

EUROPEAN UNION – BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
7TH SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING
JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND SECURITY
6-7 DECEMBER 2023
SARAJEVO (HYBRID MEETING)

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE MEETING

The recommendations below following the Sub-committee meeting are grouped under the relevant key priorities of the May 2019 Commission's Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for EU membership and reflect the short-term recommendations from the 2023 Country Report.

The drafting of strategies and legislation aimed at aligning with the EU acquis/EU standards needs to demonstrate a common vision and countrywide ownership, favour quality over speed, be accompanied by a proper stakeholders' consultation and by the allocation of resources adequate for the implementation of the objectives of the strategy/legislation. Furthermore, the collection of relevant data/statistics should be improved and a monitoring mechanism put in place for the implementation of the strategy/legislation for the whole country.

As the area of Justice, Freedom and Security is part of the fundamentals cluster, the Commission strongly encouraged the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to share any draft legislation covering these topics with the EU Office in Sarajevo to ensure alignment with the EU *acquis* and European standards.

1. Functioning of the judiciary

Opinion Key priority 6. *Improve the functioning of the judiciary by adopting new legislation on the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council and of the Courts of Bosnia and Herzegovina in line with European standards.*

- Share any draft legislation within the remit of the Justice, Freedom and Security Sub-Committee with the EU Delegation in Sarajevo to ensure alignment with the EU acquis and European standards.
- Revise the integrity-related amendments to the law on the HJPC to guarantee unhindered access to all necessary personal data and information to the external experts monitoring the asset declarations verifications process so that they may meaningfully exercise their functions as prescribed in the law. (Q4 2023)
- Guarantee the unhindered right of the HJPC to request additional information through legal amendments at the latest in the new comprehensive law on the HJPC. (Q3 2024)
- In parallel, undertake all necessary measures to secure the unhindered implementation of integrity-related amendments to the Law on the HJPC (Q1 2024).

- The Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina, HJPC and other relevant institutions (e.g. Civil Service Agency) should closely collaborate to overcome any implementation challenges stemming from administrative requirements for the establishment of the new HJPC Asset Declaration Verification Department. The monitoring of the work of the HJPC Asset Declaration Verification Department by external experts, as prescribed under the law, should be enabled and facilitated in a timely fashion including through legislative changes ensuring their access to personal information.
- Draft and adopt the new Law on the High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council (Law on HJPC), in line with recommendations from peer review missions (e.g. on appointments, disciplinary liability, performance appraisal, judicial training, asset declarations), Expert Report on Rule of Law Issues (Priebe Report) and Venice Commission Opinions. (Q3 2024)
- Integrity-related amendments to the Law on HJPC should be integrated in the new law and, to the extent required, modified based on lessons learned from their implementation. In so doing, the Ministry of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina should closely collaborate with HJPC as the body directly affected and responsible for the implementation of the law. The draft new Law on HJPC should be subject to review of the Venice Commission and its recommendations should be addressed in the final text of the law. The new Law on HJPC should be adopted by Q3/2024, as prescribed under the integrity-related amendments to the Law on HJPC.
- Adopt the Law on Courts of BiH, which addresses Venice Commission Opinion recommendations from 2013 and 2023. Any subsequent changes to the draft Law on Courts of BiH should be subject to review by the Venice Commission. When determining the seat of the appellate instance, BiH should consider carrying out ‘an evidence-based analysis of the impact of the seat location on the prosecution services, detention facilities and penitentiary institutions, legal aid services as well as the security issues related to parties and archives based on the criteria outlined in the CEPEJ Guidelines on the Creation of Judicial Maps to Support Access to Justice within a Quality Judicial System’ as recommended by the Venice Commission in 2023. (Q2 2024)
- Ensure the integrity of the judicial appointments and promotions. To that end, it should apply consistently the improved HJPC rules on judicial appointments, including candidate evaluations based on structured interview questions. Establish a judicial performance appraisal system, which is primarily based on qualitative rather than quantitative criteria. Judicial promotions should be based on candidate performance appraisals and careful consideration of disciplinary and criminal records, thus limit the subjective evaluation of a candidate. Appointments and promotions should primarily follow a non-ethnic approach and be based on merit. Ethnic affiliation should be considered only at the very end of any selection, if there is a choice between two equally ranked candidates. The non-ethnic approach should also be applied in the selection of HJPC members. HJPC members need to meet high moral, technical and professional standards, and that the prevalence of the criteria of ethnicity over the criteria of professionalism should be avoided.
- Provide regular initial and continuous training on judicial ethics and integrity, as well as on EU acquis and other relevant international law and standards, all based on training needs assessment.
- Ensure the integrity of the judicial discipline. Independence, impartiality, efficiency and effectiveness of judicial disciplinary proceedings should be ensured at all times. Disciplinary sanctions should be dissuasive and applied consistently in line with the HJPC Disciplinary Sanctioning Guidelines.

- The transparency of judiciary should be improved through consistent application of the HJPC and judicial communications strategies as well as HJPC guidelines for the publication of judgments and indictments on judicial websites.
- Adopt the new Justice Sector Reform Strategy 2023-2028 and Action plan (Q2/2024).
- Revise the enforcement procedure laws in the entities and Brčko District, especially to reduce the backlog of minor value and utility bill cases by relieving the courts from the burden of uncontested claims and by introducing professional bailiffs.
- Implement urgent measures to address the issue of excessive delays of judicial proceedings, amongst others by amending civil and criminal procedure codes and by adopting legislation to ensure the right to a judgement within a reasonable time in the Federation BiH by Q2/2024.

2. War crimes

Opinion Key Priority 5. *Take concrete steps to promote an environment conducive to reconciliation in order to overcome the legacies of the war.*

- Effectively implement the revised National War Crimes Strategy within the extended timeframe to be adopted by the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina. (Q1/2024)
- Enhance regional cooperation on the processing of war crime cases and finding of missing persons.
- Following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Registry of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (IRMCT), the country should further transpose the sentences of ICTY and its successors into domestic criminal records. (Q1/2024)
- Strengthen the forensic medicine capacities in the country by supporting and strengthening the state level Agency for Forensic Examination and Expertise (AFEE) through an appropriate level of staffing and resources and by establishing department for legal medicine with the AFEE.
- Increase the funds available for the support to the work of associations of families of the missing within the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees. (Q1 2024)
- Initiate an inclusive discussion aimed at identifying concrete measures that BiH could undertake to achieve progress under Key Priority 5, which may also contribute to the adoption of a countrywide transitional justice strategy, issuance of a formal apology, or a joint visit to pay tribute to all civilian victims of the last war. (2024)

3. Fundamental rights

Opinion Key priority 9. *Strengthen the protection of the rights of all citizens, notably by ensuring the implementation of the legislation on non-discrimination and on gender equality.*

Opinion Key priority 10. *Ensure the right to life and prohibition of torture, notably by (b) designate a national preventive mechanism against torture and ill-treatment*

Opinion Key priority 11. *Ensure an enabling environment for civil society, notably by upholding European standards on freedom of association and freedom of assembly.*

Opinion Key priority 12. *Guarantee freedom of expression and of the media and the protection of journalists, notably by (a) ensuring the appropriate judicial follow-up to cases of threats and violence against journalists and media workers, and (b) ensuring the financial sustainability of the public broadcasting system.*

Opinion Key priority 13. *Improve the protection and inclusion of vulnerable groups, in particular persons with disabilities, children, LGBTI persons, members of the Roma community, detainees, migrants and asylum seekers, as well as displaced persons and refugees in line with the objective of closure of Annex VII of the Dayton Peace Agreement.*

- Harmonise legislation and practices on freedom of assembly across the country in line with the European Commission’s recommendations stemming from the peer review on freedom of assembly conducted in May 2018 and the Venice Commission Opinion of December 2019. (Q1/2024)
- Prevent backsliding, promote conducive environment for civil society and improve systemic institutional follow-up to cases of threats and intimidation against members of civil society.
- Withdraw without delay the draft Republika Srpska entity Law on the Special Registry and Publicity of the Work of Non-Profit Organisations from the adoption procedure.
- Adopt a strategic framework for cooperation with civil society at all levels of governance. (Q1/2024)
- Ensure reliable, fully functional, systemic, country-wide statistical data collection, disaggregated by gender, on:
 - threats and attacks against journalists and media workers (Q2/2024) and ensure appropriate institutional and judicial follow up;
 - hate speech, including hate speech online, and improve identifying and reporting such cases by law-enforcement agencies, and their effective follow-up (Q2/2024);
 - hate crimes and improve identifying and reporting such cases by law-enforcement agencies, and their effective follow-up (Q2/2024);
 - child poverty rates, violence against children, in particular belonging to vulnerable groups such as children with disabilities, Roma children, and girls (Q2/2024);
 - cases of discrimination and socio-economic needs of persons in vulnerable situations (Q2/2024).

Analyse the collected data and conduct gender impact assessments to feed well-informed and evidence-based policy-making at all levels.

- Ensure that no steps are taken that would further undermine exercising freedom of expression and the media landscape.

- Undertake all necessary steps to revert the recently adopted *Republika Srpska* entity Criminal Code amendments regulating defamation as a criminal offence. (Q1 2024)
- Adopt amendments to criminal legislation to regulate hate speech in line with the ECtHR case-law and the EU acquis. (Q2/2024)
- Submit to the Commission new draft legislation on the Public Broadcasting Service to ensure its alignment with the EU acquis (Q1/2024). Fully implement the legislation on public service broadcasting guaranteeing political neutrality, independence and timely appointments of public service broadcasters' management structures (steering boards and directors). Ensuring a sustainable financing model for the public broadcasting system. (Q1/2024)
- Ensure that the new drafts of the Law on Electronic Communication and the Law on Electronic Media are in line with the EU acquis. Adopt legislation on media ownership transparency and criteria on public advertisement. Submit new draft laws to the Commission to ensure its alignment with the EU acquis. (Q2/2024)
- Ensure proper implementation of the State-level Law on the Freedom of Access to Information and timely adoption of the bylaws. Establish the Central Data Portal and implement the proactive publication of information (Q3/2024).
- Amend the State-level legislation with a view of establishing independent and specialised oversight mechanism, including the appeals procedure in the freedom of information matters (Q3/2024).
- Develop legislation on free access to information at Entity and Brcko District level harmonised across the country and aligned with relevant European standards and EU acquis, by using SIGMA model law on free access to information as a basis for drafting new laws and fulfilling the TAIEX recommendations (Q3/2024). Submit to the Commission, before the adoption procedure, new draft laws at an early stage of preparation to ensure their alignment with the EU acquis and relevant standards.
- Adopt a set of countrywide policy frameworks with regard to protection and enforcement of human rights, including non-discrimination, protection of persons belonging to minorities, and transitional justice. (Q3/2024)
- Improve the protection and inclusion of vulnerable groups, in particular persons with disabilities, children, LGBTI persons, members of the Roma community, detainees, migrants and asylum seekers, as well as displaced persons and refugees in line with the objective of closure of Annex VII of the Dayton Peace Agreement. (Q3/2024)
- Step up the engagement of the Ombudsman Institution in the court proceedings, in line with the Priebe report recommendations. (Q2/2024)
- Ensure full operationalisation of the recently adopted Amendments to the Law on Ombudsman for Human Rights, including a functional National Preventive Mechanism. (Q1/2024)
- Adopt the revised Action Plan for implementation of the ECtHR Sejdić-Finci case law. (Q1/2024)
- Ensure inclusive and quality education for all (continuous), and overcome the discriminatory practice of “two schools under one roof” including by implementing the relevant domestic court rulings. (Q2/2024)

- Specify main measures planned to address the serious systemic problems regarding inhuman and degrading treatment of children in institutional facilities and any concrete action taken towards the transition from institutionalised to community-based care of children belonging to vulnerable groups. (Q2 2024)
- Improve the status of wartime sexual violence victim by implementing August 2019 UNCAT Decision, requiring provision of compensation, rehabilitation and a formal apology by the authorities. Ensure implementation of the pending UNCAT 2017 recommendations. (Q1/2024)
- Develop and adopt a state-level law prescribing the minimum rights of civilian victims of wartime torture throughout the country, in line with the commitments under the UN Convention on Torture.
- Substantially improve the system of redress for civilian victims of wartime sexual violence and torture, particularly on subsidiary liability including application of statute of limitations against third persons and imposition and pursuit of court fees in related unsuccessful civil compensation claims, in particular in the *Republika Srpska* entity.
- Establish a budget-funded mechanism for compensation claims of civil victims of war in case of insolvent convicted perpetrators. (Q1/2024)
- Adopt amendments to RS Law on Victims of Torture to extend the deadline for application for the status of wartime victims, which expired in October 2023. (deadline expired 5 October 2023)
- As a matter of urgent priority, waive court fee charges levied on victims of wartime torture in the *Republika Srpska* entity due to application of statute of limitation to their compensation claims. (Q4 2023)
- Ensure full operationalisation of the Federation entity Law on Civilian Victims of War set to enter into force on 1st January 2024. Proceed with drafting of the Federation entity Law on Victims of Torture. (Q2 / 2024)
- Adopt the new Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (WPS - UNSCR 1325) for 2023 – 2027. (Q1/2024)
- Further harmonise Federation entity Law on Protection from Domestic Violence with the Istanbul Convention standards, including improving the system of safe houses, and adopt amendments to the Federation entity Criminal Code with an aim to ensure uniform regulation and prosecution of domestic violence as a criminal offense. (Q4/2023)
- Amend criminal codes and domestic violence legislation to address all obligations stemming from the Istanbul and Lanzarote Conventions. Further harmonise the Federation entity Criminal Code with the Lanzarote Convention aimed at improving prosecutions of organised crime cases involving children (Q4/2023)
- Ensure that the use of foster care and alternative solutions are further promoted, and that specific measures are undertaken to tackle exploitation of children and child begging.
- Improve mapping of the needs of persons in vulnerable situations, especially persons with disabilities, national minorities (Roma). (Q2/2023)
- Ensure implementation of the Action Plans for the Social Inclusion of Roma and on the rights of LGBTIQ persons and the allocation of necessary implementation budgets. (Q1/2024)

- Ensure implementation of Poznan Declaration commitments on Roma integration. (Q3/2023 – international commitment of the country)
- Harmonise relevant laws in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (inter alia criminal laws, family laws, domestic violence laws, laws related to child protection and laws related to social care). (Q2/2024)
- Develop missing and strengthen existing child-friendly protection mechanisms and structures in line with international obligations. (Q3/2024)
- Reinforce implementation of the BiH Gender Action Plan and BiH UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan at all levels and ensure timely preparations of the Action Plans for the upcoming years, with clear steps, milestones and sources of funding. (Q1/2024)
- Harmonize laws country-wide with the Gender Equality Law and the Istanbul Convention. (Q3/2024)
- Address the latest Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) reports' conclusions and recommendations in the laws, national strategies and action plans on gender equality and anti-discrimination. (Q1/2024)
- Improve the institutional response to gender-based violence and harassment, including on protective measures, victim support, legal aid in particular for children and persons in vulnerable situations, and safe accommodation. (Q2/2024)
- Ensure equal access to healthcare services by women and girls, including Roma, LGBTIQ and other minority groups, and ban obstetric violence. (Q3/2024)
- Harmonize healthcare, maternity, paternity and parental leave benefits across the country. (Q2/2024)

4. Anti-corruption policy

Opinion Key priority 7. *Strengthen the prevention and fight against corruption and organised crime, including money laundering and terrorism, notably by:*

a) adopting and implementing legislation on conflict of interest and whistle-blowers' protection;
b) ensuring the effective functioning and coordination of anti-corruption bodies;
c) align the legislation and strengthen capacities on public procurement;
d) ensuring effective cooperation among law enforcement bodies and with prosecutors' offices;
e) demonstrating progress towards establishing a track record of proactive investigations, confirmed indictments, prosecutions and final convictions against organised crime and corruption, including at high-level;
f) de-politicising and restructuring public enterprises and ensuring transparency of privatisation processes.

- Adopt the law on the prevention of conflict of interest at state level in accordance with European and international standards, such as those included in the Venice Commission recommendations and GRECO recommendations, and establish an efficient mechanism for checking the accuracy of asset declarations of public officials at all levels. (Q1 2024)
- Adopt the law on the prevention of conflict of interest at FBiH level in accordance with European and international standards, such as those included in the Venice Commission recommendations and GRECO recommendations, and establish an efficient mechanism for checking the accuracy of asset declarations of public officials at all levels. (Q1 2024)
- Align the legal framework for conflict of interest with European and international standards in the *Republika Srpska* entity and the Brcko District. (Q3 2024)
- Complete the legal framework on the protection of whistle-blowers at all levels of government. (Q1 2024 for the Federation entity; Q2 2024 for the rest of the country)
- Demonstrate progress towards establishing a track record on the repression and prevention of high level corruption, and ensure an effective and independent judicial process in the COVID-related corruption cases.
- Adopt a new state-level anticorruption strategy and action plan and ensure the professionalisation and effective coordination of corruption prevention bodies at all levels of government. (Q2 2024) Ensure that anticorruption strategies are harmonised across the country. (Q4 2024)
- Complete professionalisation of Anti-Corruption bodies. (Q4 2024)
- Adopt a new 2024-2028 public procurement strategy and accompanying action plan supporting its implementation (Q1/2024)
- Adopt the Budget of Institutions of BiH and International Obligations of BiH for 2024 providing necessary funds for the Central Election Commission of BiH (CEC) to hire new staff in the CEC's audit department to monitor compliance with political party financing regulations, in line with ODIHR/GRECO recommendations. (Q1/2024)
- Adopt the new Law on Political Party Financing in line with ODIHR/GRECO Recommendations. (Q4/2025)
- Significantly improve the track record of proactive investigations, confirmed indictments, prosecutions and final convictions against corruption and electoral fraud cases, notably at

high-level. Present detailed track record data, including the relevant articles of the criminal codes.

5. Law enforcement and judicial cooperation

Opinion Key priority 7. *Strengthen the prevention and fight against corruption and organised crime, including money laundering and terrorism, notably by:*

- a) adopting and implementing legislation on conflict of interest and whistle-blowers' protection;*
- b) ensuring the effective functioning and coordination of anti-corruption bodies;*
- c) align the legislation and strengthen capacities on public procurement;*
- d) ensuring effective cooperation among law enforcement bodies and with prosecutors' offices;*
- e) demonstrating progress towards establishing a track record of proactive investigations, confirmed indictments, prosecutions and final convictions against organised crime and corruption, including at high-level;*
- f) de-politicising and restructuring public enterprises and ensuring transparency of privatisation processes.*

- Strengthen cooperation among law enforcement agencies, notably by increasing specialised multi-agency investigation teams for complex cases, including financial investigations, or Joint Investigation Teams (JITs); improving systematic/ standardised access to electronic databases and the secure exchange of information.
- Create a new Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS).
- Ease the real-time exchange of criminal intelligence between law enforcement agencies at all levels, including use of crime registries.
- Initiate a formal process supporting a more integrated approach on DNA databases as a prerequisite of countrywide coordination and strengthen cooperation with other countries. (Q2/2024)
- Further develop and enhance intelligence-led policing at all levels of government.
- Conclude the negotiation process towards the signing of an international agreement between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the EU on cooperation with Eurojust (Q3/2024).
- To align the legislation on personal data protection with EU standards (Q2/2024).

6. Fight against organised crime

Opinion Key priority 7. *Strengthen the prevention and fight against corruption and organised crime, including money laundering and terrorism, notably by:*

- a) adopting and implementing legislation on conflict of interest and whistle-blowers' protection;*
- b) ensuring the effective functioning and coordination of anti-corruption bodies;*
- c) align the legislation and strengthen capacities on public procurement;*
- d) ensuring effective cooperation among law enforcement bodies and with prosecutors' offices;*
- e) demonstrating progress towards establishing a track record of proactive investigations, confirmed indictments, prosecutions and final convictions against organised crime and corruption, including at high-level;*
- f) de-politicising and restructuring public enterprises and ensuring transparency of privatisation processes.*

- Demonstrate progress on the implementation of the Strategy and accompanying action plans to fight against organised crime.
- Adopt the Strategy for fighting Trafficking in Human Beings (THB) for 2024-2027 period with appropriate action plan. (Q1/2024)
- Adopt strategic framework and action plans for fighting cybercrime at the governments' level where the strategies do not exist. (Q3/2024)
- Demonstrate progress towards establishing a track record of investigations, indictments and final convictions for serious and organised crime, including money laundering and terrorist financing, and fill in the relevant database with information from all levels of governance.
- Implement the recommendations of the 2022 peer review on organised crime and high level corruption.
- Align the police legislation with EU standards/best practices at all levels of decision-making/authority.
- Strengthen financial investigations and adopt standard operating procedures to run financial investigations in parallel with criminal investigations. (Q2/2024)
- Establish a firearms focal point. (Q3/2024)
- Introduce registers on beneficial ownership information with timely and unrestricted access for competent authorities and the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), in line with the 4th and 5th Anti Money Laundering Directive and as agreed in the November 2019 EC-BiH implementing arrangement following up to the EU-WB6 Action Plan on Counterterrorism. (Q4/2024)
- Adopt a new law on anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT), in line with 4th and 5th AML Directives (Q4/2023); and implementing legislation (Q2/2024)
- Adopt the revised legislation to prevent and suppress the abuse of narcotic drugs and enhance the mechanisms to fight the abuse of drugs. (Q4/2024)
- Formalise the cooperation with the EU Drugs Agency (formerly European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)) and establish a focal point for drug issues for the whole country and the Early Warning System in order to enhance cooperation and coordination. (Q3/2024)
- Actively participate in the IPA-project with the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, and design concrete working arrangements with the upcoming EU Drugs Agency to further the cooperation and learn from the experiences the Agency can provide.
- Introduce flexible mechanisms to allow for a regular updating of the list of controlled psychoactive substances.
- Establish a National Drug Observatory and an Early Warning System for new psychoactive substances and update the law on drugs as regards New Psychoactive Substances. (Q3/2024)
- Draft and adopt new National Strategy for Control of Narcotic Drugs and Suppression of Narcotic Drug Abuse and the National Action Plan for Narcotic Drug Abuse 2024-2028S(Q3/2024), based on the assessment of the implementation of the on-going strategy.

- Further strengthen and align the legal framework with EU acquis, and align within the country on cybercrime (Q4/2024); adopt strategic framework at level of all entities (Q3/2024).
- Establish asset management capacities at the state level (Adopt Law on asset confiscation and management at the state level) and designate an asset recovery office(s) responsible for facilitating the tracing, identification and seizure of crime proceeds. (Q3/2024)

7. Counter-Terrorism and Preventing/ Combatting Violent Extremism

Opinion Key priority 7. *Strengthen the prevention and fight against corruption and organised crime, including money laundering and terrorism, notably by:*

- a) adopting and implementing legislation on conflict of interest and whistle-blowers' protection;*
- b) ensuring the effective functioning and coordination of anti-corruption bodies;*
- c) align the legislation and strengthen capacities on public procurement;*
- d) ensuring effective cooperation among law enforcement bodies and with prosecutors' offices;*
- e) demonstrating progress towards establishing a track record of proactive investigations, confirmed indictments, prosecutions and final convictions against organised crime and corruption, including at high-level;*
- f) de-politicising and restructuring public enterprises and ensuring transparency of privatisation processes.*

- Continue giving high priority to the full implementation of the Joint Action Plan on Counter-terrorism for the Western Balkans as well as the actions included in the corresponding bilateral Implementing Arrangement and amongst other actions:
 - Swiftly adopt the amendments to the Criminal Code of Bosnia and Herzegovina to introduce criminal provisions concerning terrorism, namely training and travelling abroad for terrorist activities as well as abuse of the internet and social media; (Q4/2024)
 - Following the establishment of the Europol Joint National Contact point, continue strengthening a proactive exchange of information regarding terrorism and violent extremism for operational and strategic purposes;
 - Address hate speech and Terrorist and Violent Extremist content on the Internet and Social media by cooperating actively with among others Europol and Internet Providers to remove this content and provide an alternative narrative;
 - Draft legislation and guidelines on the protection of critical infrastructure and public places and create a unified threat and risk assessment mechanism covering all critical infrastructure. (Q4/2024)
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- Demonstrate progress on the implementation of the action plans for the implementation of the countrywide counterterrorism strategy for 2021 to 2026.
- Develop and implement programmes to prevent all forms of radicalisation, especially but not exclusively for youth and adolescents and facilitate disengagement from terrorism and violent extremism, applying an all of society approach involving – further to security actors

- all relevant official bodies like social workers, mental health care professionals, education sectors as well as civil society organisations.
- Ensure a proper management of returning Foreign Terrorist Fighters and their family members, also in view of expected returns, and release from prison:
 - by implementing a whole society approach and multi-disciplinary cooperation;
 - adopting a gender neutral approach regarding prosecution of FTFs.

8. Migration asylum and border management

Opinion Key priority 8. *Ensure effective coordination, at all levels, of border management and migration management capacity, as well as ensuring the functioning of the asylum system.*

- Align BiH visa policy with the EU Acquis, notably Regulation (EU) 2018/1806 on countries whose citizens require visas to enter EU (Q1/2024).
- Open the negotiation process with European Commission on the Status Agreement for the deployment of FRONTEX standing corps under the current 2019 EBCG Regulation. (Q4/2023). Conclude the Working Arrangement with Frontex (Q1/2024).
- Adopt legal framework for putting in function Lipa detention facility in line with recently adopted Law on Foreigners (Q1/2024)
- Intensify implementation of readmission agreements with neighbouring countries on ‘shortened’ readmission procedure, notably Serbia and Montenegro (Q1/2024).
- Adopt new Strategy and Action Plan for Integrated Border Management of BiH for the 2024-2029 period (Q1/2024).
- Adopt the new Law on Border Control enhancing the Integrated Border Management policy (Q1/2024).
- Adopt dedicated budget for implementation of the recently adopted migration strategy and action plan to strengthen capacity in the area of migration management (Q1/2024).
- Adopt necessary bylaws based on the recently adopted Law on Foreigners further aligned to the EU Acquis (Q2 and Q3/2024).
- Take over responsibility for the management of migration and asylum and improve coordination mechanisms. (Q1/2025)
- Continue to strengthen capacity in the area of asylum, border management and returns.
- Improve the efficiency of the registration and identification of migrant population and inter-agency cooperation, primarily through additional human resources.
- Intensify implementation of readmission agreements and step up efforts to conclude additional readmission agreements with the countries of origin of irregular migrants and other countries at high migratory risk.
- Improve the control over biometric passport manufacturing and procurement process (Q4/2024).
- Continue to ensure unhindered action and cooperate with humanitarian partners and civil society organisations to address the basic needs of refugees and migrants.

- Intensify establishment of the Passenger Data Exchange (API/PNR) system for more efficient border control and fight against terrorism (Q3/2024).
- Intensify efforts on education of the new generation of Border Police cadets for raising human resources capacities of the Border Police (Q4/2024).
- Intensify information campaigns on the rights and obligations of visa-free travel.
- Maintain current channels for the exchange of information and ensure more intensive cooperation with the European Commission and its agencies on migration and border management, notably Europol, CEPOL, EBCGA and EUAA.