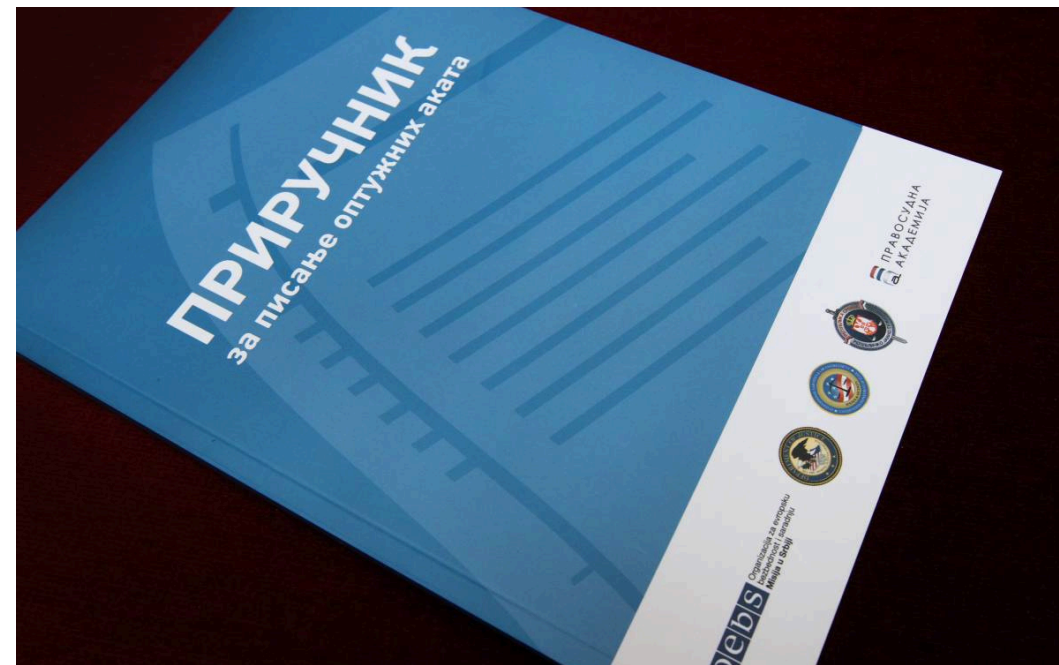
- During 2023, both the HJC and HPC sought the Mission's expert advice in developing some 45 by-laws, adopted in May 2024, in relevant working groups, concerning ethics, disciplinary measures, case selection, judges' assignments, and others.

Framework

- The Rulebook of Procedures of HPC
- The Rulebook on Disciplinary Responsibility and Disciplinary Procedure
- The Rulebook on the Criteria for Evaluation of Prosecutors and Judges
- Warsaw Recommendations on Judicial Independence and Accountability 2023



Mission Impact Stories



Investigating and prosecuting VAT fraud

Corruption is among the top 5 problems that citizens of Serbia expect its government to resolve. According to the Fiscal Council of Serbia's calculations, corruption costs at least 1.6% of GDP per year.

Results

- Organized training sessions, from mid-2022 to mid-2023, to build capacities in investigating economic crime together with the U.S. Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training (OPDAT) attended by, 220 representatives (137 women, 83 men) of law enforcement bodies.
- The Mission, together with the Finance Ministry, in 2023, trained 80 accountants (50 women, 30 men) on- and offline, and with the Judicial Academy 40 supervisory authorities and prosecutors (24 women, 16 men)

helping them understand their obligations stemming from Serbian standards related to the anti-money laundering regulations.

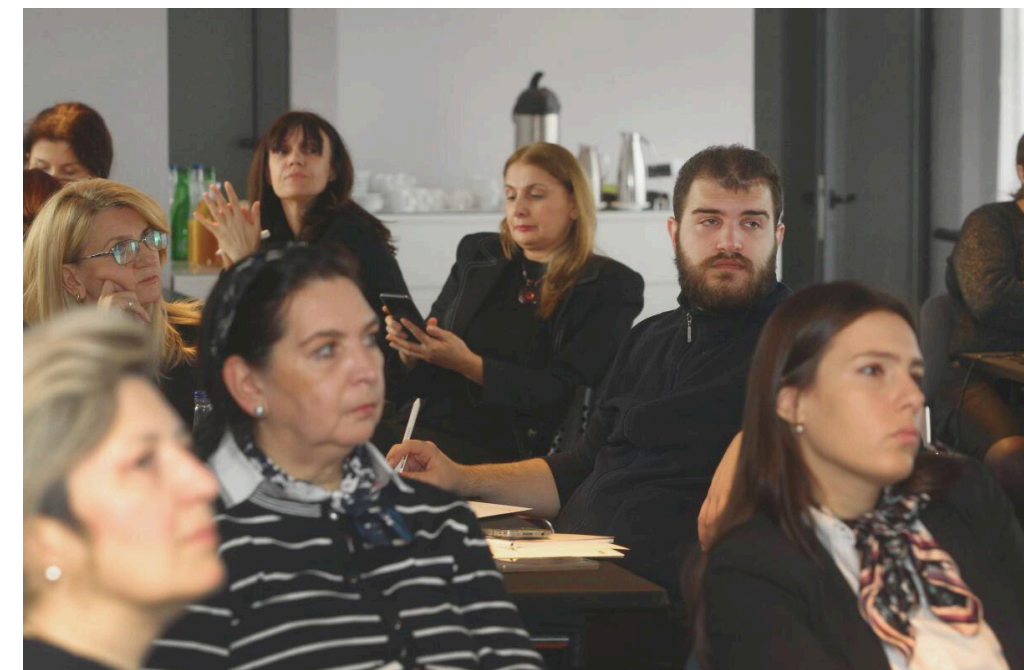
- For sustainability, and in co-operation with OPDAT, the Mission developed the Manual on Asset Forfeiture for use by Serbian practitioners and organized three seminars, attended by 25 police officers, judges and prosecutors (11 women, 14 men), to promote the Manual. These seminars are planned to be continued in 2024.

Framework

- Sofia Ministerial Council Decision No. 11/04
- 2012 Dublin Ministerial Declaration No. 2/12
- Basel Ministerial Council Decision No. 5/14
- Hamburg Ministerial Council Decision No. 4/16



Mission Impact Stories



Building a rule of law culture through civic education and sociology

To promote a rule of law culture and inter-culturalism, particularly among youth, the Mission supported the reformed curricula of civic education introduced in 2018 and organized a series of sociology teachers' trainings, accredited by the Ministry of Education

Results

- In partnership with the Institute for Improvement of Education (IIE), the Mission organized four training sessions in 2023 for a total of 115 teachers that were trained to promote core OSCE principles in their civic education classes.
 - Topics: gender equality, civic activism, good governance and democratic principles, respect for minority rights and non-discrimination.

- In co-operation with the IIE, piloted a civic education competition with 24 students (16 girls, 8 boys) from eight high schools.
 - Aim: To anchor the competition as a national one with the Ministry of Education, incorporating it into the official school competition calendar.

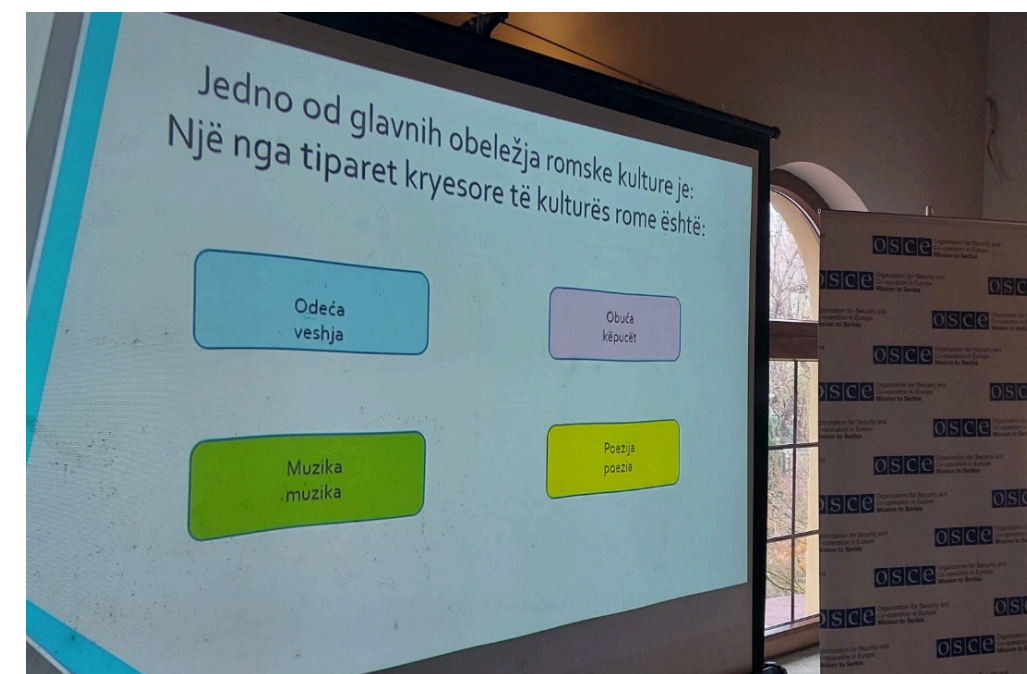
- In 2022 and 2023, in partnership with the IIE, the Mission organized 16 training seminars for 220 sociology teachers (166 women, 54 men) working in over 300 schools across the country.

Framework

- Ljubljana Guidelines on Integration of Diverse Societies



Mission Impact Stories



South Serbia Youth Talks: Building trust among youth from different communities in south Serbia

In south Serbia, the lack of opportunities for social interaction between young Serbs, Albanians and Roma from Bujanovac, Preševo and Medveđa triggered the Mission's pilot initiative 'South Serbia Youth Talks'.

Results

- Brought together 59 youth from the three communities and three municipalities (32 women and girls, 27 men and boys) in December 2023 and in May 2024 to discuss issues of common concern, breaking down stereotypes and prejudice

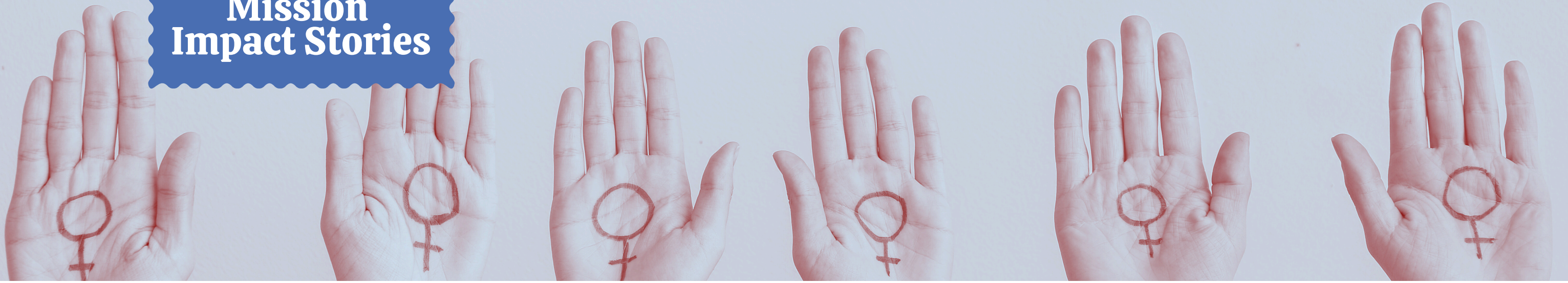
- Discussed similarities between the three languages, cultures, traditions and music, as well as environmental challenges in their respective communities, and wishes for their elected officials
- Raised awareness on the use of social media, safety on the Internet, as well as the risks associated with private data on the Internet

Framework

- Serbia's 2013 Seven-Point Plan
- 2003 OSCE Ministerial Council Decision on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination
- Declaration on the Role of Youth in Contribution to Peace and Security Efforts*



**Mission
Impact Stories**



I JA SE PITAM

I have a say, too



Engaging women on local policy issues in the multi-ethnic southwest Serbia region

In 2023, the Mission's field outlet in Novi Pazar piloted the Women's Empowerment Network I ja se pitam ("I have a say, too") initiative to create space for open discussions of gender equality and women's empowerment issues.

Results

- Created a network of 72 women from all sectors of Novi Pazar society meeting on a monthly basis to discuss current issues and challenges in the multi-ethnic southwest Serbia region
- Expanded the network in 2024 to the municipality of Prijepolje to create sister networks throughout southwest Serbia

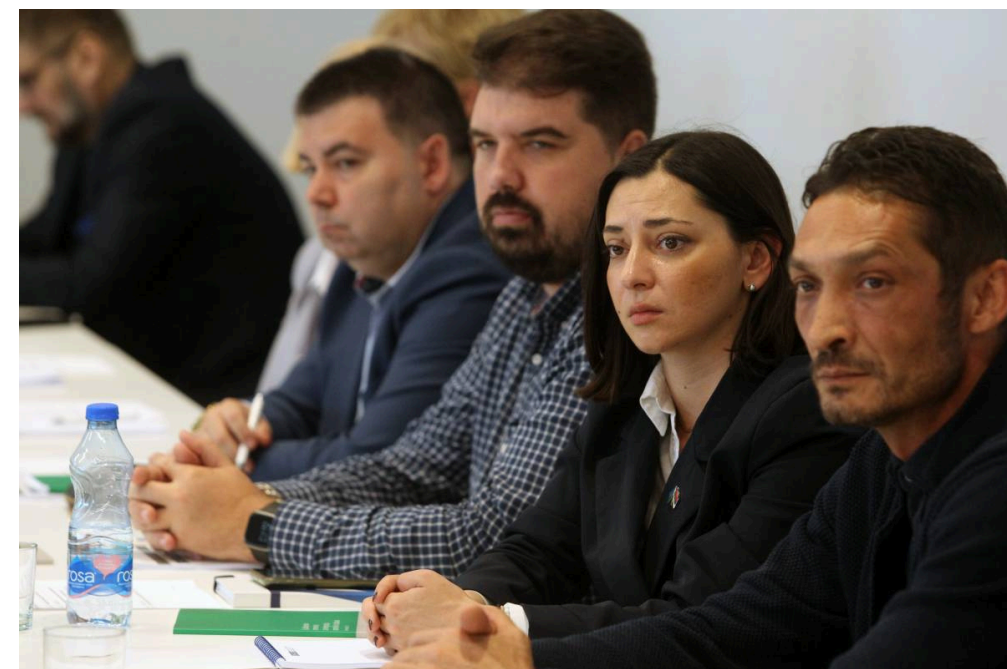
- Covered topics with policy recommendations for municipal authorities in the area of city planning and infrastructure, education, women's health, entrepreneurship, environmental and ecological security, elections, and gender-based violence
- Shared and promoted conclusions through local media outlet "Free Media", with special podcasts shining a spotlight on the discussions and outcomes

Framework

- 2004 OSCE Action Plan on the Promotion of Gender Equality
- Serbia's 2021-2030 Gender Equality Strategy
- MC Decision on preventing and combatting violence against women*



Mission Impact Stories



Supporting National Minority Councils assert their rights

As nearly 12% of Serbia's citizens belong to national minorities the Mission builds the capacities of 24 NMCs to effectively discharge their public powers in line with Serbia's Constitution and legal framework.

Results

- Provided tailored capacity-building for NMC's members based on their self-identified needs, surveyed with Mission in-house expertise.
- Organized individual training seminars for 7 NMCs in 2023 and 2024 to bolster their knowledge in the four areas of NMCs' public powers (culture, education, information, official use of language and script).

- In partnership with the Republic Secretariat for Legislation, the Mission organized a joint training seminar on the official use of language and script, attended by 22 representatives (12 women, 10 men) of 16 NMCs
- In year 2023 and 2024 organized four seminars on recognizing discrimination and available avenues for legal redress in partnership with the Commissioner for Protection of Equality with 68 representatives from 19 NMCs.

Framework

- 2003 OSCE Ministerial Council Decision No. 4/03 on tolerance and non-discrimination
- Law on National Councils of National Minorities



Mission Impact Stories



Advancing education to contribute to Serbia's reform agenda

To build expertise for future generations based on OSCE principles, the Mission has supported innovative study programmes at the University of Belgrade Faculty of Law.

Results

- Since 2015, the Mission has supported the Environmental Law Clinic which more than 500 senior law students (395 women, 145 men) have completed to date
- The second cohort of the Master's Study Programme Summer School "Law and Gender" took place in July 2024, at the Faculty of Law in Belgrade. In 2023, the Mission piloted the "Law and Gender" Spring School, currently pending accreditation as a regular master's programme for sustainability attended by 74 Serbian and international participants (50 women, 24 men)

- Supported a decade-long legal clinic for non-discrimination, with a focus on the Serbian legal framework for responding to hate crime, and protection mechanisms and legal remedy in discrimination cases. Some 150 then-students (120 women, 30 men), now lawyers, judges and prosecutors have undergone this training.
- Veljko Milošević, an alumnus of the Legal Clinic for Environmental Law, with the support of the OSCE, participated in the 2nd preparatory meeting for the 31st Economic and Environmental Forum (EEF) in Valletta, Malta, as one of the panelists

Framework

- Youth Strategy 2023-2030
- Strategy for the Development of Education in Serbia by 2030



Mission Impact Stories



Promoting ethics and integrity at the national and local level

The Mission supported the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia (National Assembly) to align the Code of Conduct for MPs (Code) with OSCE/ODIHR standards, GRECO recommendations and international best practices. In 2021, the National Assembly adopted key improvements to the Code, which it had requested the Mission to draft.

Results

- Provided expertise and organized capacity-building programmes for MPs on parliamentary integrity and ethics.
- Jointly with ODIHR and national and international partners, provided capacity-building in 2023, and delivered a specialized workshop for the newly appointed Ethics Commission members in 2023, to raise its capacities in dealing with Code-related complaints.

- Helped the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities develop the Code of Ethics for Local Officials (CoE), setting out ethical and integrity standards. It has also been translated into 13 minority languages. To date, 56 out of 170 Local Self Governments (LSGs) adopted the Code, a significant increase from 30 at the beginning of 2023.
- Supported the organization of 5 regional round tables, development of a CoE implementation Guide, distribution of posters with the CoE text, implementation of three online training programmes and development of a curriculum for an in-person training programme for CoE oversight bodies. To date, more than 400 persons (with two thirds being women) have participated in the training programme.

Framework

- Public Administration Reform Strategy 2021-2030
- The Code of Public Conduct for MPs
- The Code of Ethics for Local Officials
- 2012 Dublin OSCE Ministerial Council Declaration



Mission Impact Stories



Supporting the drafting of two media reform laws

In support of the implementation of Serbia's Media Strategy 2020-2025, the Mission in 2023 focused on legislative and policy development for two media reform laws: The Law on Public Information & Media and the Law on Electronic Media.

Results

- Provided targeted expertise and facilitated working group meetings building trust and fostering a collaborative approach between government authorities and media and journalists' associations.
- Two draft laws were harmonized in a seven-hour meeting, with the participation of the Prime Minister and media and journalists' associations, on Mission premises, in co-operation with the Norwegian Embassy and the EU Delegation to Serbia.

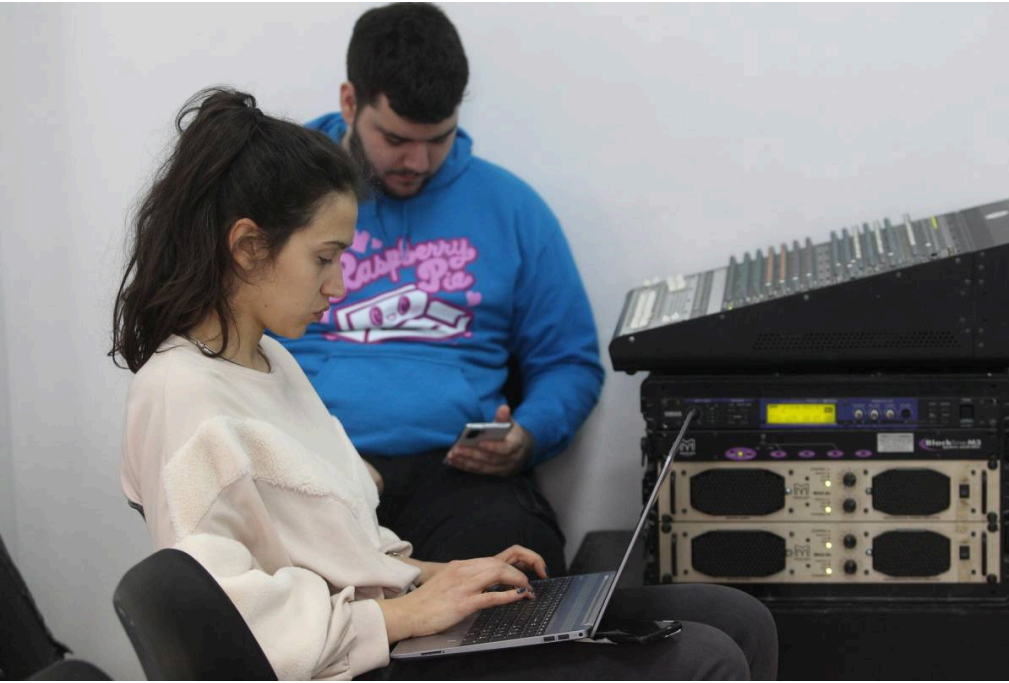
- On 26 October 2023, the National Assembly adopted the two reform laws, which represent a significant step forward towards media freedom.
- Project co-financing mechanisms strengthened.
- Press Council's role on ethical reporting asserted.
- Media reporting ban on functional campaign extended.
- REM Council recomposition foreseen by 4 November 2024.

Framework

- Helsinki Final Act 1975
- Copenhagen Document 1990
- Media Strategy 2020-2025
 - The Law on Public Information
 - The Law on Electronic Media
- PC Decision No. 193 of 1997



Mission Impact Stories



Strengthening media and digital literacy

The Mission supports media and digital literacy of all segments of society through targeted analysis, research and capacity-building.

Results

- Four digital literacy workshops in Arandjelovac, Bujanovac, Kladovo and Subotica on children's use of digital technologies, online safety, and protection from cyber bullying for 260 teachers (150 women, 110 men)
- Seven media literacy workshops for older adults on the basis of a Mission-supported research report on news media and entertainment progress, dis- and misinformation and fact-checking tools with 166 older adults above 65 years old (128 women, 38 men)

- Various Mission initiatives with 963 media professionals and journalism students (613 women, 350 men) on improving quality content, diversity, youth media, mobile and investigative journalism, and media sustainability

Framework

- Serbia's 2020-2024 Digital Skills Development Strategy
- Serbia's 2021-2030 Education Development Strategy
- Serbia's 2020-2025 Media Strategy and 2020-2023 Action Plan



Mission Impact Stories



Advancing the safety of journalists

The Mission supports institutional mechanisms to prevent impunity for attacks and crimes against journalists.

Results

- Implemented all 11 activities foreseen in the Permanent Working Group (PWG) for the Safety of Journalists' Action Plan involving the Supreme Public Prosecutor, the Ministry of Interior, and six media and journalists' associations
- Organized ten outreach visits of the PWG to local communities to establish better co-operation between a total number of 160 local law enforcement representatives and media professionals outside Belgrade

- Organized annual training sessions on the safety of media professionals attended by more than 200 prosecutors, police officers and journalists on safety mechanisms
- Establishing a 24/7 SOS hotline for journalists in case of immediate danger, used 300 times in 2023.

Framework

- 2023-2025 Action Plan of the Permanent Working Group for the Safety of Journalists
- 2018 OSCE Ministerial Council Decision on the Safety of Journalists