

## PROJECT INFORMATION

### Better Access to Justice in South Eastern Europe

Updated: June 2017



Access to justice in Balkan countries - although the road is hard the result matters

Source: K. Tingas

#### Background

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and the FYR Macedonia are parties to the Aarhus Convention, while Kosovo is interested in adopting its principles. Parts of these countries' administrative and judicial procedures do not comply with the Convention's standards yet. The judicial reform process is ongoing and the court system is changing, but citizens and NGOs still experience significant barriers when exercising their right of access to justice. Only few cases on environmental matters are brought to court, resulting in limited relevant judgements.

#### Project details

The project's objective is to facilitate the reduction of impediments for access to justice in the Parties to the Aarhus Convention in the SEE region. This shall be accomplished by increasing the knowledge and awareness of judges, legal professionals and NGOs on access to justice in environmental matters. Moreover, the project aims at enabling NGOs to gain and use skills to enforce their rights. The project will lead to enhanced capacities of judiciary and legal professionals, facilitated cooperation among the stakeholders, and an increased awareness and knowledge of NGOs. This will provision the further support for an implementation of the Aarhus Convention. The key project activities comprise the development of guidance material and the organisation of a series of trainings for civil society, judges and legal professionals, the collection of local case studies on access to justice, and the development of a comparative analytical study on access to justice in SEE countries. The project is implemented in cooperation with the ministries of justice, judicial training centers, schools for magistrates, Aarhus Focal Points, Ombudsman offices, key legal professionals, public advocacy groups and NGOs in the countries.

All produced materials and workshop information are available at <http://aarhus.rec.org/>.

**Target country/region:** South and Eastern Europe (SEE)  
**Duration:** 09/2016 – 08/2018  
**Beneficiaries:** Judiciary and legal professionals, local NGOs  
**Implementing organisation:** Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC)  
**Project number:** 76293

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