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Foreword

After EULEX’s mandate was renewed in June 2014, the Mission and the EU Special Representative in Kosovo (EUSR)/EU Office in Kosovo worked closely with Kosovo’s rule-of-law institutions to agree on a ‘joint work-plan’ that would last until June 2016 – the end of EULEX’s current mandate. This brought added energy to our joint work in strengthening the rule of law in Kosovo. The work plan was underpinned by a political commitment of all three stakeholders – the Kosovo authorities, the EUSR/EU Office, and EULEX – through the signing of the ‘COMPACT 2’ on 14 May 2015, reconfirming our joint commitments that we signed up to in the first COMPACT agreement in November 2012.

We acknowledge Kosovo’s achievements since the first COMPACT was signed. This report gives credit to rule-of-law experts in their efforts to reach the ambitious goals of this COMPACT and to Kosovo’s hard work to satisfy the requirements of the visa liberalisation process, its EU-accession aspirations and in strengthening the rule of law in Kosovo through continuous reforms.

But we equally recognise that more progress is needed to reach our commonly set goals. Therefore, we confirm our strong commitment to overcome the gaps we have identified by allocating the necessary resources and further focusing our work in order to reach the Joint Rule of Law Objectives which are set out in the COMPACT.

The inherent objective of our Joint Rule of Law Coordination Board is to ensure that Kosovo rule-of-law institutions have the necessary capacities once EULEX ends its operations. That is why implementing all of the Compact Actions – targets that we have agreed upon – is so important. Equally, the completion of the six roadmaps that we endorsed in 2014 has to remain a priority as they aim to improve specific technical areas of particular importance for the rule-of-law structures. Their implementation has been delayed, but there is expressed commitment by the Kosovo institutions to intensify efforts to reach all the targets that were agreed to.

Important work has been done in fighting political interference in the rule of law. Some meaningful changes have been made – important laws regarding the judiciary have been recently amended – but more work is needed. We will continue our close partnership through the Joint Rule of Law Coordination Board to foster the independence of the judiciary.

Minister of Justice of Kosovo
Hajredin Kuçi

EU Special Representative in Kosovo / Head of the EU Office in Kosovo
Samuel Žbogar

Head of the European Rule of Law Mission to Kosovo
Gabriele Meucci

Chair of the Kosovo Judicial Council
Enver Peci

Chair of the Kosovo Prosecutorial Council
Aleksandër Lumezi
Introduction

Rule of law has always been at the core of EU-Kosovo relations. Over the past few years, EULEX, as well as the EUSR/EU Office, has provided extensive support to Kosovo in its progress towards sustainable, accountable, multi-ethnic, and independent rule-of-law institutions free from political interference, as well as to Kosovo's path to EU integration.

Recognising the need to coordinate their work plans even further, the EU and the Kosovo institutions agreed formally on a set of objectives for their cooperation on rule-of-law issues. A COMPACT, signed in November 2012 by Kosovo’s Minister of Justice, the EU Special Representative/Head of the EU Office and the Head of Mission of EULEX, became the political agreement to bind this joint endeavour. The COMPACT had 12 specific objectives; these would be achieved by implementing 24 COMPACT Actions. All sides committed to allocate the necessary resources and to further focus their work in order to achieve these ambitious goals.

The extension of the EULEX mandate in June 2014 provided an opportunity to take stock of Kosovo’s achievements in reaching the goals of the COMPACT and to satisfy the requirements of Kosovo’s visa liberalisation process and EU-accession aspirations.

Following consultations and subsequent agreement at the working level on jointly defined rule-of-law objectives, the COMPACT 2, signed in May 2015, reconfirmed Kosovo’s political commitment to work towards the goals it has been set. The 20 COMPACT Actions in the document tie specific activities and goals together in a way that can be measured by the use of benchmarks. The Kosovo authorities, the EUSR/EU Office, and EULEX are working together every day to reach these targets.

The COMPACT supports, but does not replace, other important work the EU is doing in Kosovo, particularly on Kosovo’s EU-integration processes regarding the rule of law.

Joint Rule of Law Coordination Board

The Joint Rule of Law Coordination Board, co-chaired by the Minister of Justice, the EU Special Representative/Head of the EU Office, and the Head of Mission of EULEX, continued to be the main forum to discuss rule-of-law topics and oversee the implementation of the COMPACT.

In order to make the JRCB more efficient, the terms of reference were revised to make its setup smaller: rather than the larger number of participants it had before, the JRCB now only includes the three co-chairs as well as the Chairs of the Kosovo Judicial and Prosecutorial Councils, with the possibility of inviting other persons of interest depending on the topics on the agenda. This setup allows for a more focused and open discussion.

The JRCB will support Kosovo’s efforts to reach the rule-of-law standards required in the EU-approximation process and to establish fully functional and well-resourced rule-of-law institutions that are free from political interference. For this purpose, fully implementing the six roadmaps – jointly agreed plans and timelines to reach an objective – endorsed in the JRCB over the last few years is essential for Kosovo to bring its capacities up to the levels required for its EU aspirations.
The JRCB also continued discussing how to address the challenge of maintaining an independent judiciary. The JRCB set up a working group to look into ways of improving this. While changes were recently made to important rule-of-law legislation, further work will be needed in practice.

**JRCB Roadmaps**

Shortages of staff have continued to hinder the roadmaps on the establishment of a second Kosovo Property Agency (KPA) Appeals Panel, and on the Special Chamber of the Supreme Court (SCSC) on matters related to the Privatisation Agency of Kosovo. The lack of suitable judges for the two institutions has reduced their ability to perform and complete their expected work plans, while the recruitment of agreed additional support staff has not yet started. Despite efforts to overcome the problem, no solution has been found more than two years after the roadmaps were endorsed.

Some progress has been noted with the Mitrovica Detention Centre Prisoner Escort Unit. The effects of the chronic lack of staff in the unit will be partially reduced by the integration of 25 former Serbian Civil Protection staff who will be deployed to the detention centre. However, problems with vehicle maintenance and a lack of ammunition – which hampers firearms training – continue to be a concern. The procedures to solve these problems still need to be completed. The Kosovo Police Witness Protection Directorate (WPD) has now recruited enough staff. The final procurement process of all the equipment the Directorate needs will be completed with the acquisition of a witness-management software system which will be provided by WINPRO II, an EU-funded project in support of the WPD. Secondary legislation to fully establish the WPD has been drafted, and the JRCB will now work on promoting the Directorate’s services among Kosovo prosecutors.

Initial steps in the roadmap on the Department of Forensic Medicine (DFM) have been taken: a draft law has been finalised by the Kosovo authorities which is now awaiting an Assembly debate. This law would turn the DFM into a central body of the state administration and make it an independent legal entity that reports directly to the Minister of Justice. Two recently
hired forensic anthropologists are undergoing a specialist training and the setting up of the toxicological laboratory is moving forward: EU-funded equipment will enable the development of quantitative testing-methods for drug and alcohol abuse as of September 2015.

In relation to the roadmap on war-crimes investigations and prosecutions, progress has been made in hiring staff for the Kosovo Police and Special Prosecution Office of Kosovo (SPRK) war-crimes sections, however more work is needed. Also, a number of other objectives in the roadmap have not yet been met. Therefore, the working group in charge of overseeing this important roadmap resumed its work recently.
The Kosovo Rule of Law Institutions, the Head of the EU Office in Kosovo/EU Special Representative and EULEX Kosovo,

Acknowledging the achievements reached in the implementation of the Compact signed on 9 November 2012 as overseen by the Joint Rule of Law Coordination Board (JRCB);

Recognising the need for the Kosovo authorities to effectively cooperate with EULEX Kosovo and the EUSR/EU Office so that further progress is made in the rule of law sector to reach the goals of the Compact and to satisfy the requirements of Kosovo’s visa liberalisation and EU accession aspirations;

Acknowledging the commitment of the Kosovo rule of law institutions to implement their existing strategies and plans for advancing the rule of law and to work with the EUSR/EU Office and EULEX Kosovo to advance the joint agenda; ensuring the readiness of rule of law stakeholders in Kosovo to deal with challenges beyond the current EULEX mandate.

Acknowledging the renewed commitment of the Kosovo rule of law institutions to make further progress towards sustainability and accountability, and to develop and strengthen an independent multi-ethnic justice system and a multi-ethnic police and
customs service that are free from political interference, corruption, respect human rights and adhere to internationally recognized standards and European best practices;

Reaffirming their joint commitment to work within the overall EU policy framework as defined in the Stabilisation and Association Process with Kosovo, including the Feasibility Study;

Reaffirming the willingness to contribute to a normalization of relations between Pristina and Belgrade and move forward with the implementation of agreements reached so far in the EU facilitated dialogue as well as any other agreement in the rule of law area reached in the future;

Taking due note of the full complementarity of the European Union assistance programmes for Kosovo with the overall objectives, concrete goals and specific activities foreseen under this Compact;

have agreed as follows:

1. The Kosovo institutions, assisted by the European Union through inter alia, EULEX Kosovo Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) projects and associated programmes of support, re-commit themselves to the following overall

**Joint Rule of Law Objectives:**

- Strengthening police, customs, correctional and judicial institutions across the entire territory of Kosovo, including in the north of Kosovo, for the benefit of all communities;
- Increasing the ability of Kosovo’s rule of law institutions to deal with inter-ethnic crime, serious and organized crime and corruption;
- Enhancing the anti-corruption capabilities of Kosovo’s institutions, particularly through the criminal justice system;
- Enhancing the accountability of all rule of law institutions by allowing institutions such as the Kosovo Judicial Council, the Kosovo Prosecutorial Council and the
Police Inspectorate of Kosovo as well as relevant internal structures to fully assume their roles in accordance with the law;

- Consolidating the strategic, operational and organizational management capacity of Kosovo's rule of law institutions to advance implementation of relevant legislation, strategies and action plans;
- Fostering a higher degree of ethnic inclusion and gender balance in the Kosovo rule of law institutions;
- Improving the responsiveness of Kosovo's rule of law institutions to concerns frequently raised by minorities in relation to public safety, accessibility and openness;
- Strengthening inter-institutional cooperation between prosecutorial bodies and law enforcement by facilitating a higher degree of communication between these institutions;
- Enhancing the ability of the relevant institutions in addressing outstanding property-related claims;
- Further developing of the Kosovo witness protection system;
- Implement agreements reached in the framework of the EU facilitated dialogue, including the use of the EUSR office to facilitate mutual legal assistance requests.

2. The undersigned endorse the jointly developed new Compact Actions, which set specific activities and concrete goals with measurable benchmarks in line with the stated overall Joint Rule of Law Objectives.

3. In pursuit of these overall Joint Rule of Law Objectives, the Head of the EU Office in Kosovo/EUSR, the Head of Mission of EULEX Kosovo, the Minister of Justice, the Chair of the Kosovo Judicial Council and the Chair of Kosovo Prosecutorial Council hereby pledge to meet regularly in the Joint Rule of Law Coordination Board to examine progress made and agree upon constructive, practical and coordinated action to resolve obstacles and advance technical progress, including in the following priority areas:

   i) Compact Actions implementation;
ii) Rule of law requirements highlighted in the EU Visa Liberalisation Roadmap and the Commission Progress Report;

iii) Legislation related to the rule of law;

iv) Continuity in rule of law service delivery beyond the current EULEX mandate;

iv) Reform priorities enumerated in Kosovo's Justice Sector Review.

4. The Kosovo institutions, the EUSR/EU Office and EULEX Kosovo reiterate their strong commitment to overcoming identified gaps and to allocating the necessary resources and focusing their work so as to reach the overall Joint Rule of Law Objectives as set out in this Compact.

Pristina, the 14 May 2015

Hajredin Kuçi
Minister of Justice

Samuel Žbogar
Head of the EU Office in Kosovo
EU Special Representative

Gabriele Meucci
Head of Mission
EULEX Kosovo

Enver Feci
Chair of the Kosovo Judicial Council

Aleksandër Lumezi
Chair of the Kosovo Prosecutorial Council
1. POLICE & CUSTOMS

Objectives

To further improve ethnic balance in Kosovo rule-of-law enforcement institutions;
To enhance Kosovo authorities’ capacities to deal with inter-ethnic hate crime;
To continue the PIK institution-building process, and foster closer cooperation with KP;
To develop KP capacity to cooperate with prosecution on serious and organised crime;
To foster KC and KBP strategic cooperation on border management;
To assist KBP in setting up the necessary structures for green border control;
To continue to implement the EULEX Witness Protection programme in accordance with the JRCB roadmap.

Activities and Results

Ethnic balance in rule-of-law enforcement institutions

The Law on the Civil Service says that at least 10% of positions in rule-of-law institutions should be occupied by non-majority communities. In the Kosovo Police (KP), 16.10% of its staff belong to non-majority communities – 16.85% among officers and 10.79% among civil staff. Similarly, in Kosovo Customs (KC) 13.2% are from non-majority communities, as illustrated in the charts below. Both institutions are encouraged to build on these positive data and to continue to attract and recruit members from non-majority communities.

Inter-ethnic crimes

Inter-ethnic crime is one of the most sensitive issues in Kosovo. But the rule-of-law institutions should be more active on the issue and develop a harmonised data-collection system of inter-ethnic crimes. The Kosovo Judicial Council (KJC), the Kosovo Prosecutorial Council (KPC) and Kosovo Police (KP) have yet to identify the best way potential inter-ethnic crimes and incidents can be defined and registered. KPC and KJC have not yet standardised their data-recording systems. A common definition of the term ‘inter-ethnic crime’ is a prerequisite to designing a unified statistical framework, which would improve the recording and monitoring of such cases.
And with the right legislation in place, judges and prosecutors can better fight inter-ethnic and hate crimes. For instance, the provision in the Criminal Procedure Code of Kosovo on aggravating circumstances due to hate crime (Article 74, paragraph 2.12) is a powerful tool at the disposal of the judiciary; however, as of now, it has never been reflected in verdicts. Initiatives such as workshops for Basic Prosecution Office prosecutors and Basic Court judges on better use of relevant legislation are being considered.

In the operational management of inter-ethnic incidents, KP handles them adequately. However, improvements are needed in its data management, including the collection of reliable statistics, as well as its ability to assess cases related to inter-ethnic crime. The recently introduced KP Information System, which records data related to inter-ethnic crime, should help identify and categorise such crimes. However, there are not enough police officers trained to use the system, nor are there enough computers in the police stations around Kosovo.

**Police Inspectorate of Kosovo**

The Police Inspectorate of Kosovo (PIK) continued building itself as an institution by streamlining legislation regulating it. Five Administrative Procedures were recently approved by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA); these new regulations cover internal-management topics such as discipline, personnel, documents, its emblem, and the use of weapons. Meanwhile, the draft *Law on Pensions for Police Officers of Kosovo Police and Employees of the Police Inspectorate of Kosovo with Police Authorisations* has been finalised. The current draft covers all PIK employees with police authorisation, however, the *Law on PIK* needs to be revised because the law does not clearly define which PIK employees have police authorisation.

To better serve all communities in Kosovo, PIK is in the process of setting up three regional field offices in Prizren, Mitrovica North and Gjilan/Gnjilane. This is a step towards decentralizing the Directorate – a process foreseen in the PIK’s strategic plan, which also includes establishing Regional Investigation Division offices in each region of Kosovo.

Cooperation between PIK and the KP Professional Standards Directorate with regards to disciplinary investigations is satisfactory. The KP General Director implements all of the PIK recommendations in regard to criminal investigations, as well as the recommendations mentioned in the PIK Inspection reports. In its annual statistics for 2014, PIK reported that it had received a total of 1,304 complaints, out of which 608 were forwarded to the PIK Department for Disciplinary Investigations and 674 were forwarded to the Professional Standards Directorate in KP. Of the 608 cases that were forwarded to the PIK Department for Disciplinary Investigations, suspicion of criminal involvement was determined in 233 cases, which were then forwarded to
the prosecution, while 283 cases resulted in disciplinary violations – 92 were still being processed at the time of writing. In the first quarter of 2015, PIK received 550 complaints: 249 were forwarded to the Department for Disciplinary Investigations in PIK and 285 to the Directorate of Professional Standards in KP. Of the 249 criminal offences investigated by PIK, 22 were related to corruption, 14 involved abuse of official position, 5 were related to accepting bribes, 2 involved cases of counterfeiting official documents, and 1 was related to the disclosure of official secrets.

While PIK and KP cooperation is satisfactory, cooperation between the PIK and Kosovo prosecutors remains limited. Prosecutors are often reluctant to start a case against KP officers with the rank of captain and up. In 2014, of the 132 cases (including 48 corruption-related cases) with criminal charges sent by PIK to the prosecution, only 28 cases were forwarded to the courts by the prosecution. Five criminal offences were dismissed due to a lack of evidence, while no case has been yet been finished by the prosecution – 99 cases are still active.

In January 2015, PIK issued its Inspection Report on the Implementation of the PIK Recommendations by KP for the period 2012-2013. PIK performed 10 inspections which resulted in 84 recommendations: 64 of these recommendations were fully implemented, 36 partially and 2, for justified reasons, were not addressed at all.

**Cooperation between the KP and the Public Prosecutor’s Office**

In the fight against organised crime, cooperation between the KP and the prosecution is still developing, particularly in terms of getting results. Although good cooperation between the two bodies has been identified as one of the key priorities of Kosovo’s *National Strategy against Organised Crime, Trafficking in Human Beings and Narcotics*, more work still needs to be done. The Actions Plans that have been written (detailed plans on how to reach objectives), lack specific objectives such as timelines and budgets. Moreover, the data systems used by both the KP and the prosecutors have not yet been harmonised: this would improve how communication and case management is handled between the two.

To identify and assess the main structural weaknesses of cooperation between the police and the prosecution, a series of thematic inspections were conducted in consultation with EULEX, IPA- (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance) and Twinning-Project experts. Workshops and training sessions looking at increasing cooperation between prosecutors and police were also held. These included: a workshop held in December 2014 called “Challenges in the combat against organised crime and terrorism and cooperation in South-Eastern Europe”, which was organised by the Kosovo State Prosecutor; a joint training for police and prosecutors on vulnerable-victim cognitive interviewing; a joint anti-corruption training; a workshop on police and prosecutors’ responses to domestic violence; and a workshop on serious and organised crime investigations (in this workshop the prosecutors and the police agreed to establish a joint case-priority system).

The Kosovo Police and the Kosovo State Prosecutor are currently drafting a joint manual to assist them in their cooperation. The document has five sections which relate to: police and Prosecutor Cooperation, management of the investigative files and standardisation of forms, covert measures, investigation of Organized Crime related to drug offences, standardisation of investigations, corruption in public procurement.
**KP in the northern part of Kosovo**

To improve the KP’s planning in the northern part of Kosovo, joint work between the KP and EULEX has looked at identifying and analysing community priorities, risk assessments and inter-/intra-departmental cooperation. For Intelligence-Led Policing (ILP) to fully work in the northern part of Kosovo, certain crucial areas need to be addressed, such as: the commitment and cooperation of Regional Command staff; adjusting the organisational structure; training the command staff and intelligence officers; establishing adequate analytical capacities; and solving the technical issues of fully setting up the KPIS (Kosovo Police Information System).

Cooperation between the KP in the north and south of Mitrovica has continued to improve, in particular in the handling of specific events with a potential security impact. Police officers from the two sides communicate effectively when it comes to planning, but more remains to be done in following up investigations: here, exchanging information on criminal activities should be improved. However, in May 2015 alone, five politically and ethnically motivated crimes were registered by KP and submitted to relevant prosecutors.

The KP North Region has created a reserve unit for Crowd and Riot Control. It now has 188 trained police officers who are part of the reserve intervention capabilities and can support the QRT (Quick Response Team) if necessary. The QRT currently has 36 officers who have all completed basic and advanced training. The KP North Region has begun advanced training for the permanent members of the QRT.

**Border management**

The revenue collected by the Kosovo Customs (KC) continues to make up more than 70% of Kosovo’s annual budget. Despite a small drop in percentage in imports compared to 2014, the revenue collected by the KC for the first six months of 2015 has increased by 5.52%. This figure, however, is still slightly below the overly ambitious target of €942 million set by the Kosovo authorities (see graph). While the normal practice of the Kosovo authorities is to invest approximately 1% of collected revenue back into the KC Administration to assist with running costs and internal development, this practice will not be applied this year. Therefore with no government investment, the KC faces an extremely difficult task in reaching the target set by the Kosovo authorities.

The KC recently underwent an internal restructuring: its new setup incorporates a new staff-appraisal system, staff classification, professional profiles, career progression and recruitment. But the KC is facing serious staff shortages; a staff overview is long overdue and the present
official staff compliment has not been reviewed for five years. Such a review will assist the KC in defining staff deployment and align it to EU best-practices. On a positive note, the KC has re-employed 26 Kosovo-Serb customs officers who resigned when Kosovo unilaterally declared independence in 2008.

The KC has launched a paperless customs system throughout Kosovo which will speed up the clearance of goods – this system should facilitate trade and create closer partnerships between the KC and traders. As well as this, it will remove the need for direct contact between freight agents and customs officers and has been highlighted as an important anti-corruption tool. At the same time, it will free up approximately 35 customs officers who will now be deployed to other areas with staff shortages.

The KC has, for the first time, appointed female officers to work on physical examinations and control duties at the Border Crossing Points (BCPs) which represents a positive move towards greater gender equality in the KC Administration.

By applying improved working practices such as the systemised Activity Plan, the Post Clearance Audit (PCA) Unit has concluded a number of audits; the Intellectual and Industrial Property Rights (IIPR) Sector reported an increase in the number of registered trademarks. This is an important way of sustaining a viable economy, namely by collecting additional undeclared revenues through post-import control as well as by combating violations of IIPR.

In 2014, there was a significant rise in the number of cases taken up by the KC IIPR Unit: the number increased from 163 in 2013 to 300 in 2014. The total value of goods involved between 2013 and 2014 rose from €984,563 to €4,755,170 – 153 cases have been taken up in the first
half of 2015 bringing in €1,049,520 in revenue. This shows progress in KC operations to combat breaches of IIPR regulations. However, the KC IIPR currently has fewer staff compared to previous years: only two officers out of four are working in this section because the KC Director General (DG) has transferred the two other officers to operations duties as a consequence of his obligations on revenue collections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of cases</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goods quantity in pcs.</td>
<td>733,033</td>
<td>814,736</td>
<td>86,036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goods value in EUR</td>
<td>984,563</td>
<td>4,755,170</td>
<td>1,049,520</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data includes the period up to July 2015

The National Centre for Border Management (NCBM) is not operating near its full potential and still has a long way to go before it can achieve this. Nevertheless, the Minister of Internal Affairs has signed a Ministerial Decision that sets up a working group to review the standard operating procedures for the NCBM, particularly on staffing, management and functionality.

**Green border control**

The Kosovo Border Police (KBP) continues to conduct patrols along the green border on a regular basis. Meanwhile, cooperation between the KBP and border-police services from countries in the region (except Serbia), is on a satisfactory level. Every month several joint/synchronized patrols are carried out on both sides of the border. These patrols have not yet succeeded in detecting criminal activities, but are nevertheless a useful deterrent. Coordination and cooperation between the KBP and the KC regarding the green border, however, needs to be improved by more clearly defining roles and responsibilities. This should be the first common goal of the KBP and the KC.

In the northern region, EULEX police and customs officers have organised several meetings with KFOR since January 2015, as well as and one training with the KBP and the KC to start developing an operational plan for green-border/boundary patrols. Border/Boundary risk-assessments are being drafted and all relevant agencies are being involved in this process. The operational plan for green borders will be ready when area reconnoitring has been completed.

The number of staff in the KBP Regional Directorate has increased. No new platoons have been established, however the two platoons currently deployed in Leposavić/Leposaviq and Zubin Potok/ Zubin Potok have been reinforced with 64 more officers, who were selected in November 2014. This reinforcement will help to increase security in the KBP Regional Directorate North’s area of responsibility.
Witness protection

Since June 2014, the KP Witness Protection Directorate (WPD) has achieved many of its identified goals. KP WPD now considers its staff operationally fit-for-purpose and it is now waiting to begin its first task.

Secondary legislation related to the WPD has been addressed as well by the relevant Kosovo agencies: this has led to the establishment of technical agreements between KP WPD and the Ministry of Health, the Civil Registration Agency and the Ministry of Education.

One objective of the KP WPD is to establish specific witness-protection bilateral agreements with countries in the future. Nevertheless, the existing technical agreements on police-wide cooperation can be used, if necessary, for witness protection purposes.

Under the guidance of the WINPRO II project (an IPA project called ‘Witness Protection in the Fight against Organised Crime and Corruption’), significant progress has been made in developing a Balkan-wide network of witness-protection units. These units now meet twice a year and have carried out several joint training exercises so far; formal technical agreements to regulate joint activities will be introduced in the near future.
2. JUSTICE

Objectives

To further improve ethnic balance in Kosovo judicial institutions;
To enhance the Kosovo Correctional Services (KCS);
To strengthen the capacity of the Kosovo Judicial Council and the Kosovo Prosecutorial Council;
To strengthen a proactive approach on anti-corruption activities;
To complete the mandate of the Kosovo Property Agency;
To improve the performance of the Special Chamber of the Supreme Court.

Activities and Results

Ethnic balance in Kosovo judicial institutions

The judiciary still needs to make sure a transparent recruitment process exists so that ethnic balance can be promoted among its staff. Statistics related to ethnicity and gender balance do not show significant improvements after new judges were appointed in June 2015. However, the ongoing recruitment of Serbian judicial staff, which is part of the EU-facilitated Dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, will improve the ethnic balance in the near future. The total number of judges is now 351, out of which 249 are male and 102 are female (14 more females than in 2014).
Of this total, seven are Kosovo Serbs (one more than in 2014), nine are Kosovo Bosniaks, while there is one Kosovo Turk and one Kosovo Ashkali (one less than in 2014). In the KPC there are three Kosovo Bosniaks, two Kosovo Serbs and there is one Kosovo Turk. Both the KPC and the KJC should do more work to attract and recruit staff from non-majority communities.

Nonetheless, Kosovo Judicial Council issued a regulation and a decision to nominate and appoint a KJC member from peers among the female judges, notwithstanding the ethnic representation which is constitutionally safeguarded, but thus being in line with international standards on gender representation and the Law on Gender Equality.

**Kosovo Correctional Service**

The Kosovo Correctional Service (KCS) has started working on fighting nepotism in the institution and reducing contraband in its facilities: in relation to this, four KCS personnel have been arrested and seven officers were recently suspended.

A coordination body was established by the KCS to monitor the implementation of recommendations issued by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Internal Inspectorate (II). The body has made a number of positive changes to the KCS so far. These include issuing house rules for KCS facilities; regulating staff rosters to reduce potential nepotism and conflicts of interest by separating all identified family-related personnel working on the same shifts; and addressing issues of regular and extraordinary leave in all of its facilities (except for Dubrava Correctional Centre where the leave issue has not been addressed).
However, serious obstacles still stand in the way of the KCS fully building itself as an institution: KCS continues to suffer from shortages of staff (it is more than 20% below its full capacity); certain high-profile prisoners continue to be given preferential treatment; and political interference into the KCS persists. Furthermore, the rules for hospitalising certain high-profile prisoners continue to be abused – both in frequency and duration – while cases of extraordinary leave are being granted to certain prisoners, both of which are against the law.

Considerable improvements need to be made in the KCS’s procurement practices. These procurement practices are often overly bureaucratic. This has led to a number of bids in calls for tenders to fail for over two years now. As a result of this, the KCS is facing problems with logistics in general, mainly with a lack of escort vehicles, issues maintaining its vehicle fleet, as well as problems with poor or faulty equipment.

The MoJ’s Internal Inspectorate has completed writing its own work plan for 2015, which is based on the medium-term priorities the Kosovo authorities have set out for the years 2015-2017, the MoJ’s Strategic Development Plan 2012-2016, and the European Commission 2014 Progress Report. The Internal Inspectorate is continuously conducting field visits and monitoring the implementation of recommendations it laid out in the work plan.

The Internal Inspectorate found a number of disciplinary irregularities related to the smuggling of contraband by detainees and/or prisoners throughout its facilities (except in Mitrovica Detention Centre). The problem is particularly acute in Dubrava Correctional Centre, therefore the Internal Inspectorate has issued a number of recommendations to tackle the contraband-smuggling issue – the majority of these recommendations have been applied. The Internal Inspectorate identified another problem to be dealt with, this time regarding how needs and risks of the prisoners are assessed. This is particularly visible in the transfer of prisoners between their regimes (basic, standard, advanced) and then into semi-open facilities.
The KCS has been gradually transferring prisoners into Kosovo’s High Security Prison (HSP). The number of prisoners in the facility is increasing each month. This means that the KCS has now fulfilled the required legal obligations of reallocating prisoners to their respective regimes as foreseen by the assessment process of the abovementioned risks and needs of the prisoners. This is a step towards fully establishing sentence planning, upon which the activities of the inmates can be determined. Nevertheless the HSP is limited in its day-to-day operations since there is a serious shortage of staff at the facility: currently there are around 130 correctional staff, which is insufficient to manage the current number of inmates at the HSP (at the end July 2015 there were 119 inmates). The HSP needs around 70 more correctional staff.

**Mitrovica Detention Centre**

The Mitrovica Detention Centre is functioning relatively well despite not having enough staff, which is particularly visible with regard to the Prisoner Escorts Unit (PEU) as the number of escorts it is required to do is increasing. The recent recruitment of 25 new staff from the Serb community as a result of the EU-facilitated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina should reduce the pressure caused by the staff shortages. Meanwhile, more training is needed for the correctional staff, adequate equipment is lacking and the Kosovo Albanian staff – who left the facility in February 2008 following Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence – have still not been reinstated.

**Kosovo Judicial Council and Kosovo Prosecutorial Council**

The development of the KJC and the KPC has made slow progress. This has mainly been due to the delays in the formation of a government from June to December 2014. Furthermore, on 31 August 2014, the KJC lost its quorum to hold sessions after the mandates of two international members (EULEX judges) expired. As a result, the KJC was unable to perform its functions until the beginning of March 2015. The lack of quorum meant that much-needed legislation could not be adopted, such as regulations on the use of official languages and on a criminal-records database for convicted persons. It also affected the KJC’s capacity to recruit, transfer, promote and evaluate judges.

Following the Kosovo Assembly’s appointment of the three KJC members who were needed to make a quorum in February 2015, the KJC finally resumed its work and published 48 vacancies for Kosovo-Serb judges as part of the reintegration of the judiciary in the north of Kosovo. In April 2015, 41 new basic-court judges were endorsed by the KJC, more than one year after the vacancies were published. Similarly, in June 2015 the KJC finally recruited seven candidates for eight vacant positions at the Court of Appeals – the selection process had been pending since January 2014.
In April 2015 the KJC adopted the Regulation on Criminal Records Database of the Convicted Persons, bringing Kosovo closer to fulfilling the requirements of the Visa Liberalisation Roadmap. The same month, the KJC adopted the Regulation on the Selection of KJC Members from the Judiciary, which had been prioritised to avoid further problems with a lack of quorum in the Council. On 15 June 2015, a package of laws related to the judiciary, including the Law on Courts, Law on KJC, Law on State Prosecutor and Law on KPC, was officially published. The MoJ, in consultation with KJC and KPC – and with the direct and continuous support of the European Union – went to great efforts to finalise this package of laws. These laws primarily addressed the recommendations of the Visa Liberalisation Roadmap and aim to work in harmony with one another, particularly regarding the appointment and dismissal of judges and prosecutors, and maintaining the independence of the judiciary.

As a result of these amendments to the legislation, a number of sub-legal acts should be adopted by the KJC and the KPC within a six-month period from the date the package of four laws was adopted. However, the KJC and its Committee for Normative Issues lack sufficient capacity and resources to independently draft regulations stemming from these laws. This was visible during the drafting of the regulation pertaining to the selection, suspension and removal of court presidents and supervising judges. Increasing the KJC’s capacities and resources here is needed. A pilot project to develop a criminal-record database of convicted persons was finally launched in July 2015 at the Lipjan/Lipljan branch of the Pristina Basic Court (BC). The project is part of the IPA project “Support for the KJC and KPC.” The database will include all the convictions rendered under the jurisdiction of the branch since 1999.

In 2014, the KJC Performance Evaluation Committee evaluated 39 judges who applied for a promotion at the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court, as well as five judges whose initial
three-year mandates had expired. However, their appointments had to be put on hold until KJC had enough members to reach a quorum. In 2015, the KJC evaluated the performance of 92 judges, whose initial three-year mandates had expired.

With regard to the KPC, a vacancy announcement for a new Chief State Prosecutor (CSP) was published in March 2014 to find a replacement for the then-incumbent CSP, Ismet Kabashi, who was set to retire. On 7 June 2014, Aleksandër Lumezi was proposed as a candidate, which was in line with the regulation on the selection of Chief State Prosecutor, adopted earlier in March that year. However, on 8 July the Constitutional Court ordered the KPC to repeat the election procedure, due to what had been determined as a violation of the right to fair proceedings. The KPC instead decided to repeat the entire selection procedure. In August, Syle Hoxhaj, Chief Prosecutor at the Prizren Basic Prosecution Office, was elected as Acting CSP as an interim measure. The repeated selection procedure lasted several months due to the redrafting of relevant regulations and to answer requests submitted by the Constitutional Court. Finally on 21 April 2015, the President of Kosovo appointed the KPC-nominated candidate, Aleksandër Lumezi. Apart from posing a risk to institutional stability, the prolonged absence of a CSP affected the decision-making abilities of the KPC. This resulted in delays with performance evaluation, regular reporting, conducting KPC meetings, and the functioning of working groups and committees.

In the second half of 2014, the President of Kosovo signed 21 decrees to appoint prosecutors to basic prosecution offices in Kosovo –22 candidates were proposed by the KPC. Later, the KPC published vacancies for the recruitment of 18 more prosecutors for Kosovo’s basic prosecution offices. However, the proposals of only 13 of these candidates were submitted by the KPC to the President, hence five positions remained vacant. The KPC further issued 15 new vacancies at all levels, including 9 positions at the Mitrovica Basic Prosecution as part of the reintegration of the Serbian judicial staff in northern Kosovo. The KPC also announced internal vacancies for three prosecutors at the Office of the Chief State Prosecutor (OCSP) and three prosecutors at the SPRK. At the time of writing, the candidates for the positions at the SPRK are at the interview stage, while the recruitment procedure at the OCSP has been completed. However, the current procedure for the appointment and promotion of prosecutors to higher positions appears not be followed.

In September 2014, the KPC approved a report by Performance Evaluation Committee in which it evaluated 27 prosecutors, but the Committee had failed to evaluate 35 prosecutors with permanent mandates. In 2015, the Committee is required to assess the performance of 88 prosecutors, including the 35 prosecutors mentioned above who were supposed to be evaluated in 2014. Currently, 34 prosecutors have been evaluated. The KPC should improve the performance-evaluation process of its prosecutors and do so according to the existing rules.

In terms of legislation, the KPC has worked on drafting amendments to the Law on State Prosecutor, the Law on KPC, and to a number of regulations regarding the selection of KPC members, their disciplinary liability, the internal functioning of the prosecution offices and ethnic and gender balance.
The Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) showed limited progress in its overall performance. In 2014, the ACA processed 304 cases, of which 131 were forwarded to either prosecution offices or the police for further investigation. Of these cases, 101 were related to failure to report or falsely reporting of assets, 19 were related to abuse of official position or authority, with one case of misappropriation of office and one of accepting bribes. However, there are serious weaknesses with the ACA, particularly with its mandate to investigate core corruption-cases. Apart from the 101 cases of failure to report or falsely reporting of assets, in 2014 the ACA forwarded to the prosecution the lowest number of core corruption-cases (30) since it began its work in February 2007. These figures, published in the ACA’s annual report, indicate that the Agency has not produced substantial outcomes regarding law enforcement. To help improve the ACA’s ability to conduct preliminary investigations of core corruption-cases, the Agency’s investigators attended a workshop in April 2015. The aim of the workshop was to identify weaknesses and receive tailored training-sessions on investigation techniques and report writing.

As for its mandate to prevent corruption, a total of 5,103 declarations of assets were submitted to the ACA in 2014, which means an overall compliance rate of 98.21% (5,196 declarations were expected). With annual declarations of assets, the compliance rate was 99.74% (3,038 declarations were submitted), followed by declarations upon taking office (96%; 1,052 declarations), and declaration of assets upon termination or dismissal from office (94%; 1,018 declarations). The compliance rate for declarations submitted at the request of the Agency was 100% (88 declarations). The Agency conducted a preliminary, as well as a complete, control of 20% of all the declarations submitted to the ACA, as required by law. During the preliminary control, significant mistakes were noticed in the declarations of senior public officials who had declared their property for the first time. There is currently no established verification process which would clarify the truthfulness and accuracy of the data declared, while there are also problems with identifying institutions the Agency cooperates with in the verification process. The ACA needs to be able to determine the real monetary value of the property declared. The number of convictions for non-declaration or false declaration of assets, as well as the sanctions imposed, continues to be low.

In terms of inter-institutional cooperation, the ACA, the prosecution offices and the KP signed a Memorandum of Understanding in December 2014 to improve communication and coordination when investigating and prosecuting cases related to corruption. Also in the same month, the ACA organised a series of outreach activities on International Anti-Corruption Day (9 December), which aims to empower people to report corruption.
The draft Law on Amending and Supplementing the Law on Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Discharge of Public Functions, needs to be brought in line with EU best practices. The issue of public officials carrying out multiple additional activities, for example, needs to be clearly regulated: the ACA must be able to identify, manage and resolve all conflicts between the private interests and public duties of public officials. Other issues that need to be addressed include: harmonising and extending legislation related to forbidden activities and incompatibilities of senior officials; tightening restrictions on post-employment; and introducing a comprehensive concept of ‘conflict of interest’ – this should be clearly defined and distinguishable from ‘incompatibilities’. During a public consultation held at the Assembly’s request in July 2015, it was agreed that it is of utmost importance for the draft law to abide to the above-indicated standards.

With regard to the disciplinary system in place for judges and prosecutors who have violated applicable legislation or the code ethics, improvements could be noted in terms of the management of these disciplinary cases, as well as the framework regulating the disciplinary system. To ensure a KPC quorum exists so that second-instance disciplinary decisions can be taken, the relevant legislation has been amended and the number of KPC members has increased. In addition, provisions on statutory limitation of disciplinary cases has been adopted, as well as timelines for initiating disciplinary investigations, and competences of the KPC/KJC regarding decisions on appeals. However, other issues still need to be addressed, such as general principles guiding the disciplinary proceedings, the definition of misconducts, and the possibility to reject disciplinary procedures based on inadmissibility criteria. Furthermore, the Law on the Office of the Disciplinary Counsel/Prosecutor as well as several sub-legal acts are yet to be adopted.

The Action Plan on Increasing Effectiveness of the Prosecutorial System in the Fight against Corruption was launched in November 2013. However, according to preliminary assessments conducted, out of 959 registered cases, only 401 (41.81%) were solved during the first year the Action Plan's came into effect – more than half of these cases were dismissed. The Basic Prosecution Offices in Pristina and Mitrovica have had the lowest success rates in fulfilling the obligations of the Action Plan, with 17.41% and 31.25% of cases solved respectively. Nevertheless, disciplinary investigations are being conducted and sanctions have been imposed against prosecutors for negligence or failure to fulfil the obligations of the Action Plan.

Specific strategies for institutional cooperation in the fight against corruption are in place, but their implementation is not always supported by those involved. For instance, the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the local institutions, including the KPC, the KJC and the MoJ, led to the establishment of the National Coordinator on Economic Crime (NCEC) whose mandate is to tackle money laundering, financing terrorism and tax evasion. A KPC regulation more precisely specifies what work the NCEC should do and the institutions with which it should cooperate. While the NCEC board has already begun its work, its recommendations are often not applied as it is difficult to enforce them.
Kosovo Property Agency

The Kosovo Property Claims Commission (KPCC) and the Appeals Panel of the Supreme Court for KPA – both of which are comprised of Kosovo and EULEX staff – continued to resolve outstanding disputes involving private immovable agricultural, commercial and residential property resulting from the 1998-1999 armed conflict. By the end of April 2015, the KPCC had finalized a total of 42,000 claims, marking the successful completion of its mandate.

The KPA Appeals Panel adjudicates the appeals filed against KPCC decisions on property claims brought before the KPA. As of July 2015, the panel has adjudicated 699 appeals, while 447 appeals are pending (some of these appeals are waiting for translations of the documents in their files to be completed).

In view of the complexity of the decisions, the JRCB agreed in early 2013 to establish a second KPA Appeals Panel. However, no second Kosovo judge was found who could render this second panel possible. Due to the limits of the panel’s mandate, there is a lack of willingness among Kosovo judges to apply for this position. In June 2014, the Kosovo authorities ended the rotation system involving local judges at the Supreme Court.

The majority of the appeals filed to the Panel are contested cases between different ethnic groups (Kosovo Albanians/Kosovo Serbs) therefore extensive research must be done to resolve these appeals. Thus, finalising all appeals filed to the KPA Appeals Panel by the end of June 2016 appears unrealistic: aside from the pending cases, a large amount of KPCC decisions have not yet been served to the parties and may eventually be appealed.

Special Chamber of the Supreme Court

EULEX judges and local judges have been continuing to adjudicate cases in mixed panels at the SCSC. Local judges have been in a majority on all these panels. The trial panels of the SCSC deal with privatization claims, list of employees, property claims, liquidation claims, and reorganisation claims. The Appellate Panels deal with appeals against the decisions of the Special Chamber and appeals against the decision of the other Courts.

The total number of pending cases before the SCSC increased to 20,460 cases – or went up by 33% – from June 2014 to June 2015, as the chart on the right illustrates. The main reason for this increasing backlog of cases is a high volume of new cases. The SCSC receives new cases every day; many more than can be closed in the same period of time. Furthermore, it is difficult to predict the number of cases that will be received by the SCSC. This is partly because the law firm delivering professional services to the Privatization Agency of Kosovo (PAK) on liquidation
procedures (whenever a company is brought to an end and assets are redistributed) is very active.

Aggrieved parties to such liquidation procedures, as well as other proceedings of PAK, turn to the SCSC to seek justice. As the chart on the left shows, the ratio of new cases registered as compared to cases closed is much higher. Over the last three years (June 2012 to June 2015), the SCSC closed an average of 2,742 cases per year. The overall clearance rate is unlikely to improve considering the current challenges. For example, these consist of prolonged processing times – due to inadequate quality of the claims and submissions filed with the SCSC – as well as lengthy service of court submissions to parties residing outside Kosovo (particularly in Serbia, due to the pending challenges in mutual legal assistance). Furthermore, the Court does not have enough judges. This results in a very high workload. Currently, each Judge is assigned approximately 1,000 cases. Due to the recent lack of a KJC quorum, the appointment of two EULEX judges and the renewal of three local judges’ mandates could not be processed in time. Vacancies for two local judges have not yet been filled. With the current procedural provisions at the SCSC, the mere lack of assignment makes not only the judge inactive, but also the whole Trial Panel (at the first instance) without any possibility for a temporary replacement. The participation of SCSC judges in the juridical discussions in the General Sessions of the Supreme Court could not yet be established, as is required by law, due to a lack of communication between the President of the Supreme Court and of the Special Chamber Court. This indirectly affects the clearance rate of cases, as SCSC judges cannot discuss their issues in the General Sessions.

Considering the variety of factors affecting the adjudication of cases, the performance of the Court is difficult to assess in the short term.
3. DIALOGUE IMPLEMENTATION

Objectives

Within the Compact framework, the EU Office and EULEX will support the Kosovo authorities in implementing agreements reached in the Dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade on civil registry, Freedom of Movement (FoM), Integrated Border Management (IBM), mutual legal assistance, integration of security structures, Justice, and KP Religious and Cultural Heritage Unit.

Activities and Results

Civil registry

After copying and certifying civil and religious registry books of birth, marriage and death kept in Serbia and the handing-over of the certified copies to the Kosovo Civil Registration Agency (CRA) in March 2014, activities have focused on establishing a sustainable and reliable civil status system.

The usage of the civil registry books in municipal civil status offices was duly monitored. The monitoring revealed a number of challenges, in particular the lack of a common approach on the usage of the books. As a result, EULEX organised a workshop to analyse differences in the use of certified copies that had been identified and that required a harmonised approach among all civil status offices in Kosovo. The outcome of the workshop was a clear need for common internal procedures on the use of certified copies in compliance with the Administrative Instructions.

Six cooperation agreements on the interoperability of databases were signed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs with the Kosovo Judicial Council, Kosovo Police, Kosovo Customs, the Financial Intelligence Unit of the Ministry of Finance, the Kosovo State Prosecutor and the Tax Administration of Kosovo. The interoperability of databases requires the creation of links between databases and the effective integration of data into a central civil status database. Except for one, all agreements still need to be put in practice. It is essential that all personal data recorded in the hard copies of the civil status registry books, including the certified copies, should be registered electronically in a format that allows versatile searches using all data available, and that all databases containing personal data are linked to a centralised Civil Status Registration System.
**Freedom of Movement**

As part of the implementation of the Freedom of Movement agreement, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Kosovo Insurance Bureau and the Insurance Association of Serbia on the mutual recognition of third party liability insurances was signed in June 2015 and entered into force on 12 August 2015. According to the agreement, users of motor vehicles registered in the territory of one Party who are in possession of a valid insurance for the territory of the other Party may freely enter and travel in that jurisdiction.

**IBM**

Important progress has been made. Following the EU-facilitated negotiations between Pristina and Belgrade, customs collections at the northern Crossing Points (CPs) were restored, a licencing regime also for northern Kosovo companies importing controlled products was put in place, and mutual recognition of certificates of medicinal products was agreed between Kosovo and Serbia which enables the normalization of trade in the field of medical products. In June 2015, Pristina and Belgrade Parties agreed to establish two new interim CPs at Kapija Vrapce in the south and Rajetici/Izvor in the north.

**Integration of security structures**

At the end of March 2015, the Pristina and Belgrade Parties agreed, in the framework of the EU facilitated dialogue and following the April 2013 agreement, on the procedure how to integrate 483 Serbian Civil Protection staff operating in the north of Kosovo. Since then tangible progress has been made. By 20 July, 105 former Civil Protection staff were integrated into the Kosovo Agency for Emergency Management and the Kosovo Correctional Service. The integration process for the remaining staff into various Kosovo institutions is at an advanced stage.

**Justice**

In February 2015, the Pristina and Belgrade Parties agreed, in the framework of the EU facilitated dialogue on the implementation of the Justice provisions of the First Agreement. The integration process of Judges and Prosecutors is ongoing following the publication of vacancies.

**KP Religious and Cultural Heritage Unit**

The KP unit for Religious and Cultural Heritage Sites (RCHS) established a positive collaboration with the Orthodox and Catholic Churches. In February 2015, the General Director of KP and the Bishop for Raska - Prizren Diocese held their first meeting ever to discuss RCHS performance. In October 2014, an Operation Order on Safeguarding and Protection of Serbian Orthodox Heritage Sites stipulated that risk assessments for Orthodox heritage sites will be made every 6 months, however the first professional assessment has yet to be made. While RCHS unit’s overall functioning is satisfactory, RCHS could adopt a more pro-active management approach to improve its efficiency.
Steps to increase inter-agency cooperation are being taken. RCHS held meetings with UNDP, UNMIK, EUSR and EULEX to ensure its sustainability and tackle some logistical deficiencies. The EUSR recently approved in principle an application for a one year project which includes the training of the RCHS unit, and to restore and maintain a selected number of religious and cultural heritage sites. This project is still in the last phase of approval in Brussels and it will require some more time before its implementation.
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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACA</td>
<td>Anti-Corruption Agency</td>
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<td>BCP</td>
<td>Border Crossing Point</td>
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<td>Basic Prosecution Office</td>
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<td>Correction Centre</td>
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<td>Systematic Electronic Exchange of Data</td>
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<td>Standard Operating Procedure</td>
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European Union Rule of Law Mission

Partnership for Justice

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