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Regional Cooperation Council

**HELP in the Western Balkans**

**Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey 2019-2022**



Co-funded by the European Union

# ***Council of Europe HELP online course on Access to justice for women***

***Launch event***

*Draft concept paper and agenda*

*Link TBC*

<b>Date</b>	9 June 2021
<b>Location</b>	Online (web-conference) Link will be provided to selected participants prior to the session
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Participation</b>	Judges and prosecutors from South East Europe selected by their respective Training Institutions

## Background

Achieving **gender equality** is a priority for the Council for Europe (CoE) and its member States. It is also central to achieving the organisation's mission: safeguarding human rights, upholding democracy and preserving the rule of law. Even if the legal status of women in Europe has improved during the recent decades, effective equality between women and men is far from being a reality.

The CoE and its member States have made specific commitments to **improve women's access to justice** and **prevent and combat violence against women**. The role of justice system professionals in ensuring and strengthening women's access to justice is essential in achieving **substantive equality** and guaranteeing **equal rights** to all in the society.

The regional **HELP online course on Access to justice for women** will be launched in cooperation with the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and GIZ Open Regional Funds for South East Europe - Legal Reform, for judges and prosecutors from South East Europe. The aim is to help legal professionals understand the legal and other barriers in accessing justice and apply a gender sensitive lens in their daily work. This course is being organised in the framework of the activities of SEE Judicial Training Institutes (SEE JTI) Network<sup>1</sup>.

## The HELP online course on Access to justice for women

The HELP online course provides a comprehensive overview of International and European women's rights and gender equality standards, case-law and good practices. It is the first HELP course to provide a single resource on gender equality and justice covering the extensive CoE standards, monitoring reports and soft-law instruments on the matter.

The course is developed in an **interactive** way and includes various practical exercises and it consists of **six substantive modules**:

1. Introduction to the concept of access to justice
2. International and European legal framework
3. Discrimination on the grounds of sex and gender
4. Avoiding gender stereotyping
5. Practical guidance to improve women's access to justice
6. Gender sensitive approach to the practice of law

## The online launch

The **launch event will be held online, by web conference on 4 June 2021**. Its main goal is to introduce participants to the HELP platform and the course pages on which each group will follow the course (translated into all local languages) with the assistance of a tutor.

The working language for the online launch will be English. Selected participants will receive from the HELP Secretariat a link allowing them to access the web-conference, based on which they can follow the event on their computer or mobile devices (tablet/smartphone).

## The course preparation and implementation

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.rcc.int/working\\_groups/32/see-judicial-training-institutions-network](https://www.rcc.int/working_groups/32/see-judicial-training-institutions-network)

Before the online launch event, participants should create an account on the [HELP e-learning platform](#)

*For creating your HELP account, please follow these steps:*

*- go to this link and fill in the form (it takes about 2 mins):*

*<http://help.elearning.ext.coe.int/login/signup.php>*

*- once submitted, you will receive an activation link on the email you used for creating the account*

*- go to your email inbox and click on the link to activate your account.*

**VIDEO TUTORIAL**

how to create a HELP account

During the launch event, the participants will be registered on their course page, prepared in advance by their tutors. Over the following 3 months and based on the planning set by the tutor, the participants will go through the **online course** in English, moderated by the HELP certified tutors.

The participants who have successfully completed the course and passed the evaluation set by the tutors will receive **certificates** issued by the HELP Programme of the Council of Europe and Regional Cooperation Council.

### Registration

Interested participants should:

- Be appointed by their respective Training Institutions to participate in the course.
- Be available to **attend the launch event** (join the web-conference via the link provided by the HELP Secretariat before the event)
- Undertake to **follow and complete the online tutored course** in the following 3 months (approx. 1-2 hours of work per week)
- Have a laptop/tablet/smartphone available for accessing the launch event via a link provided by the HELP Secretariat.

### Further information

For any information, do not hesitate to **contact**:

[Political.Department@rcc.int](mailto:Political.Department@rcc.int)

[Jorida.shytaj@rcc.int](mailto:Jorida.shytaj@rcc.int)

## Draft agenda

12.15 – 12.30	<i>Online connection</i>
12.30 – 12.45	<b>Welcoming address</b> <i>Amer Kapetanovic, Head of Political Department, RCC</i> <i>Eva Pastrana, Head of HELP Unit, Council of Europe TBC</i> <i>Representative of Open Regional Fund for South East Europe - Legal Reform TBC</i>
12.45 – 13.15	<b>The Council of Europe HELP Programme and the online course on Access to justice for women</b> <i>Valentina Boz, Project Coordinator, Council of Europe</i>
13.15 – 13.45	<b>Guidelines on Gender-Sensitive Approach for Adjudicating Gender-Based Violence Cases</b> <i>Konul Derya Gasimova, Council of Europe, TBC</i>
13.45 – 14.15	<b>HELP online course on Access to justice for women: practical aspects of its implementation</b> <i>HELP tutors</i>
14.15 – 14.45	<b>Tour de table and participants' expectations</b>
14.45 – 15.00	<b>Closing remarks</b> <i>Jorida Shytaj, Senior Political Advisor, RCC</i> <b>Representative of Open Regional Fund for South East Europe - Legal Reform TBC</b>

### **The Council of Europe HELP Programme**

The **Council of Europe (CoE) Programme for Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP)**<sup>2</sup> is aimed at supporting the CoE member States in implementing the European human rights standards at the domestic level, focusing on the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), other key CoE instruments, and since 2015, EU law. This is done by raising the capacities of legal professionals to apply those instruments in their daily work.

The objective of HELP is to provide high quality education on human rights to judges, lawyers and prosecutors throughout Europe. Law enforcement authorities such as police and prison staff are also targeted by HELP. Thanks to HELP courses, legal professionals can better protect human rights on a national level and keep up to date with the ever-evolving standards and case law of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). HELP courses specifically designed for EU countries increasingly incorporate relevant EU laws.

HELP is:

1. the only pan-European Network of national training institutions for judges, prosecutors and lawyers in the 47 CoE Member States.
2. an e-learning platform with free on-line courses on human rights.
3. a human rights training methodology for legal professionals.

### **The HELP in the Western Balkans action**

The regional HELP online course on Refugee and migrant children is implemented under the “HELP in the Western Balkans” action which is part of the joint European Union/Council of Europe programme “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey 2019-2022”, implemented by the Council of Europe.

Its overall objective is to enhance justice professionals’ capacities to effectively and coherently apply European fundamental rights standards at the domestic level through training, mainly referring to the Council of Europe instruments (the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), the (revised) European Social Charter (ESC) etc.) and EU framework (EU Charter on Fundamental Rights, EU Law). It also aims to strengthen the HELP Network in the Western Balkans.

### **The Regional Cooperation Council (RCC)**

RCC is an all-inclusive, regionally owned and led cooperation framework. This framework engages RCC participants from the South East Europe (SEE), members of the international community and donors on subjects which are important and of interest to the SEE, with a view to promoting and advancing the European and Euro-Atlantic integration of the region.

Within the framework of the general political guidelines set by the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP), the RCC works to develop and maintain a political climate of dialogue, reconciliation, tolerance and openness towards cooperation, with a view to enabling the implementation of regional programmes aimed at economic and social development to the benefit of the people in the region.

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<sup>2</sup> For more information on HELP please visit HELP’s website: [www.coe.int/help](http://www.coe.int/help)

In April 2016 the RCC established SEE Judicial Training Institutions Network (SEE JTIN) and agreed upon its concrete activities and goals for the future. The RCC now serves as a hub for the regional activities in the field of judicial training, disseminating information of the regional relevance, linking it to the European training institutions and organizing regional seminars for judges and prosecutors.