



Regional Cooperation Council

# RULE OF LAW





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The Regional Cooperation Council is  
working towards

**independent and accountable judiciary, and  
transparent and efficient public services in  
South East Europe**

# WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

## Our goals are:

- **Reliable** and predictable **judiciary** with laws **equally applied to all**
- Improved capacity, **independency** and accountability of **judiciaries**
- **Better** mutual **legal** assistance
- Enhanced **courts'** **efficiency** and reduced backlogs
- Enhanced **public participation** in legislative process
- **Increased integrity** of public institutions



# WHAT DID THE RCC DO SO FAR TO GET THERE?

The RCC has:

- **Established** SEE Judicial Training Institutions Network and launched SEE Associations of Mediators Network
- **Acted** as a hub for cooperation for these two networks, developing training tools and materials, and creating regional expert database
- **Supported** regional activities enhancing cooperation between prosecutors and police
- **Promoted** mediation as backlog reduction tool
- Developed **Western Balkans Recommendation on Public Participation**
- **Developed** tools for corruption proofing of legislation and corruption risk assessment
- Examined **corruption risks in healthcare**
- **Found out** what people in SEE think about whistleblowing
- **Supported** establishment of SEE Coalition for Whistleblower Protection and production of a documentary film on whistleblowing



# WHERE DOES THE REGION STAND NOW?

- Slow progress in setting up functioning and independent judicial systems
- Lack of independence and accountability of judicial systems
- Court backlogs challenge efficiency of judiciaries
- Weak implementation of merit-based criteria in process of judges and prosecutors appointment
- Insufficient knowledge of EU legislation
- Mediation is still an inefficient case resolution tool
- Faces instable institutions with non-transparent processes
- Fails to properly address corruption as it still faces high rates of bribery
- Provides insufficient protection to those who report corruption



# WHAT THE PEOPLE/BUSINESS THINK?

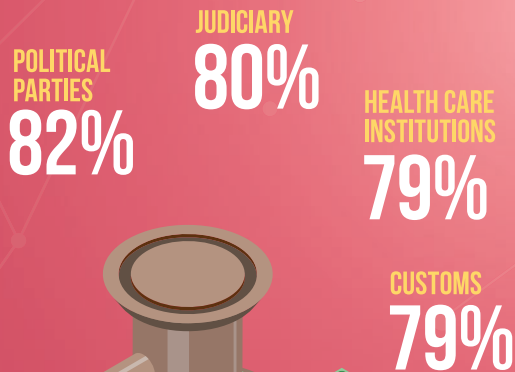
The legal system is considered least independent, say

**78%**

of people in SEE, whereas the ombudsmen are considered the most independent, or rather the least dependent,

**SAID 64%**  
of respondents

These are considered the most corrupt by the SEE population:



**47%**

of the population believe that religious authorities are corrupt



and **55%**

believe the same for NGOs



THE MAJORITY OF SEE POPULATION

**73%**

do not perceive their government as effectively combating corruption

**34%**

of SEE managers agree that reporting wrongdoing to people in authority, via official channels, is the most efficient way to combat corruption (less than in 2015 – 39%)



**45%**

of the entire SEE population do not even discuss government's decisions,

**WHILE 35%**

discuss them only with people they privately know and outside of a public setting

**ONLY 8%** of South East Europeans protested,

**5%** commented the government's decisions on social networks

**AND 3%** participated in public debates

Compared to the 2015 survey, there are slightly more people who are actively involved in activities that could affect the government's decisions

# WHAT THE RCC WILL DO NEXT TO CHANGE THIS?

We will:

- **Contribute to courts' efficiency** by strengthening mediation
- **Enhance independency and accountability** of judiciary by ensuring their regional cooperation
- **Build capacities** of judges and prosecutors through regional activities on international standards
- **Share information** of regional relevance on the rule of law
- **Enhance** public participation in legislative process
- **Push** for further corruption prevention actions
- Help **strengthen capacities of the corruption preventive bodies**
- **Assist** in assessing corruption risks in healthcare

# HOW?

Through:

- Enabling regular meetings of the two SEE Networks - judicial training institutions and associations of mediators - and supporting their institutional and capacity building
- Coordinating projects in the area of judicial training and mediation
- Developing studies on best practices and organising regional trainings in cooperation with European Judicial Training institutions
- Raising awareness on the importance of mediation
- Serving as a link to European institutions and networks in the area of judicial training and mediation
- Mobilising high level political commitment and raise awareness in the field of public participation in legislative process
- Advocating decentralisation and principle of subsidiarity
- Involving civil society in anti-corruption action and public administration reform monitoring at the regional level



# THE RCC TEAM IN CHARGE OF THE RULE OF LAW:



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The Regional Cooperation Council serves regional cooperation and European and Euro-Atlantic integration of South East Europe in order to spark development in the region to the benefit of its people

**JUSTICE**

**HOME AFFAIRS**

**ANTICORRUPTION**

**PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM**

**Good. Better. Regional.**





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