



**REPORT ON THE  
IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE REVISED  
ACTION PLAN FOR  
CHAPTER 23 –  
SUBCHAPTER 'FIGHT  
AGAINST CORRUPTION'  
for 2023**





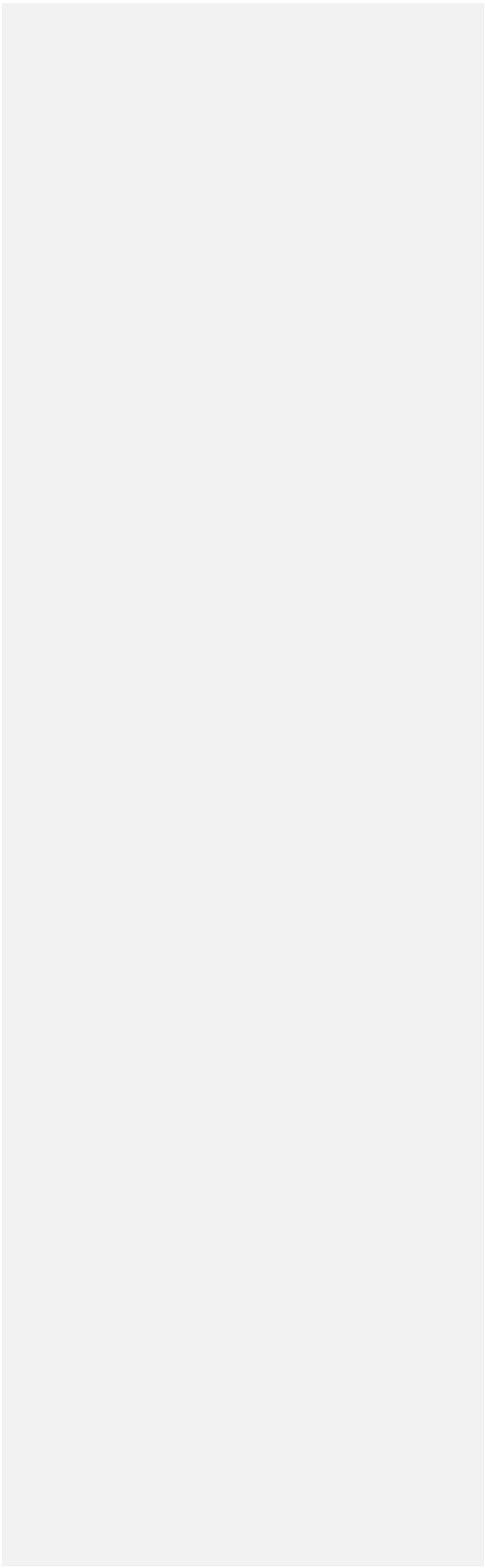
Republic of Serbia



# **REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVISED ACTION PLAN FOR CHAPTER 23 – SUBCHAPTER ‘FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION’**

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# INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The Law on Prevention of Corruption<sup>1</sup>, whose implementation began on September 1, 2020, extended the competence of the Agency for the Prevention of Corruption (Agency<sup>2</sup>) to include oversight of the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’, as well as all future strategic documents in the field of fight against corruption, i.e. prevention of corruption.

In accordance with Article 6, paragraph 1 of the Law on Prevention of Corruption, the Agency oversees the implementation of strategic documents, submits to the National Assembly a report on their implementation with recommendations for further action, gives recommendations to responsible entities on how to eliminate shortcomings in the implementation of strategic documents, and initiates amendments and supplements to said documents.

Article 33, paragraph 3 of the Law on Prevention of Corruption further stipulates that in terms of “joint action in the implementation of strategic documents in the field of fight against corruption”, the Agency shall cooperate with public authorities and other legal entities, scientific institutions and associations.

Article 38 of the Law on Prevention of Corruption prescribes: 1) that entities responsible for the implementation of measures and activities contained in strategic documents are obliged to report to the Agency on their implementation; 2) that the manner of reporting is regulated in more detail by an act passed by the Director of the Agency, in accordance with strategic documents; 3) that the Agency shall submit to the National Assembly a report on the implementation of strategic documents with recommendations for further action, no later than by March 31 of the current year for the previous year; and 4) that the Agency shall provide opinions with recommendations regarding the implementation of strategic documents.

The Revised Action Plan for the Chapter 23<sup>3</sup> adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia on July 10, 2020 also envisages that the Agency will oversee the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 – subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’, in accordance with the new Law on Prevention of Corruption.

The Agency is an independent and autonomous state body that is accountable to the National Assembly for its work.

1 „Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", no. 35/19, 88/19, 11/21 - authentic interpretation, 94/21 and 14/22

2 See the list of abbreviations pp. 135

3 <https://www.mpravde.gov.rs/tekst/30402/revidirani-akcioni-plan-za-poglavlje-23-i-strategija-razvoja-pravosudja-za-period-2020-2025-22072020.php>

The Agency submitted the First Report on the Implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’ to the National Assembly on March 30, 2021. The Second Report was submitted on March 29, 2022, and the Third Repoirt on March 27, 2023.

The Fourth Report on the Implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’ contains the following:

- Introductory remarks;
- General assessment of fulfilment;
- Summary of the implementation of activities;
- Implementation of anti-corruption measures;
- Recommendations, and
- General remarks on supervision on implementation.

# GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF FULFILMENT

The revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’ defines 130 activities.

The assessment of fulfilment is presented using the so-called traffic light scale: the activities that were implemented are marked in green, the activities that were not implemented are marked in red, and those that the Agency was unable to assess are marked in yellow. The Agency evaluated certain activities as two, with relevant explanations provided for each such individual activity. Activities that are carried out simultaneously were counted as one, which was also explained in the presentation of individual activities. Activities that are carried out simultaneously were counted as one, which was also explained in the presentation of individual activities. For this very reason, instead of 130, the Agency observed and evaluated 114 activities.

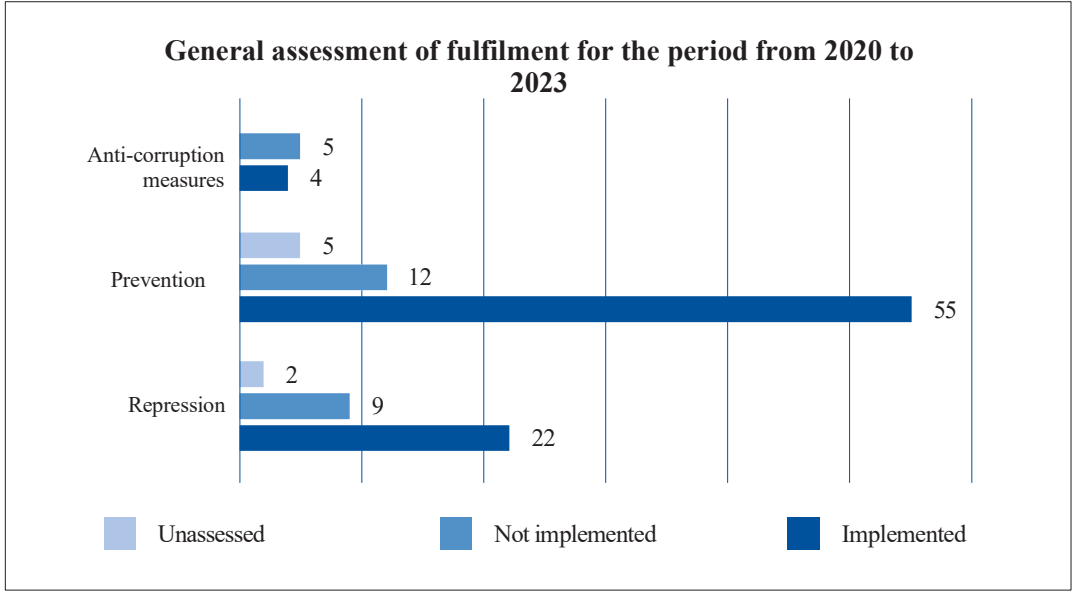
The statistical review that follows should certainly be taken conditionally, given that the level of complexity, inter-institutional coherence or anticipated duration is not the same for all activities. The Agency also indicates that, in order to gain complete insight, previous three Implementation Reports should also be taken into account when considering the assessment of activities, especially those that are continuous in nature

## General assessment of fulfilment for the period from 2020 to 2023

The revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’ defined 130 activities. Out of these, for the period from 2020 to 2023, the Agency evaluated 114 activities that were due in the III and IV quarters of 2020, i.e., after July 10, 2020 (adoption of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23), activities that are due in 2021, 2022, and 2023, as well as those that are of a continuous nature, namely:

- 9 in the area of implementation of anti-corruption measures;
- 72 in the field of prevention of corruption and
- 33 in the area of repression of corruption.

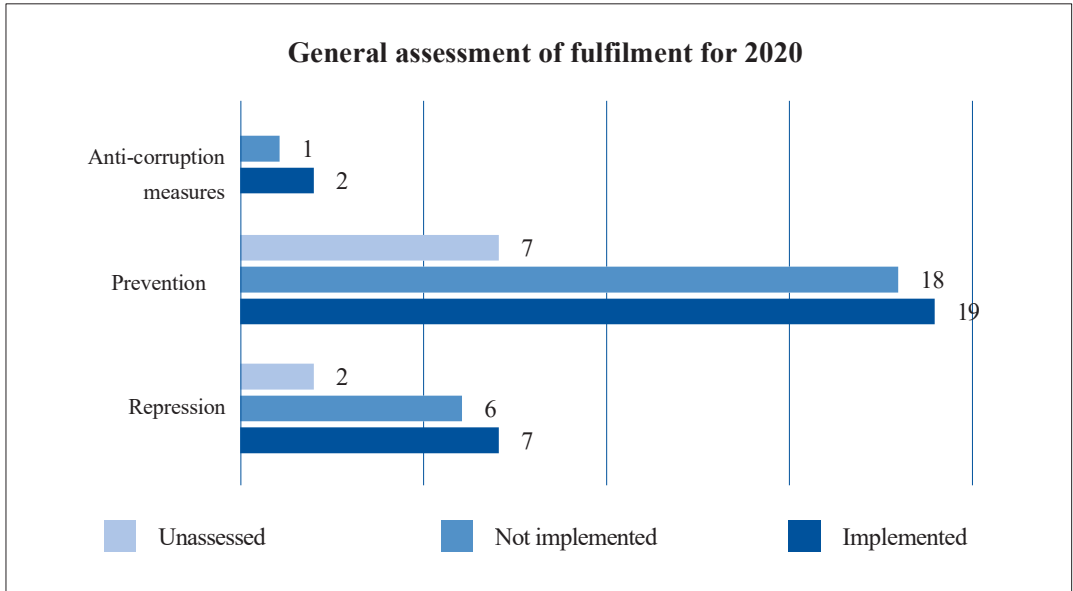




### General assessment of fulfilment of activities for the year 2020

The Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption' defined 130 activities. Out of these, in the reporting period, the Agency evaluated 68 activities that were due in the III and IV quarters of 2020, i.e., after July 10, 2020 (adoption of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23), as well as those that are continuous in nature:

- 3 in the area of implementation of anti-corruption measures;
- 50 in the field of prevention of corruption and
- 15 in the area of repression of corruption.



According to the Agency, out of 62 reviewed activities:

- 26 (42%) were implemented;
- 26 (42%) were not implemented, and
- 10 (16%) were impossible to assess.

Out of 3 reviewed activities in the area of implementation of anti-corruption measures:

- 2 (67%) were implemented and
- 1 (33%) were impossible to assess.

Out of 44 reviewed activities in the field of prevention of corruption:

- 19 (43%) were implemented;
- 18 (41%) were not implemented, and
- 7 (16%) were impossible to assess.

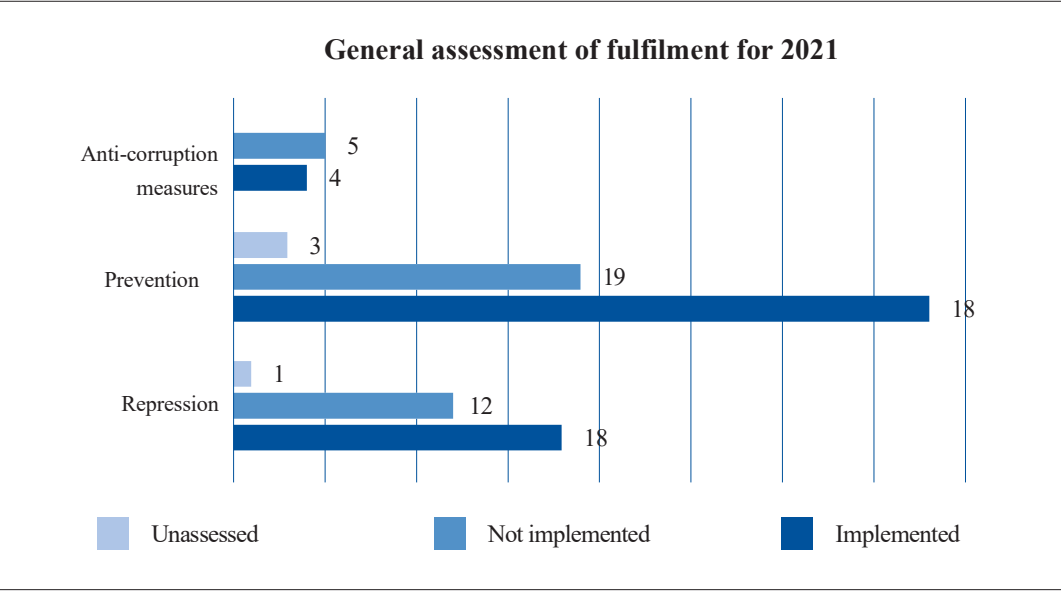
Out of 15 reviewed activities in the area of repression of corruption:

- 7 (47%) were implemented;
- 6 (40%) were not implemented, and
- 2 (13%) were impossible to assess.

### General assessment of fulfilment for 2021

The agency assessed 100 activities, that is, those that are continuous in nature, those that were due in 2021, those that were assessed as not implemented in the First Implementation Report, and those that the Agency was unable to assess in the First Implementation Report. Namely:

- 9 in the area of implementation of anti-corruption measures;
- 60 in the field of prevention of corruption, and
- 31 in the area of repression of corruption.



According to the Agency, out of 100 reviewed activities:

- 60 (60%) were implemented,
- 36 (36%) were not implemented, and
- 4 (4%) were impossible to assess.

Out of 9 reviewed activities in the area of implementation of anti-corruption measures:

- 4 (44%) were implemented, and
- 5 (56%) were not implemented.

Out of 60 reviewed activities in the field of prevention of corruption:

- 38 (63%) were implemented,
- 19 (32%) were not implemented, and
- 3 (5%) were impossible to assess.

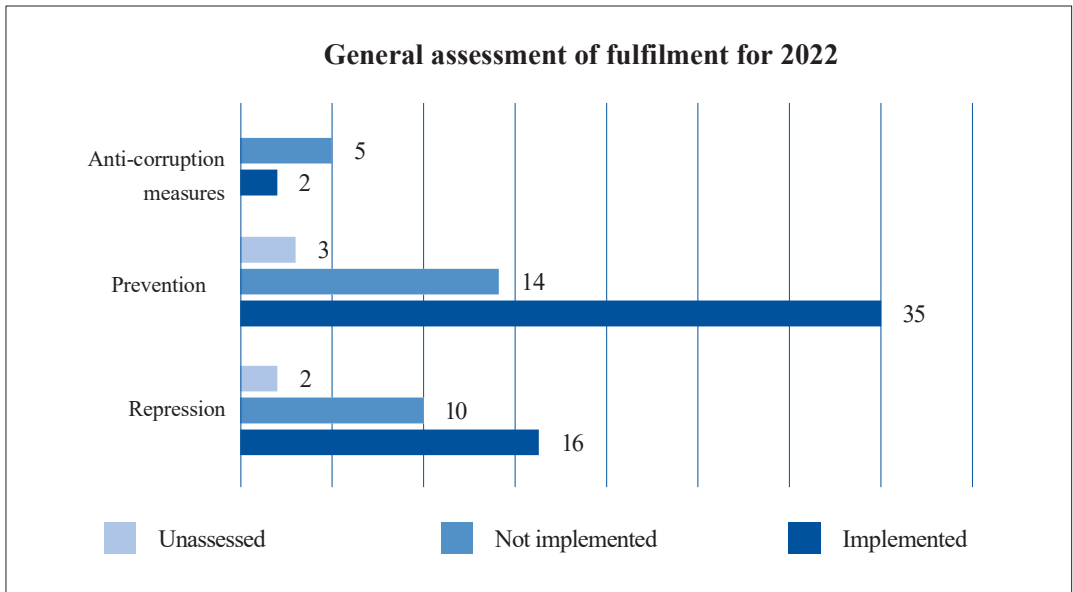
Out of 31 reviewed activities in the area of repression of corruption:

- 18 (58%) were implemented,
- 12 (39%) were not implemented, and
- 1 (3%) were impossible to assess.

### General assessment of fulfilment for 2022

The agency assessed 87 activities, that is, those that are continuous in nature, those that were due in 2022, those that were assessed as not implemented in the First and Second implementation Reports, and those that the Agency was unable to assess in the Second Implementation Report. Namely:

- 7 in the area of implementation of anti-corruption measures;
- 52 in the field of prevention of corruption, and
- 28 in the area of repression of corruption.



Out of 7 reviewed activities in the area of implementation of anti-corruption measures:

- 2 (29%) were implemented,
- 5 (71%) were not implemented.

Out of 52 reviewed activities in the field of prevention of corruption, and:

- 35 (67%) were implemented,
- 14 (27%) were not implemented, and
- 3 (6%) were impossible to assess.

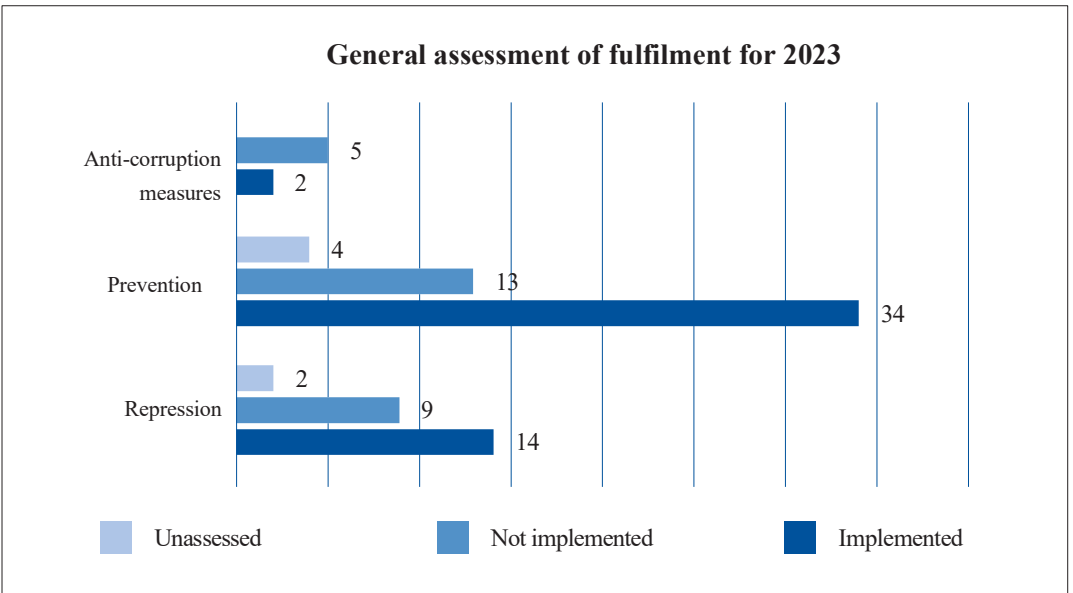
Out of 28 reviewed activities in the area of repression of corruption.:

- 16 (57%) were implemented,
- 10 (36%) were not implemented, and
- 2 (7%) were impossible to assess.

### General assessment of fulfilment for 2023

The Agency assessed 83 activities, that is, those that are continuous in nature, those that were due in 2023, those that were assessed as not implemented in the First, Second and Third Implementation Report, and those that the Agency was unable to assess in the Third Implementation Report:

- 7 in the area of implementation of anti-corruption measures;
- 51 in the field of prevention of corruption, and
- 25 in the area of repression of corruption.





Out of 7 reviewed activities in the area of implementation of anti-corruption measures:

- 2 (29%) were implemented, and
- 5 (71%) were not implemented.

Out of 51 reviewed activities in the field of prevention of corruption:

- 34 (67%) were implemented,
- 13 (25%) were not implemented and
- 4 (8%) were impossible to assess.

Out of 25 reviewed activities in the area of repression of corruption:

- 14 (56%) were implemented,
- 9 (36%) were not implemented and
- 2 (8%) were impossible to assess.

After the fourth cycle of monitoring the Implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', the key conclusion is that it is necessary to carry out a new revision of the Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', or adopt a new public policy document, that is, establish a new mechanism through which the priorities of the Republic of Serbia in the field of reform processes and European integration will be determined, as well as the goals, expected results, concrete activities, and the way of monitoring their implementation.

The shortcomings that were identified in previous Reports st continued to significantly affect implementation and reporting, as well as monitoring the implementation of this document. The revision is necessary also because, according to the current document, the activities should end in 2023.

The deficiencies of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption' affected the quality of implementation, which was also recognised by some of the reporting institutions, in the sense that it was not entirely clear to them what certain activities or parts of activities referred to; that they felt that certain activities were not even supposed to be listed in this document, because they were already implemented; that it was not always entirely clear which institution were in charge of which segments of the activity, and so on.

The activities that have been successfully implemented primarily relate to monitoring the application of current regulations and strengthening capacities in the form of professional development of employees and inter-institutional trainings.

Delays in conditional activities (e.g. adoption of regulations) had a negative impact on the overall performance. On the other hand, some activities, whose implementation was delayed earlier, were implemented in the meantime, making it possible to realise some other activities that were conditioned thereby.

Generally speaking, activities that include systemic steps such as planning, preparation and coordination, i.e. several stages and a number of actors (e.g. hiring, draft documents, consultations, submission of comments, testing and development of technical tools, public

procurement, engaging experts, etc.) proceeded at a slower pace compared to those that had fewer phases from start to finish.

It is also worth noting that reporting entities have shown readiness to present the true status of the implementation of activities and that, in most cases, they themselves stated (in the reporting form) that certain activities have not been implemented. In most cases, they did not provide any information that was not relevant for the implementation of a specific activity. Although certain activities have been implemented in the previous reporting cycle, institutions continued to report on their further development (e.g. implementation of institutional anti-corruption plans); however, for reasons of methodological consistency, the Agency did not include these reports in this Report.

Progress in reporting quality has been noted in the third reporting cycle, but it cannot be said that the challenge of uneven quality has been entirely overcome. Continuous capacity building is still necessary, in terms of holding workshops and consultative meetings for contact persons, especially bearing in mind frequent staffing turnover and a specific type of experience necessary for reporting and coordination within each of the reporting institutions. In this domain, a good practice of organising workshops was noted in 2021 as well; namely, with the support of the IPA 2017 project "EU for Justice" as well as the Project "Support to the Ministry of Justice in connection with Chapter 23 and preparations for budget support," organized trainings for reporting on the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23. The trainings were organized with the aim of strengthening the capacity of contact persons in charge of reporting on the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23, i.e. improving the reporting process as well as the quality of reports. The training also included the improvement of acting in accordance with the Early Warning System, as well as reporting on impact indicators.

During the entire reporting period, the Agency collected reports at the quarterly level, and all reporting institutions (as well as those which are not, depending on the activity) submitted reports in a timely manner, responding to additional inquiries from the Agency, whenever requested to do so. Timely reporting made the work of the Agency easier, since the deadline for submitting the annual report on implementation is prescribed by the Law on Prevention of Corruption, and delays are neither possible nor allowed.

Despite all the challenges referred to, the Agency was able to establish communication with all the reporting entities to discuss difficulties in the implementation process, not only through formal reporting channels, but also in meetings and conversations.

Certain reporting institutions stood out in terms of reporting, by referring to all necessary elements of both the activities and indicators of results, using necessary institutional memory to review the entire activity and what preceded it. However, the Agency reiterates its finding from the Implementation Report that this was sometimes made difficult for institutions, not because of their insufficient reporting capacity, but because of the already mentioned deficiencies in certain parts of the strategic document. This has been noted by some of the institutions, while the Agency itself identified it.

The fact that in 2023 the Coordinating Body for the Implementation of the Action Plan for Chapter 23, established in 2021, continued to operate, and that, in addition to regular reports, it also collected extraordinary reports on already existing or intended delays (Early Warning Reports), has affected the improvement of consideration of the situation in the field, as the Agency pointed out in the first and second implementation reports. This remains one of the challenges, which needs to be paid even more attention in the coming period so that in the next reporting cycles everyone will be able to respond, regardless of the possible revision of the Action Plan for Chapter 23 or a completely new mechanism.

In the Fourth Implementation Report, the Agency identified 15 recommendations which, if fulfilled, could significantly influence the improvement of the implementation, reporting, and supervision of the implementation of future strategic documents that will deal with the fight against corruption within Chapter 23, i.e. Cluster 1. Their purpose is also to provide assistance the process of revision of the existing document once that process begins.

The deficiencies and challenges the Agency recognised during the development of the Implementation Report, are explained in greater detail in the section: Recommendations, and in the section: Challenges in the Process of Supervision of Implementation.

# SUMMARY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVITIES

## Implementation of Anti-Corruption Measures

The Government has adopted the Operational Plan for the Prevention of Corruption in Areas of Special Risk, as well as the Decision on the Establishment of the Coordination Body for the Implementation of the Operational Plan. The Agency prepared the First, Second, and Final Implementation Report of the Operational Plan for the Prevention of Corruption in Areas of Special Risk, which are publicly available on the Agency's website. ([https://www.acas.rs/cyr/page\\_with\\_sidebar/nadzor\\_pracenje#](https://www.acas.rs/cyr/page_with_sidebar/nadzor_pracenje#)).

The government did not consider the reports of the Anti-Corruption Council, nor was this institution actively involved in the legislative process. The Republic Public Prosecutor's Office, on the other hand, did consider the reports of the Anti-Corruption Council. Having forwarded them to the competent prosecutor's offices and kept track of its actions, it submitted the data to the Anti-Corruption Council. The budget and staff capacities of the Anti-Corruption Council have not been strengthened any further.

## Prevention of Corruption

Implementation of the Law on the Prevention of Corruption was monitored, and training for employees of the Agency was conducted. Workshops were also held with the competent institutions with which the Agency cooperates.

The application for reporting on the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption' has been completed and institutions have started using it, deficiencies have been eliminated, and its functioning is still regularly supervised. The application for monitoring the Operational Plan for the Prevention of Corruption in Areas of Special Risk has not been developed, but this did not affect the monitoring of the implementation of this document. The third application (for integrity plans) and video tutorials have been developed.

No workshops were held with representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia with the aim of implementing the recommendations contained in the Agency's report.

A new Law on Financing Political Activities has not been adopted<sup>4</sup>, which made it possible to implement the activities that are directly connected to its adoption.

A Handbook for recognizing and managing situations conflict of interest situations and incompatibility of functions, as well as video material, related to potential situations of conflict of interest of public officials has been developed.

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.acas.rs/cyr/pages/zakoni\\_1](https://www.acas.rs/cyr/pages/zakoni_1)

Public administration employees attended training in the field of prevention of conflicts of interest. The implementation of the Law on Prevention of Corruption in the field of conflict of interest of public officials was monitored, as well as the application of the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants.

Data on the application of the Criminal Code and the Law on Organization and Competences of State Authorities in the Suppression of Organised Crime, Terrorism and Corruption were also submitted.

The implementation of the Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance, adopted on November 3, 2021, has begun. Trainings for employees authorised to act upon requests for free access to information of public importance were organised.

A new legal framework based on competencies in the processes of employment, performance evaluation, promotion and career development of civil servants is being applied.

The process of implementing program budgeting has been improved as well as the methodology of the program budget. Trainings on financial management and control were organised, increasing the number of certified auditors.

Trainings on the application of the Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers were conducted, but not for all identified target groups. Data on monitoring the implementation of the Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers were conducted, but the impact assessment of this regulation has not been prepared.

The Office for Public Procurement is strengthening its capacities and establishing a new Public Procurement Portal. Measures related to the implementation of supervision and control in public procurement is being monitored, but not all identified institutions are doing this. Trainings for police officers, prosecutors and judges were also conducted, with the aim of more efficient prosecution of corruption in public procurement.

The methodology for assessing the impact of measures taken to reduce corruption in areas prone to risk (public procurement, privatisation, health, taxes, education, police, customs, local self-government) has been developed, and the data collection process is under way.

Work is underway on developing mechanisms for strengthening the integrity of police officers and the capacities of the Internal Control Sector of the Ministry of the Interior.

The installation of video surveillance at customs offices and border crossings has not been completed, and neither has real-time access to video surveillance.

Not all local self-government units have yet adopted local anti-corruption plans, or formed bodies that will be in charge of monitoring the implementation of these documents.

In the reporting period, joint activities were carried out with the aim of encouraging and rendering more efficient the participation of citizens in the fight against corruption, and measures were taken to further improve the system of transparent financing of civil society organizations.

From July 2020 to the end of 2023, four public competitions were held for the allocation of funds to civil society organizations for the realisation of projects in the field of corruption.

### Repression of Corruption

Data on the implementation of the amended and supplemented Criminal Code were submitted, in the part relating to corruptive and economic crimes, as well as data on the application of the altered criminal act of ‘abuse of position of responsible person’, which contains the “legal subsidiarity” mechanism.

The analysis of the compliance of the normative framework of the Republic of Serbia with the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force - international body tasked with developing and improving the fight against money laundering and terrorism financing (FATF) for conducting financial investigations in parallel with criminal investigations has not been completed. Consequently, the accompanying planning document has not been completed either.

Certain activities related to strengthening the capacity of the Financial Investigations Unit of the Ministry of Interior have been implemented, as well as those related to training police officers, public prosecutors and judges to conduct financial investigations, monitor cash flows, act proactively and use special investigative techniques.

The capacities of the Prosecutor’s Office for Organized Crime and special anti-corruption departments of higher public prosecutor’s offices are still being strengthened, as well as those of the Financial Forensics Services in the Prosecutor’s Office for Organized Crime and other bodies.

A new Rulebook on Internal Organization and Classification of Job Positions in the Prosecutor’s Office for Organized Crime has been adopted, but not for ecial anti-corruption departments of higher public prosecutor’s offices.

Meetings of the Anti-Corruption Council with the Republic Public Prosecutor’s Office were held.

A by-law has not been passed in accordance with the Law on Organization and Competences of State Authorities in Charge of Suppression of Organized Crime, Terrorism and Corruption to regulate deadlines, procedures and official communication between the police and the public prosecutor’s office in organised crime and corruption cases.

Agreements on cooperation have been signed between those to whom the Law on Organization and Competences of State Authorities in Charge of Suppression of Organized Crime, Terrorism and Corruption pertains, while the methodology for working, and forming working groups, has been developed.

The analysis of feasibility studies on the establishment of a single electronic register of corruption crimes has been conducted, and the recommendations from the analysis have been complied with.

Steps have been taken to improve the capacity of the Directorate for the Management of

Confiscated Assets in terms of the training that was attended by employees in the reporting period, but not in terms of employment. No agreements were concluded with directorates from the countries of the region and the European Union.

An activity is also being carried out in connection with monitoring the sanctioning of violations of regulations related to the disclosure of confidential information, but no analysis of the application of regulations has been made to date.

# IMPLEMENTATION OF ANTI-CORRUPTION MEASURES

In this report, within Section 2.1 of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’, which deals with the implementation of anti-corruption measures, the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following recommendation from the Screening Report and the relevant benchmark:

2.1.1. Expand political and institutional ownership, including top-level coordination, in the field of fight against corruption, and clearly identify high-level institutional leadership in the implementation of the anti-corruption strategy.

Benchmark: Serbia is implementing the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy for the period 2013-2018. Implementation is strictly monitored, and corrective measures are being taken whenever necessary. Serbia is conducting an impact assessment of its results in 2018.

The activities in question are Activities 2.1.1.1, 2.1.1.2 and 2.1.1.3, which are presented individually below.

## Activity 2.1.1.1.

Prepare and adopt the Operational Plan for the Prevention of Corruption in Areas of Special Risk.	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ministry of Justice (State Secretary for corruption issues)</li><li>Anti-Corruption Agency</li><li>All competent institutions</li><li>Government of the Republic of Serbia</li><li>With the participation of civil society organizations</li></ul>
Deadline	Second quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	Operational Plan for Prevention of Corruption in Areas of Special Risk has been adopted.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

## On the implementation of Activity 2.1.1.1.

The Ministry of Justice has reported that on 30 September 2021 the Government of the Republic of Serbia, at the proposal of the Ministry of Justice, adopted a Conclusion adopting the Operational Plan for the Prevention of Corruption in Areas of Special Risk.

The Agency assessed this activity as implemented in the Second Implementation Report.

## Activity 2.1.1.2.

Adopt the Decision on the Establishment of the Coordination Body for the Implementation of the Operational Plan for the Prevention of Corruption in Areas of Special Risk.	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Government of the Republic of Serbia</li><li>Ministry of Justice (State Secretary for corruption issues)</li></ul>
Deadline	Second quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	<p>Adopted: Decision on the establishment of the Coordination Body for the implementation of the Operational Plan for the Prevention of Corruption in Areas of Special Risk.</p> <p>The Coordinating Body holds meetings, solves identified problems and takes measures to fulfill the Operational Plan.</p>
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

## On the implementation of Activity 2.1.1.2.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Ministry of Justice reported that, at its 94<sup>th</sup> session held on 25 November 2021, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted a Decision on establishing a Coordination Body for the implementation of the Operational Plan for the Prevention of Corruption in Areas of Special Risk.

The Agency assessed this activity as implemented in the Second Implementation Report.

Since the activity 2.1.4.1. is defined in the same way as the activity 2.1.1.2, the Agency did not present or assess it during the entire reporting period.



*Activity 2.1.1.3.*

<b>Holding regular meetings of the Coordination Body in accordance with the new Decision (Activity 2.1.1.2).</b> <b>Meetings of the Coordination Body are open to the public and to the participation of civil society organizations.</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues)</li><li>• Anti-Corruption Agency</li><li>• All competent institutions</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	Continuous, starting with the Decision from Activity 2.1.1.2
<b>Indicators of results</b>	Reports from the meetings of the Coordination Body are published on the website of the Ministry of Justice. Reports of the Anti-Corruption Agency on monitoring the implementation of the Operational Plan for the Prevention of Corruption in Areas of Special Risk were considered. The Coordinating Body is considering specific proposals of civil society organizations submitted in connection with the reports of the Coordinating Body on the implementation of the Operational Plan. The Coordinating Body has solved the problems that have arisen in fulfilling the Action Plan.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was not implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.1.1.3.*

The Ministry of Justice has reported to the Agency that in the reporting period there were no meetings of the Coordinating Body for the Implementation of the Operational Plan for the Prevention of Corruption in Areas of Special Risk. Bearing in mind that the Operational Plan expired on December 31, 2022, the meetings of the Coordination Body will not even be convened.

The Agency assessed that this activity was not carried out in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

In this report, in the same Section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following benchmark:

2.1.2 The Government of the Republic of Serbia is engaged in a constructive relationship with the Anti-Corruption Council and it is seriously considering its recommendations and taking them into account as much as possible.

The activities in question are Activities 2.1.2.1, 2.1.2.2, 2.1.2.3, 2.1.2.4 и 2.1.2.5, which are presented individually below.

*Activity 2.1.2.1.*

<b>The Government is considering the reports of the Anti-Corruption Council at its sessions and taking them into account as much as possible.</b> <b>The Council is invited to Government sessions when the report is discussed, to present the report's main findings.</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Government of the Republic of Serbia</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	Continuous
<b>Indicators of results</b>	The Government has considered the Council's Reports and has reached a Conclusion on further action related to the Council's findings and recommendations.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was not implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.1.2.1.*

The Government of the Republic of Serbia has informed the Agency that during the reporting period, it did not consider the Council's reports for the fight against corruption. As both the activity and the indicators of results refer to the review of the report of the Council for the fight against corruption and the adoption of the Conclusion on further action in connection with the findings and recommendations of the Council for the fight against corruption, the Agency assessed the activity as not implemented in the First, Second, and Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.1.2.2.*

<b>Adopt a new Decision of the Government of RS regulating the work of the Anti-Corruption Council, in accordance with the conducted analysis titled "Anti-Corruption Council of the Government of the Republic of Serbia in the Light of Best Practices of the European Union", developed within the IPA 2013 project "Prevention and Fight against Corruption"</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Government of the Republic of Serbia</li><li>• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues)</li><li>• Anti-Corruption Council</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	Second quarter of 2021
<b>Indicators of results</b>	A new Decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, which regulates the work of the Anti-Corruption Council in accordance with the conducted analysis, has been adopted.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was not implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.1.2.2.*

The Government of the Republic of Serbia has reported that the activity was not implemented.

The Agency assessed that this activity was not implemented in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.



Activity 2.1.2.3.

<b>Ensure active participation of the Anti-Corruption Council in the legislative process, through membership in working groups for the adoption and amendment of laws that, according to the Council, carry a risk of a corruption, at the initiative of the Council, i.e. bodies authorised to propose laws.</b>	
<b>Members of the Council actively participate in the work of working groups.</b>	
	• Anti-Corruption Council
<b>In charge of activity</b>	
<b>Deadline</b>	Continuous
<b>Indicators of results</b>	The Council receives information on legislative activities in a timely manner, acts proactively, and Council members actively participate in the legislative process.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was not implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.1.2.3.*

The Anti-Corruption Council has reported that, in the reporting period, it was neither invited nor participated as an active member in the working groups. As in previous years, the submitted information does not correspond to the essence of this activity, i.e., it does not represent participation in the legislative process.

The Agency assessed that this activity was not implemented in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

Activity 2.1.2.4.

<b>The Republic Public Prosecutor's Office considers the reports of the Council from the point of view of possible criminal responsibility and forwrd's them to the competent prosecutor's offices to act. It also follows-up and reports.</b>	
	• Republic Public Prosecutor's Office • Government of the Republic of Serbia
<b>In charge of activity</b>	
<b>Deadline</b>	Continuous
<b>Indicators of results</b>	Annual reports on the activities related to the reports of the Anti-Corruption Council have been prepared and submitted to the Government.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.1.2.4.*

The Republic Public Prosecutor's Office has reported that it was considering the reports of the Anti-Corruption Council, forwarding them to the competent prosecutor's offices, and monitoring their actions. Reports on the actions of public prosecutor's offices based on the reports of the Anti-Corruption Council for 2020, 2021, and 2022 have been prepared and submitted to the Council.

However, as it was convinced that this was a regular annual practice of the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office, which was supported by the report for 2020, 2021, and 2022, and the fact that reports for the previous year are prepared in the following year, in this reporting period the Agency assessed the activity as implemented for the first time in the Second, then in the Third, and now in the Fourth Implementation Report.

Activity 2.1.2.5.

<b>Further strengthen the budget and staffing capacities of the Anti-Corruption Council.</b>	
	• Government of the Republic of Serbia • Anti-Corruption Council
<b>In charge of activity</b>	
<b>Deadline</b>	Second quarter of 2021
<b>Indicators of results</b>	The Government decision appointing members of the Anti-Corruption Council has been adopted. Higher level of administrative support from the General Secretariat of the Government.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was not implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.1.2.5.*

The Government of the Republic of Serbia has reported that the activity was not implemented.

The Anti-Corruption Council has reported that, after the meetings held with the Minister for European Integration on June 15, 2023, it submitted a proposal for the appointment of two new members of the Council, which was accepted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia in 2021, but that he is not always informed of their appointment.

Based on the financial plan of the Ministry of Finance for 2024, the Anti-Corruption Council was allocated total financial resources in the amount of RSD 27,441,000.

The Agency assessed that this activity was not carried out in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

In this report, in the same Section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following benchmark:

2.1.3. Serbia is conducting a comprehensive assessment of its legislation compared to the EU acquis and the UN Convention against Corruption, and is amending it where necessary. Serbia is following all GRECO recommendations.

The activity in question is Activity 2.1.3.1, which is presented below.

Activity 2.1.3.1.

Amend the legal framework for the fight against corruption, taking into account the recommendations contained in the “Analysis of Compliance of Anti-Corruption Legislation with EU acquis and International Standards”, conducted under the IPA 2013 project “Prevention and fight against corruption”.	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues)</li><li>• Other ministries, in accordance with their competences</li><li>• Government of the Republic of Serbia</li><li>• National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia</li></ul>
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	Amendments and supplements to laws have been adopted.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.1.3.1.

In 2021, the Ministry of Justice has reported that the National Assembly adopted the Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Prevention of Corruption on September 23, 2021, with the aim of further complying with the recommendations of the Group of States against Corruption of the Council of Europe (GRECO).

Further compliance with GRECO recommendations is one of the recommendations contained in the Analysis from this activity, which is why the Agency assessed the activity as implemented. However, since this is not the only recommendation contained in the above Analysis, the Agency will continue to monitor the implementation of this activity in further reporting cycles.

As stated in the Second Compliance Report, which was adopted at the 95<sup>th</sup> plenary session of the Group of States against Corruption of the Council of Europe, held from November 27 to December 1, 2023, the compliance procedure within the Fourth Round of Evaluation in relation to Serbia has been completed. In the Fourth Round of Evaluation, which refers to the prevention of corruption in relation to MPs, judges, and prosecutors, the Republic of Serbia fully fulfilled ten of the 13 recommendations, while three recommendations were partially fulfilled (recommendations numbers 1, 8, and 9).

For this reason, the Agency assessed this activity as implemented in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

# PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION

In this report, within the Section 2.2 of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’, which refers to the prevention of corruption, the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following benchmarks:

- 2.2.1. Serbia has adopted a new Law on the Anti-Corruption Agency, providing said Agency with clear and strong competencies. Serbia has ensured that the Anti-Corruption Agency can continue to enjoy the necessary independence, the receipt of adequate financial and human resources, training, as well as very good embedment with other relevant bodies (including access to their databases). Serbia has ensured that all bodies that fail to submit their reports and refuse to cooperate with the Anti-Corruption Agency are held accountable for such behaviour.

Benchmark: Serbia has provided initial records of effective implementation of the asset declaration and verification system, including dissuasive sanctions in cases of non-compliance, as well as appropriate monitoring of measures (including criminal investigations where necessary) in cases where reported assets do not correspond to reality.

The activities in question are Activities no. 2.2.1.1, 2.2.1.3, 2.2.1.4, 2.2.1.5, 2.2.1.6, 2.2.1.8 and 2.2.1.9, which are individually presented below.

Activity 2.2.1.1.

Monitor the implementation of the new Law on Prevention of Corruption and the actions of all state authorities under the new Law on Prevention of Corruption.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anti-Corruption Agency</li><li>• In cooperation with relevant institutions</li></ul>
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous, once per year
Indicators of results	<p>The annual report on the work of the Anti-Corruption Agency contains the following elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Number of obligations fulfilled by public officials in accordance with the Law on Prevention of Corruption;</li><li>2) Number of measures issued by the Agency respected by public officials;</li><li>3) Percentage of institutions that have fulfilled the obligation to adopt an integrity plan and a local anti-corruption plan;</li><li>4) Percentage of measures in the integrity plan and local anticorruption plan implemented by relevant institutions;</li><li>5) Number of institutions that adhere to the obligation to conduct training in ethics and integrity based on the curriculum of the Agency;</li><li>6) Qualitative analyses, comparisons with previous years, comparison of results with the number of reported cases and controlled subjects.</li></ol> <p>The National Assembly has adopted conclusions on the implementation of the new Law on Prevention of Corruption.</p> <p>The Government and other state authorities are acting in accordance with the conclusions of the National Assembly.</p> <p>The European Commission's Report on the progress of the Republic of Serbia.</p>
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.1.1.

The final data on the monitoring of the implementation of the Law on the Prevention of Corruption can be found in the annual work reports submitted by the Agency to the National Assembly, and are publicly available. Moreover, the data according to the indicators of results can be found in the previous reports on the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption'.

This report presents data for the year 2023, with a comparison with data from previous years.

Data on conflict of interest is presented in Activity 2.2.3.4.

In the reporting period, the number of submitted reports on the assets and revenues of public officials was 4910 (5218 in 2022), the number of public authorities that notified the Agency of the commencement/termination of public office was 2053 (2057 in 2022), and 332 (8 in 2022) and that legal entities notified the Agency of their participation in public procurement, privatization, or other procedures, that involve concluding a contract with a public authority as their outcome.

In the area of assets reporting, 178 reprimand measures were issued, of which 133 (246 in 2022) for failure to submit a report within the legally prescribed time period after the commencement or termination of public office, 23 for failure to report significant changes in assets and revenues during the public office, and 22 due to multiple violations involving the announcement of a decision on the violation of the Law.

Eight (10 in 2022) measures of public announcement of the decision on violation of the law were adopted.

In the process of supervising the reports on the assets and revenues of public officials, the Agency initiated 175 (111 in 2022) proceedings against public officials for deciding on the violation of the provisions of the Law related to Chapter VI - Reporting assets and revenues.

The Agency also submitted 157 (22 in 2022) requests for misdemeanour proceedings for violation of the provisions of the Law related to the mentioned area.

11 criminal charges/reports (five in 2022) were submitted to the competent public prosecutor's office, the Special Department for the Suppression of Corruption. Moreover, two (five in 2022) reports were submitted to other competent state bodies due to a suspicion of violation of regulations that fall within the competence of said authorities.

On the occasion of the Fifth Round of Evaluation - Preventing corruption and promoting integrity in central governments and law enforcement agencies, adopted by the GRECO Committee of the Council of Europe, taking into account the recommendations of the Final Report of the Election Observation Mission of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the common opinion of the Venice Commission and the OSCE and the aforementioned offices on the constitutional and legal framework of the functioning of democratic institutions in Serbia - electoral law and electoral administration, submitted to the Ministry of Justice an Initiative for Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Prevention of Corruption.

During 2023, the Agency concluded a series of agreements and memoranda on cooperation with other state bodies and public institutions, namely:

- Agreement with the Human resources management service - Memorandum on Cooperation with the aim of establishing long-term cooperation that will contribute to the development and improvement of the work of both institutions. The goals of the cooperation will be achieved, first of all, through the analysis of the application of positive regulations in areas particularly at risk for the emergence of corruption, which relate to employment in the public sector, as well as pointing out the potential risks of corruption in that area. Then through the organization of training for employees in Agency, newly appointed public officials in the public authorities, as well as planning to attract staff to work in the Agency and other activities.
- Agreement with the Institute of Comparative Law for the purpose of establishing scientific and professional cooperation in connection with the study and analytical work of finding the best solutions in the field of prevention of corruption in order to consistently respect the principles of the rule of law.
- Memorandum with the Anti-Corruption Council, which, among other things, is aimed at building a system of permanent mutual cooperation through the establishment of a proactive approach to preventing corruption in areas particularly at risk for the emergence of corruption, provided for in the strategic documents of the Republic of Serbia, for the

purpose of effective implementation and control of implementation. The agreement establishes positive regulations in the specified areas, adhering to the highest international standards and regulations. It was signed on October 13, 2023, in accordance with the recommendation of the Group of States against Corruption of the Council of Europe (GRECO), from the Fifth Round of Evaluation.



- Agreement on cooperation with the Administration for the Prevention of Money Laundering, aimed at strengthening professional and business-technical cooperation in the areas of prevention of corruption, money mapping, and terrorist financing. The previous cooperation has already been assessed as extremely successful, and the new Agreement will open up opportunities for its deepening.
- Memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Anti-Corruption Agency, which, among other things, aims to improve the efficiency of the procedure for declaring the assets and income of ambassadors and consuls general.
- Agreement on receiving the data alongside the Serbian Business Registers Agency, which in the coming period will enable the regular download of data on business entities, related parties, and beneficial owners from the Serbian Business Registers Agency for the purposes of performing tasks in the field of preventing corruption.
- Agreement on cooperation with the Republic Geodetic Institute for the purpose of more efficient implementation of tasks within their jurisdiction established by law as a simplification and facilitation of the process of reporting real estate to the Agency.
- Agreement on cooperation with the Faculty of Law in Belgrade, taking into account the competences of the Anti-Corruption Agency prescribed by the Laws on the Prevention of Corruption, on the Financing of Political Activities, and on Lobbying, and, at the same time, taking into account the social importance of the Faculty of Law of the University of Belgrade.
- Agreement on cooperation between the Anti-Corruption Agency and the Security Innovation Center of the Faculty of Security, University of Belgrade. The agreement establishes scientific and professional cooperation in the field of corruption research and the fight against corruption and ensures the support of the Security Innovation Center to the Agency through the analysis of research results and the development of innovative solutions, methods, techniques, software, products, processes, and services in security systems.
- Agreement on cooperation with the National Bank of Serbia for the purpose of electronic exchange of data from the registers maintained by the National Bank of Serbia. The Agency will be able to download data from the Single Register of Accounts, the Single Register of Safe-deposit Boxes, the Single Register of Money Remittance Beneficiaries, and the Register of Virtual Currency Service Provider, which it needs for the investigation it carries out in accordance with the Law on Prevention of Corruption.

At the request of the Ministry of Economy, an opinion was given on the assessment of the risk of corruption in the Draft Law on the Management of Public Enterprises Owned by the Republic of Serbia, as well as in the Draft Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Prevention of Corruption. At the request of the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government, an opinion was given on the assessment of the risk of corruption in the Proposal for a Regulation on Central Records of Beneficial Owners.

In previous periods, the Agency reported on activities in accordance with the instructions for the development and implementation of the integrity plan, which was adopted in May 2021. The third cycle of development and implementation of the integrity plan for all public authorities in the Republic of Serbia began on November 1, 2021.

In 2023, 99% of the institutions that were obliged to prepare and adopt integrity plans. Implementation of measures from the integrity plans is still in process. The deadline for implementing the measures from the integrity plans is 30 September 2024, while the deadline for submitting the report on the implementation of the integrity plans was 31 October 2023.

In the same period, the Agency supervised the preparation of the integrity plan in 16 institutions. Supervision was carried out in Aranđelovac, Negotin, Vrnjačka Banja, Ivanjica, Loznica, and Belgrade, after which reports were drawn up with recommendations for the improvement of these documents.

As regards training on ethics and integrity, 34,550 participants successfully completed the training on ethics and integrity remotely. In the mentioned period, there were 337 public authorities where managers and employees attended the training on ethics and integrity.

Data on local anti-corruption plans is presented in the Activity 2.2.10.31.

Since the Agency has submitted all the data on the application of the Law on Prevention of Corruption, which, according to result indicators, were objectively possible to submit, and since, from the submitted report, it is evident that the application of the new Law on the Prevention of Corruption is being monitored, in this reporting period the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the First, Second, and Third, as well as now in the Fourth Implementation Report.

Activity 2.2.1.2.

<b>Conduct an analysis of the effects of the implementation of the new Law on the Prevention of Corruption, which will cover the period from the beginning of its implementation and the next three years, especially in the following areas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- reports on assets and revenues of public officials, including appropriate measures in cases of non-compliance, as well as monitoring of measures (including criminal investigations where necessary);</li><li>- prevention of conflicts of interest;</li><li>- control of the financing of political activities;</li><li>- supervision over the implementation of integrity plans and</li><li>- monitoring the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption'.</li></ul>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anti-Corruption Agency</li><li>• Misdemeanor courts</li><li>• Republic Public Prosecutor's Office</li><li>• In cooperation with other relevant institutions</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	Fourth quarter of 2023
<b>Indicators of results</b>	<p>The analysis determined the effects of the application of the new Law in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- reports on assets and revenues of public officials;</li><li>- prevention of conflicts of interest;</li><li>- control of the financing of political activities;</li><li>- supervision over the implementation of integrity plans;</li><li>- monitoring the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption'.</li></ul> <p>The analysis includes quantitative and qualitative result indicators. The analysis is publicly available on the official website of the Anti-Corruption Agency.</p>
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was not implemented.</b>

***On the implementation of Activity 2.2.1.2.***

The Methodology for evaluating the effects of the Law on Prevention of Corruption has been developed, with a unique table and auxiliary tables for all thematic areas defined by the methodology, which are functionally adapted for entering and automatically processing data on an annual basis, starting in 2021. Starting from 2021, data from all competent sectors of the Agency has been collected according to defined parameters.

The Agency, with the support of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), conducts investigations related to the assessment of the effects of the implementation of the Law on Prevention of Corruption. Research is underway on the perception of public opinion, the public sector, and the business sector.

Bearing in mind that, as of the fourth quarter of 2023, the Analysis of the Effects of the Application of the New Law on Prevention of Corruption was not implmeneted, the Agency assessed this activity as not implemented in the Fourth Implementation Report.

***Activity 2.2.1.3.***

Continuous specialized training of employees in the Anti-Corruption Agency on the implementation of the new Law on Prevention of Corruption and the Law on Lobbying.	
In charge of activity	Anti-Corruption Agency
Deadline	Continuous, starting with the adoption of the new Law on Prevention of Corruption and the Law on Lobbying.
Indicators of results	Trainings have been conducted. Out of the total number of employees in the Agency, at least 2/3 attended trainings on the implementation of the new Law on Prevention of Corruption, i.e. the Law on Lobbying, in the first year of implementation.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

***On the implementation of Activity 2.2.1.3.***

The Agency continuously reported on the conducted trainings and the data can be found in the previous reports on the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against corruption'.

This report presents data for the year 2023.

As part of the Project "Support for Strengthening the Rule of Law in the Republic of Serbia" (EU for the Fight against Corruption and Fundamental Rights), nine representatives of the Agency visited Lithuania on a study visit, organized topics that were discussed and related to risk assessment of corruption, assessing the risk of corruption in regulations, integrity, analytical tools, strengthening awareness of the harmfulness of corruption, and coordination and monitoring of the implementation of anti-corruption measures. Within the project, three expert missions of the Special Investigation Service of Lithuania were held, which dealt with the topics of strategic planning, communication, defining recommendations for the development of the Agency's new Strategic Plan, recommendations for the development of the communication segment of the new

Strategic Plan as well as the youth education.



Moreover, training was held for 17 employees of the Agency on prevention of fraud and investigative techniques, as well as training for 14 employees on "Corruption Risk Assessment" organized by the International Anti-Corruption Academy, with the support of the EU, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the Austrian Development agencies.

Three employees attended training on trends in digital fraudulent activities in the organization Deloitte Serbia. Thanks to the support of the US Department of Justice, one employee of the Agency became a certified fraud investigator.

The representative of the Agency participated in the third regional workshop on the topic "Improving anti-corruption investigations and cooperation in investment projects," organized as part of the UNODC project "Encouraging sustainable development through the implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption in countries along the Silk Road Economic Belt," in cooperation with the Anti-Corruption Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

A representative of the Agency took part in a workshop on "Conflict of Interest in the Security Sector", organized by the Center for Security Cooperation - RACVIAC, in cooperation with the Regional Anti-Corruption Initiative (RAI) and the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Montenegro.

Four representatives of the Agency participated in a regional workshop in the field of corruption risk assessment in the higher education and public companies sectors, organized by the Regional Anti-Corruption Initiative, in cooperation with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and with the support of the Austrian Development Agency. The representative of the Agency participated in the round table within the project "Promotion of anti-corruption education among young people" implemented by UNODC. Representatives of the Agency participated in the Global Conference on the use of data to improve the measurement of corruption, organized by the UNODC and the International Anti-Corruption Academy (IACA) in cooperation with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) with the aim of encouraging further discussion on measurement corruption. As well as, participation of representatives of the Agency at the 10<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of States Parties to the UN Convention against Corruption, which was held in Atlanta, USA.

The representative of the Agency participated in the seminar "Corruption without borders. How to cooperate to tackle corruption?" organized by the European Partners against Corruption (EPAC) and the International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities (IAACA).

Representatives of the Agency attended the training "Development, implementation, and monitoring of the implementation of integrity plans" and the training "System for the Protection of Secret Data," organized by the National Academy of Public Administration. In order to better apply the Law, Agency employees attended trainings on "Collection and processing of data, analysis of collected data, and writing of reports", "Discrimination before public authorities", "Protection of human rights and confidentiality of data", also organized by the National Academy of public administration. A representative of the Agency attended the "Protection of classified data" training, organized by the Office of the National Security Council.

In the organization of RAI, SELDI and CSD, training was held on the topic "Promoting integrity

in public administration through Regional cooperation in Southeast Europe".

Within the project "Strengthening the professional capacities of civil servants in positions in Serbia (IPA - 19)", in the reporting period, the representative of the Agency was a member of the delegation of the study visit to the institutions of the European Union in Brussels, organized by the National Academy of Public Administration.

The representative of the Agency participated in the training "Basic curriculum integration of the ethical framework in institutions of higher education", held at the Faculty of Political Sciences by prof. Dr. William C. McCoy from Clemson University in South Carolina, USA.

As of December 31, 2023, the Professional Service of the Agency employed 92 persons out of a total of 162 provided for by the Rulebook on Internal Organization and Classification of Job Positions, which represents 56.79% of the occupation of workplaces. The total number of employees in the Agency, who underwent training related to the implementation of the Law on Prevention of Corruption, in the reporting period is 119, from which it follows that 2/3 of the employees did attend trainings related to the implementation of the Law on Prevention of Corruption, with a note that on the same employees participated in certain trainings, depending on the topic and organizational unit of the Agency, to which the topic refers.

In the First Implementation Report, the Agency reported on the number of employees who attended training on the subject of the Law on Lobbying in the first year of implementation. Bearing in mind one of the result indicators, the Agency reported that the total number of employees in the Agency, who attended trainings related to the implementation of the Law on Lobbying, in the first year of implementation was 32.

The Agency assessed this activity as implemented in the First, Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth implementation report.

**Activity 2.2.1.4.**

Adapt the software for reporting on the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and the Action Plan for its implementation so that it meets the needs of monitoring the relevant measures of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23, and maintain said software on a regular basis.	
	• Anti-Corruption Agency
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Software customization - Fourth quarter of 2020 Software maintenance - continuous
Indicators of results	Software has been customised to meet the needs of monitoring relevant measures from the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23. The software is regularly maintained.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

**On the implementation of Activity 2.2.1.4.**

The agency has reported that the reporting software, i.e. the application, was adjusted and put into operation in the third quarter of 2021. The Sgency eliminated the identified shortcomings in the

regularly maintained reporting application, which enabled taxpayers to submit reports in that way as well. At the same time, the Agency continued to collect data via e-mail and correspondence, with the aim of uninterrupted supervision over the implementation of the Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption' of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23.

The Agency assessed this activity as implemented in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

**Activity 2.2.1.5.**

Adjust the software for reporting on the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 to meet the needs for monitoring the Operational Plan for the Prevention of Corruption in Areas of Risk.	
	• Anti-Corruption Agency
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Third quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	Software was customised to meet the needs of monitoring the Operational Plan for the Prevention of Corruption in Areas of Risk.
Agency's assessment	The activity was not implemented.

**On the implementation of Activity 2.2.1.5.**

The Agency has reported that it has not adjusted the software because the Operational Plan for Preventing Corruption in Areas of Special Risk was to be in effect only until the end of 2022, and because spending funds would not be expedient taking into account the duration of the development and testing of the application. The Agency further reported that monitoring the implementation of the Operational Plan for Preventing Corruption in Areas of Special Risk was carried out smoothly, and that implementation reports were prepared on time regardless of the absence of the application<sup>5</sup>.

The activity was assessed as not implemented in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

**Activity 2.2.1.6.**

Technically improve the existing software application related to integrity plans. Maintain the software application regularly.	
	• Anti-Corruption Agency
In charge of activity	
Deadline	For software updating – fourth quarter of 2021 For software maintenance – continuous
Indicators of results	Software has been updated. Software is regularly maintained.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

5 In 2022 and 2023, the Agency prepared two semi-annual and one final report on monitoring the implementation of the Operational Plan for the Prevention of Corruption in Areas of Special Risk, which are available on the Agency's website at the following link: [https://www.acas.rs/cyt/page\\_with\\_sidebar/nadzor\\_pracenje#](https://www.acas.rs/cyt/page_with_sidebar/nadzor_pracenje#).

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.1.6.*

The Agency has reported that the technical maintenance of the software application for integrity plans was completed in 2021, as well as that the application functioning. The Agency reported that in 2022 and 2023, maintenance of the software application for integrity plans has continued.

The Agency assessed this activity as implemented in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.2.1.7.*

Create video tutorials for the third cycle of developing, implementing and reporting on the implementation of integrity plans.	
	• Anti-Corruption Agency
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	Video tutorials have been developed. Video tutorials are operating and are publicly available.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.1.7.*

The Agency has reported that in 2021 it created video tutorials for the third cycle of developing, implementing and reporting on the implementation of integrity plans, which are available at the following link: [https://www.acas.rs/lat/pages/video\\_uputstvo](https://www.acas.rs/lat/pages/video_uputstvo).

The Agency assessed this activity as implemented in the Second Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.2.1.8.*

Multidisciplinary trainings and workshops with institutions that intensively cooperate with the Anti-Corruption Agency, including trainings for journalists.	
	• Anti-Corruption Agency
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	Trainings and workshops that contribute to the improvement of the level of knowledge necessary for the implementation of the new Law on Prevention of Corruption have been conducted. At least two trainings per year are organised with institutions with which the Agency cooperates intensively. At least one training per year is organised for journalists.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.1.8.*

The Agency has reported on the conducted trainings and the fact that the data can be found in previous Implementation Reports of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’.

This report presents data for the year 2023.

In 2023, the Agency held two trainings on the topic "Third cycle of developing and implementing integrity plans" intended for directors, deputy directors, managers of organizational units of health institutions, primary and secondary schools, public enterprises, and local governments. Distance training was also held on the concept, importance, and method of preparing an integrity plan, which was intended for representatives of institutions from the education system, public enterprises, healthcare, and local self-governments.

The Agency also held three webinars on the topic "Assessment of the risk of corruption in regulations" for employees of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Government and the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, as well as two trainings on the same topic for representatives of local self-government units in Novi Pazar and Užice. In cooperation with the OSCE Mission, an online training "Strengthening the capacity of the Internal Control Sector to conduct corruption risk analyzes" was held for members of the Ministry of Interior.

The Agency held a training for journalists and representatives of civil society organizations, on the control of the financing of political activities and assessment of the risk of corruption in regulations, as well as an online workshop with representatives of the media and civil society organizations, where the participants were introduced to the legal competences and powers, when determining incompatibility of functions and conflicts of interest of public officials..

Also, the Agency held training for the members of the working group for the drafting of the National Strategy for the fight against corruption for the period 2023-2028 and the accompanying Action Plan, on the subject of the application of the Methodology for assessing the risk of corruption in the areas that are the subject of strategic documents for the fight against corruption.

Three trainings were also held at the National Academy of Public Administration, one for civil servants in position (Resolving ethical dilemmas), as well as two for other civil servants (Ethics and Integrity).

Representatives of the Agency held training for prosecutors from the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade on the Agency's competences in the field of control of funding of political activities, conflicts of interest and lobbying, reporting and verification of assets and handling of petitions.

Within the project "Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism in Serbia", supported by the Swedish Agency for International Development and Cooperation and implemented by the Council of Europe, a training was held for employees of the Agency and the Directorate for the Prevention of Money Laundering, on the subject of reporting suspicious transactions, as and a workshop on inter-institutional cooperation between prosecutor's offices and

the Anti-Corruption Agency.

- Representatives of the Agency participated in:
- the regional workshop on improving cooperation between supreme audit institutions and anti-corruption bodies, organized by UNODC within the framework of the Abu Dhabi Declaration Program, held in Vienna;
  - roundtable " Anti-Corruption Education – Approaches and Challenges ", organized by UNODC and German Agency for International Cooperation;
  - workshops related to the implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and the review mechanism of its implementation;
  - a regional event organized by UNODC as the Secretariat of the project "Regional Roadmap on Anti-Corruption and Illicit Financial Flows in the Western Balkans" in cooperation with RAI;
  - a regional roundtable in the area of property registration in Skopje within the project "SouthEast Europe - Together Against Corruption (SEE-TAC)", a regional program financed by the Austrian Development Agency, jointly implemented by RAI and UNODC;
  - a working meeting on the assessment of IT and legal capacities of the Republic of Serbia for the exchange of data on the assets of public officials organized by the RAI Secretariat.

The activity was assessed as implemented in the First, Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth implementation report.

Activity 2.2.1.9.

Hold workshops with the relevant parliamentary committee in order to meet the Agency’s recommendations, including training on ethics and integrity for MPs.	
	<div><div>• Anti-Corruption Agency</div><div>• Relevant Assembly committees</div></div>
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	Workshops were held to contribute to improving the level of knowledge necessary for the implementation of the new Law on Prevention of Corruption. At least two workshops per year are organised with MPs, i.e. members of relevant committees of the National Assembly.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was not implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.1.9.

When it comes to training on ethics and integrity, the Agency has reported in previous reporting cycles that the Ethics Commission and the Agency held two online training sessions for MPs in 2021. Therefore, the Agency assessed the activity related to ethics and integrity training for MPs in 2021 as implemented.

In 2022, neither workshop was held with competent parliamentary committees, or trainings on ethics and integrity for MPs.

In 2023, no workshops were held with the relevant assembly committees, nor were there any training on ethics and integrity for MPs. It was not possible to implement these activities considering that the National Assembly was dissolved on November 1, 2023.

A meeting was held with representatives of the Ethics Commission of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia on the topic of developing future training programs for MPs in accordance with the existing framework (Code of Conduct for MPs and the accompanying Guide), and a training program for the members of the Ethics Commission was also presented.

Bearing in mind the result indicator, i.e. that it is necessary to organize at least two workshops per year with MPs, i.e. members of competent committees of the National Assembly, the Agency assessed the activity as not implemented in the Second, Third, and now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

In this report, in the same section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’, the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following benchmark:

- 2.2.2. Serbia has amended the Law on Financing Political Activities and is working on strengthening the independence and administrative capacity of relevant oversight bodies, in particular the State Audit Institution and the Republic Election Commission. Serbia is providing initial records of adequate application of the Law, including deterrence measures where necessary.

The activities in question are Activities 2.2.2.1, 2.2.2.2, 2.2.2.3, 2.2.2.4, 2.2.2.5, 2.2.2.6, 2.2.2.7 and 2.2.2.8, which are individually presented below.

Activity 2.2.2.1.

Amend the Law on Financing Political Activities so as to clearly define and delineate the obligations of the Agency, SAI and other bodies in the process of control of political activities and entities, and precisely define obligations and mechanisms for transparency of financing of political entities in accordance with a qualitative analysis of the implementation of the Law on Financing Political Activities. Ensure that amendments to the Law include strengthening the capacity of the Anti-Corruption Agency by providing it with all necessary information on financial flows.	
In charge of activity	<div><div>• Ministry of Finance</div><div>• Anti-Corruption Agency</div><div>• Government of the Republic of Serbia</div><div>• National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia</div><div>• With the participation of civil society organizations</div></div>
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2020
Indicators of results	The Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on the Financing of Political Activities has been adopted.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.



*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.2.1.*

The Ministry of Finance has reported that, as the entity responsible for the fulfilment of the aforementioned measures, it implemented all the activities that led to the adoption of the Law on the Financing of Political Activities in the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia on 4 February 2022. The Law was published in the “Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia” on 7 February 2022 and entered into force on 8 February 2022.

The Ministry further reported that the adoption of this Law is an indicator of the results of implemented activities. Therefore, the Agency assessed this activity as implemented in the Third Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.2.2.2.*

<b>Prescribe that the audit program must include the audit of parliamentary political parties at the national level and introduce the obligation of the Director of the Tax Administration to include providers of funds and other services to political entities in the annual or extraordinary plan of tax control in accordance with the Agency’s report on financing political activities and entities.</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry of Finance (State Secretary)</li><li>• Government of the Republic of Serbia</li><li>• National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	Fourth quarter of 2020
<b>Indicators of results</b>	The Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on the Financing of Political Activities was adopted.
<b>Agency’s assessment</b>	<b>The activity was implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.2.2.*

The Ministry of Finance, as the entity responsible for the fulfillment of the aforementioned measures, implemented all the activities that led to the adoption of the Law on the Financing of Political Activities in the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia on February 4, 2022. The Law was published in the “Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia” on 7 February 2022 and entered into force on 8 February 2022.

As the above stated requirements are reflected in the new Law on the Financing of Political Activities, the Agency assessed this activity as implemented in the Third Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.2.2.3.*

<b>Monitor the implementation of the Law on Financing Political Activities, including the application of dissuasive measures.</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anti-Corruption Agency</li><li>• Misdemeanour courts</li><li>• Republic Public Prosecutor’s Office</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	Continuous
<b>Indicators of results</b>	Reports of the Anti-Corruption Agency on the financing of political activities and the election campaign.  1) At least 50% of political entities have submitted annual financial reports;  2)At least 70% of political entities have sumitted the costs of the election campaign;  3) The number of initiated misdemeanour proceedings, the number and degree of sanctions imposed by the misdemeanor courts.  Annual reports of the Republic Public Prosecutor’s Office on criminal proceedings arising from the application of Article 38 of the Law on Financing Political Activities, including the number and degree of sanctions applied.
<b>Agency’s assessment</b>	<b>The activity was implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.2.3.*

According to the result indicators, data on the monitoring of the implementation of the Law on the financing of political activities can be found in the previous Implementation Reports of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’.

This report shows data for the year 2023.

The Agency has reported that parliamentary elections and elections for councilors took place in 2023. During the election campaign, the Agency organized and conducted monitoring of the election activities of political entities that participated in said elections. The procedure of selecting and training the observers of the election campaign was carried out in several cities, for the purposes of data collection in the field in order to monitor the control of the financing of election campaign expenses. In the end, 144 field observers were engaged. Ten central coordinators from the Agency were engaged to monitor and control the work of observers in the field.

Political subjects submitted to the Agency 312 preliminary reports on the expenses of the election campaign, as well as two final reports on the expenses of the election campaign.

179 annual reports on the financing of political entities were submitted. Substantial control of 31 submitted annual reports on the financing of political subjects was carried out.

Due to the violation of the Law on the Financing of Political Activities, the Agency conducted proceedings against political subjects ex officio and on based on submitted reports.

A total of 20 decisions were made establishing a violation of the Law on the Financing of Political Activities, of which 11 warning measures related to the regular work of political entities were issued.

As far as decisions related to violations of the Law in connection with the election campaign are concerned, in eight cases a warning measure was issued, while in one case a violation of the Law was established and is the basis for submitting a request for the initiation of misdemeanour proceedings. All decisions were published on the Agency's website within the prescribed period.

62 decisions were made on the loss of the right to receive funds from public sources.

On the basis of established violations of the Law on the Financing of Political Activities in 2023, 94 requests for the initiation of misdemeanour proceedings were submitted to the competent misdemeanour courts.

According to the results indicators, 69% of political subjects submitted annual financial reports, and 75% reports on election campaign expenses.

A total of 114 second-instance judgments were handed down, of which 45 were at the legal minimum, 39 below the legal minimum, three above the legal minimum, 21 were warnings and 6 acquittals.

The Republic Public Prosecutor's Office reported that it is monitoring the actions of public prosecutor's offices in cases that were opened based on criminal reports related to violations of the provisions of the Law on the Financing of Political Activities and informing the Agency for the Prevention of Corruption thereof. Six-monthly reports on the actions of public prosecutors' offices in cases from this area are drawn up in January and July.

In January and July 2023, the Anti-Corruption Agency received the report on the actions of public prosecutors' offices based on criminal reports regarding violations of the provisions of the Law on Financing Political Activities.

Considering all the above, in this reporting period the activity was assessed as implemented in the Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

**Activity 2.2.2.4.**

Draft bylaws that would regulate the criteria and deadlines for the control of reports of political entities by introducing a plan of priority control of reports that will enable prioritisation of reports control.	
In charge of activity	• Anti-Corruption Agency
Deadline	Second quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	Bylaws have been adopted.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

**On the implementation of Activity 2.2.2.4.**

The Agency reported that on 4 February 2022, upon the adoption of the new Law on the Financing of Political Activities, it drafted and adopted all necessary by-laws.

Therefore, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Third Implementation Report.

**Activity 2.2.2.5.**

Build the capacity of all entities responsible for the implementation of the Law on Financing Political Activities, the Republic Election Commission, train judges of misdemeanour courts.	
In charge of activity	• Anti-Corruption Agency • Judicial Academy • Republic Election Commission (REC)
Deadline	Continuous, starting from the first quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	Capacities of all entities responsible for the implementation of the Law on Financing Political Activities and REC have been built and misdemeanour court judges have been trained. Number of held trainings, compared to the number of planned trainings on the Law on Financing Political Activities.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

**On the implementation of Activity 2.2.2.5.**

The previous Implementation Report of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption' contains all data regarding the organized trainings on the Law on Financing of Political Activities according to the result indicators.

In 2023, the Agency held twelve trainings for political entities on the application of the Law on the Financing of Political Activities and the method of submitting reports to the Agency. In addition, it held 13 trainings for field observers.

Therefore, in this reporting period, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

Activity 2.2.2.6.

Building the technical capacities of the Anti-corruption Agency for monitoring the financing of political activities, software for online reporting, and better accessibility of published data.	
	• Anti-Corruption Agency
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuously, starting from the IV quarter of 2020
Indicators of results	Built technical capacities that enable effective monitoring monitoring of the financing of political activities.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

About the implementation of the activity 2.2.2.6.

In previous reporting cycles, the Agency has reported that, following the adoption of the Law on Referendum and People's Initiative and the the Law on the Financing of Political Activities, it adjusted the existing software applications to new requirements and created new forms for political entities, including the forms for their preliminary reports.

In 2023, the Agency has reported that it continuously maintains and improves the software it uses to control the financing of political activities. Also, the Agency reported that the request for the introduction of an electronic signature on the preliminary and final reports on the expenses of the election campaign of political subjects was implemented, as well as the improvement of the web form and the internal application.

As the technical capacities for controlling the financing of political activities were improved, in this reporting period the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

Activity 2.2.2.7.

Introduce online training modules related to the implementation of the Law on Financing Political Activities.	
	• Anti-Corruption Agency
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous, starting from the second quarter of 2020
Indicators of results	Online training modules have been introduced.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.2.7.

At the end of 2023, an online training module on the implementation of the Law on the Financing of Political Activities was developed, which is based on the Handbook for the application of the Law on the Financing of Political Activities, with the support of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).

The Agency assessed the activity as implemented now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

Activity 2.2.2.8.

Develop a handbook for the implementation of the Law on Financing Political Activities.	
	• Anti-Corruption Agency
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Second quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	The handbook has been developed.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.2.8.

In the previous reporting cycle, the Agency has reported that the Handbook was prepared with the support of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), and that it was published on the Agency's website<sup>6</sup>.

Having in mind the above, the activity was evaluated as implemented in the Third Implementation Report.

In this report, in the same section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following benchmark:

- 2.2.3. Serbia provides initial records showing an increase in the number of observed and resolved cases of conflict of interest, including deterrence sanctions. Serbia is conducting trainings and raising awareness so as to ensure a better understanding of the concept at all levels.

The activities in question are Activities no. 2.2.3.3; 2.2.3.4 and 2.2.3.5, which are individually presented below.

Activity 2.2.3.1.

Development of the Guidelines on Prevention of Conflicts of Interest after the adoption of the new Law on Prevention of Corruption.	
Presentation of the Guidelines on Prevention of Conflicts of Interest.	
	• Anti-Corruption Agency
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Third quarter of 2020
Indicators of results	The Guidelines were developed and published to ensure better understanding of the concept of conflicts of interest and to properly inform all risk categories that may experience a conflict of interest. Presentation of the Guidelines held at the round table.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

6 See more at: [https://www.acas.rs/storage/page\\_files/Priručnik%20za%20primenu%20Zakona%20o%20finansiranju%20političkih%20aktivnosti%20\(2022\).pdf](https://www.acas.rs/storage/page_files/Priručnik%20za%20primenu%20Zakona%20o%20finansiranju%20političkih%20aktivnosti%20(2022).pdf)

**On the implementation of Activity 2.2.3.1.**

The Agency reported that, with the support of the USAID Government Accountability Initiative, it developed the Manual for the Recognition and Management of Conflicts of Interest and Incompatibility of Functions, which is harmonized with the provisions of the new Law on Prevention of Corruption and available on the Agency's website.

Taking into account the above, the activity was assessed as implemented in the First Implementation Report.

**Activity 2.2.3.2.**

Creation of video materials – potential conflict-of-interest situations, including dissemination and awareness raising component.	
In charge of activity	• Anti-Corruption Agency
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2020
Indicators of results	Video materials were produced, operational and widely used as part of the training course for public officials conducted by the Agency.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

**On the implementation of Activity 2.2.3.2.**

In the first cycle of reporting for 2020, the Agency reported that it developed a video material, which shows potential conflict of interest situations, and it is available on the website of the Agency, i.e. the official YouTube channel of MyIntegrity at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KCoV0KRJb1g&t=12s>. The video material was also made available through the Agency's official social media accounts and is presented at events and used when training for public officials.

Taking into account the above, the activity was assessed as implemented in the First Implementation Report.

**Activity 2.2.3.3.**

Conduct professional training of public administration employees on issues of conflict of interest prevention.	
In charge of activity	• National Academy of Public Administration
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	Professional training of public administration employees on issues of conflict of interest prevention has been conducted. Number of trainings held on the topic of prevention of conflicts of interest, in relation to the number of planned trainings.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

**On the implementation of Activity 2.2.3.3.**

In previous reporting cycles, the National Academy of Public Administration submitted data on the conducted trainings. The previous Implementation Reports of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’ contain all necessary data.

This report presents data for the year 2023.

The National Academy of Public Administration has reported that it is preparing and implementing the General Training Program for Civil Servants, the General Training Program for Employees in Local Self-Government Units, the Training Program for Heads in State Authorities and the Training Program for Heads in Local Self-Government Units, which were all adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia.

The Introductory Training Program (for the year 2023) for employees in both state administration and local self-government, both for those with secondary and higher education, as part of the preparation program for taking the state professional exam, are provided in accordance with the regulations, constitutional regulations, is based on the state administration system. The aim of the program is taking the state professional exam in accordance with the regulations on the program and method of taking the state professional exam. Topics related to the prevention of conflicts of interest are part of this training. As part of the My Workplace program, in the training program "Fundamentals of Public Procurement" within this program, a thematic unit related to the prevention of conflicts of interest is provided.

The training program “Prevention of conflicts of interest, verification of assets and income of officials, registers and lobbying in the Republic of Serbia” was developed as part of the General Training Program for Civil Servants for 2022 - thematic area “Prevention of Corruption”. The planned "Ethics and Integrity" thematic area includes a thematic unit on conflict of interest. In addition, the online training “Inspection Control” was developed within the thematic area “Inspection Control”, which includes the thematic unit “The Integrity of Inspectors: Conflict of Interest”. In addition, the thematic area "Public Procurement" contains five training programs: public procurement: development of a plan; implementation of the procedure; preparation of tender documents; conclusion, execution, and amendments of agreements; public procurement: portal; and public procurement: partnership for innovation. Each of the aforementioned training programs includes a thematic unit on prevention of conflict of interest.

Within the sectoral program of continuous professional development of employees in local self-government units, which is part of the General Training Program for employees in local self-government units for 2023, training programs were provided in the thematic area of "Good Governance", "Ethics and integrity", "Development and implementation of local anti-corruption policies" and "Implementation of the code of ethics of local self-government officials and the code of conduct of officials and deputies in local self-government units".

The training titled “Resolving Ethical Dilemmas” was developed as part of the Training Program for heads State Authorities for 2023. It, too, deals with the topic of conflicts of interest.



In the Training Program for Managers in local self-government units for 2023, the training "Prevention of corruption at the local level" was developed. Moreover, a thematic unit related to the prevention of conflicts of interest is provided in the training program "Fundamentals of public procurement".

Within the Introductory Training Program (for 2023):

30 participants attended the "Constitutional Order and Foundations of the State Administration System" training, 42 attended the "Constitutional Order" training, and 34 attended the "Basics of Public Procurement" training. Online training "Inspection Supervision" was completed by 22 trainees, "Constitutional Order" training by 55 trainees, and "State Administration System" by 62 trainees from the beginning of 2023 (data is processed on an annual basis). From the moment it was placed on the platform, a total of 164 participants completed the "Inspection Control" training, 234 participants completed the "Constitutional Order" training, and 134 "State Administration System".

As part of the General Training Program for Civil Servants for 2023 - thematic area "Prevention of Corruption", 24 participants attended the training "Prevention of conflicts of interest, verification of assets and income of officials, registers and lobbying in the Republic of Serbia", and 7 trainings were held as part of the thematic area "Ethics and Integrity" which was attended by 220 participants.

44 participants completed the "Ethics and Integrity" online training. Two trainings on the topic "Public Procurement - preparation of a plan" were conducted, attended by 16 participants. Two trainings on the topic "Public Procurement - implementation of the procedure" attended by 36 participants. Two trainings on the topic "Public Procurement - preparation of tender documents" attended by 27 participants. 53 participants attended two trainings on "Public Procurement - concluding, executing and amending contracts". 33 participants attended two trainings on "Public Procurement - portal" and two trainings on "Public Procurement of innovations" - partnership for innovation" attended by 57 participants. Online trainings on the topic of public procurement were completed: "Public Procurement - preparation of the plan" attended by 4 participants. "Public Procurement - implementation of the procedure" was attended by 4 participants, "Public Procurement - preparation of tender documentation" by 2 participants, "Public Procurement - conclusion, execution and amendments of contracts" ” by 4 participants, "Public Procurement - portal" by 1 participant and "Public Procurement of innovations - partnership for innovation" by 5 participants. In the Training Program for Managers in State Bodies (within the Training Program for Civil Servants in Office, the "Resolving of Ethical Dilemmas" training was attended by nine participants).

In the Training Program for Managers in Local Self-Government Units, 12 participants completed the "Fundamentals of Public Procurement" online training.

According to the results indicator, trainings on the prevention of conflicts of interest were carried out continuously. The Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the First, Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth implementation report.

*Activity 2.2.3.4.*

Regularly monitor cases of conflict of interest, including the number and degree of sanctions applied.	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anti-Corruption Agency</li><li>• Republic Public Prosecutor’s Office</li><li>• Misdemeanour courts</li></ul>
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	Conflict of interest cases are regularly monitored in the reports of the Anti-Corruption Agency.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.3.4.*

In the previous reporting cycles, the Agency submitted data according to the result indicators, on the regular monitoring of cases of conflicts of interest, which are found in the previous Implementation Reports of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’.



This report presents data for the year 2023.

Number of obligations fulfilled by public officials in accordance with the Law on Prevention of Corruption:

- A total of 634 requests were resolved through the application of the Law on Prevention of Corruption.
- 46 decisions were made rejecting the request of a public official to discharge another public office, i.e. to perform another job or activity.
- Out of these, in 35 procedures the public official acted in accordance with the decision and stopped discharging public office, while in four procedures the deadline for the public official's action is in progress. Five decisions are not final, (delivery is in progress or the deadline for appeal has not passed) and in two cases the decision-making procedure on appeal before the Council of the Agency is in progress.

Number of measures issued by the Agency, which public officials comply with:

- The implementation of the Law on Prevention of Corruption, a total of 107 decisions were initiated to decide whether there were violations of the Law on Prevention of Corruption, of which 103 measures and four decisions were issued determining the termination of another public office, in accordance with the provisions of Article 56 of the Law on Prevention of Corruption.
- Out of a total of 103 measures, 91 reprimands, 7 measures of public announcement of the decision on violation of the Law and 5 measures of public announcement of the recommendation for dismissal from public office were issued. Out of total reprimands issued, 14 were with a warrant.
- In eight cases, the public official the public officials complied with the measure, while that was not the situation in two other ones (a more severe measure was imposed), in three procedures the deadline for action is in progress and in one procedure the decision-making procedure on appeal before the Council of the Agency is in progress.
- When it comes to the decisions in which the measure of public announcement of the recommendation for dismissal from public office, in five cases letters were sent to the competent authorities to act in line with the decision of the Agency, of which in three cases the competent authority informed the Agency that it would not to act on the initiative, in one case they acted on the initiative, and in one case the deadline for notifying the Agency has not yet passed.
- Four decisions were adopted, which determine the termination of another public office by force of law. In all proceedings, the decisions are final and enforceable and acted in accordance with them.

As cases of conflict of interest are being monitored and the Agency has submitted final data thereon, in this reporting period this activity was assessed as implemented in the First, Second, Third, and now, in the Fourth implementation report.

*Activity 2.2.3.5.*

Monitor cases of conflict of interest through the application of the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants, in terms of the number of identified and resolved cases of conflict of interest, including disciplinary measures.	
In charge of activity	• High Civil Service Council
Deadline	Continuous, once per year
Indicators of results	The annual report of the High Civil Service Council contains data on the number of identified and resolved cases of conflict of interest, including disciplinary measures.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.3.5.*

According to the result indicators, the High Civil Service Council also submitted data on monitoring cases of conflicts of interest through the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants, which can be found in previous Implementation Report of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption'.

This report presents data for the year 2023.

The High Civil Service Council has reported that in 2023, in connection with the monitoring of conflicts of interest through the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants, three complaints were sent to the High Civil Servant Council against employed civil servants and employees in public institutions and were forwarded to the competent authorities.

This activity is directly related to Activity 2.2.3.5, that is, it is the same report that was referred to in the result indicator for Activities 2.2.3.5. and 2.2.6.3, given that the High Civil Service Council does not resolve conflict of interest cases, but instead monitors the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants, collecting data from state administration bodies that directly take care of the application of this act, including cases that involve conflicts of interest.

Starting from 2021, the Agency was convinced that this was a regular annual practice of the of the High Civil Service Council, in support of the prepared reports and the fact that the reports for the previous year are prepared in the current one, which is why the activity was evaluated as implemented in the Second, Third, and now, Fourth Implementation Report.

In this report, in the same section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following recommendation from the Screening Report:

2.2.4. Consider what would be an adequate statutory and institutional solution for effectively addressing the issue of illicit enrichment.

The activity in question is Activity no. 2.2.4.1, which is presented below.

Activity 2.2.4.1.

<b>The Ministry is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Criminal Code and the Law on the Organization and Competence of State Authorities in Combating Organised Crime and Corruption, which requires courts and prosecutors' offices of general and special jurisdiction to submit reports on the number of initiated and completed procedures. The Ministry of Justice complies a single report, composed of the reports of all the aforementioned authorities, and publishes it on its website.</b>	
	• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary for corruption issues)
<b>In charge of activity</b>	
<b>Deadline</b>	Continuous, once per year
<b>Indicators of results</b>	A report was prepared and published on the website of the Ministry of Justice. Annual report of the Anti-Corruption Agency.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.4.1.*

The Ministry of Justice also reported on the activity in previous cycles, and the Agency made sure that it was a regular annual practice of the Ministry of Justice, as supported by the reports prepared for 2020, 2021, and 2022, as well as the reports for the previous year. The Ministry of Justice is currently preparing and publishing these reports on their internet platform. Although the result indicator also mentions the Agency, the Agency did not submit any information as it is not competent to monitor the application of the above regulations

The Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Second, Third, and now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

In this report, in the same section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following benchmark:

- 2.2.5. Serbia has amended its Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance, strengthening the administrative capacity of the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection, providing training on handling requests for access to information and initial records of improved access to information, including tasks related to privatisation, activities of state-owned enterprises, public procurement procedures, public spending and donations to political parties from abroad.

The activities in question are Activities no. 2.2.5.3, 2.2.5.4 and 2.2.5.5, which are presented individually below.

Activity 2.2.5.1.

<b>Conduct an analysis of the current application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance, with special reference to the following areas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- privatization,</li><li>- public procurement,</li><li>- public expenditures and</li><li>- donations to political entities from abroad.</li></ul>	
	• Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection, with the participation of civil society organizations.
<b>In charge of activity</b>	
<b>Deadline</b>	Third quarter of 2020
<b>Indicators of results</b>	An analysis of the current application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance has been conducted, with special reference to the areas of privatisation, public procurement, public expenditures and donations to political entities from abroad.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was implemented in the part referring to the analysis of the current application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance.</b> <b>The activity could not be assessed in the part referring to donations to political entities from abroad.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.5.1.*

The Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection has reported that it regularly publishes annual reports on the implementation of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance, which contain relevant analyses divided by thematic areas, and that all the analyses related to the implementation of this regulation are available in its annual reports.

This activity is directly related to Activity 2.2.5.2. As the Commissioner reported, the amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance were accompanied by analyses that were provided by the Commissioner through annual reports on the implementation of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance, which is why the Agency assessed the activity as implemented.

At the same time, the Commissioner also pointed out that political parties are not bound by the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance and that no statement can be made about that area, so the activity in the part that refers to donations to political subjects cannot be assessed.

The Agency evaluated this activity as two: the part of the activity that refers to donations to political entities cannot be assessed, while the activity in the part that refers to the analysis of the previous application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance was assessed as implemented in Second implementation report.

Activity 2.2.5.2.

Amend the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance based on the analysis of the previous application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance.	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ministry in charge of state administration and local self-government</li><li>Partner institution:</li><li>Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection</li><li>Government of Republic of Serbia</li><li>National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia</li></ul>
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2020
Indicators of results	The Law on Amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance has been adopted
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.5.2.

In the previous reporting cycle, the Ministry of Justice and the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection submitted data according to the results indicators on the adoption of the Law on Amendments to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance, based on the analysis of the previous application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance.

The Agency assessed this activity as implemented in the Second Implementation Report

Activity 2.2.5.3.

Strengthen the personnel capacities of the Commissioner based on the previously conducted analysis of the existing staffing capacities, especially in terms of: - organizational structure; - number of employees; - level of training; - in accordance with the amended Rulebook on Internal Organization and Classification of Job Positions.	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and of Personal Data Protection</li><li>National Assembly – Committee for Administrative Affairs</li></ul>
Deadline	Continuous, starting six months from the adoption of amendments to the law
Indicators of results	Amended Rulebook on Internal Organization and Classification of Job Positions. Vacancies were filled in accordance with the amended Rulebook.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.5.3.

The Rulebook on Internal Organization and Classification of Job Positions in the Office of the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection from February 2022 envisages 156 executors and three advisers to the Commissioner. At the end of 2022, the Commissioner's Office had 105 employees, excluding elected commissioners and deputy commissioners. At the end of 2023, the number of employees in the Commissioner's Service will be 110, including civil servants and permanent employees.

The Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Second, Third (with the fact that then, in the part related to filling the positions, it was assessed as not implemented), as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

Activity 2.2.5.4.

Monitoring the application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection</li></ul>
Deadline	Continuous, starting from the moment of the coming into effect of the Law
Indicators of results	Description of the situation in the annual report on the work of the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.5.4.

The Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection has submitted data according to the results indicators on monitoring the implementation of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance and in the previous reporting cycles.

The Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection has submitted detailed information from the monthly reports for 2023 on the application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance. The Commissioner compiles the Annual Report on the Commissioner's work for the previous year in the current year, submits it to the National Assembly for consideration, and publishes it on the Commissioner's website.

As the monthly reports of the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection are publicly available, the Agency did not show them here, assessing the activity in this reporting period as implemented in the Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

Activity 2.2.5.5.

Conduct trainings for officials authorised to deal with requests for free access to information, in accordance with case law and international standards.	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• National Academy of Public Administration</li><li>• Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection</li></ul>
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	Trainings have been conducted. Percentage of trained officers authorised to deal with requests for free access to information, in relation to the percentage of officials in need of training.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.5.5.

The National Academy of Public Administration and the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection has submitted data on the implementation of activities in previous reporting cycles as well, which are found in previous Implementation Report of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption'.

The National Academy of Public Administration has reported that it has prepared and is implementing the General Training Program for Civil Servants, the General Training Program for Employees in Local Self-Government Units, the Training Program for Managers in State Bodies and the Training Program for Managers in Local Self-Government Units, all adopted by the Government of Serbia

The training program "Right to Access Information of Public Importance" was developed within the General Training Program for Civil Servants for 2023. Additionally, within the thematic area "Protection of human rights and confidentiality of data" training was developed on "Basics of data processing and protection" with a planned thematic unit on information of public importance. Within the sectoral program of continuous professional development of employees in local self-government units, which is part of the General Training Program for employees in local self-government units for 2022, a training program "Exercising the Right to Access Information of Public Importance" is envisaged within the thematic area "Good Governance".

Five trainings on the topic "Right to Access Information of Public Importance" were held, attended by 242 participants, and two trainings on the topic "Basics of data processing and protection" were attended by 108 participants.

The Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection reported that it had organized the following trainings in 2023: 1) Training for employees of the Urban Planning Institute of Belgrade on the application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance, specifically focusing on the Act's amendments and additions related to misdemeanor liability and the obligation to create informants for work on the platform (20 persons). 2) Webinar on the application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public

Importance for 120 representatives of public authorities; 3) Online training in the field of access to information organized by the National Academy of Public Administration for several dozen representatives of public authorities; 4) Training on free access to information of public importance for members of the Medical Chamber; 5) As part of the project "Implementation of the Aarhus Convention and access to information of public importance," the Commissioner, with the support of the OSCE mission in Serbia, organized the workshop "Importance of access to environmental information for the improvement and protection of the environment." 6) Within the framework of the multi-donor project "Support for strengthening the rule of law in the Republic of Serbia," the training "Free access to information of public importance: legislation and practice" was organized by the Commissioner and the Austrian Development Agency (ADA); 7) Online training on free access to information of public importance with the topic "How to act correctly on a request for access to information-step by step" was organized for 120 persons; 8) Round table on the right to access information of public importance and the right to protection of personal data, in cooperation with the OSCE Mission in Serbia and the Permanent Conference of Cities and Municipalities; 9) As part of the "Media Freedom and Development" project, the Commissioner, with the support of the OSCE Mission in Serbia, organized a round table on the topic "Access to information of public importance and protection of personal data"; 10) Training on the application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance for members of the Chamber of Health Institutions; 11) Training on the application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance in National Academy of Public Administration; 12) Training on the application of the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Importance for employees in schools, preschools, and cultural institutions of the City of Čačak, for about 30 participants;

Having in mind the above, in this reporting period the Agency evaluated the activity as implemented in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

In this report, in the same section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following benchmark:

- 2.2.6. Serbia is employing and managing the careers of civil servants based on clear and transparent criteria, with an emphasis on performance evaluation and demonstrated skills. Serbia has developed and is implementing a mechanism for the efficient implementation of the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants. Serbia is providing initial records of sanctions applied in cases of violation of said Code. Serbia is ensuring the prevention of corruption through the introduction of an effective internal system of control and by increasing the accountability of managers in the public sector.

The activities in question are Activities no. 2.2.6.1, 2.2.6.2, 2.2.6.3, 2.2.6.4, 2.2.6.5, 2.2.6.6, 2.2.6.7 and 2.2.6.8, which are presented individually below.



*Activity 2.2.6.1.*

Ensure the implementation of the new legal framework based on competencies in the processes of employment, performance evaluation, promotion and career development of civil servants.	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Human Resources Management Service</li><li>• High Civil Service Council</li><li>• Ministry in charge of state administration and local self-government</li></ul>
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	Competitions, performance evaluation, promotion and career development of civil servants are based on the full application of the system of competencies (recorded in the relevant reports of the Human Resources Management Service).
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.6.1.*

The Human Resources Management Service has regularly reported on the implementation of activities, and all data can be found in previous Implementation Reports of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption'.

In 2023, the continuous implementation of activities continued.

The Human Resources Management Service has reported that, in the processes of selection in employment, performance evaluation, and support of civil servants' career development and promotion, it applies the updated legal framework based on competencies, which dates from the end of 2018 but was further formulated in 2019. They are actively applying regulations, providing advisory support in the application of regulations and the improvement of the process, and are monitoring their implementation in practice in state administration authorities and Government services.

In the period from 1 January to 31 December 2023, the Human Resources Management Service announced 974 competitions to fill vacant executors' positions, hiring a total of 1,083 competitions. Of the 974 announced competitions, 63 were internal, and 911 were public.

For the purpose of verifying behavioural competences in election procedures in state administration and other state bodies, psychologists have assessed 1101 candidates, of which 89 were for the needs of the Supreme Court of Cassation, the Constitutional Court, the Administrative Court, the Commercial Court, the Misdemeanor Court, the First Basic Court, and Third Basic Court, 72 for the needs of the Tax Administration, 282 for the needs of the Customs Administration, 1 for the needs of the Fiscal Council, 1 for the needs of the Anti-Corruption Agency, and 34 candidates in election procedures for appointing positions.

Employees in the Staff Selection Department are still providing expert assistance and support in the assessment of competences for other state bodies that do not have psychologists as mandatory commission members (Tax Administration, Anti-Corruption Agency, Customs Administration, courts).

Due to the specific epidemiological situation in 2020, adapting to the circumstances and needs of the authorities, the employees of the Staff Selection Department intensified consultations (online, by telephone) and briefings. In addition, psychologists who participate in the selection procedure as members of the competition commissions encouraged holding initial meetings to acquaint the members of the competition commissions with the new procedures in the process of filling vacancies. Psychologists, as members of the competition commissions, provide expert and technical support, both to the human resources units of the authorities and to the members of the commission.

The employees of the Human Resources Management Service started a new type of information and support for civil servants through the "Open Doors Day for Civil Servants". Human Resources Management Service is dedicated also to more intensive informing and attracting potential candidates. The Viber Group is used as a channel of communication this quarter, giving candidates the opportunity to get acquainted with the competencies, phases and techniques of selection, as well as with certain career development opportunities, and to ask individual questions and receive concrete answers. At the same time, the website of the Service is undergoing improvement. A 'Candidates' Corner' has been created to better inform the candidates, and they now have the opportunity to ask questions through the website, Facebook and LinkedIn pages.

During 2023, in the field of performance evaluation, the Human Resources Management Service has collected data on performance evaluation marks in state administration authorities and has prepared a summary Annual Report on the results of the performance evaluation for 2022 which was submitted to the Government of the Republic of Serbia for review. Moreover, the Service continuously provided professional support to state administration bodies in the implementation of the assessment procedure and worked on collecting reports on evaluation outcomes at the level of individual bodies.

As regards career development and promotion of civil servants, as well as further modernisation in the field, the Human Resources Management Service, i.e. its Career Management Centre, applies the following: analysis of individual potentials, 360 degree assessment of development needs, career counseling, drafting of individual development plans, coaching and development support through individual work or work in small groups. The following activities were carried out in 2023: 156 civil servants had their individual development potentials assessed for promotion purposes; 11 officials from the local self-government underwent a process of assessment of their general functional and behavioural competencies in order to be taken over through the internal labour market; 217 civil servants underwent career counseling; 79 coaching sessions were held; and for 62 appointed officials were subjected to the 360 degree feedback assessment for development purposes

The Service prepared two proposals for a new Decree on Determining Competences for the Work of Civil Servants, and the proposals, together with the report on the drafting process, were submitted to the Special Working Group for monitoring the situation and proposing measures related to the management of persons in position for further decision.

The Human Resources Management Service further reported that it is continuing its efforts to improve the human resource management system in terms of employment, performance evaluation



and career development of employees, both through proposals for improving the regulatory framework and by directly improving the practice.

Having in mind the above, in the reporting period the Agency evaluated the activity as implemented in the First, Second, Third, and now, in the Fourth implementation report.

Activity 2.2.6.2.

Complete all initiated competition procedures to fill the positions, and initiate competition procedures for all vacancies (including positions currently discharged by acting officials).	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Human Resources Management Service</li><li>• High Civil Service Council</li><li>• Authorised proposers</li><li>• Government of Republic of Serbia</li></ul>
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	Competition procedures are being conducted. All competitions started by the competition commissions to fill the positions have been completed.
Agency's assessment	The activity cannot be assessed.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.6.2.

The Human Resources Management Service and the High Civil Service Council have regularly reported on activities, and all data can be found in the previous Implementation Reports of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption'.

In 2023, the Human Resources Management Service and the High Civil Service Council have reported that the total number of competitions announced during the year was 43, namely 15 internal and 28 public. In the reporting period, the procedures for 38 tenders were announced in 2023 and earlier, and implemented in the reporting period, namely 13 internal and 25 public.

The total number of job positions, i.e. appointed positions in the state administration is 420.

The number of persons who are currently in appointed positions, having been appointed by the Government after the conducted competition, is 163.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia reported that the Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government formed a special Working Group to monitor the situation regarding the filling of positions in the state administration bodies that started operating in April 2021. The Working Group consists of representatives of the Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government, the Prime Minister's cabinet, the General Secretariat of the Government, the Republic Secretariat for Legislation, the National Academy of Public Administration and the Human Resources Management Service.

The Agency was not able to evaluate Activity 2.2.6.2, as the activity itself, as well as the result indicators and the deadline, is defined in a way that prevents annual monitoring, and consequently also the assessment based on the established methodological rules. Completion of all initiated competition procedures for filling appointed positions cannot be monitored annually, because competition procedures - in accordance with the regulations governing the competition procedure - begin in different periods, and end in different periods. It is also unclear when the competition procedures referred to in the activity actually start, considering that the defined deadline is marked as 'continuous'.

In the First Implementation Report, the Agency assessed the completion of the procedures that had already started at the time of the adoption of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23, but in all subsequent reporting cycles it will not be possible to assess the activity the way it is defined in the current version of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23. The same remark, on why the annual monitoring has been made significantly more difficult, applies to the initiation of competition procedures for all vacancies.

Having in mind the above, the Agency did not evaluate the activity as implemented in the First Implementation Report, while in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report, the Agency could not assess its implementation.

Activity 2.2.6.3.

Monitor violations of the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants by applying sanctions in case of violation of the Code.	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High Civil Service Council</li></ul>
Deadline	Continuous, once per year
Indicators of results	Sanctions have been applied in cases of violation of the Code of Conduct. Annual Report of the High Civil Service Council.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.6.3.

The High Civil Service Council has reported that monitoring the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants is its regular activity, which stems from the Law on Civil Servants<sup>7</sup> (Article 164a), as well as from the activities defined by the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23.

At the 8<sup>th</sup> session held on March 24, 2023, the High Civil Service Council adopted the Report on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants for 2022, with proposed measures to improve compliance therewith. The Report on the Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants for 2020 was submitted to the Ministry of State Administration and Local Self-Government and published on the website of the Human Resources Management Service [www.suk.gov.rs](http://www.suk.gov.rs).

Data on the monitoring of violations of the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants can be found in previous reports.

Among other things, the High Civil Service Council reported that it recommended all heads of state administration bodies, Government services, and expert services of administrative districts, to continue improving the quality of the work of their employees, as well as the way they receive complaints from citizens and the way they measure citizens' satisfaction with the services they

<sup>7</sup> „Official Gazette of the RS”, no. 79/05, 81/05 – corr., 83/05 – corr., 64/07, 67/07 – corr., 116/08, 104/09, 99/14, 94/17, 95/18 and 157/20

provide (by providing information, making it possible to file complaints through the website, by surveying service users, etc.). It is especially recommended for public officials and appointed persons to cultivate appropriate behaviour when communicating with colleagues by providing them with timely, accurate and complete data in a polite and dignified manner. The High Civil Service Council also recommended that the heads of state administration bodies, Government services, and expert services of administrative districts should include persons engaged on other grounds in the proposed activities from point 1.

The High Civil Service Council also proposes to look at the justification and consider the possibility of including material from the Code of Ethics in the content of the program related to the state professional examination.

This activity is directly linked to activity 2.2.3.5, that is, it is the same report as in the result indicators for Activities 2.2.3.5. and 2.2.6.3, given that the High Civil Service Council does not resolve cases of conflict of interest but rather monitors the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Civil Servants, collecting data from the state administration authorities, which directly take care of the implementation of this act, including cases of conflict of interest.

The Agency is convinced that this is the regular annual practice of the High Civil Service Council, as supported by the prepared reports and the fact that the reports for the previous year are prepared in the current year, which is why the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report. The First Implementation Report did not include an assessment of the activity.

*Activity 2.2.6.4.*

Improve the process of implementation of program budgeting (operational and methodological improvement of the process of planning and preparation of multi-annual budget at all levels of government).	
	• Ministry of Finance
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	The process of application of program budgeting is continuously improved at all levels.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.6.4.*

The Ministry of Finance has reported that, during the preparation of the Priority Areas of Financing for the period 2022-2024, new programs, program activities and projects were opened in cooperation with budget users, in accordance with the methodology of the program budget, as analysing the submitted proposals and setting limits, the program structure of budget users was changed.

Although the Ministry of Finance reported that there were no activities in 2023, and having in mind that from the previously submitted information, it can be concluded that the process of implementing program budgeting is being improved, as well as that its essence is such that it does not necessarily require changes on an annual basis (that is, the deadline was not determined in an appropriate way), the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the First, Second, and now in the Fourth implementation report. In the Third Implementation Report, the Agency did not count this activity in the statistical presentation.

*Activity 2.2.6.5.*

Conduct periodic analyses of the program budgeting process and identify recommendations for its improvement.	
	• Ministry of Finance
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous, once per year
Indicators of results	Percentage of budget users who have switched to the program budget. Recommendations for improvement have been identified.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.6.5.*

In earlier reporting cycles, the Ministry of Finance has submitted data on the conducted analyses, as well as that they have been completed periodically, that is, when such analyzes were expedient. In addition, in accordance with the result indicator, the Ministry of Finance has reported that all budget users have now switched to the program budget.

Bearing in mind that the essence of this activity is such that it does not necessarily require changes at the annual level (that is, the deadline was not determined in an appropriate way), the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the First, Second, and now, in the Fourth Implementation Report. In the Third Implementation Report, the Agency did not count this activity in the statistical presentation.

*Activity 2.2.6.6.*

Improve the methodology of the program budget and prepare a new Instruction in accordance with the recommendations from the analyses under Activity 2.2.6.5.	
	• Ministry of Finance • Republic Secretariat for Public Policies
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous, once per year
Indicators of results	Percentage of compliance of program structures of budget users with the Instruction for Drafting the Program Budget.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

**On the implementation of Activity 2.2.6.6.**

Based on an analysis of the program structure of local self-government units, the Ministry of Finance amended Annex 5 of the Instructions for the preparation of the program budget, adding new program activities to the uniform program structure of the budget of local self-government units. Bearing in mind the result indicator, the Ministry of Finance has also submitted information that the percentage of program structure compliance of budget users with the instructions for the preparation of the program budget is 94% in 2021 (92% in 2020).

Looking at the essence and sequence of the activities, as well as the fact that recommendations for improving the program structure under Activity 2.2.6.5 were indeed given, in this reporting period the Agency assessed the activity as implemented..

The essence of the activity is such that it does not require improvement of the methodology, or the preparation of new instructions on an annual basis, which the Ministry of Finance did in 2021 and reported on this in the previous report. The agency assessed the activity as implemented, and its essence is such that it does not necessarily require changes on an annual basis (that is, the deadline was not set appropriately).

The Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the First, Second, and now, in the Fourth Implementation Report. In the Third Implementation Report, the Agency did not count this activity in the statistical presentation.

**Activity 2.2.6.7.**

Strengthen the staffing capacities of the Central Harmonization Unit (which provides central guidance and coordinates public internal financial control activities) in accordance with the amended Rulebook on Internal Organization and Classification of Job Positions.	
	• Ministry of Finance
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2022.
Indicators of results	Vacancies have been filled in accordance with the Rulebook on Internal Organization and Classification of Job Positions
Agency’s assessment	The activity was not implemented

**On the implementation of Activity 2.2.6.7.**

The Ministry of Finance has reported that, as of September 2023, 11 persons, including an Assistant Minister, were employed for an indefinite period in the Central Harmonization Unit, while 2 employees were hired on the basis of temporary and casual employment contracts. It was also reported that in the coming period, the filling of vacant positions is planned in accordance with the Rulebook on Internal Organization and Classification of Job Positions.

The staffing capacities of the Central Harmonisation Unit have been strengthened, but since not all positions were filled in 2023, in line with the set deadline, the Agency did not assessed the activity as implemented in the Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

**Activity 2.2.6.8.**

Increase the number of managers and employees in the public sector who are trained on the essence and importance of the financial management and control system, and increase the number of trained internal auditors.	
	• Ministry of Finance
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	Consolidated annual report on the state of internal financial control in the public sector. Number of newly trained managers and employees in public administration and certified internal auditors, compared to 2013.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

**On the implementation of Activity 2.2.6.8.**

The Ministry of Finance has reported that trainings were organized in the previous reporting periods and that the number of employees in the public sector participated in trainings on the essence and importance of the financial management and control and the number of trained internal auditors increased. Previous Reports contain all necessary data.

The Ministry of Finance has reported that during 2023, the Central Harmonization Unit (CHU) trained 3,118 managers and employees of users of public funds through basic training for financial management and control (FMC). So far, 1,211 candidates have completed the theoretical training for internal auditors.

Trainings were held in connection with the annual reporting on the state of internal financial control in the public sector for 2022. Instructions were given for filling out and submitting the report. In addition to the instructions related to the correct and objective filling of the questionnaire, emphasis was also placed on the essence and importance of self-assessment through questionnaires, which are the best tool for monitoring the establishment and development of the FMC system.

A basic training for financial management and control was held in the reporting period in 2 cycles. The first cycle was attended by 77 and the second by 64 participants.

In addition to these trainings, CHU also conducted one-day trainings for the top managers of public funds users.

In the reporting period, one-day trainings (two cycles) were held in the field of FMC, organized by CHU, for managers and employees in the Ministry of Interior, in the Directorate of Civil

Aviation, Radio and Television of Serbia, Railway Infrastructure of Serbi, the Treasury Administration and the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund of the Republic of Serbia.

A basic training for internal auditors was held for a total of 73 participants. A theoretical training for internal auditors organized by mentors from CHU is continuously being conducted.

An exam for obtaining the title of certified internal auditor in the public sector was held, and by December 2023, a total of 599 candidates passed the examination.

The Central Harmonization Unit with the support of the project "Reform of public finances - Agenda 2030", and in cooperation with the German Cooperation and Development implemented by GIZ, organized trainings in 2023 with the aim of improving and acquiring the knowledge of internal auditors.

The training was held for internal auditors on the topic "Competencies for the work of internal auditors in the public sector and tools for assessing competences", as well as trainings "Provision of advisory services in internal audit" and "Risk assessment for internal auditors in the public sector".

Having in mind the above, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the First, Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth implementation report.

In this report, in the same section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following benchmark:

2.2.7. Serbia is efficiently implementing the new Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers and is monitoring its implementation.

The activities in question are Activities no. 2.2.7.1, 2.2.7.2, 2.2.7.3 and 2.2.7.4, which are individually presented below.

Activity 2.2.7.1.

Conduct trainings on the application of the Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers for the police, public prosecutors and judges, as well as for special departments in public prosecutor's offices and courts dealing with the suppression of corruption.	
	• Judicial Academy
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	Trainings for police, public prosecutors and judges, as well as for special departments in public prosecutor's offices and courts, have been conducted.  Percentage of police officers, public prosecutors and judges trained to apply the Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers, compared to those in need of training.
Agency's assessment	The activity cannot be assessed in the part referring to training the police.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.7.1.

The Judicial Academy has reported that it conducted a series of trainings for public prosecutors, judges, as well as for special departments for combating corruption in public prosecutor's offices and courts. All data on the conducted trainings can be found in the previous Implementation Reports of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption'.

Now the Judicial Academy has reported that this is a continuous activity, it is expected that the training will continue in the future.

The Agency evaluated Activity 2.2.7.1 as two because the institution listed as the holder is not competent for all its segments. The Judicial Academy has reported that it is not responsible for the training of police officers under the Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers, and it was designated as the sole holder of this activity. The Agency could not evaluate the activity in the First Implementation Report because it considered the activity as one.

In the Second, Third and Fourth implementation reports, the Agency evaluated Activity 2.2.7.1 as two activities.

Bearing in mind that the trainings were held in the previous period, as well as that it is planned that the trainings will continue to be conducted, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth report on the implementation of the training for public prosecutors, judges, as well as special departments for combating corruption in public prosecutor's offices and courts. The activity, in the part of police training, still cannot be assessed.

Activity 2.2.7.2.

Monitor the implementation of the Law on Protection of Whistleblowers by preparing the annual report of the Ministry in charge of justice compiled based on periodic reports of competent institutions on actions related to whistleblowers.	
	• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary)
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous, once per year
Indicators of results	The Ministry of Justice's report, with detailed statistical data, has been prepared and published.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.7.2.

The Ministry of Justice hasreported that the Annual Report on the Implementation of the Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers for the period from January 1 to December 31 2022 was prepared and published in 2023, on the official website of the Ministry of Justice, at the following link: <https://www.mpravde.gov.rs/tekst/14518/izvestaji-o-primeni-zakona-o-zastiti-uzbunjivaca.php>.



As the report for the previous year is prepared in the current year, in this reporting period the Agency has assessed the activity as implemented in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth implementation report.

Activity 2.2.7.3.

Monitor the effects of the Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers with regard to the actions of state authorities in response to whistleblowers’ reports.	
In charge of activity	• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary)
Deadline	Continuous, once per year
Indicators of results	The report of the Ministry of Justice on the actions of state authorities in response to whistleblowers' reports has been prepared and published.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was not implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.7.3.

The Ministry of Justice has submitted information related to the report on the application of the Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers, which was assessed in activity 2.2.7.2. Since no impact assessment of the Law on the Protection of Whistleblower has been made, in this reporting period the Agency assessed the activity as not implmeneted<sup>8</sup>.

The Ministry of Justice has submitted information that the mechanism for collecting data on the effects of the implementation of the Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers is currently being established, as well as that the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office has been informed about the mannerof keeping records with for statistical data processing.

Since no assessment of the effects of the Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers was made, the Agency assessed the activity as not implemented in the Second, Third, and now, in the Fourth Implementation Report. The Agency could not assess the activity in the First Implementation Report because there was no data available.

Activity 2.2.7.4.

Raise citizens’ awareness of the Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers as well as the level of their readiness to act as whistleblowers.	
Activity holder	• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary)
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2021
Results indicators	The awareness raising campaign has been conducted.
Rating of the Agency	The activity was not implemented.

<sup>8</sup> Through recommendations in previous reports, the Agency indicated that the assessment of effects should be done in accordance with the Law

on Planning System of the Republic of Serbia, and that the deadline for implementation cannot be once a year.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.7.4.*

The Ministry of Justice has reported that the Ministry of European Integration has engaged an expert to prepare an analysis of the Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers. The need for possible amendments to the law will be considered based on the above analysis, and a brochure will be created to raise the level of awareness among citizens about the Law on the Protection of Whistleblowers and their willingness to act as whistleblowers.

In 2023, the Ministry of Justice has reported that the activity that involves raising awareness among citizens to act as a whistleblower was included in the Proposal of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Strategy for the Fight against Corruption (2023-2028), and the implementation of this activity is expected in the coming period.

Since the deadline has expired and the activity has not been completed, in this reporting period the Agency assessed the activity as not implemented in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

In this report, in the same section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following benchmark:

- 2.2.8. Serbia is implementing and assessing the impact of measures taken to reduce corruption in areas of risk (health, taxes, customs, education, local self-government, privatisation, public procurement and police), taking corrective action where necessary and organising initial records of measurable reduction of corruption in above areas.

The activities in question are Activities no. 2.2.8.1, 2.2.8.2, 2.2.8.3, 2.2.8.4, 2.2.8.5, 2.2.8.6, 2.2.8.7, 2.2.8.8. which are individually presented below.

*Activity 2.2.8.1.*

Strengthen the personnel capacities of the Public Procurement Office, especially in terms of the number and position of employees.	
	• Public Procurement Office
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2020
Indicators of results	All vacancies were filled.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.8.1.*

The Public Procurement Office has reported that the Rulebook on Internal Organization and Classification of Job Positions, in the Public Procurement Office was adopted as a result of the need to strengthen the administrative and institutional capacities of the Republic of Serbia in the field of public procurement, with the aim of meeting all the temporary criteria that it established European Commission within Chapter 5 - Public Procurement. This entered into force on

December 2, 2020.

The new Rulebook in the Public Procurement Office foresees a total of 36 systematized jobs, of which four are civil servants, so that the total number of civil servants is 55.

The Rulebook on Internal Organization and Classification of Job Positions in the Public Procurement Office, to which the Government of the Republic of Serbia gave its consent on April 7, 2023, foresees a total of 38 systematized workplaces, of which 4 are civil servants, so that the maximum number of civil servants with whom an employment relationship can be established is 61. As of December 31, 2023, a total of 38 civil servants and 6 persons were employed on the basis of contracts for the performance of temporary and occasional jobs.

The activity was implemented by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2020, given that the Rulebook on Internal Organization and Classification of Job Positions was adopted and the total number of employees, i.e. persons hired on the basis of contracts for temporary and occasional jobs, increased.

The Public Procurement Office continued to further strengthen its capacity in the following years through hiring people for an indefinite period of time through a public tender and hiring people based on contracts for performing temporary and occasional jobs.

Having in mind that the new Rulebook on Internal Organization and Classification of Job Positions in the Public Procurement Office has increased the total number of civil servants, and that the preconditions for additional strengthening of personnel capacities have been met, as well as that the number of people engaged outside the employment relationship has increased, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the First Implementation Report.

**Activity 2.2.8.2.**

Establish a new Public Procurement Portal equipped with new functionalities resulting from the new Law on Public Procurement.	
	• Public Procurement Office
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2020
Indicators of results	A new Public Procurement Portal was established.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

**On the implementation of Activity 2.2.8.2.**

The Public Procurement Office has reported that the new Public Procurement Portal, equipped with new functionalities, stemming from the new Law on Public Procurement<sup>9</sup>, started operating on July 1, 2020, together with the beginning of the implementation of the new Law on Public Procurement. The Public Procurement Portal was created with the expert support of the GIZ Project “Support for further improvement of Public Procurement system in Serbia”

9 „Official Gazette of the RS”, number 91/19

financed through IPA in 2013. The project "Support for further improvement of Public Procurement system in Serbia" is after several addendums to the Agreement since the beginning of implementation in July 2017 extended until June 2021, during which new functionalities were added to the Public Procurement Portal.

Having in mind the above, the Agency assessed this activity as implemented in the First Implementation Report.

**Activity 2.2.8.3.**

Monitoring of measures related to the application of supervision and control in public procurement.	
In charge of activity	• Public Procurement Office • Republic Commission for Protection of Rights in Public Procurement Procedures • Ministry of Finance
Deadline	Continuous, once per year
Indicators of results	Report of the Public Procurement Office on supervision of the implementation of the Law on Public Procurement. Report on the work of the Republic Commission for the Protection of Rights in Public Procurement Procedures. Report of the Ministry of Finance on the supervision of the execution of public procurement contracts.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented in the part referring to the competencies of the Public Procurement Office.
	The activity was implemented in the part referring to the competencies of the Republic Commission for the Protection of Rights in Public Procurement Procedures.
	The activity was not implemented in the part referring to the competencies of the Ministry of Finance.

**On the implementation of Activity 2.2.8.3.**

The Public Procurement Office and the Republic Commission for the Protection of Rights in Public Procurement Procedures have submitted information on the monitoring of the implementation of regulations on public procurement in previous reporting cycles.

The Public Procurement Office has reported that, in accordance with the legal obligation established in Article 180, Paragraph 6 of the Law on Public Procurement, it prepares Annual Reports on the monitoring carried out for the previous year and submits them to the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia within the legally prescribed deadline.

During 2023, the Public Procurement Office continued to monitor the implementation of public procurement regulations according to the adopted annual monitoring plan, as well as other types of monitoring in accordance with legal authorizations and the Rulebook on Monitoring the Implementation of Public Procurement Regulations. The Public Procurement Office submitted the data on the implemented monitoring for the year 2023 and reported that the data on the implemented monitoring for the year 2023 will be presented as part of the Annual Report on

Implemented Monitoring for the year 2023.

The Republic Commission for the Protection of Rights in Public Procurement Procedures has submitted statistical data for 2023, and the Annual Report of the Republic Commission for 2023 will contain the final data. The Republic Commission notes that, in accordance with Article 203 of the Law on Public Procurement, if this body submits the Annual Work Report to the National Assembly by March 31 of the current year for the previous year, the submitted data can be considered working data, which means that the final data will be presented in the annual report of the Republic Commission for 2023.

The Ministry of Finance reported that it is not preparing a Report on the Supervision of the Execution of Public Procurement Contracts.

The Agency evaluates activity 2.2.8.3 as three activities, beginning with the Second Implementation Report, as the results indicate that three institutions, each within their respective domains of competence, are implementing this activity. The Agency has confirmed that the Public Procurement Office and the Republic Commission for the Protection of Rights in Public Procurement Procedures follow this regular annual practice, as demonstrated by the prepared reports and the inclusion of the previous year's reports in the current one.

The Agency assessed the activities in the domain of competence of these two institutions as two and evaluated them as implemented in the Second, Third, as well as now in the Fourth implementation report. The Agency could not assess the activity in the First Implementation Report, because the annual reports for the previous year are prepared and published by March 31 of the current year.

At the same time, the activity, in the part of the competence of the Ministry of Finance, was assessed as not implemented in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth implementation report.

*Activity 2.2.8.4.*

Conduct trainings for police officers, prosecutors and judges in order to process cases of corruption in public procurement more efficiently (compatible with the Financial Investigation Strategy).	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Public Procurement Office</li><li>Republic Commission for Protection of Rights in Public Procurement Procedures</li><li>Judicial Academy</li></ul>
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	Trainings have been conducted. Percentage of trained police officers, public prosecutors, judges and employees and the Public Procurement Directorate, in relation to those in need of training.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.8.4.*

The Public Procurement Office, the Republic Commission for the Protection of Rights in Public Procurement Procedures and the Judicial Academy, in previous reporting cycles, submitted information on the conducted trainings, which can be found in the previous Implementation Reports of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’.

The Public Procurement Office reported that it conducted the following trainings in 2023: 1) In cooperation with National Alliance for Local Economic Development (NALED) and the Judicial Academy, it conducted four trainings for representatives of courts and prosecutors' offices on the topic "Public procurement for courts and prosecutors' offices as contracting authorities in the procedure of"; 2) They participated in a workshop on challenges in the detection and prosecution of criminal offenses related to public procurement, together with representatives of the prosecution and the police; 3) In cooperation with the Public Procurement Office and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and within the Project for the Improvement of Public Procurement, two trainings were held for representatives of the police and prosecutor's offices on the topic "Advanced use of the Public Procurement Portal"; 4) Representatives of the Public Procurement Office presented the basic and advanced functionalities of the Public Procurement Portal to the participants.

The Judicial Academy reported that in 2023 they organized: 1) In cooperation with USAID, a two-day seminar on the topic: "Offenses in the field of public procurement" for a total of 17 participants (judges); 2) Two seminars on the topic: "Assessment of the risk of money laundering and supervision of the implementation of the Law on Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism", for a total of 53 participants; 3) Workshop on the topic: "Public procurement - challenges in detection and prosecution of criminal offenses related to public procurement", for a total of 24 participants; 4) Workshop on the topic: "Public procurement - corruption: Training for advanced use of the Public Procurement Portal for the police and prosecution", for a total of 22 participants; 5) In cooperation with the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), organized three seminars on the topic: "Prevention of money laundering, FAFT recommendations and immediate results" in Belgrade, for a total of 56 participants; 6) Seminar on the topic: "Law on public procurement - basic terms and rules of the public procurement procedure", for a total of 28 participants; 7) In cooperation with the OSCE, organized a seminar on the topic: "Improving the capacity of supervisory authorities in fulfilling their obligations related to the PN and FT system - cooperation between supervisory authorities and prosecutor's offices", for a total of 22 participants.

The Agency evaluated the activity as implemented in the First, Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth implementation report.

Activity 2.2.8.5.

Develop a methodology for drafting an Impact Assessment of measures taken to reduce corruption in the field of public procurement.	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anti-Corruption Agency</li><li>• Public Procurement Office</li><li>• Republic Commission for Protection of Rights in Public Procurement</li><li>• Procedures</li></ul>
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2020
Indicators of results	The methodology for drafting the Impact Assessment of measures taken to reduce corruption in the field of public procurement has been developed and is based on clear criteria.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.8.5.

The Agency has previously reported that the methodology for drafting an Impact Assessment of measures taken to reduce corruption in the field of eight risky areas (public procurement, privatization, health, taxes, education, police , customs and local self-government) was prepared in April 2021, in in cooperation with experts engaged through the IPA 2013 Project "Prevention and fight against corruption", including one representative of a civil society organization.

The Agency has counted and evaluated the activities 2.2.8.5, 2.2.9.2, 2.2.10.1, 2.2.10.6, 2.2.10.11, 2.2.10.19, 2.2.10.27 and 2.2.10.32. as one activity, because the methodology for drafting an Impact Assessment of measures taken to reduce corruption in the field of eight risky areas was prepared as one document, which includes all eight risk areas (public procurement, privatization, health, taxes, education, police , customs and local self-government). The Agency did not show them individually in this report.

Bearing in mind the above, the Agency assessed this activity as implemented in the Second Implementation Report for 2021.

Activity 2.2.8.6.

Establish a Working Group to prepare an Impact Assessment of measures taken to reduce corruption in the field of public procurement and collect all relevant data.	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anti-Corruption Agency</li><li>• In cooperation with competent institutions</li></ul>
Deadline	Second quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	The working group has been established and is operational. All the data relevant for the preparation of the Impact Assessment have been collected
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented in the part referring to the establishment of the Working Group.

The activity was implemented in the part of data collection for the preparation of the Impact Assessment.



10 See more at: [http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/cir/pdf/izvestaji/2022/02-554\\_22.pdf](http://www.parlament.gov.rs/upload/archive/files/cir/pdf/izvestaji/2022/02-554_22.pdf)

**On the implementation of Activity 2.2.8.6.**

The Agency has previously reported that the formation of the Working Groups was completed in 2021, as well as that the collection of data available to the institutions was completed in 2022, which was discussed in detail in the Second and Third Implementation Reports for 2021 and the year 2022.

The Agency has counted and evaluated the activities 2.2.8.6, 2.2.9.3, 2.2.10.2, 2.2.10.7, 2.2.10.12, 2.2.10.20, 2.2.10.28 и 2.2.10.33. as one, because it simultaneously formed Working Groups for eight risky areas. As each of these activities involves two diverse sub-activities, namely the education of Working Groups and data collection, the Agency separated the activity into two. The Agency did not present them individually in this report.

The Agency assessed the activity in the part of the formation of the Working Groups as implemented in the Second Implementation Report for 2021, while the data collection process was completed in 2022, and the Agency assessed the activity in that part as implemented in the Third Report on implementation for 2022.

**Activity 2.2.8.7.**

Prepare and present the Impact Assessment of the measures taken to reduce corruption in the field of public procurement	
	• Anti-Corruption Agency
In charge of activity	
Deadline	First quarter of 2022
Indicators of results	An impact assessment of measures taken to reduce corruption in the field of public procurement was prepared and presented to the National Assembly.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented in the part related to the preparation of the Impact Assessment.
	The activity cannot be assessed in the part related to the preparation of the Impact Assessment.

**On the implementation of Activity 2.2.8.7.**

The Agency has reported that it prepared the Impact Assessment in the second quarter of 2022, and that it submitted the document to the National Assembly on 28 June 2022. The National Assembly published the Impact Assessment on its website<sup>10</sup>.

In a communication dispatched to the National Assembly, the Agency indicated the need to present this document; however, whether and how it will be presented to the National Assembly, and what the outcome of the presentation will be, depends on the National Assembly, not on the Agency. The appropriate presenter of the Impact Assessment has not been defined, i.e. the Agency was listed as the sole entity in charge of activities both in the part of implementation and in the part of presentation of the Impact Assessment.

The Agency has counted, presented and evaluated the activities 2.2.8.7, 2.2.9.4, 2.2.10.3, 2.2.10.8, 2.2.10.13, 2.2.10.21, 2.2.10.29. and 2.2.10.34. as one, through two sub-activities, because one relates to the implementation of the Assessment of the impact of measures taken to reduce corruption in eight risk areas, and the other to its presentation. The Agency did not present them individually in this report.

The Agency evaluated the activity in the part of the preparation of the Impact Assessment as implemented, and due to the inappropriate holder, it could not assess the activity in the part related to the presentation of this document in the Third Implementation Report.

**Activity 2.2.8.8.**

Take corrective measures based on the findings from the Impact Assessment.	
In charge of activity	• All relevant institutions, based on the findings from the Impact Assessment
Deadline	First quarter of 2023
Indicators of results	Corrective measures based on findings from the Impact Assessment were undertaken.
Agency’s assessment	The activity cannot be assessed.

**On the implementation of Activity 2.2.8.8.**

The competent authorities did not implement corrective measures because the Report on the Impact Assessment of Strategic Documents in the Area of the Fight Against Corruption (Impact Assessment of measures taken to reduce corruption in the field of eight risky areas: public procurement, privatization, health, taxes, education, police , customs and local self-government) does not contain corrective measures for each of the areas that are particularly risky.

The Agency has counted and evaluated Activities 2.2.8.8, 2.2.9.5, 2.2.10.4, 2.2.10.9, 2.2.10.14, 2.2.10.22, 2.2.10.30, 2.2.10.35, as one, and did not present them individually in this report.

Namely, in the Report on the Impact Assessment of Strategic Documents in the Area of the Fight Against Corruption, prepared by the Agency, it is indicated that the aim of the assessment of the impact of strategic documents is to determine whether any progress has been achieved in the fight against corruption in areas of special risk, and if so, is it a consequence of the application of strategic documents or is there some other explanation for the resulting change (if it happened). As the impact assessment has been presented, corrective measures were planned based on the analysis of the risk of corruption in areas of special risk and not on the basis of an impact assessment; therefore, concrete measures for each of the particularly sensitive areas did not result from the assessment of the impact of strategic documents and could not be directly undertaken.

Bearing in mind the above, the Agency could not assess the activity in the Fourth Implementation Report.

In this report, in the same section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’, the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following benchmark:

- 2.2.9. Serbia is implementing and assessing the impact of measures taken to reduce corruption in areas of risk (health, taxes, customs, education, local self-government, privatisation, public procurement and police), taking corrective measures when necessary, and organising initial records of measurable reductions of corruption in said areas.

The activity in question is 2.2.9.1, which is presented below, while activities 2.2.9.2, 2.2.9.3, 2.2.9.4, 2.2.9.5. which are presented in the section of the Report: Transitional benchmark 2.2.8.

**Activity 2.2.9.1.**

Establish internal control in all public enterprises.	
In charge of activity	• Ministry of Finance (Central Harmonization Unit) • All public enterprises
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2022
Indicators of results	As evident from the Annual Report of the Central Harmonisation Unit, internal control has been established in all public enterprises.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was not implemented.

**On the implementation of Activity 2.2.9.1.**

The Ministry of Finance has reported that beneficiaries of public funds are independently establishing internal control in their organizations based on the principle of a decentralized system of internal controls, while the Sector - Central Harmonisation Unit of the Ministry of Finance, is providing a legal and methodological framework and continuously conducting training and promotional activities to raise awareness of the importance and obligation of establishing a system of internal control.

The Ministry of Finance pointed out that, in accordance with the Law on the Budget System<sup>11</sup>, users of public funds are obliged to establish a system of financial management and control. Pursuant to this Law, it is the manager of a beneficiary of public funds who is responsible for establishing a system of financial management and control.

Bearing in mind the above, the Ministry of Finance further pointed out that this activity (2.2.9.1) is not defined in line with Article 81, paragraph 4 of the Law on the Budget System, because in addition to public enterprises, the Ministry of Finance / Sector - Central Harmonisation Unit was also listed as the carrier of activities related to the establishment of internal control in public enterprises (beneficiaries of public funds).

11 „Official Gazette of the RS”, no. 54/09, 73/10, 101/10, 101/11, 93/12, 62/13, 63/13 – corr., 108/13, 142/14, 68/15 – other law, 103/15, 99/16, 113/17,

95/18, 31/19, 72/19, 149/20, 118/21, 118/21 – other law and 138/22.



According to the above Law, beneficiaries of public funds should report to the Minister of Finance about the implementation of internal control in their organizations, whose status is monitored by the Sector - Central Harmonisation Unit, preparing - based on individual reports of beneficiaries of public funds - an annual report on the state of internal financial control in the Republic of Serbia, which the Minister then uses to report to the Government.

The Ministry of Finance also stated that, starting from the fact that from the point of view of financial management and control, the issue of corruption as a narrower term is covered by the term 'irregularity' (as defined in Article 2 of the Law on the Budget System), and bearing in mind that this activity is part of the Action Plan related to the issue of prevention of corruption, the Central Harmonization Unit had already implemented appropriate activities related to the establishment of a system for management of irregularities within the jurisdiction defined by law and its scope of work. Namely:

- The definition of irregularity was introduced in the Law on the Budget System;
- The Rulebook on common criteria and standards for the establishment, operation and reporting on the financial management and control system in the public sector<sup>63</sup> obliges managers of users of public funds to establish a system for detecting, recording and acting on notifications of suspected irregularities, as well as a reporting system, and to take measures necessary to reduce the risk of irregularities;
- As an aid in understanding and implementing the system for irregularities in practice, the Central Harmonization Unit has developed Guidelines for managing irregularities for the beneficiaries of public funds
- The trainings that the Central Harmonization Unit regularly holds for employees and managers on financial management and control contain a section devoted to irregularities;
- The Central Harmonization Unit continuously conducts promotional activities through electronic and print media, organises meetings and trainings to raise awareness of the importance and obligation of establishing internal control systems; has published on the Ministry's website an extensive set of practical guidelines to help with the implementation, better understanding and self-study on financial management and control and internal audit, which are available for download; and informs the most important beneficiaries of public funds (from the point of view of the number of employees and their budgets) about the obligation to establish a system and appropriate reporting

The Ministry of Finance has reported for the year 2023 that 3,416 beneficiaries of public funds have submitted the Annual Report on the Financial Management and Control System for the year 2022 and that all received reports were included in the analysis.

Public enterprises (PE) at the central republic level that submitted the FMC manage 99.98% of the total revenues of the PE group. Of the public sector bodies and organizations that were listed in the Government Conclusion that adopted the consolidated annual report for the previous year, for 2022 the number of PEs that submitted an annual report increased, and the number of those that did not adopt the Risk Management Strategy decreased, created the Register of Risks, i.e. Maps of Business Processes.

Out of 36 public enterprises at the central republic level, which submitted reports for FMC, 5 organizations do not have business process maps, while 4 PEs do not have a Risk Management Strategy, and 7 PEs do not have a Risk Register.

Out of a total of 39 PEs and capital companies from the central republic level included in the analysis, which perform activities of general interest and which apply the Law on Public Enterprises, there are 28 functional IRs, which makes up 72% of the total number of this category, and the coverage of total revenues for 2022 of this category is 84%.

In 2023, CHU, with the support of KPMG, prepared video trainings for financial management and control, intended for managers and coordinators for FMC. In addition to this, video training related to internal audit was also prepared. The aforementioned trainings are in the final stage of production, and in the public period users of public funds will be able to access and listen to these trainings.

In addition, the Conclusion by which the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopts the consolidated annual report individually highlighted the most important beneficiaries of public funds, among them public companies, which were given specific recommendations for the improvement of the FMC and internal audit.

From this reporting period, the Government's Conclusion has been improved with an additional obligation for the beneficiaries of public funds, which is ordered to perform certain actions by the said Conclusion, and it refers to the obligation to report to the Central Harmonization Unit within a certain period of time on the implementation of the activities that were ordered to them.

In Activity 2.2.9.1. the holder of the activity is not properly defined because – as the Ministry of Finance itself stated in the report - this institution, based on individual reports of users of public funds, does prepare an annual report on the state of internal financial control in the Republic of Serbia. However, since the data submitted by the Ministry of Finance clearly show that internal control has not been established in all public enterprises, the Agency assessed the activity as not implemented in the Third Report, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

In this report, in the same Section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following benchmark:

2.2.10 Serbia is implementing and assessing the impact of measures taken to reduce corruption in areas of risk (health, taxes, customs, education, local self-government, privatisation, public procurement and police), taking corrective action where necessary and organising initial records of measurable reduction of corruption in above areas.

<sup>12</sup> „Official Gazette of the RS”, number 89/19

The activities in question are Activities no. 2.2.10.1, 2.2.10.2, 2.2.10.3, 2.2.10.4, 2.2.10.6, 2.2.10.7, 2.2.10.8, 2.2.10.9, 2.2.10.11, 2.2.10.12, 2.2.10.13, 2.2.10.14, 2.2.10.19, 2.2.10.20, 2.2.10.21, 2.2.10.22, 2.2.10.27, 2.2.10.28, 2.2.10.29, 2.2.10.30, 2.2.10.32, 2.2.10.33. and 2.2.10.35. which are presented in the section of the Report: Transitional benchmark 2.2.8, while the Activities no. 2.2.10.5, 2.2.10.10, 2.2.10.15, 2.2.10.16, 2.2.10.17, 2.2.10.18, 2.2.10.19, 2.2.10.23, 2.2.10.24, 2.2.10.25, 2.2.10.26, 2.2.10.31. are presented individually below.

*Activity 2.2.10.5.*

Prepare and adopt an Operational Plan to combat corruption in health care.	
In charge of activity	• Ministry of Health with the participation of civil society organizations
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	The Operational Plan to combat corruption in health care has been adopted
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.10.5.*

The Ministry of Health has reported that it has prepared the Operational Plan to Combat Corruption in Health Care and adopted it by Decision no. 119016901/202116 on 28 December 2021.

The Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Second Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.2.10.10.*

Prepare and adopt an Operational Plan to combat corruption in the field of taxation.	
In charge of activity	• Tax Administration, Ministry of Finance with the participation of civil society organizations
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2020
Indicators of results	The Operational Plan to combat corruption in the field of taxation has been adopted.ional Plan for the fight against corruption in the field of taxes was adopted.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.10.10.*

The Tax Administration has reported that it has prepared the Operational Plan to Combat Corruption in the Field of Taxes and adopted it on 31 December 2021, which is why the Agency assessed this activity as implemented.

The Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Second Implementation Report.



Activity 2.2.10.15.

Prepare and adopt the Operational Plan to combat corruption in the field of education.	
	• Ministry of Education with the participation of civil society organizations
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Third quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	The Operational Plan to combat corruption in the field of education has been adopted.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.10.15.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development has reported that the Minister had issued a Decision no. 021 02126/202109 from October 15, 2021 to adopt the Operational Plan to Combat Corruption in the Field of Education, as well as that the implementation of activities contained in the Operational Plan to Combat Corruption in the Field of Education began in the fourth quarter of 2021.

The Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Second Implementation Report.

Activity 2.2.10.16.

Develop mechanisms to strengthen the integrity of police officers: a) Carry out a corruption risk analysis for job positions in the police; b) Create preconditions for normative regulation; strengthen integrity (change procedures and work methodology).	
	• Ministry of the Interior
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Point a) - fourth quarter of 2021 Point b) - third quarter of 2020
Indicators of results	Analysis of the risk of corruption in the Ministry of Interior has been created. A register of risks has been created. Procedures of the methodologies of work and actions in the Sector have been created.
Agency's assessment	The activity was not implemented in point a).
	The activity was implemented in point b).

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.10.16.

Regarding point a), the Ministry of the Interior has reported that the work of working groups in the organizational units of the Ministry of the Interior related to corruption risk analysis was realised in the

course of 2021 and 2022. The Ministry of Interior further reported that the Internal Control Sector has formed working groups to conduct risk analyses in all organizational units of the Police Administration, that the activities of most working groups at the Police Administration are nearing completion, and that activities of regional police administrations are almost completed. The results of the conducted corruption risk analysis, will serve as the basis for the development of the Integrity Plan of the Ministry of Interior.

In 2023, the Ministry of the Interior has reported that the largest number of working groups were in the final stage of developing a corruption risk analysis. Until now, analyses of the risk of corruption have been completed in the following organizational units: Sector for Emergency Management; Traffic Police Administration; Border Police Directorate; Special Anti-Terrorist Unit; Serbian Police Helicopter Unit; Coordination Directorate for Kosovo and Metohija; Police Administration for the City of Belgrade; Police Administration in Požarevac.

The Agency counted Activity 2.2.10.16 as two activities, because of the different deadlines for the implementation of the two activity's segments. We can note that point a) was assessed as not implemented, bearing in mind that based on the report of the Ministry of the Interior, the analysis of the risk of corruption has not been fully completed. Regarding item b), the Ministry of Interior has reported that, in addition to the already adopted by-laws prescribed by the Law on Police, and the Code of Police Ethics, the Ministry of the Interior also issued the Instruction on Gifts in the Ministry of Interior on August 24, 2021, and prerequisites for strengthening integrity were created.

Given that the preconditions for strengthening integrity have been created, the Agency assessed point b) as implemented in the Second Implementation Report. However, it assessed point a) as not implemented because the corruption risk analysis is not fully completed bearing in mind that the corruption risk analysis was not fully completed, in Second, Third, as well as now in the Fourth Implementation Report.

Activity 2.2.10.17.

Strengthen the capacity of the Internal Control Service in order to prevent and combat corruption in the police sector, in accordance with the analysis of and changes to the regulatory framework.	
	• Ministry of the Interior
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous, ending with the fourth quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	Capacities of the Police Internal Control Sector have been strengthened - the number of employees in the Police Internal Control Sector has been increased.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.10.17.

The Ministry of Interior submitted data on strengthening the capacity of the Internal Control Sector, which are found in previous Implementation Reports.

In conclusion with the fourth quarter of 2021, the number of systematized jobs in the Internal Control Sector was increased by 8, and on March 24, 2022, it amounted to 187 jobs, and that the number of employees in the Sector is 162. Moreover, continuous efforts were made to strengthen the personnel and administrative capacities of the Internal Control Sector.

According to the reports of the Ministry of the Interior, a continuous increase in the number of employees in the Internal Control Sector is visible, which is why the Agency assessed this activity as implemented in the First, Second, Third, and now in the Fourth Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.2.10.18.*

Continuous education of employees in the Internal Control Service and all employees in the Ministry of Interior regarding integrity.	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry of the Interior</li><li>• Criminal Police Academy</li></ul>
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	Trainings have been conducted. Percentage of employees in the Ministry of Interior trained on the topic of integrity, in relation to those in need of training.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.10.18.*

The Ministry of the Interior has reported on the implementation of activities, and all data on the trainings held in the previous period can be found in previous reports.

The Ministry of the Interior has reported that in 2023, three representatives of the Internal Control Sector of the Ministry of the Interior participated in the international conference "Practical experiences in conducting integrity tests in some European countries", organized by the National Protection Service of the Ministry of Interior of Hungary. Moreover, eight representatives of the Department for Internal Control, Criminal Investigations and Professional Standards of the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of North Macedonia paid a study visit to the Internal Control Sector, on the topic of conducting an integrity test, the organization of which was supported by the Geneva Center for Security Sector Governance - DCAF.

Bearing in mind the mentioned trainings, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the First, Second, Third, as well as now in the Fourth Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.2.10.23.*

<b>Establish a Working Group in the Ministry of Justice to consider the initiative of the Customs Administration (based on the Corruption Risk Analysis of the legal framework of the customs system) to amend the Criminal Procedure Code, and act in accordance with the conclusions (link: Activity 2.3.7.2).</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry of Justice</li><li>• Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance</li><li>• Government of Republic of Serbia</li><li>• National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	Creation of the working group: first quarter of 2021 Amendments and supplements to regulations: up to the fourth quarter of 2022
<b>Indicators of results</b>	The working group has been created. Amendments and supplements to the law have been adopted, in accordance with the conclusions of the working group.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was not implemented in the part referring to the amendment of the regulations.</b>
	<b>The activity was implemented in the part referring to the creation of the working group.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.10.23.*

The Ministry of Justice has reported that, by the Decision of the Minister of Justice no. 119-01-126/2021-05 of May 12, 2021, a Working Group for the Analysis of the Criminal Procedure Code was established with the aim of identifying and eliminating its weaknesses and shortcomings, and drafting a working text of the Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Criminal Procedure Code based on the results of the Analysis.

The Agency assessed the education activity of the Working Group as implemented in the Second Implementation Report, while the activity in the part of amending regulations was assessed as not implemented, in the Third, as well as now in the Fourth Implementation Report, bearing in mind that the Code of Criminal Procedure has not been amended.

*Activity 2.2.10.24.*

<b>Train customs officers in accordance with the new regulations</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	Continuous
<b>Indicators of results</b>	Trainings have been conducted. Percentage of trained customs officers, in relation to those in need of

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.10.24.*

The Customs Administration has reported that Activity 2.2.10.24 of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 was conditioned by the amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code (Activity 2.2.10.23). As the Code has not been amended yet, it was not possible to implement Activity 2.2.10.24.

The Agency assessed the activity as not implemented in the First, Second, Third, as well as now in the Fourth Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.2.10.25.*

<b>Strengthen the capacity of the Internal Control Department by procuring adequate supporting equipment, IT equipment and uniforms, and by employing 15 people.</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	Continuous
<b>Indicators of results</b>	Capacities have been strengthened (appropriate supporting equipment, IT equipment, uniforms, etc.). The number of systemised job positions has been increased by 13 in 2021.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.10.25.*

The Customs Administration has reported that it has amended the Rulebook no. 110-00-307/3/2021-08 on June 21, 2021, systemising another job position in the Department for Internal Control, and that the total number of systemised job positions is 18. The Customs Administration has taken steps to achieve the preconditions for strengthening staff capacity and has, accordingly, increased the number of systemized job positions.

The Customs Administration has reported that in 2022, customs officials received a new uniform, as well as new IT equipment. The Customs Administration further reported that in 2022 there was no hiring of new people in the Department for Internal Control due to limited budget resources. Even in 2023, there was no recruitment of new employees in the Department for Internal Control, due to limited budget funds.

In 2023, the accompanying appropriate equipment, IT equipment, uniforms, etc. were not procured and there was no employment due to limited budget funds.

The Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Third, as well as now in the Fourth Implementation Report, because the activity is continuous.

Activity 2.2.10.26.

Install video surveillance in customs offices and at border crossings, with a centralised signal recorder in the Customs Administration and a possibility of the Customs Administration to access video surveillance in each facility in real time.	
	• Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	Video surveillance has been installed.
Agency's assessment	The activity was not implemented

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.10.26.

The Customs Administration has reported that the activity was not implemented, and that, in the earlier period, the activity was implemented by the Ministry of the Interior through the "Integrated Border Management" project, and since April 2019, the establishment of video surveillance has been transferred to the jurisdiction of the Republic Directorate of the Property of the Republic of Serbia. The Customs Administration, through the new strategy of integrated border management for the period 2022-2024 proposed the procurement of video surveillance at all border crossings, the Interagency Cooperation Section.

Bearing in mind the above, the Agency assessed the activity as not implemented in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

Activity 2.2.10.31.

The assemblies of the autonomous provinces and local self-governments are adopting local action plans and establish permanent working bodies to monitor the implementation of local action plans.	
In charge of activity	For adoption: - Assemblies of the autonomous provinces and local self-governments For reporting: - Anti-Corruption Agency
Deadline	For adoption: fourth quarter of 2020 For reporting: continuous, until the local self-governments and autonomous provinces fulfil their obligations
Indicators of results	Local action plans have been adopted. Working bodies to monitor their implementation have been established. The assemblies of local self-government units and the territorial autonomy have adopted their anti-corruption plans and formed bodies to monitor their implementation in line with the model of the Anti-Corruption Agency.
Agency's assessment	The activity was not implemented in the part that refers to the adoption of local anti-corruption plans and the establishment of bodies to monitor their implementation.

The activity was implemented in the part that refers to reporting on the adoption of local anti-corruption plans and the establishment of bodies to monitor their implementation.

***On the implementation of Activity 2.2.10.31.***

All data on local anti-corruption plans can be found in previous reports.

The Agency was informed that, from the beginning of April 2017, when it published the LAP Model, until 15 December 2021, a total of 114 local self-government units (LGUs) have adopted the LAP i.e. 78.62% of the 145 LGUs that are subject to this obligation (excluding the territory of Kosovo and Metohija). 27 LGUs submitted the information that they did not prepare and adopt the LAP, and 4 of them never informed the Agency about the preparation of the LAP and the formation of a body to monitor its implementation.

Out of a total of 114 plans that local self-government units submitted to the Agency, 98 of them were prepared in accordance with the Model, 12 were prepared partially in accordance with the Model, three adopted plans did not correspond to the Model in either form or content, and one local self-government unit did not provide sufficient data for assessing whether the LAP was drafted in accordance with the Model.

The reasons for the partial compliance of some of the LAPs are reflected in the fact that during the development of some of the plans there were no representatives of civil society in the working groups for the development of LAP, in some reports on the adoption of LAP local governments did not appropriately explain why they failed to use certain measures contained in the Model, activities were not well established, and so on.

A total of 39 7 local self-government units have formed bodies that will be in charge of monitoring the implementation of the LAP, of which 27 were formed mainly in line with the Model, one was formed partially in line with the Model, seven with significant deviations, while in case of five bodies there was no sufficient data to assess compliance.

While forming the bodies to monitor the implementation of LAP, i.e. while electing members of said bodies, some of the commissions did not include representatives of the civil society, some self-government units had to re-announce the public competition for the election of body members because there were not enough candidates, while some municipalities formed a temporary body, in accordance with the supplemented Model, after two conducted public competitions in which no candidates applied.

If we summarize the data on the creation of the LAP and the formation of the body for its monitoring, at the end of the last reporting period in 2023, we can conclude that three LGUs (the City of Bor, the Municipality of Golubac, and the Municipality of Kula) reported to the Agency about the adoption of the LAP, of which the City of Bor adopted the LAP in 2019 and the municipalities of Golubac and Kula in 2022. Through project financing, the City of Bor and the Municipality of Golubac obtained expert assistance to develop the LAP. When it comes to the formation of a body to monitor the implementation of the LAP, one LGU, the Municipality of Kladovo, fulfilled this task in 2023, in accordance with the addition of the LAP Model and with expert help. Three LGUs (City of Kikinda, Municipality of Beočin, and Municipality of Sokobanja) performed a technical audit of the existing anti-corruption plans due to the expiration of the deadline for which they were adopted.

Taking into account the above, it can be concluded that 27 LGUs adopted the LAP and formed a body to monitor its implementation, mostly in accordance with the Model.



The Agency assessed Activity 2.2.10.31 as two activities, because its segments were separated, both thematically and according to who is in charge

Having in mind that the deadline for the adoption of the LAPs was the fourth quarter of 2020, and that not all local self-government units have fulfilled this obligation, the Agency assessed the first activity as not implemented in the First, Second, Third, and now in the Fourth Implementation Report. In this reporting period, the second activity was assessed as implemented in the First, Second, Third, and now, in the Fourth Implementation Report, because the Agency continuously monitors and reports on the adoption of LAPs, as well as on the establishment of bodies to monitor their implementation.

In this report, in the same section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’, the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following recommendation from the Screening Report:

2.2.10. Ensure the involvement of civil society in the anti-corruption program.

The activities in question are Activities no. 2.2.11.1, 2.2.11.2. и 2.2.11.3, which are individually presented below.

Activity 2.2.11.1.

Implement joint activities to encourage citizens and make their participation in the fight against corruption more efficient.	
	• Office for Cooperation with Civil Society
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	Joint activities aimed at encouraging citizens and making their participation in the fight against corruption more efficient are continuously implemented.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.11.1.

The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue submitted data on joint activities in previous reporting cycles.

The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue has reported that during the first quarter of 2022, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice, it announced a public call for civil society organizations to apply for membership in the Working Group for the preparation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy for the period from 2023 to 2028 and the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy for the period from 2023 to 2028. Two organizations were selected following the public call. However, since the organizations whose applications were rejected had many years of work experience and have participated in numerous reforms and processes of drafting regulations and public policy documents, and since the Action Plan for Chapter 23 promotes the inclusion of civil society organizations in all stages of the

preparation of planning documents, the Commission proposed considering the possibility of including all the organizations that applied in the Working Group for the preparation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy and the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy for the period from 2023 to 2028.

The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue has reported that in the course of 2023, the Government of the Republic of Serbia, at the session held on September 28, 2023, adopted the Decision on the establishment of the Council for the creation of a stimulating environment for the development of civil society. Eleven representatives of civil society organizations, including the Council President, comprise the twenty members of the newly formed Council. The Council convened its first session to foster a stimulating environment for civil society's development. On December 5, 2023, the Council held its first session and adopted its Rules of Procedure.

Bearing in mind that the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue took steps towards greater involvement of citizens in the fight against corruption, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Second, Third, and now in the Fourth Implementation Report.

Activity 2.2.11.2.

<b>Further improve the system of transparent financing of civil society organizations, by:</b> <b>- Monitoring the implementation of the Decree on funds for stimulating programs or the missing part of funds for financing programs of public interest that are implemented by associations;</b> <b>- Strengthening the capacity of public administration employees.</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	• Office for Cooperation with Civil Society
<b>Deadline</b>	Continuous
<b>Indicators of results</b>	The summary report of the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society contains relevant data on the implementation of the Decree.  The number of trainings held for public administration employees, in relation to the number of planned trainings on the system of transparent financing of civil society organizations.
<b>Agency’s assessment</b>	<b>The activity was implemented.</b>

On the implementation of Activity 2.2.11.2.

The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue reported on joint activities in 2021 and 2022, and more detailed data can be found in previous reports.

The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue have reported on the activities in 2023 in the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy for the Creation of an Environment Encouraging for the Development of Civil Society 2022-2030, within measure 2.1. - Improving the stimulating normative framework and administrative practices for funding transparency and financial sustainability of the civil sector, and measure 2.1.6, "Developing criteria and guidelines for providing non-financial support to civil society organizations".

The development of a training program for CSOs for transparent management of allocated budget funds falls under measure 2.3, "Improving the professional capacities of CSOs for transparent

management of allocated budget funds."

As part of the preparatory activities, donor support was provided in the implementation of the mentioned activities.

Considering the need for further improvement of the legal framework that governs the financing of associations and other civil society organizations from budget funds, primarily the Regulation on the funds for encouraging programs or missing parts of the funds for financing the programs of public interest realised by the associations ("Official Gazette of the RS ", no. 2016/18), at the initiative of civil society organizations, the Ministry proposed a commitment in the Action plan for the implementation of the Open Government Partnership initiative in the Republic of Serbia for 2023-2027 entitled "Improving the transparency of the process of competitive financing of programs of public interest implemented by associations", which foresees the preparation of an appropriate analysis of the effects of the previous application of the Regulation with recommendations for improvement, based on which further steps would be taken in the direction of amendments or the adoption of a new Regulation.

In order to implement Measure 2.1 - "Improving the stimulating normative framework and administrative practices for funding transparency and financial sustainability of the civil sector," as foreseen by the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy for the Creation of an Environment Encouraging for the Development of Civil Society 2022-2030, for the period 2022-2023, and realization of Activity: 2.1.5. "Improved application Calendar of Public Copetitions in such a way as to ensure an overview of the planned and approved support of CSOs from budget funds on an annual level," the Ministry carried out the process of procurement of services for the creation, i.e., programming of the e-application Calendar of Public Copetitions and questionnaire, and provided donor support for the implementation of the above activities.

The Open Society Foundations supported the project for the development of this application, which started the development of applications that will be a tool for collecting data from public administration bodies of all three levels of government, in order to review the planned and allocated volume of funds, procedures for the allocation of funds and other information relevant for the further improvement of the regulation and practice of financing organizations.

As part of the same measure, the implementation of Activity 2.1.6 has begun in accordance with the Development of criteria and guidelines for providing non-financial support to civil society organizations.

In order to develop criteria and guidelines for the awarding of non-financial support to civil society organizations by public administration bodies, an analysis of the Improvement of non-financial support to civil society organizations was prepared, which contains an overview of regional practice with recommendations for the regulation of this area. A focus group was held attended by representatives of public administration bodies.

The measure 2.3, "Improving professional capacities of CSOs for transparent management of allocated budget funds," is being implemented in accordance with the planned activity. 2.3.1. The Belgrade Open School, in cooperation with the project "EU National Resource Centre for Civil

society in Serbia" project, and a training program for CSOs on transparent management of allocated budget funds has been dveloped. The training program guided the conduct of a set of three trainings entitled "Financial Sustainability Training for Civil Society Organizations". 57 representatives from civil society organizations, who recognized the need to enhance their own capacities, participated in the trainings.

The Ministry, working with the Permanent Conference of Cities and Municipalities and the Association of Cities and Municipalities of Serbia, held three two-day trainings to carry out measure 2.2, which was to "Improving the staffing and professional capacities of the public administration for plan-based and transparent allocation, monitoring and evaluation of the allocation of budget funds intended for CSO programs and projects and the achievement of set goals." The trainings are part of the Sectoral Program of Continuous Professional Development of Employees in Local Self-Government Units, which is part of the General Training Program of LGU Employees for 2023. The trainings were intended to strengthen the capacity of local self-government units to ensure transparency in the selection and allocation of funds as well as monitoring the implementation of programs, i.e., projects implemented by civil society organizations. A total of 67 representatives of local self-government units participated.

The Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue gave information on how the Regulation was being put into action regarding funds for encouraging programs or missing parts of the funds for financing the programs of public interest realised by the associations. They also set up capacity-building activities related to the open funding of civil society organizations. The Agency then looked at how the activity was implemented in the Second, Third, and now Fourth Implementation Report. In the First Implementation Report, the Agency could not assess the activity because the Ministry for Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue did not submit the relevant data.

Activity 2.2.11.3.

Conduct public competitions for the allocation of funds to civil society organizations for projects in the field of anti-corruption, for initiatives at the national and local level, as well as for media initiatives in the field of anti-corruption.	
In charge of activity	• Anti-Corruption Agency
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	The civil sector is involved in the fight against corruption, based on conducted competitions for donations to civil society organizations for projects in this area.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.2.11.3.*

The Agency has reported that it has conducted two public competitions for the allocation of funds to civil society organizations for anti-corruption projects, for initiatives at the republican and local level, as well as for media initiatives in the fight against corruption, on which data id available in previous reports.

In 2023, the 15<sup>th</sup> public competition for the allocation of funds to civil society organizations, for the implementation of projects in the field of anti-corruption, was completed and a decision was made to support the project "Analysis of the risk of corruption in the regulations of local self-government units", which was submitted by Transparency Serbia.

Having in mind the above, in this reporting period the activity was assessed as implemented in the First, Second, Third, as well as now in the Fourth Implementation Report.

# REPRESSION OF CORRUPTION

In this report, in the Section 2.2 of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’, which refers to the repression of corruption, the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following benchmark:

2.3.1. Serbia is revising its Criminal Code and providing an effective solution for dealing with crimes against the economy, especially the criminal act ‘abuse of office by responsible official’.

The activities in question are Activities no 2.3.1.1; 2.3.1.2 и 2.3.1.3, which are individually presented below.

*Activity 2.3.1.1.*

<b>Monitor the implementation of the amended and supplemented Criminal Code, the part referring to corruption-related and economic crimes, with the obligation of the police, public prosecutor’s office and courts to submit to the Ministry of Justice annual statistical reports on initiated and completed proceedings.</b>	
<b>The Ministry of Justice compiles a single annual report and publishes it on its website.</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry of Interior</li><li>• Republic Public Prosecutor's Office</li><li>• Supreme Court of Cassation</li><li>• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues)</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	Continuous
<b>Indicators of results</b>	Annual report has been published.
<b>Agency’s assessment</b>	<b>The activity was implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.1.1.*

In the previous reporting cycles, the Ministry of Justice submitted information on the implementation of activities, i.e. that the reports for 2020, 2021 and 2022 were prepared and published on the website of the Ministry of Justice: <https://www.mpravde.gov.rs/tekst/33769/statistika-koruptivnih-krivicnih-dela-.php>.

The Ministry of Interior submitted information on the monitoring of the implementation of the amended Criminal Code in the part governing corruption and economic crimes, which is contained in previous reports.



For the year 2023, the Ministry of Interior has reported that in the first quarter, within the jurisdiction of the Internal Control Sector, 19 criminal reports were filed on grounds for suspicion that a criminal offence of corruption was committed (Article 359 of the Criminal Code - Abuse of Office; Article 367 of the CC - Accepting a bribe; Article 368 of the CC – Giving a bribe; and Article 366 of the CC - Trading in influence). In the reporting period, 15 criminal reports were filed for 26 criminal offenses under the jurisdiction of the Police Directorate, the Criminal Police Directorate, and the Anti-Corruption Department for criminal offences: from Article 359 of the CC - Abuse of official position; from Article 367 - Accepting a bribe, 2 criminal reports were filed for 2 criminal offenses, from Article 368 - Giving a bribe, 3 criminal reports were filed for 5 criminal offenses, and from Article 366 - Trading in influence, no criminal reports were filed.

In the second quarter of 2023, 12 criminal reports were filed within the jurisdiction of the Internal Control Sector due to the existence of grounds for suspicion that a criminal act of corruption had been committed (Article 359 of the Criminal Code - Abuse of Office; Article 367 of the CC - Accepting a bribe; Article 368 of the CC – Giving a bribe; and Article 366 of the CC - Trading in influence). In the second quarter, 11 criminal reports were filed for 17 criminal offenses under the jurisdiction of the Police Directorate, the Criminal Police Directorate, and the Anti-Corruption Department for criminal offences: from Article 359 of the CC - Abuse of official position; from Article 367 - Accepting a bribe, 4 criminal reports were filed for four criminal acts under Article 368 of the CC – Giving a bribe, 4 criminal reports were filed for 8 criminal offences, according to Article 366 of the CC - Trading in influence, 2 criminal reports were filed for 4 criminal offences.

In the third quarter, the Internal Control Sector submitted 24 criminal reports due to the existence of grounds for suspicion that a criminal act of corruption had been committed, in accordance with Article 359 of the Criminal Code - Abuse of Office, Article 367 of the CC - Accepting a bribe; Article 368 of the CC – Giving a bribe; and Article 366 of the CC - Trading in influence.

In the fourth quarter, under the jurisdiction of the Police Directorate, the Criminal Police Directorate, and the Anti-Corruption Department for criminal offences: from Article 359 of the Criminal Code - Abuse of Office, 17 criminal reports were filed for 27 criminal offences; from Article 367 of the CC - Accepting a bribe, one criminal report was filed for one criminal offence; from Article 368 of the CC – Giving a bribe, one criminal report was filed for one criminal offence; from Article 366 of the CC - Trading in influence, one criminal report was filed for three criminal offences.

The Republic Public Prosecutor's Office has reported that the Prosecutor’s Office for Organised Crime and special departments for the suppression of corruption in high public prosecutor’s offices submitted reports to the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office on initiated and completed proceedings related to economic crime and corruption cases. Based on these reports, the Republic Public Prosecutor’s Office monitors the actions of the prosecutor's offices in this area and prepares annual reports on the suppression of crime and the protection of constitutionality and legality.

The Agency assessed that this is was a regular annual practice, as supported by the prepared reports and the fact that the reports for the previous year are prepared in the following year, which is why it assessed the activity as implemented in the Second, Third, and now in the Fourth Implementation Report. The activity could not be assessed in the First Implementation Report, because the reports for the previous year are made in the following year.

Activity 2.3.1.2.

Training of judges and prosecutors for the application of the Criminal Code.	
	• Judicial Academy
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	Trainings have been conducted. Number of conducted trainings, in relation to the number of planned trainings.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.3.1.2.

The Judicial Academy has reported that no trainings were held in 2020 and 2021 due to the epidemiological situation, while in 2022, a one-day roundtable was held with the support of the US Department of Justice (OPDAT) and the OSCE on the topic of " Procedural Skills: Writing Indictments," for a total of 48 participants, as well as three workshops on the topic "Procedural Skills: Writing Indictments”, for a total of 65 participants. The Judicial Academy, with the support of the OSCE Mission in Serbia, also organized four one-day interactive workshops on the topic " New approaches to the exclusion of micro-traces in the forensic processing of a crime scene; Recognition of foreign court decisions and evidence collected abroad" for a total of 120 participants. A one-day seminar on the topic of “Digital Forensics” was held for a total of 22 participants.

The Judicial Academy has now reported that in 2023 will organize the following: 1) an online seminar on the topic "Training on digital evidence" for a total of 95 participants; 2) two seminars on the topic "Digital Forensics" for a total of 53 participants; 3) a workshop on the topic "Public procurement: challenges in detection and prosecution of criminal offenses related to public procurement" for a total of 24 participants; 4) a workshop on the topic " Value Added Tax Evasion" with a total of 21 participants 5) a workshop on the topic " “Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism in Serbia: processing of money laundering as an independent criminal offense" for a total of 24 participants (judges, assistant judges, chief public prosecutors, public prosecutors and assistant prosecutors); 6) with the support of the OSCE Mission in Serbia, four interactive workshops on the topic "New approaches to the exclusion of micro-traces in forensic processing of crime scenes; Recognition of foreign court decisions and evidence collected abroad" for a total of 92 participants; 7) a workshop on the topic "Public procurement - corruption: Training for advanced use of public procurement portals for the police and prosecutor's office," with a total of 22 participants; 8) two seminars on the topic "Digital skills in organized crime investigations: Basic training for Internet searches for investigators," with a total of 41 participants (police officers and prosecutors); 9) a workshop on the topic "Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism in Serbia: use of electronic evidence in the work on money laundering cases," for a total of 24 participants; 10) training on the topic "Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism in Serbia: adjudication of independent criminal acts of money laundering," for a total of 22 participants; 11) four workshops on the topic: "Procedural Skills: Writing Indictments", for a total of 102 participants, with the support of the US Ministry of Justice (OPDAT) and the OSCE; 12) two seminars on the topic: "Assessment of the risk of money laundering and supervision of the implementation of the Law on Prevention of



Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism in Misdemeanor Proceedings", for a total of 23 participants; 13) three seminars on the topic: "Costs of criminal proceedings - presentation of the manual" for a total of 104 participants; 14) two workshops on the topic: "Prevention and suppression of human trafficking for the purpose of labor exploitation and forced labor - multi-sectoral approach", for a total of 29 participants; 15) three seminars on the topic: "Protection of victims of human trafficking during criminal proceedings", for a total of 40 participants (judges and public prosecutors); 16) two seminars on the topic: "Investigation as an evidentiary action - module 3 - digital forensics", for a total of 64 participants (police officers, public prosecutors, assistant prosecutors).

Having this in mind, the Agency assessed the activity as not implemented in the First and Second Implementation Reports, because no trainings were held in 2020 and 2021 due to the epidemiological situation. In the Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented.

*Activity 2.3.1.3.*

Monitor the application of the amended criminal offence ‘abuse of office by responsible official’, which includes the mechanism of ‘legal subsidiarity’, in effect since 1 March 2018, and monitor those criminal events from 1 March 2018.	
In charge of activity	<div><div>• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues)</div><div>• Republic Public Prosecutor’s Office</div></div>
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	The annual report has been published.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.1.3.*

In previous reporting cycles, the Ministry of Justice has submitted information on the implementation of activities, i.e. that the reports for 2020, 2021 and 2022 were prepared and published on the website of the Ministry of Justice: <https://www.mpravde.gov.rs/tekst/33769/statistika-koruptivnih-krivicnih-dela-.php>.

The Repblic Public Prosecutor's Office reported that the Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime and special departments for the suppression of corruption in high public prosecutor’s offices, in accordance with the Mandatory Instruction of the Republic Public Prosecutor, no. 146/2018 of March 1, 2018, are to submit quarterly reports to the Repblic Public Prosecutor's Office on initiated and completed procedures related to economic crime and corruption cases. Based on the above reports, the Republic Public Prosecutor’s Office monitors the actions of prosecutor’s offices in this area.

The Agency assessed that this is was a regular annual practice of the Ministry of Justice, as supported by the prepared reports and the fact that the reports for the previous year are prepared in the following year, which is why it assessed the activity as implemented in the Second, Third, and now in the Fourth Implementation Report.

In this report, in the same Section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’, the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following benchmark:

2.3.2: Prior to amending the Law on the Organization and Competences of State Authorities in Combating Organised Crime, Corruption and Other Particularly Serious Crimes, Serbia has conducted an analysis of the organizational structure and state authorities. Serbia pays special attention to building the capacity of public prosecutor’s offices and the police, and provides the necessary financial and staff support and training. Inter-agency cooperation and the exchange of intelligence in a safe and secure manner are being significantly improved.

The activities in question are Activities no. 2.3.2.1, 2.3.2.2, 2.3.2.3, 2.3.2.4, 2.3.2.5, 2.3.2.6, 2.3.2.7, 2.3.2.8, 2.3.2.9, 2.3.2.10, 2.3.2.11, 2.3.2.12, 2.3.2.13. and 2.3.2.14, which are presented individually below.

Activity 2.3.2.1.

<b>Conduct an analysis of compliance of the RS normative framework with the FATF recommendationsfor conducting financial investigationsin parallel with criminal investigations, on the basis of which a planning document in the field of combating financial crime will be prepared.</b> <b>(Link to AP 24, Activity 6.2.5.4)</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues)</li><li>• Republic Public Prosecutor’s Office</li><li>• Prosecutor’s Office for Organised Crime</li><li>• Ministry of Interior</li><li>• Anti-Money Laundering Authority</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	For the analysis: fourth quarter of 2020 For the planning document: fourth quarter of 2021
<b>Indicators of results</b>	An analysis of the compliance of the normative framework with the relevant FATF recommendations has been made. A planning document in the field of fight against financial crime has been prepared.
<b>Agency’s assessment</b>	<b>The activity was implemented in the part relating to the preparation of the analysis.</b>
	<b>The activity was not implemented in the part relating to the preparation of the planning document.</b>

On the implementation of Activity 2.3.2.1.

The Ministry of Justice has reported that as part of the “Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing” project, funded by the Kingdom of Sweden and implemented by the Council of Europe, an analysis of the compliance of the normative framework with the relevant FATF recommendations for the development of the Strategy for the Investigation of Financial Crimes has been completed. It was submitted to the Ministry of Justice at the end of June 2022, since there was a delay in the preparation of the aforementioned strategic document.

They have now reported that, under the Flexible Facility project for Chapter 24, component 1 - Strengthening professional skills and capacity to fight serious and organized crime, activity 1.6.1, support will be provided for the development of recommendations for a new Strategy for the Investigation of Financial Crimes. According to the work plan, the deadline for the realization of

this activity is the third quarter of 2024.

With the support of the Flexible Facility project for Chapter 23, in cooperation with the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office, a Working Group was formed for the development of the Standard Operating Procedure/internal instruction and accompanying manual on the proactive implementation of financial investigations, composed of representatives of RPPO, PPOOC, SPPO,, the Administration for the Prevention of Money Laundering, the Tax Administration and the Ministry of Interior.

In 2023, two additional meetings of the Working Group were held, where work was done on the elaboration of the structure of the SOP/manual, as well as on the preparation of material that will be available in electronic form. The next meeting is planned for the first quarter of 2024. The activity is implemented in cooperation with the OSCE Mission.

The Agency assessed the activity as two activities, having in mind that it contains a sub-activity related to the analysis and a sub-activity related to the preparation of the planning document. The Agency assessed the activity, in the part of the analysis, as implemented in the Third Implementation Report, and in the part of the planning document as not implemented in the Third Report, as well as now in the Fourth Implementation Report.

Activity 2.3.2.2.

Strengthen the capacity of the Financial Investigation Unit of the Ministry of the Interior, based on the results of the analysis. (Related activity from AP 24: Activity 6.2.5.3.)	
	• Ministry of Interior
In charge of activity	
Deadline	From the second quarter of 2016 on.
Indicators of results	The number of employees in the Financial Investigation Unit has been increased from 57 to 63 police officers. Trainings have been conducted. Percentage of trained personnel in the Financial Investigation Unit of the Ministry of the Interior, in relation to those in need of training.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.3.2.2.

The Ministry of Interior regularly reports on the number of systematized and filled jobs in the Financial Investigations Unit, as well as on the training and measures taken to strengthen the capacity of the Financial Investigations Unit. All data can be found in previous reports.

In 2023, the Ministry of Interior has reported that the number of systematized jobs in the Financial Investigations Unit increased from 2 to 66, while the number of filled job positions in 2023 was 58 (in 2022, it was 62).

Police officers of the Financial Investigations Unit participated in the following seminars: CEPOL organized a training on "Digital skills for criminal investigators dealing with the prevention of organized crime"; In the organization of OPDAT, a Regional workshop was held in the field of

fighting against organized crime and providing legal assistance; Organized by the Council of Europe, a seminar was held on the topic "Assessment of the effectiveness of the system for confiscation of property resulting from a criminal offense in Serbia and proposals for further improvement"; "Analytical investigative methods" training and "I2 Analyst Notebook" training were held.

As the number of employees increased, and other measures aimed at strengthening the professional capacities of the Financial Investigation Unit were taken, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the First, Second, Third, and now in the Fourth Implementation Report.

Activity 2.3.2.3.

Conduct professional training of employees with information exchange mechanisms at the international level in accordance with Framework Decision 2006/960/PUP in order to more efficiently seize, confiscate and manage property.	
	• Judicial Academy • Ministry of Interior
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous, starting from the fourth quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	Training has been conducted. Percentage of employees trained on information exchange mechanisms at the international level, in relation to those in need of training.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.3.2.3.

In the previous reporting cycles, the Judicial Academy submitted data on the conducted trainings.

For the year 2023, the Judicial Academy has reported that during the year, they organized a seminar on the topic: "Virtual Assets and Cryptocurrencies" for a total of 55 participants (judges, chief public prosecutors, judicial and prosecutorial associates and police officers), then in cooperation with the Academy of European Law (ERA), seminar on the topic: "Impact of new technologies and computer forensics in criminal justice" for a total of 26 participants (judges, public prosecutors and lawyers). In addition, the Judicial Academy organized two seminars on the topic: "Investigation as an evidentiary action" - Module 3 - "Digital Forensics" for a total of 64 participants (police officers, public prosecutors, assistant prosecutors).

Therefore, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the First, Second, Third, and now in the Fourth Implementation Report.

Activity 2.3.2.4.

Continuous training of police, public prosecutors and judges to conduct financial investigations, monitor cash flows, act proactively and use special investigative techniques. (Activity related to AP 24: Activity 6.2.5.2)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Judicial Academy</li></ul>
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	Trainings have been conducted. Percentage of police officers, public prosecutors and judges trained to conduct financial investigations, monitor cash flows, act proactively and use special investigative techniques, in relation to those in need of training.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.3.2.4.

The Judicial Academy has reported on the conducted training of police officers, public prosecutors and judges for conducting financial investigations, monitoring money flows, special investigative techniques and proactive actions. All relevant data can be found in previous reports.

For 2023, the Judicial Academy has reported that it had organized: 1) an online seminar on the topic "Training on digital evidence" for a total of 95 participants; 2), in cooperation with the German Organization for International Cooperation (GIZ), three seminars on the topic "Prevention of money laundering, FAFT recommendations, and immediate results" for a total of 56 participants; 3) two seminars on the topic: "Assessment of the risk of money laundering and supervision of the implementation of the Law on Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism", for a total of 53 participants; two seminars on the topic: "Digital Forensics" for a total of 53 participants; 4) with the support of the Council of Europe, conducted three trainings on the topic: "High-Tech Crime" - Module 1, Module 4 and Module 5, for a total of 71 participants; 5) two seminars on the topic: "Investigation as an evidentiary action" - Module 3 - "Digital Forensics", for a total of 64 participants (police officers, public prosecutors, assistant prosecutors); 6) in cooperation with the Academy of European Law (ERA) in September, a seminar on the topic: "Impact of new technologies and computer forensics in criminal justice" for a total of 26 participants (judges, public prosecutors and lawyers); 7) two seminars on the topic: "Digital skills in organized crime investigations - Basic Internet search training for investigators", for a total of 41 participants (police officers and prosecutors); 8) a workshop on the topic: "Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism in Serbia: processing money laundering cases as an independent criminal offense", for a total of 24 participants (judges, assistant judges, chief public prosecutors and public prosecutors and assistant prosecutors); 9) with the support of the OSCE Mission in Serbia, it organized four interactive workshops on the topic: "New approaches to the exclusion of micro-traces in the forensic processing of a crime scene" for a total of 92 participants; 10) a workshop on the topic: "Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism in Serbia - Use of electronic evidence in the work on money laundering cases", for a total of 24 participants; 11) a training on the topic: "Prevention of Money Laundering and

Financing of Terrorism in Serbia - Adjudication of independent criminal offenses of money laundering", for a total of 22 participants; 12) in cooperation with the US Ministry of Justice (OPDAT) and the OSCE Mission, conducted two workshops on the topic: "Fighting Money Laundering", for a total of 49 participants; 13) in cooperation with the OSCE, a seminar on the topic: "Improving the capacity of supervisory authorities in fulfilling their obligations related to the PN and FT system - cooperation between supervisory authorities and prosecutor's offices", for a total of 22 participants.

Bearing in mind the above, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the First, Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

Activity 2.3.2.5.

Enable mutual connection of criminal investigations databases, i.e. a secure system for electronic exchange of information between public prosecutor's offices, the police, the Customs Administration, the Tax Administration, the Agency for the Anti-Corruption Agency and other relevant authorities that have databases of importance for combating corruption,	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues)</li><li>Ministry of the Interior</li><li>State Prosecutorial Council</li><li>Republic Public Prosecutor's Office</li><li>Agency for the Prevention of Corruption</li></ul>
Deadline	First quarter of 2022
Indicators of results	Databases were connected.
Agency's assessment	The activity was not implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.3.2.5.

The Republic Public Prosecutor's Office has reported that the implementation of the activities is under way. The web services the prosecutor's office presents on the platform of the National Criminal Intelligence System (NCIS platform) have been defined and submitted to the Ministry of Interior within the set deadline. The graphic layout of the future application was also defined, in accordance with the needs of the users. In the period from May 11 to 13, 2022, a workshop was held in Šabac, where members of the group dealing with IT/technical issues and the group dealing with legal issues jointly worked on the Draft Law on NCIS.

With the aim of implementing the activities from the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 24, the project "Instrument to support Serbia in achieving goals within Chapter 24 - Justice, Freedom and Security (Facility IPA 2019)" is under way, implemented for the needs of the police and the judiciary. As part of the support for the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia, this project serves to plan, among other things, activities for the further development of the Police-Intelligence Model (PIM) in establishing the NCIS. By establishing NCIS and digitizing the process, the Republic of Serbia will establish a unique, standardized, high-quality, and modern system of collection, processing, search, analysis, exchange, and management of data and information in the field of organized crime, corruption, terrorism, and other security-threatening phenomena. In this



regard, on September 22 and December 1, 2022, representatives of the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office, who participate in the work of the

working group for the establishment of the NCIS, and representatives of the working group for the establishment of the case management program in the Public Prosecutor's Office (SAPO), held meetings with IT experts engaged on this project with the aim of conducting an analysis of the business processes of the public prosecutor's office and connecting the prosecutorial software with relevant police software in connection with the submission of criminal reports, exchange of electronic documents, delivery of feedback on the status of cases, and so on.

In this regard, work on the working version of the Draft Law on NCIS was intensified and two workshops were held in 2023, and the workshops were attended by representatives of all state bodies' signatories to the agreement, lawyers and IT experts. Activities on the drafting of the Law on NCIS continued and two more workshops were held. At the workshops, both subgroups, IT and legal, worked together on the draft law. The Draft Law on NCIS has been forwarded to the institutions for comments.

Since the measures have been taken (some after the deadline, though), and the activity has not yet been completed, the Agency assessed it as not implemented in the Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.3.2.6.*

<b>Adopt the by-law from Article 16, paragraph 4 of the Law on Organization and Competences of State Authorities in the Suppression of Organised Crime, Terrorism and Corruption, which will regulate deadlines, manner and ways of official communication between the police and the public prosecutor's office in cases of organised crime and corruption.</b> <b>(Activity related to the AP 24: Activity 6.2.2.1)</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues)</li><li>• Ministry of Interior, Service for the Fight against Organised Crime</li><li>• Republic Public Prosecutor's Office</li><li>• Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	Fourth quarter of 2021
<b>Indicators of results</b>	The by-law has been adopted.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was not implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.2.6.*

The Ministry of Justice has reported that representatives of the Ministry of Justice and the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office were working on finalising the by-law at the end of November 2021, in order to define the articles of the by-law. It was also reported that representatives of the Ministry of Justice and now the Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office are working on finalizing the by-law.

The deadline for the adoption of this act has expired, therefore the activity has not been completed, and bearing in mind the deadline for implementation, the Agency assessed the activity as not implemented, in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.3.2.7.*

<b>Strengthen the capacity of the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime and special departments of high public prosecutor's offices for combating corruption, by conducting trainings on the application of new mechanisms prescribed by the Law on Organization and Competences of State Authorities for Combating Organised Crime, Terrorism and Corruption (liaison officers, task forces, financial forensics service).</b> <b>(Activity related to the AP 24: Activity 6.2.2.3.)</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Judicial Academy</li><li>• Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime</li><li>• Special department high public prosecutor's offices for combating corruption</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	Continuous
<b>Indicators of results</b>	Trainings have been conducted. Percentage of trained employees, in relation to those in need of training.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.2.7.*

In previous reporting cycles, the Judicial Academy and the Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime submitted data on regular training of employees in the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime and the special anti-corruption departments in higher public prosecutor's offices on the implementation of new mechanisms prescribed by the Law on Organization and Competences of State Authorities in the Suppression of Organised Crime, Terrorism and Corruption (liaison officers, task forces, financial forensics service).

The Judicial Academy reported that in 2023, it organized: 1) an online seminar on the topic "Training on digital evidence" for a total of 95 participants; 2), in cooperation with the German Organization for International Cooperation (GIZ), three seminars on the topic "Prevention of money laundering, FAFT recommendations, and immediate results" for a total of 56 participants; 3) two seminars: "Assessment of the risk of money laundering and supervision of the implementation of the Law on Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism," for a total of 53 participants; 4) two seminars on the topic: "Digital Forensics," for a total of 53 participants; 5) with the support of the Council of Europe, conducted three trainings on the topic: "High-Tech Crime" - Module 1, Module 4 and Module 5, for a total of 71 participants; 6) two seminars on the topic: "Investigation as an evidentiary action" - Module 3 - "Digital Forensics", for a total of 64 participants (police officers, public prosecutors, assistant prosecutors); 7) the Academy of European Law (ERA) collaborated to host a seminar on the topic: "Impact of new technologies and computer forensics in criminal justice", which attracted a total of 26 participants, including judges, public prosecutors, and lawyers. 8) two seminars on the topic: "Digital skills in organized crime investigations - Basic Internet search training for investigators", for a total of 41



participants (police officers and prosecutors); 9) a workshop on the topic: "Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism in Serbia: processing money laundering cases as an independent criminal offense", for a total of 24 participants (judges, assistant judges, chief public prosecutors and public prosecutors and assistant prosecutors); 10) with the support of the OSCE Mission in Serbia, it organized four interactive workshops on the topic: "New approaches to the exclusion of micro-traces in the forensic processing of a crime scene" for a total of 92 participants; 11) a workshop on the topic: "Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism in Serbia - Use of electronic evidence in the work on money laundering cases", for a total of 24 participants; 12) a training on the topic: "Prevention of Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism in Serbia - Adjudication of independent criminal offenses of money laundering", for a total of 22 participants; 13) in cooperation with the US Ministry of Justice (OPDAT) and the OSCE Mission, conducted two workshops on the topic: "Fighting Money Laundering", for a total of 49 participants; 14) in cooperation with the OSCE, organized a seminar on the topic: "Improving the capacity of supervisory authorities in fulfilling their obligations related to the PN and FT system - cooperation between supervisory authorities and prosecutor's offices", for a total of 22 participants; 15) a workshop: "Proactive investigations of corruption cases of financial fraud and economic crime: Value Added Tax Evasion (module 3)", with the support of the US Department of Justice (OPDAT) and OSCE, for a total of 23 participants; 16) a workshop: "Value Added Tax Evasion" for a total of 21 participants.

The Public Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime reported that its representatives participated in a series of educational activities, namely: 1) a study trip "Strengthening the fight against transnational organised crime in South-East Europe through the improvement of regional cooperation in seizure and confiscation of property, management and reuse of confiscated property"; 2) a workshop on reuse of confiscated property; 3) a workshop on digital assets; 4) a roundtable: "New security risks"; 5) a training: "International financial investigations and asset recovery operations in cases of organized crime"; 6) a webinar: "Digital skills in organized crime investigations"; 7) a workshop on the use of circumstantial evidence - development of guidelines; 8) a regional conference "Fight against Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling"; 9<sup>th</sup> Permanent Conference of Organized Crime Prosecutors; 9) support and assistance to Bosnia and Herzegovina in developing a proliferation risk assessment; 10) a conference of the Seven Seas Group and exchange of employees between SE Europe and non-EU countries; 11) a regional training for representatives of candidate countries and potential candidates; 12) a workshop: "An assessment of the efficiency of the system for confiscation of property resulting from a criminal offense in Serbia and proposals for further improvement"; 13) a seminar on international organized crime and international legal assistance; 14) a workshop for drafting the law on NCIS; 15) a CEPOL regional training "Investigations of semi-criminal groups involved in migrant smuggling"; 16) a workshop: "Expert-technical exchange - sanctions and diversion - new global frameworks for risk assessment"; 17) a study visit to Spain on the topic "Practice in work and tools for conducting complex investigations of organized crime and complex financial investigations"; 18) a regional coordination meeting on organized crime; 19) a webinar: "Use of social networks in human trafficking investigations"; 20) the "Regional training - simulation of real situations - desktop exercise for key participants in investigations of human trafficking and smuggling of migrants and assistance and protection of victims of human trafficking in the Western Balkans"; 21) a regional training on the topic: "International joint investigations of serious and organized crime";

22) a study visit to the Netherlands and Belgium on money laundering; 23) an advanced course for blockchain analysis; 24) an international seminar on organized crime; 25) a training on the subject of proactive investigation of value-added tax (VAT) fraud; 26) a workshop on sectoral risk assessment of PN/FT in the real estate sector; 27) a study visit to Italy on the topic of money laundering risk assessment; 28) a roundtable on the use of circumstantial evidence - development of guidelines; 29) a workshop on the work of strike groups; 30) a bilateral meeting on the implementation of the Agreement on cooperation in the fight against human trafficking and the Agreement on cooperation in the fight against migrant smuggling between the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of North Macedonia, signed in 2019; 31) a webinar: "Use of social networks in human trafficking investigations"; 32) a workshop was held to prepare for the risk assessment of money laundering and terrorism financing in the real estate sector. 33) another workshop focused on gathering evidence from social networks. 34) a study trip to the United States of America: assistance in implementing the action plan for assessing the risk of proliferation financing; 35) a training for VAT fraud detection and investigation; 36) a webinar on "Europol and Frontex tools for the detection and investigation of criminal offenses related to firearms"; 37) a seminar on the processing of money laundering cases as an independent criminal offense; 38) a workshop devoted to the preparation of a report based on transitional criteria from the Action Plan for Chapter 23: Subchapter Fight against Corruption; 39) the use of encrypted communications in criminal proceedings; 40) a regional workshop on the presentation of the EU Peer Review mission's results on cases of organized crime and corruption; 41) a training "Conducting digital investigations in human trafficking and migrant smuggling"; 42) a seminar: "International legal assistance in cases of serious and organized crime"; 42) the Seventh Global Conference on Finances and Cryptocurrencies Used in Criminal Offenses; 43) "Fight against Money Laundering" is a workshop or seminar that provides training for police officers, public prosecutors, and judges. 44) a workshop "Fighting Money Laundering": training for judges of misdemeanor and commercial courts, the Customs Administration, and public prosecutor's offices; 45) a workshop "Fight against Money Laundering: FATF Recommendations and Standards"; training for judges and public prosecutors from the Court of Appeal area in Kragujevac; 46) a roundtable: "Specific problems in judicial prosecutorial practice: a forum for judges and prosecutors"; 47) a regional Training: Advanced Forfeiture Workshop; 48) Seizure and Recovery of Digital Assets; 49) Roundtable: Law on organization and competence of state bodies in combating organized crime, terrorism, and corruption (ZONDO): Amendments to the law and next steps; 50) the national exercise on the topic of prevention and fighting against the use of the Internet for terrorist purposes; 51) the regional roundtable: "Strengthening the judicial response to human trafficking and migrant smuggling in the context of mixed migration"; 52) the annual (online) SIRIUS conference will focus on current topics such as electronic evidence and its cross-border acquisition, cryptocurrencies, unlocking crypto wallets and obtaining electronic evidence from cryptocurrency exchanges, relationships with providers, challenges in the darknet, and artificial intelligence. 53) the presentation of the GlobE network of anti-corruption authorities and its regional component; 54) the meeting of the Eastern European working group on digital asset monitoring and investigation; 55) the advanced training in cryptocurrency investigation and confiscation; 56) the lecturers at the "Judiciary against corruption in BiH" training on the topic of "high-tech crime"; 57) the lecturers at the workshop or training on the topic of money laundering; 58) the lecturers at the workshop for judges of misdemeanor commercial courts on the prevention of money laundering. 59) the lecturer at the training for deputy public prosecutors of the ZJT and assistant prosecutors; 60) the lecturer on the subject of financial accounting at master's studies; 61)

the lecturer at the workshop "Exchange of experiences in criminal prosecution for abuses related to public procurement"; 62) the lecturer at the training course: "High-tech crime related to organized crime and corruption" as part of regular "Criminal counseling"; 63) the lecturer in training "Current situation and practice in the field of prevention of irregular migration and the fight against smuggling of migrants in Bosnia and Herzegovina".

The trainings that the financial forensic expert PPOOC has undergone are presented under activity 2.3.2.10.

Since the capacities of the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime and special departments for the suppression of corruption of high public prosecutor's offices were indeed strengthened through the above trainings, in this reporting period the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the First, Second, Third, and now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.3.2.8.*

Draft and conclude cooperation agreements between those bound by the Law on Organization and Competences of State Authorities Charged with the Suppression of Organised Crime, Terrorism and Corruption.	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Republic Public Prosecutor's Office</li><li>• Ministry of Interior</li><li>• Authorities listed in Article 20 of the Law on Organization and Competences of State Authorities in Charge of Combating Organised Crime,</li><li>• Terrorism and Corruption</li></ul>
Deadline	First quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	Agreements have been signed.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.2.8.*

The Republic Public Prosecutor's Office has reported that agreements had been concluded with the Central Securities Depository and Clearing House, the Directorate for the Property of RS, the Business Registers Agency, the Public Procurement Office, the National Bank of Serbia and the Anti-Corruption Agency. The final versions of the agreements with the Customs Administration, the Tax Administration - the Tax Police and the Republic Pension and Disability Insurance Fund.

It also reported that the Agreement on Cooperation with the Anti-Money Laundering Authority which comprehensively regulated mutual cooperation had been concluded on 26 April 2017, and that, based on the assessment, there is currently no need to draft a new one. Agreements have not been concluded with the Republic Health Insurance Fund, the State Audit Institution and the Republic Geodetic Authority, because it was estimated that they were not necessary considering databases kept by these institutions and their public availability.

On November 17, 2023, an Agreement on Cooperation with the Customs Administration has been concluded.

Assessing the essence of the activity, i.e. the fact that formal preconditions for cooperation with the above institutions have been achieved through the existing or newly signed agreements, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Second Implementation Report, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.3.2.9.*

Develop Methodology of work and the establishment of task forces. (Activity related to the AP 24: Activity 6.2.2.5)	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Republic Public Prosecutor's Office</li><li>• Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime</li><li>• Ministry of Interior</li><li>• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues)</li></ul>
Deadline	First quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	Handbook on methodology of work and the formation of task forces has been developed and published
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.2.9.*

The Republic Public Prosecutor's Office has reported that the Working Group has completed the text of the Methodology of Work and the Establishment of Task Forces, which was proofread, graphically designed and submitted to the printer with the support of the OSCE Mission to Serbia. Therefore, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Second Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.3.2.10.*

Strengthen the capacity of the Financial Forensics Service in the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime and other authorities. (Activity related to AP 24: Activity 6.2.2.6)	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues)</li><li>• Republic Public Prosecutor's Office</li><li>• Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime</li></ul>
Deadline	Continuous, starting from the fourth quarter of 2020
Indicators of results	A team of economic forensic experts has been formed in the Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime. Trainings of economic experts have been conducted. Number of conducted trainings, in relation to the number of planned trainings.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

**On the implementation of Activity 2.3.2.10.**

The Ministry of Justice, the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office and the Public Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime submitted data on the implementation of measures to strengthen the capacity of the Financial Forensics Service in the Public Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime and special departments for combating corruption.

In 2023, the financial forensic experts participated, either as lecturers or participants, in the following educational activities: 1) a webinar "Illegal Sale of Financial Services"; 2) a workshop on digital assets 3) an online "Seminar on Understanding and Knowledge of Digital Evidence"; 4) a training: "International Financial Investigations and Asset Recovery Operations in Cases of Organized Crime"; 5) an Advanced Blockchain Analysis Course; 6) a training on the subject of proactive investigation of value-added tax (VAT) fraud; 7) a workshop on sectoral risk assessment of AML/CFT in the real estate sector; 8) Workshop for preparing a risk assessment of money laundering and financing of terrorism in the real estate sector; 9) Training for detecting and investigating VAT fraud; 10) A seminar on processing money laundering cases as an independent criminal offense; 11) Global conference on finance and cryptocurrencies used in the commission of criminal acts; 12) Workshop A "Fight Against Money Laundering" seminar for police officers, public prosecutors, and judges; 13) Workshop "Fighting Money Laundering": training for judges of misdemeanor and commercial courts, the Customs Administration, and public prosecutor's offices; 14) Workshop or seminar "Fighting Money Laundering: FATF Recommendations and Standards"; training for judges and public prosecutors from the Kragujevac Court of Appeal; 15) SIRIUS hosts an annual online conference that covers current topics such as electronic evidence and its cross-border acquisition, cryptocurrencies, unlocking crypto wallets and obtaining electronic evidence from cryptocurrency exchanges, relationships with providers, challenges in the darknet, and artificial intelligence. 16) Study visit to Spain on the topic of work practices and tools for conducting complex investigations of organized crime and complex financial investigations; 17) Study visit to the Netherlands and Belgium on the topic of money laundering; 18) Study visit to Italy on the subject of money laundering risk assessment; 19) Lecturer on the continuous improvement of authorized intermediaries and authorized representatives in insurance; 20) Lecturer at the workshop: "Risk assessment of the state and the impact on taxpayers work"; 21) Lecturers at the "Money Laundering" workshop/training; 22) Lecturers at the workshop for judges of misdemeanor commercial courts in the field of money laundering prevention; 23) Lecturers at the "Exchange of experiences in criminal prosecution for abuse in connection with public procurement."

The Republic Public Prosecutor's Office reported that, in accordance with the Rulebook on the Internal Organization and Systematization of Job Positions, two financial forensic experts are permanently employed in the Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime, thus filling both systematized job positions.

In the special department of the High Public Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade and Niš, financial forensic experts were hired under a work contract. In the special department in Novi Sad, based on the agreement on the temporary transfer of employee to the special department f of the High Public Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade and Niš, the financial forensic experts were engaged under a work contract. In the special department in Novi Sad, based on the agreement on the temporary

transfer of employee to another state body, concluded between the Ministry of Interior and the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office in Novi Sad, hired a financial forensic expert until December 31, 2023.

As previously mentioned, the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office, in collaboration with the Faculty of Economics at the University of Belgrade, the US Ministry of Justice, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is involved in the project "Building forensic-accounting capacities in Serbia". This project aims to launch a one-year academic study program at the Faculty of Economics in Belgrade. This program will train staff, specifically financial forensic experts, to work in competent public prosecutor's offices. The mentioned program is accredited. Representatives from the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Interior, professors from the Faculty of Economics, and the US Ambassador attended the program's promotion at the Faculty of Economics in Belgrade on June 23, 2023. The 2023-2024 school year witnessed the enrollment of the first generation of students.

Having in mind the above, in this reporting period the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the First, Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

**Activity 2.3.2.11.**

Adopt a new Rulebook on the Systemisation of Job Positions in the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime and special anti-corruption departments in accordance with the conducted analysis of human capacity needs in Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime and special anti-corruption departments of high public prosecutor's offices. (Activity related to The AP 24: Activity 6.2.2.7)	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues)</li><li>• Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime</li><li>• Republic Public Prosecutor's Office</li><li>• High Public Prosecutor's Offices in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Niš and Kraljevo</li><li>• State Prosecutors Council</li></ul>
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2020
Indicators of results	Needs analysis for staff capacity expansion has been conducted. Amendments to the Rulebook on the Systemisation of Job Positions have been adopted.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

**On the implementation of Activity 2.3.2.11.**

The Ministry of Justice, the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office and the Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime regularly reported on activities, i.e. they submitted data indicating that changes were adopted and new regulations were adopted on the systematization of job positions in the special departments, in accordance with the implemented by analyzing the needs of human capacities.



In the Second Implementation Report, the activity related to the Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime was assessed as implemented, while in the part related to the special anti-corruption departments, it was assessed as implemented in the Third Implementation Report.

Now the Agency has only presented the information that was resubmitted by the Public Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime.

During 2023, the Ministry of Justice has reported that it had approved changes to the Rules on the Systematization of Higher Public Prosecutor's Offices. With these changes, the number of employees in the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade increased by 4, in Novi Sad by 15, while in Kraljevo the number of employees is increased by 5.

The Republic Prosecutor's Office has reported that, as stated in previous reports, the amendments to the Rulebook on the Internal Organization and Systematization of Job Positions entered into force in the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office in Kraljevo on August 1, 2022, and in the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office in Niš on September 30, 2022. On March 31, 2023, the new Rulebook on Internal Organization and Systematization of Job Positions entered into force in the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade. In the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office in Novi Sad, the new Rulebook on Internal Organization and Systematization of Job Positions has entered into force and will be applied from May 3, 2023.

The Republic Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime has reported that in 2023 it prepared an Analysis of the organizational structure, powers and the existing and necessary capacities of that Office, concluding with an overview of the situation from 2020. The analysis showed that, in order to achieve faster, better and more economical flow of criminal proceedings and prosecutorial investigations led by the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime, intensive international cooperation, fulfilment of obligations undertaken in connection with the implementation of a series of strategic documents, and participation in the process of European integration in the area of negotiation Chapters 23 and 24, it is necessary to increase the number of employees in the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime as soon as possible, as follows:

- to employ the envisaged number of deputy prosecutors for organized crime up to 25 (5 vacancies), financial forensics officer (1 vacancy), and a typist (1 vacancy);
- to increase the number of job positions of prosecutors' assistants from 19 to 25 jobs, typists/record takers by 2 job positions, registrars by 2 job positions, and IT support technicians by 1 job position;
- to introduce new job positions for European integration and strategic planning (1 job position), translation to and from English (1 job position), study-analytical tasks (2 job positions), administrative-technical support, general affairs and human resources (1 job position), and for entering data into the application for monitoring money laundering and terrorism financing cases (1 job position).

The activity in the part related to the Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime, in the Second Implementation Report, was assessed as implemented and the Agency did not further process it in its report, except for presenting the information that was resubmitted by the Public Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime.

In the First Implementation Report, the activity was assessed as not implemented, in the Second Activity was viewed as two and assessed as implemented in the part related to the Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime, and not implemented in the part related to the special departments.

**Activity 2.3.2.12.**

Fill the vacancies in line with the Rulebook on Internal Organization and Classification of Job Positions in Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime and special anti-corruption departments of high public prosecutor's offices. (Activity related to the AP 24: Activity 6.2.2.8)	
In charge of activity	• Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime • State Prosecutors Council • Republic Public Prosecutor's Office • Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues)
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	Administrative capacities of Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime and special anti-corruption departments have been filled in accordance with the new Rulebook on the Systemisation of Job Positions.
Agency's assessment	The activity was not implemented.

**On the implementation of Activity 2.3.2.12.**

The Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime has reported that in 2023 there was an increase in the staffing capacity in said Prosecutor's Office. The current accommodation capacities of the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime are not sufficient to accommodate all the planned job positions. This will be fully possible only after the new building that will house the Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime is constructed in accordance with the activity 6.2.2.14 of the Action Plan for Chapter 24.

The Republic Public Prosecutor's Office has reported that the activities to fill the job positions have continued. Thus, in the Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime and special anti-corruption department of higher public prosecutor's offices in Novi Sad, according to the consent obtained, a competition was conducted and the selected candidates started working on October 1, 2023. That did not fill all systematized job positions, so consent was obtained for an additional number of employees and currently a public competition is underway to fill two positions with four executors. In the other special anti-corruption department of higher public prosecutor's office, all systematized positions have been filled, in accordance with the applicable Rulebook on Internal Organization and Systematization of Job Positions, except for the position of financial forensic officer.

Activity 2.3.2.12 is not adequately termed, bearing in mind that, in essence, it requires a process longer than a one-off deadline. Rulebooks from activity 2.3.2.11 made it possible to strengthen the staffing capacities, which was done in 2022 and 2023, both in the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime and in the special anti-corruption departments of the higher public prosecutor's offices.

However, since the need to fill job positions in the above institutions still exists, the Agency assessed the activity as not implemented in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.3.2.13.*

Analyse the needs for technical equipment in the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime and special anti-corruption departments of high public prosecutor's offices. (Activity related to the AP 24: Activity 6.2.2.9)	
In charge of activity	<div><div></div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues)</li><li>Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime</li></ul></div></div>
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2020
Indicators of results	The analysis of technical equipment needs has been made.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.2.13.*

The Ministry of Justice and the Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime have reported earlier that the Analysis of Technical Capacities and Needs for Technical Equipment of the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime was conducted and drafted.

Having in mind the above, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Second Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.3.2.14.*

Procure technical equipment for the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime and special anti-corruption departments of high public prosecutor's offices in accordance with the results of the analysis. (Activity related to the AP 24: Activity 6.2.2.10)	
In charge of activity	<div><div></div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues)</li><li>Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime</li></ul></div></div>
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	Technical equipment for the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime and special anti-corruption departments has been procured
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.2.14.*

In the Second Implementation Report, the activity was rated as two, bearing in mind that it is about the procurement of equipment for different institutions. The activity in the part related to the equipment for the special departments in the Second Implementation Report was assessed as implemented, but not implemented in the part of the procurement of equipment for the Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime. In the Third Implementation Report, it was not implemented in the procurement for organized crime.

The Public Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime has now reported that in 2023, in accordance with the Analysis of Technical Capacities and Needs for Technical Equipment of the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime, part of the necessary equipment in the value of EUR 9,137.95 was acquired with a donation from the Rule of Law in the Western Balkans in May 2023. In addition, as part of this project, software licenses for the use of the commercial database "Dun & Bradstreet" were donated for the needs of the Financial Forensic Service of this prosecution.

Having in mind that the procurement of equipmen was realized for special departments, as well as the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime, partly in 2023, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Fourth Implementation Report.

In this report, in the same section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following recommendation from the Screening Report

2.3.3. Conduct effective investigations into all allegations of corruption in privatisation cases, and ensure full transparency and accountability to avoid similar cases in the future.

The activities in question are Activities no. 2.3.3.1. and 2.3.3.2, which are individually presented below.

*Activity 2.3.3.1.*

Create and implement the Program of mutual professional development of authorities participating in the privatisation process and authorities in charge of prevention and criminal prosecution of corruption cases.	
In charge of activity	<div><div></div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Judicial Academy (Director)</li><li>Ministry in charge of economic affairs</li><li>Anti-Corruption Agency</li></ul></div></div>
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	Trainings have been conducted. Number of conducted trainings, in relation to the planned trainings on mutual professional development of authorities participating in the privatisation process and authorities in charge of prevention and criminal prosecution of corruption cases.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented in the part referring to the creation of the Program for professional development.
	The activity was not implemented in the part referring to the realisation of the trainings.



*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.3.1.*

In the Second Implmenetation Report, the activity was rated as two because it includes two wholes, namely the creation of curricula and the implementation of trainings. The activity in the part of creating the Professional Development Program was assessed as implemented in the Second Implementation Report, but not implemented in the part of training implementation.

Since the trainings were not held in 2022 or 2023, the Agency assessed the activity in the part of holding trainings as not implemented in the Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.3.3.2.*

<b>Hold regular meetings of the Anti-Corruption Council with the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office and the Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime in order to better implement the recommendations provided in the Council's reports.</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anti-Corruption Council</li><li>• Republic Public Prosecutor's Office</li><li>• Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	Continuous
<b>Indicators of results</b>	Meetings are being held on a regular basis.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.3.2.*

The Anti-Corruption Council has reported that a meeting was held in 2022 with the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office with the aim of exchanging information and acting upon reports of the Anti-Corruption Council that were submitted to the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office. The Council agreed with the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office to hold regular quarterly meetings in the upcoming period.

In 2023, the Anti-Corruption Council received the Annual Report for 2022 from the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office on the actions of public prosecutors' offices in connection with the Council's reports.

The Republic Public Prosecutor's Office also reported that on March 23, 2022, a meeting was held with representatives of the Anti-Corruption Council, where the Council's reports were discussed and further cooperation in the fight against corruption was agreed upon. It was also reported that no meetings of the Anti-Corruption Council, the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office and the Public Prosecutor's Office for Organized Crime were organized in 2023.

Having in mind that the activities were implemented in certain periods, and that the deadline for implementation is continuous, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented, in the Third, as well as now in the Fourth Implementation Report.

In this report, in the same section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following recommendation from the Screening Report:

2.3.3. Improve the collection of uniform statistics on corruption, drawing clear distinctions between different criminal offences and providing the possibility of a detailed assessment of the length of cases, outcomes, and so on.

The activities in question are Activities no. 2.3.4.1, 2.3.4.2. and 2.3.4.3. which are presented below.

*Activity 2.3.4.1.*

<b>Conduct an analysis of feasibility studies on the establishment of a single electronic register of corruption-related crimes, conducted under IPA 2013 "Prevention and Fight against Corruption" and USAID GAI projects.</b>	
<b>Act in line with the findings of the analysis in terms of the most feasible solution.</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues)</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	Fourth quarter of 2021
<b>Indicators of results</b>	Feasibility study analysis has been conducted.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.4.1.*

In the Second Report, the Agency assessed the activity as two, having in mind that it includes analysis and action based on the analysis. The activity in the analysis part of the feasibility study was assessed as implemented in the Second Implementation Report, but not implemented in the submergence part in accordance with the findings of the analysis. Since in 2022 the findings of the analysis were acted upon in terms of the most feasible solution, i.e. the Ministry of Justice reported that the software that is being used successfully was developed, the Agency assessed the activity in that part as implemented in the Third Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.3.4.2.*

<b>Amend positive regulations so as to establish a unique methodology for data collection, recording and statistical reporting on criminal acts of corruption.</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry of Justice (state secretary in charge of corruption issues)</li><li>• Government of the Republic of Serbia</li><li>• National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	Second quarter of 2022
<b>Indicators of results</b>	Amendments to regulations were adopted.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.4.2.*

The Ministry of Justice has reported that a uniform methodology for data collection, recording and statistical reporting on corruption crimes was established based on the functional analysis developed within the IPA 2013 project “Prevention and Fight against Corruption” and USAID GAI projects. It further reported that there was no need to change any positive regulations in this area.

Although Activity 2.3.4.2 included amendments to the regulations, the essence of the activity refers to the establishment of a uniform methodology for data collection, recording and statistical reporting on corruption crimes. Since said methodology was established, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the Third Implementation Report, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.3.4.3.*

Establish a unique record (electronic register) of criminal acts with a corrupt element, in accordance with the law governing personal data protection, which will be used in the future to create criminal policy.	
In charge of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ministry of Justice (state secretary in charge of corruption issues) Republic Public Prosecutor's Office</li><li>• Partner institutions</li><li>• Ministry of Interior</li><li>• Ministry of Finance</li><li>• Authorities in charge for the repression of corruption</li><li>• All relevant institutions</li></ul>
Deadline	Second quarter of 2022
Indicators of results	The record was established.
Agency’s assessment	The activity was not implemented.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.4.3.*

The Ministry of Justice has reported that an electronic registry of criminal offences containing a corrupt element has been established, and that data is collected in accordance with the provisions of the the Law on Personal Data Protection. The total number of cases in the ERCC in 2023 was 8,996.

The Republic Public Prosecutor's Office also reported in the previous reporting cycle that within the framework of the USAID Government Accountability project, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Serbia, the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office and the Supreme Court of Cassation, a project was implemented to develop the Electronic Register of Corruption Cases (ERCC). Additional reports were tested and verified, such as the report on the duration of the procedure and the report on the costs of the criminal procedure.

ERCC is a reporting software tool that will provide regular and ad hoc reports with timely information on the status of corruption cases, reveal “bottlenecks” in the investigation of this type of cases, and enable the identification of strategies to increase the efficiency of the four special anti-corruption departments in higher courts and higher public prosecutor’s offices. The register will communicate with existing case management systems in courts and public prosecutor’s offices (AVP, SAPO) by generating reports based on data stored in these systems. Using the application will not require the introduction of new or changes to existing work processes in registry offices

For the purpose of developing the application, the Republic Public Prosecutor’s Office created models of necessary reports, the correctness of most reports was tested and confirmed, while a few reports could not be tested due to work on improving the SAPO program for managing cases in public prosecutor’s offices

The development of the new SAPO application is in the final phase, and in the second half of 2022, the work on the additional functionalities of the program necessary for the operation of the Electronic Register of Corruption Cases was completed, which enabled the testing of additional reports, such as the report on the duration of the procedure and the report on the costs of criminal proceedings.

As the last extension of the duration of the project expired on July 1, 2023, and the contractor has not yet completed the work on the necessary improvement of the developed and creation of the missing functionalities, it was not possible to declare the date of the start of the application of this software tool intended for the special departments, and having in mind the deadline for implementation, the Agency rated the activity as not implemented in the Third Implementation Report, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

In this report, in the same section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’, the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following recommendation from the Screening Report:

2.3.3. Ensure that the legislative and institutional frameworks allow for the effective temporary and permanent confiscation and management of criminal assets stemming from crime, which would lead to more asset confiscation cases, as well as the following benchmark:

Serbia is establishing an initial record of efficient and effective investigations (including financial investigations), prosecutions, convictions and confiscations of assets in corruption cases, including cases of high-level corruption. (Serbia is applying a zero-tolerance policy for information leakage in connection with planned or ongoing corruption investigations and imposes sanctions in the event of such situations - discussed in 2.3.7)

The activities in question are Activities no. 2.3.5.1, 2.3.5.2. and 2.3.5.3, which are presented below.

Activity 2.3.5.1.

<b>Improve the capacity of the Directorate for the Management of Confiscated Property by holding trainings, especially in the part related to the management of property confiscated from legal persons.</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues) Directorate for the Management of Confiscated Property
<b>Deadline</b>	Continuous
<b>Indicators of results</b>	Trainings have been conducted. Percentage of trained employees in the Directorate for the Management of Confiscated Property, in relation to those in need of training.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.5.1.*

In previous reporting cycles, the Ministry of Justice submitted data on the attendance of employees in the Directorate for the Management of Confiscated Property, organized by the Judicial Academy. All information on this can be found in previous reports.

In 2023, employees of the Directorate for the Management of Confiscated Property attended trainings on the following topics: 1) "Improving coordination among key actors with the aim of better application of the law and prosecution of organized crime"; 2) Organized by the US Embassy, OPDAT training on "VAT fraud", 3) Organized by GIZ, training on "Money laundering and FATF recommendations"; 4) "Prevention of money laundering and financing of terrorism in Serbia - use of electronic evidence in the work on money laundering cases"; 5) "Processing the case of money laundering as an independent criminal offense"; 6) "Digital skills in organized crime investigations - basic Internet search training for investigators"; 7) "Prevention of money laundering, FAFT recommendations and immediate results"; 8) "Fight against money laundering"; 9) "Mutual legal assistance in solving serious crimes of organized crime and corruption"; 10) "Public procurement - training for advanced use of the Public Procurement Portal for the police and prosecution"; 11) "Challenges in detection and prosecution of criminal offenses related to public procurement".

Given that steps were taken to strengthen the capacity of representatives of the Directorate for the management of confiscated property, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the First, Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

Activity 2.3.5.2.

<b>Improve international cooperation by concluding agreements with directorates from countries in the region and the EU.</b> <b>(Activity related to the AP 24: Activity 6.2.6.6)</b>	
<b>In charge of activity</b>	• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues) Directorate for the Management of Confiscated Property
<b>Deadline</b>	Continuous
<b>Indicators of results</b>	Number of contracts concluded with directorates from the countries of the region and the EU.
<b>Agency's assessment</b>	<b>The activity was not implemented.</b>

*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.5.2.*

The Ministry of Justice has reported in the previous cycle that a Draft Agreement on the division of property with foreign countries has been prepared and will be submitted as a proposal for the basis for negotiations with interested parties. Since positive answers were received from the counterparties, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Draft Agreement and the basis for conducting negotiations for the purpose of concluding a contract on the division of property with the Kingdom of Spain, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska. In addition, it was reported that in cooperation with the Project in cooperation with the "Asset Recovery Project Western Balkans Rule of Law Program", AIRE Center, a Draft Agreement on the division of property was prepared to be signed by the mentioned countries and that two online meetings were held in which considered provisions of the submitted Draft Agreement. In 2022, the Kingdom of Spain and the Republic of Serbia worked on the harmonization of the proposed texts.

Now the Ministry of Justice reported that the Conference in Belgrade was held on February 7, 2023, where most of the contract proposals were agreed upon. The meeting that was supposed to be held at the beginning of June 2023, in Montenegro, in order to harmonize the complete text of the contract, but it was postponed at the suggestion of the Montenegrin side - due to the elections in Montenegro.

The meeting of the representatives of the Republic of Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Srpska was held on September 29, 2023. The text of the agreement was fully agreed at the meeting. The text was also sent to the Montenegrin side for a statement on the text of the contract itself and whether Montenegro remains committed to being a signatory party to the said contract. Since the Government of Montenegro has been formed in the meantime, consultations are underway to agree on the date of the meeting in the second half of January 2024, at which the work of the experts of all contracting parties on the drafting of the contract on the division of property will be brought to an end, and which will then be submitted to the governments of the contracting parties on further procedures for its adoption.

Although steps were taken to implement the activity, in this reporting period the Agency assessed the activity as not implemented from the standpoint of the result indicator which foresees a number of agreements concluded with directorates from the countries of the region and the EU.

Activity 2.3.5.3.

Strengthen the capacity of the Directorate for the Management of Confiscated Property by	
In charge of activity	• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues) Directorate for the Management of Confiscated Property
Deadline	Fourth quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	Vacancies have been filled in accordance with the Rulebook on the Systemisation of Job Positions.
Agency's assessment	The activity was not implemented.

On the implementation of Activity 2.3.5.3.

The Ministry of Justice has reported that the new Rulebook on the Internal Organization and Systematization of Job Positions of the Directorate for the Management of Confiscated Property entered into force on July 17, 2023. Since the adoption of the Rulebook, one person has been employed in the Directorate for an indefinite period and tw of them for a fixed period.

Bearing in mind that the Ministry of Justice reported that the implementation of the activity is in progress, as well as that there is still work to be done, the Agency assessed the activity as not implemented in the Second, Third, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report.

In this report, in the same section of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', the Agency assessed the implementation of activities related to the following benchmark:

2.3.7. Serbia is establishing initial records of efficient and effective investigations (including financial investigations), prosecutions, convictions and confiscation of assets in corruption cases, including cases of high-level corruption - discussed in 2.3.5). Serbia is applying a zero-tolerance policy on information leaks related to planned or ongoing corruption investigations and imposing sanctions in such situations.

The activities in question are Activities no. 2.3.7.1, 2.3.7.2, 2.3.7.3. and 2.3.7.4, which are presented individually shown below.

Activity 2.3.7.1.

Adopt new regulations and procedures in order to introduce control and control mechanisms in accordance with the analysis of the current state of affairs (normative, organizational and functional), and identify weaknesses and risks (level of data availability, with accurate determination of availability in terms of time and content).	
In charge of activity	• Ministry of Interior
Deadline	First quarter of 2021
Indicators of results	Amended or adopted new regulations and procedures have been amended or new ones adopted, in accordance with the analysis.
Agency's assessment	The activity cannot be assessed.

On the implementation of Activity 2.3.7.1.

The Agency did not receive any new information on the basis of which it could assess the implementation of this activity. The Agency explained the reasons why Activity 2.3.7.1 cannot be assessed in the Second Implementation Report. The Ministry of Interior applied existing regulations and procedures, but the Agency did not have sufficient information on the basis of which it could conclude whether the procedures have been changed based on the aforementioned analyses.

As the Agency did not receive new information even for 2023, accordingly, it could not assess the implementation of activities in the Fourth Implementation Report either.

Activity 2.3.7.2.

Establish a Working Group in the Ministry of Justice to consider initiatives of the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office concerning the amendments and supplements to the Criminal Procedure Code (based on the Analysis of the normative, organisational and functional frameworks - measures to prevent information leaks and repressive measures to suppress unauthorised communication of criminal procedure data), the Criminal Code and the Law on Public Prosecutor's Office (based on the Analysis of the legislative framework related to criminal, disciplinary and other types of liability in connection with unauthorised disclosure of information). Act in accordance with the conclusions of the working group. (Related to Activity 2.2.10.23)	
In charge of activity	• Ministry of Justice (State Secretary in charge of corruption issues) Republic Public Prosecutor's Office • Government of the Republic of Serbia • National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia
Deadline	For the creation of the Working Group: first quarter of 2021 For amendments and supplements: until the fourth quarter of 2022
Indicators of results	The Working Group has been established. The law has been amended and supplemented in accordance with the conclusions of the Working Group.
Agency's assessment	The activity was not implemented in the part relating to the adoption of regulations. The activity was implemented the part relating to the education part of the working group.



*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.7.2.*

The Agency rated the Activity 2.3.2.7. as two activities. In the Second Implementation Report, 3 the activity was assessed as implemented in the part referring to the establishment of the working groups, taking into account the deadlines for the second part of the activity, while in the Third Report, the activity was assessed as not implemented in the part referring to the adoption of regulations.

In the Fourth Implementation Report, the Agency assessed the activity referring to the adoption of regulations as not implemented - since amendments and supplements to the regulations were not adopted in 2023.

*Activity 2.3.7.3.*

Increase the level of IT protection by creating the so-called early warning system and the alarm system.	
	• Ministry of Interior
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	The level of IT protection has been increased. The so-called early warning system and alarm system has been established.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implmeneted.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.7.3.*

The Ministry of Interior has submitted information that, during the reporting period, activities were carried out in the reporting period in accordance with the competencies and the normative framework in the field of information security, within which several test alarm systems were implemented in accordance with the domain of competence of the Sector for Analytics, Telecommunications, and Information Technology of the Ministry of Interior. The Ministry of Interiorcontinuously implements the activity, based on test results, and puts the systems that meet the criteria into production mode.

In the course of 2023, The Ministry of the Interior has reported that, within the Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) of the Ministry of the Interior, activities were carried out in the reporting period in accordance with the competencies and the normative framework in the field of information security, namely: monitoring of the ICT system of the Ministry of the Interior.

Protection against information leakage is included in the protection of the IT system of the Ministry of the Interior, which is why in this reporting period the Agency assessed the activity as implemented in the First, Second, and Third Implementation Report, as well as now in the Fourth Implementation Report.

*Activity 2.3.7.4.*

Monitor the sanctioning of violations of regulations to prevent the disclosure of confidential information and prepare the analysis of the application of regulations and recommendations.	
	• Ministry of Interior • Republic Public Prosecutor's Office
In charge of activity	
Deadline	Continuous
Indicators of results	Number of violations of regulations that serve to prevent disclosure of information. Analysis of the application of regulations, with recommendations, has been prepared.
Agency's assessment	The activity was implemented in the part referring to the monitoring of sanctioning violations.
	The activity cannot be assessed in the part referring to the analysis of the allication of regulations and recommendations.

*On the implementation of Activity 2.3.7.4.*

The Ministry of Interior and the Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office provided detailed information on the monitoring of sanctioning of violations of the regulations for the prevention of the disclosing information bearing the mark of confidentiality, which is contained in previous reports.

In 2023, the Ministry of Interior has reported, that in the first quarter, the Police Directorate, the Criminal Police Administration had one disciplinary procedure, pending for the violation of official duties under Article 207, paragraph 1, item 10 of the Law on Police. The police official was found guilty and the measure of termination of employment was imposed. One disciplinary procedure was conducted on the above basis in the Police Department of Vranje, Novi Sad, Niš, Leskovac, and Prijepolje.

In the second quarter of 2023, two disciplinary proceedings were initiated for violation of official duty from Article 207, paragraph 1, item 10 of the Law on Police, namely:

- in the Police Administration in Niš, the police officer was found guilty and a fine of 30% of the salary was imposed for six months;
- in the Police Administration in Novi Sad, as the employee was released from responsibility.

One disciplinary procedure for one employee is still being conducted in the Police Administration in Vranje and the Leskovac, while 1 (one) disciplinary procedure is being conducted against six employees in the Police Administration in Prijepolje.

In the second quarter of 2023, three disciplinary proceedings were initiated, for one employee each, in: the Police Directorate, the Criminal Police Administration, the Police Directorate in the Border Police Directorate, and the Police Administration in Belgrade.

According to the report of the Republic Public Prosecutor's Office, no notification was submitted to this institution in the reporting period on the existence of grounds for suspicion that a violation of the regulations on preventing the disclosure of information has been committed.



In the First Implementation Report, the Agency assessed the activity as implemented and in the Second Report, the Agency assessed the activity as two, because it includes monitoring of sanctions imposed for violation of regulations, as well as the analysis of the application of regulations. Looking at the result indicators, in this reporting period the Agency assessed the activity in the part that referred to monitoring the sanctioning of violations of regulations that govern disclosure of confidential information as implemented, while it assessed the part referring to the analysis of the implementation of regulations and recommendations as not implemented. In the Third Report, as well as now, in the Fourth Implementation Report, the activity was assessed as two activities. In the part referring to the monitoring the sanctioning of violations of regulations preventing disclosure of confidential information, the activity was assessed as implemented, while in the the part referring to the analysis of the application of regulations and recommendations, the Agency could not assess the status of implementation because it did not have information on the basis of which it could do so.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Most of the recommendations were taken from the Report on the Impact Assessment of Strategic Documents in the Fight against Corruption<sup>13</sup>, because regardless of the fact that the Agency did not consider the current document, i.e., the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23, but the previous document, i.e., the Action Plan for Chapter 23, which was valid from April 2016 until the adoption of the revised one in July 2020, both documents were created on a similar matrix, i.e., they are aimed at implementing the recommendations from the European Commission's Screening Report as well as transitional measures.

Activities, their holders, deadlines for implementation, financial resources, and result indicators at the activity level are defined within the documents. The four-year monitoring of the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', showed almost identical deficiencies in the preparation and implementation, just like the previous one.

Precisely for this reason, recommendations are given below that may refer to a new revision of the Action Plan for Chapter 23, the development of a future public policy document, or the establishment of a new mechanism that will determine the priority of Republic of Serbia in the domain of reform processes and European integration, as well as goals, expected results, specific activities, and the way of supervising their realization.

1. When revising, drafting a future public policy document, or establishing a new mechanism, it is necessary to take into account the findings of the Impact Assessment of measures taken to reduce corruption in risk areas;
2. When revising, drafting a future public policy document, or establishing a new mechanism, it is necessary to conduct trainings for competent institutions on how to define the desired changes that public policy documents should lead to;
3. It is necessary to pay attention to solving the shortcomings recognized in the Impact Assessment so that they are clearly reflected in the following public policy documents (e.g. if statistics and records have not been kept so far in a way that will enable the determination of possible changes before and after the expiration of the documents public policy, it is necessary to work on their systematic editing, but also to strengthen the awareness of the taxpayers as to why this is important, including through their active participation from the very beginning);
4. It is necessary to define in advance the problems to which the revised or new public policy document, i.e. another new mechanism should provide an answer, but so that later the trend can be monitored both at the lower level of the indicator and at the level of the impact indicator;
5. It is necessary to ensure the involvement of all interested parties in the process of drafting a revised or new public policy document, i.e. another new mechanism in order to build a sense

13 [https://www.acas.rs/cyr/pages/strate%C5%A1ka\\_dokument](https://www.acas.rs/cyr/pages/strate%C5%A1ka_dokument)

- of ownership over the document and prevent the possibility that institutions do not have information of the creation of a certain segment or how they were assigned a task they should realize;
6. It is necessary to work on strengthening coordination within institutions, in order to ensure the continuity of institutional memory and prevent situations in which employee turnover cannot be adequately overcome;
  7. It is necessary to strengthen the skills of employees to present the institution's performance in a way that will ensure the subsequent monitoring of progress in the implementation of public policy documents, as well as their effects;
  8. It is necessary to strengthen awareness and capacities about the importance of planning, as well as the way in which the desired outcomes are considered and defined;
  9. It is necessary to define the goals in such a way that it can be concluded with certainty what purpose (social change) they want to achieve and how the eventual (non)occurrence of such change will be detected;
  10. It is necessary to define the objectives, which foresee interventions in the regulatory framework, so that it is clear what the outcomes of these interventions should be, as well as to specify the standards that are aimed for through the objectives.;
  11. It is necessary to define the goals, which envisage the introduction or improvement of certain mechanisms/institutes/institutions, so that it is clear how it will be assessed whether the quality "embedded" in the goal has been achieved and what will be achieved with that mechanism.;
  12. It is necessary to define the goals, which foresee certain efforts/ways of behavior of the obliged subjects, in such a way that they include criteria for who and how will interpret whether the realized level of efforts is sufficient, i.e. whether it is required quality achieved;
  13. It is necessary to define goals according to SMART criteria, i.e. so that they are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-limited;
  14. It is necessary to conduct targeted research at appropriate time intervals, which will enable the implementation of a direct analysis of the potential impacts of a revised or new public policy document, or another new mechanism;
  15. It is necessary to define the indicators in such a way that they contain the base and target value and to clearly delineate what should be measured by them (output result, actual result, impact, etc.).

# GENERAL REMARKS ON THE SUPERVISION OF IMPLEMENTATION

## Revision of the Action Plan for Chapter 23

At the third Intergovernmental Conference, held in Brussels on 18 July 2016, the Republic of Serbia initiated negotiations Chapters 23 (Judiciary and Fundamental Rights) and 24 (Justice, Freedom, and Security). Following the recommendations of the European Commission from the Screening Report for Chapter 23, made on the basis of conclusions from explanatory and bilateral meetings on the analytical review of legislative compliance, and after consultations with relevant actors and the civil society, the Government of Serbia adopted the Action Plan for Chapter 23 on 27 April 2016. One of the recommendations of the European Commission to the Republic of Serbia was to “adopt one or more detailed action plans with a harmonised schedule and clear objectives and deadlines, as well as the necessary institutional framework and adequate estimates of costs and financial allocations in the following areas: justice, the fight against corruption and fundamental rights.” Following the adoption of the Action Plan for Chapter 23, negotiations on this chapter were opened in July 2016. The Common Position of the European Union for Chapter 23, including 50 transitional criteria defined in order to assess further progress of the Republic of Serbia, was presented at the above mentioned Intergovernmental Conference.

The revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia on 10 July 2020<sup>14</sup>.

As stated in the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23, the revision of the Action Plan for Chapter 23 was necessary to review the activities that clearly indicate future direction (setting new, realistic deadlines), make interventions in the formulation of activities so that they properly reflect the recommendations from the Screening Report and the benchmarks, and eliminate the observed difficulties in the implementation and monitoring of the implementation of activities. During the process of revision, the aim was for the interventions to properly reflect the recommendations of the Screening Report and the benchmarks, taking into account the assessments of the fulfilment of activities provided by the Council for the Implementation of the Action Plan for Chapter 23, contributions of responsible institutions - holders of activities from the Action Plan for Chapter 23, and difficulties observed in the implementation and monitoring of the implementation of activities

<sup>14</sup> See: <https://www.mpravde.gov.rs/files/Revidirani%20AP23%202207.pdf>

As also provided for in the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23, the oversight of the implementation of activities listed in this document has been entrusted to the Coordination Body. The Secretariat of the Coordination Body provides the Body with professional and administrative-technical support in performing the entrusted tasks. The Coordination Body conducts oversight by analysing and reviewing draft implementation reports, making recommendations for improving the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23, and initiating an early warning mechanism in case of delays or other implementation problems. This Body adopts the implementation reports and forwards them to the European Commission, the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the National Assembly. Members of the Coordination Body are appointed by the Government. Members of the Body are top-level officials who come from the institutions that are in charge of carrying out the main part of the activities from the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23.

In 2020, the Government of the Republic of Serbia made a decision to establish the Coordination Body for the Implementation of the Action Plan for Chapter 23: Judiciary and Fundamental Rights, which was amended in 2021. Three meetings of the Coordination Body were held in 2021 and four meetings in 2022. The Coordinating Body held four meetings in 2023, with representatives of the Agency participating as members and deputy members.

In 2021, the Coordination Body established a new way of reporting that monitors the indicators of results, as well as the so-called Early Warning Mechanism, with the aim of special monitoring of activities whose implementation is delayed or expected to be delayed. This mechanism was also applied in 2023.

## Supervision of implementation

Acting in accordance with Article 38, paragraph 2 of the Law on Prevention of Corruption, the Director of the Agency issued an Instruction on how to report on the implementation of strategic documents.

In addition, the Agency, with the support of the IPA 2013 Project "Prevention and Fight against Corruption", developed guidelines for reporting on the implementation and monitoring of the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', which were published on the website of the Agency.

In the process of monitoring the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', the Agency submitted quarterly communications to the institutions responsible for implementing the activities about the provisions of the Law on the Prevention of Corruption in connection with the supervision of strategic documents, the adoption of the Instructions on the manner of reporting on the implementation of strategic documents and Guidelines for reporting on the implementation and supervision of the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', as well as on the need to appoint persons authorised to coordinate, monitor the implementation and report on the implementation of activities, as well as to the reporting of activity holders to the Agency will be carried out on a quarterly basis.

In the process of monitoring the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', the Agency submitted quarterly communications to the institutions responsible for the implementation of the subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', setting deadlines for them for the submission of quarterly implementation reports, in line with the Guidelines for Reporting on the Implementation and Supervision of the Implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter 'Fight against Corruption'.

The Agency decided that the first cycle of reporting should cover the period from July 10 (when the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 was adopted) to December 31, 2020, i.e. to include activities due in the third and fourth quarters of 2020, as and those that are continuous.

Starting in 2021, the Agency collected data on the first quarter until mid-April, on the second quarter until mid-July and on the third quarter until mid-October of the following year. The Agency collected data for the last quarter of the previous year, as well as the entire previous year, until mid-January of the following year.

Reports were collected through e-mail and correspondence, on the provided form, as well as by means of the reporting application. After putting the reporting application into operation, the Agency also submitted the Instructions for Use to the institutions. The institutions were regularly provided with assistance in using the application, and were informed in a timely manner if identified deficiencies in the application were being taken care of.

Institutions in charge of carrying out individual activities which in 2020 appointed persons authorised to coordinate, monitor the implementation and report on the implementation of activities from the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter 'Fight against Corruption', and which have experienced staff changes in 2022, informed the Agency thereof in a timely manner, enabling the Agency to regularly update its internal records of activity holders, i.e. reporting entities.

Quarterly reports on the implementation of activities that became due in the period from January 1 to December 31, which are of a continuous nature, as well as those that were previously assessed as not implemented, were submitted to the Agency by all institutions responsible for the activities, including those which are not primary activity holders but do possess information relevant for the implementation and implementation monitoring.

During the preparation of the report, the Agency requested additional information from some of the institutions. If they possessed the requested information, they replied within the set deadlines. Additional information was requested to complete the rationale for the assessment of the activities provided by the Agency in the report.

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## Challenges in the Process of Supervision of Implementation

As the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23, adopted on 10 July 2020, is still in force, one of the key challenges in the process of monitoring the implementation relates to certain shortcomings of the Revised Action Plan itself, which the Agency pointed out in recommendations contained in this, Third Implementation Report, as well as in the First and the Second. In certain cases, these shortcomings significantly affected both the way activities were carried out and the way of reporting on their implementation.

The pandemic caused delays in the implementation of activities or parts of activities that the Agency assessed in the reporting period, primarily those related to capacity building activities and inter-institutional cooperation and coordination.

An additional challenge was the fact that the Government of Republic of Serbia was formed on October 28, 2020, which caused a delay or only the beginning of the implementation of certain activities.

In addition, there are activities that are conditioned by the implementation of others, most often by the adoption of laws and the implementation of analysis, which is why, in the event that the specific law was not adopted, or the analysis was not done, they were assessed as not implemented.

The challenge in monitoring the implementation is also reflected in the fact that several institutions, in accordance with the positive regulations of the Republic of Serbia, prepare their final annual reports for the previous year in the current year, which is why they were unable to present the final data, including accompanying statistics.

Although certain activities from the domain of normative changes were implemented at the beginning of 2022, certain others were delayed due to the fact that the new Government of the Republic of Serbia was formed only on 26 October 2022

The uneven complexity of the activities themselves is also a challenge which must be taken into

account during the next revision of the Action Plan. For this reason, the statistical presentation should be taken conditionally, because activities that e.g. include the holding of meetings and activities that e.g. define amendments to umbrella laws or the introduction of complex IT mechanisms cannot be treated equally, especially considering the sequence of steps involved in the first or second type of activity.

Activities related to the filling of job positions are also a challenge, as they sound almost the same in different activities, but have different implementation deadlines. Even when this happens, the complete filling of job positions should be taken conditionally, because various forms of employee turnover can cause the situation in a certain institution to change each year. Particular attention should be paid to this during the revision of the existing Action Plan, in order to ensure consistency in the drafting of the document, as well as in the implementation and monitoring of implementation.

Some institutions did not fully address the result indicators; however, when it was obvious and clear from their reports that steps have been taken towards their implementation, the Agency assessed such activities as implemented in the First, Second, and Third Implementation Reports, indicating in the recommendations how this challenge could be overcome.. This especially refers to continuous activities, because the Agency will continue to monitor their implementation in other reporting cycles.

The manner in which certain activities were timed was particularly challenging in this implementation monitoring cycle. We are talking about different deadlines for activities of the same type; about activities that are marked as continuous although it is obvious from the activity itself that it is of a one-off nature, and vice versa; about activities that define the obligation of state bodies to carry out a certain activity every year, even though the nature and essence of the activity is such that this is not possible and not always expedient, etc.

Many activities are related to capacity building in the form of conducting trainings, and these are - for the most part - being worked on. However the wording that describes trainings in certain areas does not define clearly enough how many of them there should be, or how many participants they should have. As stated in the recommendations, the implementation of training should be preceded by a needs analysis, followed by the creation of a training plan and program. The activity structured in this way would enable much easier implementation, as well as supervision of the implementation by monitoring the implementation of the training plan.

There are activities regarding whose implementation certain institutions have declared themselves incompetent, which is also mentioned in the recommendations as an area that needs to be adjusted so that the responsibility for implementation is assigned to institutions that are truly competent for a certain area.

In all reports, the Agency tried to avoid not providing any assessment for a specific activity, except when it did not have enough relevant information to assess implementation. There were 10 unassessed activities in the First Report, four in the Second, five in the Third, and six in the Fourth.

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The challenge of uneven quality of reporting is still present, but during 2022, there is a noticeable improvement compared to the first two implementation reports, in the sense that institutions are recognising shortcomings on their own, both in the structure of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’, and in implementing and reporting on what they did and did not achieve in the reporting period. Consequently, they are finding ways ways to overcome these shortcomings wherever possible. This could be explained by the fact that the institutions are now more familiar with the document, that the continuity of reporting has been established and they are aware of their obligations, as well as by the fact that the Coordination Body was established and that deficiencies in the implementation and reporting processes were discussed at its meetings.

Special attention should be paid to activities that have been assessed as not implemented since the beginning of the supervision of the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’, and whose status has not changed in this Report either.

However, it is important to note that there are also examples of good practice; there are institutions that have submitted complete reports, processing both the essence of the activities and the results indicators in their entirety.

## Methodological Framework

The methodological framework is based on the Guidelines for Reporting on the Implementation and Supervision of the Implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’.

Supervision of the implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’ means that the Agency collects information on the implementation of activities from the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’; assesses the level of implementation of activities, and submits a report to the National Assembly.

In addition to monitoring the implementation of strategic documents and submitting a report to the National Assembly on their implementation, with recommendations for action, the Agency provides recommendations to the responsible entities on how to eliminate shortcomings in the implementation of strategic documents, and initiates amendments and supplements thereto.

In this regard, the Guidelines for Reporting on the Implementation and Supervision of the Implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter “Fight against Corruption” include four key processes:

- the manner in which the Agency collects information and data on the implementation of activities from the activity holders, i.e. the manner in which the activity holders report to the Agency;
- the manner in which the Agency handles the received information and data and submits a report to the National Assembly;

- the manner in which the Agency gives opinions with recommendations to the holders of activities for overcoming difficulties, i.e. improving the quality of reporting; and
- the manner in which the Agency initiates amendments and supplements to the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’.

The reports of the reporting entities were the main source of information on which the Agency based its assessments of the status of the activities. For that reason, in the reporting form, the reporting entities were also asked to provide evidence that the activities were in fact implemented.

In addition to the reporting entities’ reports, other sources of information were also available to the Agency to analyse the context in which certain activities are carried out and to better understand the situation in the reporting area, such as: research in a specific monitored area; reports of other independent state authorities on the state of affairs in certain areas; reports on the work of public authorities charged with implementing the activities, etc.

The assessment of the status of the activities was supposed to provide an answer to the question of whether and to what extent the activities were carried out. Based on the reports submitted to the Agency by the reporting entities, and by comparing the responses from the reports with the essence of specific activities and result indicators, in this report the Agency gave one of the following status assessments regarding each of the activities:

- the activity was implemented;
- the activity was not implemented, or
- the activity could not be assessed.

based on the parameters presented in the table below, using the so-called traffic light scale

Preparing the report, the Agency used only data related to the reporting period, i.e. implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - Subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’, with a special, more detailed presentation of the activities implemented in 2023. The Agency will submit the Fourth Implementation Report to the National Assembly by March 31, 2024.

To ensure the methodological coherence of the report, the Agency always tried to assess the essence of the activity itself, as well as the result indicators. In situations where the result indicator was not appropriately defined, as explained in the recommendations, the Agency relied on the meaning of the activity itself, as well as the goal that should have been achieved, or should be achieved, by its implementation

In the process of drafting this report, while entering individual activities, recommendations from the screening report and the benchmarks, the Agency used the already available translation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter ‘Fight against Corruption’ into Serbian, published on the website of the Ministry of Justice, despite the fact that it contains certain inaccuracies.



Tabular Presentation of the Assessment of the Status of Individual Activities in the Fourth Implementation Report

Status of activity	Assessment criteria/Explanation
1. The activity was implemented	<p>The activity is viewed as implemented because::</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. It was completed within the set deadline and in accordance with the steps planned for its implementation and defined result indicators;</li><li>2. The purpose of the activity indicates that steps have been taken towards its implementation (especially in the case of continuous activities), even if it is not fully in line with the result indicator.</li></ol>
2. The activity was not implemented	<p>The activity is viewed as not implemented because:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. It was not completed within the set deadline and in accordance with the steps planned for its implementation and defined result indicators;</li><li>2. The purpose of the activity indicates that no steps have been taken, or completed, towards its proper implementation;</li><li>3. It is conditioned by the implementation of some other activity, which is either not yet implemented or is currently in the process of being implemented.</li></ol>
3. The activity cannot be assessed	<p>The activity could not be assessed because:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. No data have been submitted from which it could be determined how the activity is being implemented;</li><li>2. The holder of the activity is not defined in an appropriate manner in all the aspects of the implementation of the activity;</li><li>3. The activity is not clearly defined and/or it cannot be established whether it has been implemented or not.</li></ol>

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Agency	Agency for Prevention of Corruption
First Implementation Report	First Report on the Implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter Fight against Corruption
Second Implementation Report	Second Report on the Implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subshapter 'Fight against Corruption'
Third Implementation Report	Third Report on the Implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subshapter 'Fight against Corruption'
Fourth Implementation Report	Fourth Report on the Implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subshapter 'Fight against Corruption'
Guidelines	Guidelines for Reporting on the Implementation and Supervision of the Implementation of the Revised Action Plan for Chapter 23 - subchapter 'Fight against Corruption'
Council	Anti-Corruption Council
MoI	Ministry of the Interior
PPOOC	Public Prosecutor's Office for Organised Crime
RPPO	Republic Public Prosecutor's Office
SPPO	Supreme Public Prosecutor's Office
SAI	State Audit Institution
NAPA	National Academy for Public Administration
HRMS	Human Resources Managament Service
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
Commissioner	Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection
CC	Criminal Code
IPA	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance of the European Union
GRECO	Group of States against Corruption
USAID	United States Agency for International Development



<b>OSCE</b>	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
<b>ODIHR</b>	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>SIGMA</b>	Joint initiative of the European Union and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to support for improvement in governance and management
<b>GIZ</b>	German Agency for International Cooperation
<b>DCAF</b>	Geneva Center for Security Sector Governance
<b>PCIB</b>	Regional Police Cooperation and Integrity Building Program in the Western Balkans
<b>LGU</b>	Local Self-Government Unit
<b>LAP</b>	Local Anti-Corruption Plan
<b>Model</b>	Model Local Anti-Corruption Plan
<b>OPDAT</b>	Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training
<b>CAMS</b>	International certification program in the field of prevention of money laundering
<b>ACAMS</b>	Association of Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialists
<b>CFE</b>	International Certification Program for Certified Fraud Examiners
<b>ACFE</b>	Association of Certified Fraud Examiners
<b>BIRODI</b>	Bureau of Social Research
<b>BC</b>	Border crossing
<b>PA</b>	Police administration
<b>FATF</b>	Financial Action Task Force - an international body whose task is to develop and improve the fight against money laundering and terrorism financing
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Program
<b>RAI</b>	Regional Anti-Corruption Initiative
<b>CEPOL</b>	European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training
<b>NCIS</b>	National Criminal Intelligence System
<b>PIM</b>	Police-Intelligence Model
<b>SPC</b>	State Prosecutorial Council
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technologies
<b>CERT</b>	Computer Emergency Response Team

<b>BIA</b>	Security Intelligence Agency
<b>VBA</b>	Military Security Agency
<b>VOA</b>	Military Intelligence Agency
<b>MU</b>	Military Units
<b>MFA</b>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>SBPTE</b>	Counter-Terrorism and Extremism Service
<b>OITEA</b>	Office of Information Technology and Electronic Administration
<b>EMPACT</b>	European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats
<b>CAR</b>	Consolidated Annual Report
<b>VAT</b>	Value-added tax
<b>CHU</b>	Central Harmonization Unit
<b>FMC</b>	Financial Management and Control
<b>UPF</b>	Users of public funds
<b>PE</b>	Public enterprises
<b>IFCPS</b>	Internal Financial Control in the Public Sector
<b>IACA</b>	International Anti-Corruption Academy
<b>IAACA</b>	International Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities
<b>EPAC</b>	European Partners Against Corruption
<b>SELDI</b>	Southeast Europe Leadership Development Program
<b>CDS</b>	Center for Democratic Studies
<b>ADA</b>	Austrian Development Agency
<b>ERA</b>	Academy of European Law



