



PRESS RELEASE

November 21, 2024

Ninth Expert Forum on Criminal Justice for Central Asia Concludes in Astana

ASTANA

European Union supported organisation of the Ninth Expert Forum on Criminal Justice for Central Asia in Astana in November 20-21, 2024. The forum brought together over 220 participants from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Mongolia, including judges, prosecutors, lawyers, civil society representatives, and international experts.

The forum comprehensively examined Central Asian criminal justice reforms from 2021 to 2024 on strengthening the independence of the judiciary, access to justice, pre-trial investigation human rights, investigative effectiveness, penitentiary reform and probation, and the digitalization of justice systems, including ethical AI considerations. A dedicated session highlighted gender-related issues and the role of women in the justice system, and combating gender-based violence in the region.

The forum served as a valuable platform for sharing best practices, identifying challenges, and fostering collaboration among stakeholders in the region. The results of professional discussions will contribute to effective cooperation to strengthen the rule of law and promote access to justice in Central Asia.

Forum organizers included ODIHR OSCE, LPRC, UNODC, UNDP, Dignity Public Association, OSCE Program office in Astana and other regional program offices of the OSCE of CA, with the financial support of the EU and Bureau of Counterterrorism, U.S. Department of State.

The Legal Policy Research Centre (LPRC) and International Partnership for Human Rights (IPHR) together with ODIHR OSCE presented monitoring methodology and discussed results of the pilot in Kyrgyzstan on Forum session on monitoring criminal justice.

This session was held under the project "Coordinated Civil Society Action to Promote the Rule of Law for All", implemented by the Public Foundation "Legal Policy Research Centre" (LPRC) and the International Partnership for Human Rights (IPHR) with the financial support of the European Union. The project is designed for 3 years - from the beginning of 2024 to the end of 2026 and aims to increase the capacity of civil society to support the rule of law and respond to challenges in the criminal justice system in Kazakhstan. The total budget of the project is EUR 777,895. The contribution of the European Union is 739,000 Euros.

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IPHR International
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This project is funded
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