



MONITORING REPORT JANUARY –MARCH2020

CROSS-SECTOR JUSTICE STRATEGY

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NAIS	National Agency of Information Society
SAJS	State Archive for Judicial System
DFLA	Directorate of Free Legal Aid
DGP	Directorate General of Prisons
DGB	Directorate General of Bailiffs
NCA	National Chamber of Advocacy
NCM	National Chamber of Mediators
NCN	National Chamber of Notaries
NCJPB	National Chamber of Judicial Private Bailiffs
CC	Constitutional Court
HC	High Court
HIJ	High Inspectorate of Justice
FI	Forensic Institute
JAC	Justice Appointments Council
HJC	High Judicial Council
HPC	High Prosecutorial Council
CoM	Council of Ministers
AAC	Albanian Adoption Committee
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoFE	Ministry of Finance and Economy
IMO	International Monitoring Operation
GPO	General Prosecutor Office
AP	Action Plan
OPC	Official Publications Center
CSJS	Cross-Sector Justice Strategy
SPAK	Special Anti-Corruption Structure
SoM	School of Magistrates
ICSSP	Internal Control Service in the System of Prisons
PS	Probation Service
DCM	Decision of Council of Ministers

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ON MONITORING THE CROSS-SECTOR JUSTICE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2019 – 2021, FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY–MARCH 2020.

The justice reform has come to a very important stage of its implementation. Several new institutions have been established and new ones are on their way soon. Regarding the institutions that operate in the justice system, they have been fully engaged in order to have a justice system in compliance with standards that a country in the process of opening negotiations with member countries of the European Union must have and must accomplish.

The Council of Ministers upon decision no.773, dated 2.11.2016, has adopted Cross-Sector Justice Strategy and its Action Plan. The **Mission** of this strategy is the successful implementation of reforms in the justice sector, in order to provide an effective, efficient, independent and transparent system in accordance with best European practices.

This document contains *eight high level strategic objectives*, which are:

1. Strengthening the independence, efficiency, effectiveness and accountability of the justice system institutions.
2. Consolidation of legal education and training as well as specialisation of magistrates and court personnel.
3. Guaranteeing efficiency, transparency and accessibility of the judicial system, and the right to due legal process in accordance with European standards.
4. Increasing the efficiency of criminal justice system and anti-corruption measures through the consolidation of the mission, status and functions of criminal justice institutions.
5. Improving the functioning of the justice system by providing modern electronic systems procedures and facilities for development of strong international cooperation.
6. Enhancement of the protection of human rights in penitentiary system.
7. Improving the functioning of the Ministry of Justice and its subordinate institutions of new or substantially changed institutions.
8. Improving the service quality of legal professions and establishing a legal framework for arbitration.

As to the above, in view of intensification the commitments on justice reform and its reflection in the implementation of Action Plan, Ministry of Justice has reviewed the Action Plan of Cross-Sector Justice Strategy, for the period 2019-2021. On this purpose, it was drafted the Passport of Indicators pursuant to the objectives of strategy. In June, the Council of Ministers upon decision no. 409, dated 19.06.2019 has adopted the Action Plan 2019-2021 of Cross-Sector Justice Strategy.

The methodology followed in the revision of Action Plan was the involvement of all responsible institutions identified in the previous Action Plan, the reception of their direct contributions and predictions in the drafting and implementation of measures. The foreseen measures have been framed on the basis of a concrete, tangible result and are cost-oriented. During the prediction of measures, it was applied the interconnectedness *objective-indicator-measure*. The objectives of the strategy have been organized and divided into sub-objectives, in order to enable a closer and more direct organization of measures and connected therewith. It has been applied the foreseen format of target measures/*milestones*.

The new Action Plan measures 2019-2021, pursuant to Cross-Sector Justice Strategy aim at intensifying organization and functioning of new justice bodies such as HJC, HPC, HIJ, JAC, SPAK and the Special Court, to deepen technical and professional formation of the justice system by means of continuous qualification of judges, prosecutors of the judicial administration or even enhancement of access to justice system, through establishment and functioning of Free Legal Aid.

The Action Plan 2019-2021, gives impetus to improvement of judiciary through introduction of IT administration systems and other improvements in infrastructure. The new justice bodies are foreseen to be better equipped with functional work tools and conditions.

Ministry of Justice and its subordinate institutions, part of the Action Plan 2019-2021, press ahead with concrete measures towards structural, organizational development and deepening of human and professional capacities, in order to enable obligations stemming from the strategy.

Free legal professions have become part of the Action Plan 2019-2021, with foreseen measures to be accomplished that came as a product of legal amendments that their laws sustained, in view of the Justice Reform.

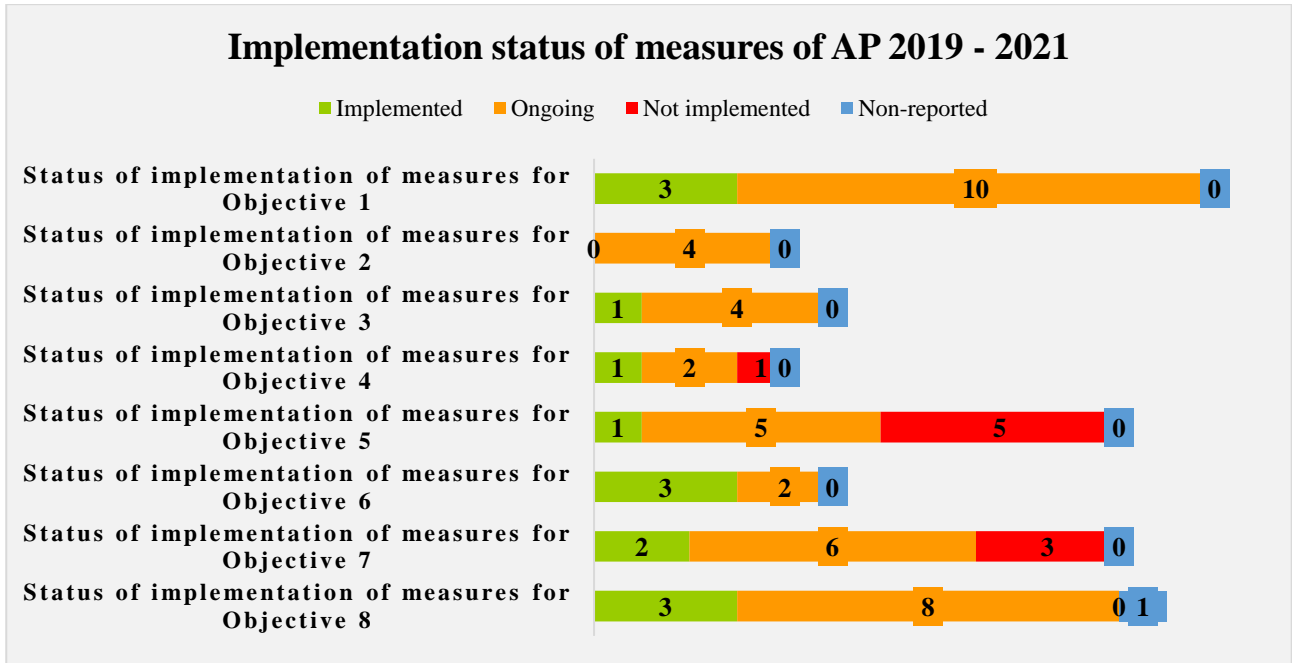
The Action Plan 2019- 2021, pursuant to Cross-Sector Justice Strategy consists in:

- ✓ 8 strategic objectives;
- ✓ 11 indicators from the Passport of Indicators;
- ✓ 7 tranche indicators of the European Union;
- ✓ 65 measures.

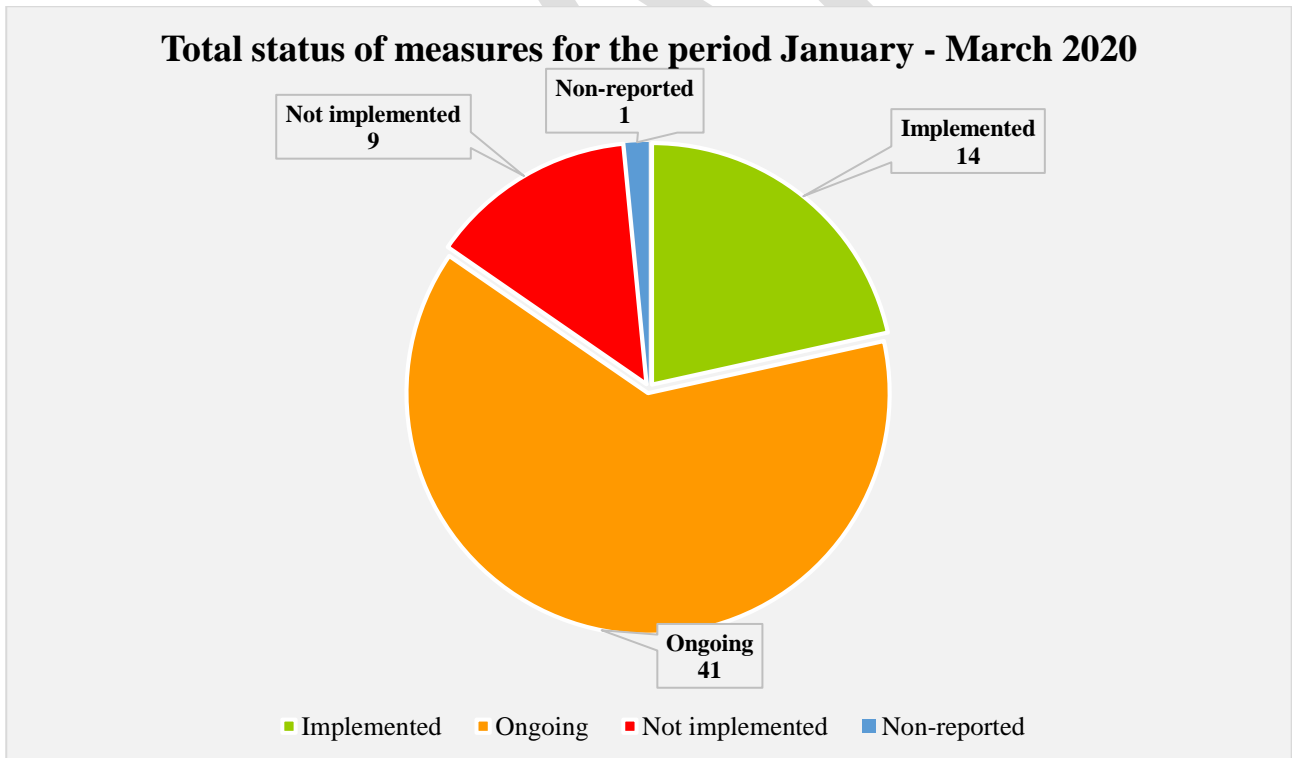
With the purpose of monitoring regarding the achievements, progress and/or challenges towards the accomplishment of strategy objectives, by contact points report was provided information from each responsible institution related to the implementation of CSJS. This report has been drafted in view of implementation of the Action Plan 2019 – 2021 and covers the progress during the period 1 January – 31 March 2020.

The Action Plan is composed of 8 aforementioned objectives and contains a total of 65 measures. The level of assessment and implementation status of the measures of CSJS is based upon the information submitted by each responsible unit. Ministry of Justice has conducted the assessment of information during April 2020. Based on an overall reporting assessment for the period January – March 2020, it results that the implementation level of the Action Plan measures is as follows:

Implementation Status of Measures according to Objectives



Total Progress of Measures of AP 2019 – 2021



For the period January – March 2020, out of 65 measures foreseen in the Action Plan 2019 – 2021, pursuant to Cross-Sector Justice Strategy, there are implemented 14 of them, 41 are ongoing, 9 measures are not implemented, as well as 1 measure is non-reported by the responsible

institution. The percentage against total progress of implementation of Action Plan 2019 – 2021 is at level 22% on measures that are implemented, 63% for ongoing measures, 14% on measures that will be carried out in the future by responsible institutions, as well as 2% on non-reported measures.

a. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ON JUSTICE SYSTEM REFORM

High Judicial Council

The High Judicial Council, during the period January-March 2020 has continued with greater activities for better service, efficiency and independence of courts as well as taking measures to solve the problem of missing judges and back log cases. This period of time is also characterized by the spread of COVID-19 Pandemic that brought serious consequences in the functioning of the judiciary, for which the HJC took a series of measures, that can be accessed at <http://klgj.al/covid-19/>.

1. The Supreme Court

HJC, after completing the sub-legal framework (Rules for criteria and procedure for promotion of magistrates in the High Court - decision no. 75, dated 23.05.2019; rules for criteria and procedure for the appointment of non-judges in the High Court - decision no. 102 dated 5.07.2019), opened the candidacy procedures for the High Court, from the ranks of prominent lawyers. At the end of the candidacy procedures for each of the vacancies announced, after verifying the legal conditions and criteria of candidacy for all competitors, as well as the evaluation according to the merits of the qualified candidates, the High Judicial Council decided to propose to the President The appointment of three candidates to the Republic, with decisions no. 110, 111 and 112 dated 27.2.2020, on the basis of which they were appointed as Judges of the High Court respectively with decrees no. 11452, 11453 and 11454, dated 11.03.2020, of the President of the Republic.

The High Judicial Council is following the procedure of verifying the legal conditions and criteria of candidacy for the candidate for the fourth position from the ranks of prominent lawyers, and decided at the meeting dated 26.2.2020 to open the procedure of promotion to the High Court, from the ranks of judges, to fill other vacancies in the High Court.

Decision no. 70, dated 07.02.2020 "On the criteria and procedures for the promotion of judges" paved the way for the promotion of judges in the High Court. Thus, with decisions no. 82, 83 and 84 dated 26.02.2020, it was decided to open the promotion procedure in the High Court, for three vacant positions in the field of administrative law, with decisions no. 85, 86 and 87, dated 26.02.2020, it was decided to open the procedure of promotion to the High Court, for three vacant positions in the field of civil law.

Regarding the reduction of the number of backlog cases and the increase of efficiency in the High Court, the Council with the decision No. 317 dated 19.12.2019, has approved the establishment of a temporary commission for drafting an action plan. In the face of the extraordinary number and long

time of pending cases to be reviewed and in compliance with the legal criteria for their adjudication, the General Meeting of Judges assessed that it will immediately proceed with the review of the records of the fundamental issues, from the criterion of the time of their submission for consideration to the High Court, in addition to other issues that by their nature and according to the law should be reviewed quickly, such as disputes over jurisdiction, competence, requirements for suspension of execution of decisions. The Civil, Administrative and Criminal College was also formed. Judges ArdianDvorani and Ervin Pupe have been appointed to the Civil College; Judge SokolSadushaj at the Administrative College and Judge Ilir Panda at the Criminal College.

2. Special Courts for the Judgment of Criminal Offenses of Corruption and Organized Crime

The process of putting into operation the Special Courts for the Trial of Criminal Offenses of Corruption and Organized Crime has been completed and their functioning has been announced by decision No. 286 dated 18.12.2019. The Council, with decisions no. 287-304, dated 18.12.2019 has permanently appointed 5 judges and temporarily 13 judges (pending the completion of their transitional assessment). Meanwhile, during 2020, the HJC has permanently appointed to the Court Special Appeals for Corruption and Organized Crime 5 judges and temporarily 1 judge. Meanwhile, in the Special Court of First Instance for Corruption and Organized Crime, 4 judges have been permanently appointed, as well as 6 judges temporarily. During this process, 9 judges were transferred to different courts (mainly due to their suspension according to the decision to dismiss the IQC).

Regarding the filling of other vacancies in this court, the HJC in the meeting of February 7, 2020, after a consultation with judicial bodies and international partners, approved with Decision no. 70, the criteria and procedures for promotion. judges. The purpose of this decision is to determine the detailed rules that will apply to the ranking of judges running for office, among others, the Special Courts for Corruption and Organized Crime. As a result, on 26 February 2020 the HJC called for the filling of vacancies in these courts, the deadlines of which were later suspended on 12 March 2020 due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. With the decision no. 142, dated 22.04.2020 "On the resumption of the activity of the High Judicial Council in the conditions of facilitating the measures taken to limit the spread of Covid-19", the HJC decided to resume the suspended administrative procedures, including for the establishment of duty in the High Court.

3. Transitional Reassessment Process

The HJC, in close cooperation with the Independent Qualification Commission, for the period January - March 2020 have organized 39 draws for the selection of files for 39 subjects of transitional re-evaluation. 11 detailed and reasoned reports have been submitted to the IQC and IMO, accompanied by 55 court files for 11 re-evaluation subjects and 7 more reports are in process. In total, taking into account the work done since the establishment of independent bodies of transitional re-evaluation of judges, until March 31, 2020, evaluation reports have been submitted to the IQC and IMO 221.

4. Ethical-professional evaluation of judges

The HJC, according to the constitutional provisions (Article 147 / that of the Constitution) and Articles 68-99 of Law no. 96/2016 "On the status of judges and prosecutors in the Republic of

Albania" as amended, has the obligation to conduct periodic ethical and professional evaluation of judges .

In this context, bylaws have been drafted for the implementation of this process with the aim (i) continuous improvement of the ethical and professional aspect of judges; (ii) establishing stable standards for the quality and quantity of judges' activity; (iii) developing a judge's career based on professional merit, identifying judges who have special professional skills, and (iv) identifying the need for professional training of judges in order to effectively plan the ongoing training process.

The creation of standards in the evaluation of judges' performance, carried out in close cooperation with international partners (Euralius and the Council of Europe), has been carried out taking into account 3 main acts adopted by the HJC and pertaining to the evaluation scheme. (Decision no. 263, dated 21.11.2019 "On the approval of the additional rules of evaluation of judges", no. 264, dated 21.11.2019 "On the approval of the" scoring methodology in order to determine the level of evaluation of the judge "and no. .120 dated 05.03.2020 "On the approval of the" integrated judge evaluation form ").

The Program for Ethical and Professional Assessment of Judges for 2020 has been approved by decision No. 276 dated 10.12.2019 and provides for the evaluation of 121 judges during 2020.

Taking into account the continuation of the natural disaster situation in the country created by COVID-19, the High Judicial Council took the decision to suspend the activity and judicial services in all courts in the Republic of Albania, except for urgent matters. Consequently, this will also affect the process of evaluating judges throughout 2020.

5. Measures against the spread of COVID-19

The HJC, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, took a number of regulatory measures:

- with decision No. 127, dated 10.03.2020, has decided to suspend the activity and judicial services in all courts in the Republic of Albania. Excluded from the effects of this suspension are the activity and judicial services related to urgent cases, assessed as such case by case by the judge,
- with decision no.135 dated 16.04.2020 decided to set up the Temporary Commission for drafting, proposing and supervising the implementation of a plan of measures for exercising the activity of judicial services in the safest possible way during the duration of the epidemic
- with decision no. 138 dated 16.04.2020 decided to make some changes in the budget of the HJC for 2020 in order to make these funds available to the Ministry of Finance and Economy, to cope with the Covid-19 epidemic.
- with decision no. 143 dated 22.04.2020 decided to resume the activity and judicial services in all courts in the Republic of Albania, on 27 April 2020, according to the restrictions defined in the Normative Act no. 9, dated 25.03.2020, "On taking special measures in the field of judicial activity, during the duration of the epidemic situation caused by COVID-19 ", approved by the Albanian Parliament on 16.04.2020.

Also, the Council approved with decision no. 141 dated 22.04.2020 "Regulation on taking restrictive measures for the dissemination of Covid - 19 during the exercise of the activity of the High Judicial Council".

The High Judicial Council with the decision of the Council no. 135, dated 16.04.2020, in order to draft, propose and supervise the implementation of a plan of organizational and administrative measures, in the situation of the epidemic caused by the COVID-19 virus, with its decision no. 142, dated 22.04.2020 "On the resumption of the activity of the High Judicial Council in the conditions of facilitating the measures taken to limit the spread of Covid-19" decided, among other things, the Resumption of suspended administrative proceedings:

- a) for promotion to the High Court;
- b) for promotion in special courts for corruption and organized crime;
- c) for the command in the Office of the High Inspector of Justice;
- ç) for the command in the School of Magistrates;
- d) for command in the Ministry of Justice.

6. Career of judges

Council, with decision no. 70, dated 07/02/2020 determined detailed rules for the criteria and procedure followed for the ranking of judges running for office according to Law no. 96/2016 "On the status of judges and prosecutors in the Republic of Albania", as amended. The rules of this decision are applicable to the ranking of judges who run and who meet the legal criteria for promotion to the following positions:

- a) a judge in the High Court, when he has one or more vacancies;
- b) a judge in the special courts for corruption and organized crime, when he has one or more vacancies;
- c) a judge in the Administrative Court of Appeal, when there are one or more vacancies, which are not filled through the parallel movement;
- ç) a judge in an appellate court of general jurisdiction, when he has one or more vacancies, which are not filled through the parallel movement.

A full verification process (similar to vetting) has been conducted by the Career Development Committee regarding the criteria of professional experience, assets and background for 76 applicants for various positions:

- 10 magistrate candidates who graduated from the School of Magistrates in 2018.
- 15 magistrate candidates who completed the School of Magistrates in 2019.
- 28 candidates who enrolled in the School of Magistrates in 2019.
- 23 candidates for judge in the High Court

7. Other

The Council has also approved the necessary rules (decision no. 22 and 23, dated 7.02.2019) on the criteria and procedure for the selection of magistrates and the period of service according to the mobility scheme; rules for notifications and methods for filling temporary vacancies (created by commands, transfers, promotions, etc.); for the organization and parallel transfer for magistrates; rules for criteria and procedure for promoting magistrates at higher levels, etc.

Regarding the process of appointment and appointment of magistrates who have completed the School of Magistrates in 2018 and 2019, this process has been completed and 10 magistrates graduated in 2018 have been appointed - decisions no. 145-154, dated 30/07/2019 and 15 graduate magistrates in 2019 (decisions no. 42 - 56 of the HJC, dated 29.01.2020).

HJC also, with decision no. 31, dated 23.01.2020 has determined the number of candidates that will be accepted in the initial training program at the School of Magistrates, for the academic year 2020-2021, where the number of candidates for magistrates, judicial profile, that after passing the professional test, will to be admitted to the initial training program at the School of Magistrates, for the academic year 2020-2021, is 40 (forty), while the number of candidates for counselors and legal assistants, who after passing the professional test, will be accepted to attend for a period of nine months the initial training program at the School of Magistrates, for the academic year 2020-2021, is 25 (twenty-five).

On February 5, 2020, the High Judicial Council, in close cooperation with USAID, activated the new website (www.klgj.al). The new page already fulfills the obligations defined in law no. 119/2014 "On the Right to Information" and law no. 115/2016 "On the governing bodies of the justice system", aims to establish proactive, transparent and informative relations with the public and the media.

During the first three months of 2020, the Council addressed 163 requests for the appointment of a judge in total, of which: 39 requests received from the district courts; 1 request from the administrative courts; 119 requests from the courts of appeals; as well as 4 requests received from the High Court) in response to which 240 judges have been appointed to adjudicate special court cases in different courts, from where they exercise the function permanently (of which 49 judges from the courts of judicial districts, 1 by the administrative courts of first instance and 189 by the courts of appeals general and special jurisdiction).

In the process, and in accordance with objective no. 3 of the Strategic Plan of the HJC "Ensuring the proper functioning of the courts, through the adoption of unified rules of court administration", the draft law is being prepared for the main procedural and material elements of the progress and review of disciplinary violations. In order to set standards that guarantee a more professional and ethical judicial system, the HJC is in the process of drafting this draft act, the focus of which is the definition of disciplinary bodies and procedures, as well as the clear definition of the main procedural elements and materials of progress and review of disciplinary violations.

High Prosecutorial Council

The HPC is one of the new governance institutions of the justice system, which was established in the framework of the judicial reform, following the amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, as well as the adoption of special laws regulating the organization and functioning of the constituent bodies of the justice system. Article 149 of the Constitution provides that the HPC is a collegial body consisting of 11 members, of which 6 members are elected from among the ranks of prosecutors of all levels and 5 members are elected by the Assembly from among lawyers. Accordingly, on 11 December 2018, the General Meeting of Prosecutors was held for the election of six members of the HPC, while the first HPC meeting was held on 19 December 2018, during which the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Council were elected. The HPC guarantees the independence, accountability, discipline, status and career of prosecutors of the Republic of Albania.

o On the procedure of establishing SPAK

During the reporting period, was taken the decision of confirmation in office of Mrs. DolorezaMusabelliu, as there was no complaint from the Public Commissioner. With the decision no. 29, dated 31.01.2020, the High Prosecution Council decided the appointment of a prosecutor in the SPAK of Mrs. DolorezaMusabelliu, who then took the oath of office in the Presidency. From this moment, this structure consists of nine members.

Regarding other candidates for SPAK prosecutor, for Mrs. Anita Jella, the decision of confirmation in office by the Independent Qualification Commission was taken on 10.12.2019 and was clarified on 10.02.2020. On 25.02.2020, the Public Commissioner filed an appeal against the decision of the IQC. The Special Appellate Panel is scheduled to set a date for the hearing.

Whereas, for Mr. Anton Martini, confirmed on 29.01.2020 by IQC, the decision was clarified on 24.03.2020. It is expected that the Public Commissioner will appeal the decision or not, within 15 days from the moment of notification.

Also, Prosecutor ManjolaKajana was confirmed by the IQC, but this decision was appealed by the Public Commissioner. On 06.03.2020 a public court session was held, where the Commissioner requested the opening of the judicial investigation and the receipt of the relevant evidence in function of the appeal. The Public Commissioner requested that the decision no. 162, dated 19.06.2019 of the Independent Qualification Commission. The SACH decided that the next session would be on 26.03.2020, but due to the situation created by the spread of the COVID-19 virus, it announced through the website, the postponement of this session. There is no scheduled date for prosecutor ElisabetaImeraj.

Also, HPC after announcing with Decision no. 19, dated 27.01.2020, the notification for the completion of the two vacancies in the Special Prosecution, which is fulfilled through the promotion procedure, also announced the criteria that must be met to be part of the competition. The criteria to be met by prosecutorial candidates were published on the HPC's official website.

Candidates who expressed interest, submitted the relevant documentation and with Decision no. 84, dated 18.03.2020, HPC approved the list of candidates for prosecutors, who meet the legal requirements, after preliminary evaluation. The number of candidates that will follow the race is 4 (four).

o Acts approved by the HPC in the period January-March 2020

The following decisions have been taken on issues related to the activity of the Career Development Commission:

- *36 Decisions of command and temporary appointment of prosecutors;*
- *1 Decision on the Command of a magistrate at the High Inspector of Justice;*
- *10 appointments of prosecutors;*
- *1 Discontinue command decision;*
- *2 Opinions and draft decisions for command purposes;*
- *2 Decisions and notification announcements for the purpose of filling places for Master's Degree Command at HPC and HIJ.*

The following decisions have been taken on issues related to the activity of the Ethics and Professional Activity Evaluation Commission:

- *10 Decisions on the approval of the Report on the verification of assets, figures and integrity as well as other legal conditions of graduate candidates in the School of Magistrates;*
- *3 Decisions on the approval of the Report on the verification of the assets and figures of the candidates to be accepted in the initial training in the School of Magistrates.*

- 10 Decisions on the approval of the Reports for the analysis of the professional and ethical skills of the subject of re-evaluation (prosecutor);
- 1 Decision on the verification of property and figure for magistrates, candidates to be commanded as inspectors at the High Inspector of Justice;
- 1 Decision on conducting property and figure verification for incumbent chancellors.

For issues related to the activity of the Commission for the Protection of Prosecutors, 5 decisions on special protection have been prepared and approved for five cases requested by prosecutors.

Two decisions were also taken to terminate the mandate of the member of HPC, for Mr. BesnikCani (Decision of HPC no. 76, dated 04.03.2020, after the acquaintance with Decision no. 2, dated 27.02.2020 of the Special Appellate Panel for his dismissal and the report prepared by the Disciplinary Commission) and for Mr. ArbenDollapaj (Decision of the HJC no. 90, dated 25.03.2020, after being acquainted with Decision no. 4, dated 12.03.2020 of the Special Appellate Panel for his dismissal and the report prepared by the Disciplinary Commission).

o Bylaws

Are in the process:

- Regulation "On the criteria and procedures for promotion to the highest levels and in the position of the head of the prosecution";
- Regulation "On the rules of evaluation, scoring and ranking of candidates in the procedure of parallel movement of prosecutors".

o Other activities

On 17.02.2020, the High Council of the Prosecution held the swearing-in ceremony of the new prosecutors, graduates of the School of Magistrates, for the academic year 2018-2019.

The ceremony was attended by members of the Council, the Ambassador of the European Union Delegation Mr. Luigi Soreca, representatives of the Embassy of the United States of America, EURALIUS, OPDAT, the General Prosecutor's Office, the High Judicial Council, the head of the Special Prosecutor's Office Mr. .ArbenKraja, as well as some of the heads of prosecutors in the districts.

The Justice Appointments Council

The Justice Appointments Council (JAC), pursuant to Article 149 / d of the Constitution, carries out the verification of the legal conditions and the evaluation of the professional and moral criteria of the candidates for High Inspector of Justice, as well as the candidates for members of the Constitutional Court. The Justice Appointments Council is made up of 9 members selected by lot, from among the ranks of judges and prosecutors. They exercise their mandate for one year.

On 15.01.2020, the first meeting of the Justice Appointments Council 2020 took place and took into consideration the issues as follows, with this agenda:

1. Establishment of the Judicial Appointments Council, with the composition chosen to exercise the constitutional and legal functions and responsibilities for the calendar year 2020.
2. Issues of support of the Judicial Appointments Council with budgetary means, administrative staff, facilities and work equipment from the High Court for 2020.

3. Information on existing vacancies for judges in the Constitutional Court which according to the Constitution are filled in by the President of the Republic, the Assembly and the High Court.

4. Lottery procedure for appointing rapporteur members to follow the procedures of verification, evaluation, scoring and ranking of candidates for vacancies as follows:

- Vacancies, early vacancies, in the Constitutional Court, announced on 28.08.2018 and re-announced on 21.08.2019 by the Assembly of the Republic of Albania, due to the premature termination of the mandate of Judge FatosLulo.

Appointed Relative Short: SaidaDollani.

- Vacancies, early vacancies, in the Constitutional Court, announced on 07.02.2018 and re-announced on 27.09.2019 by the President of the Republic, due to the premature termination of the mandate of Judge BesnikImeraj.

Appointed by Relators: ArtMarku.

- Vacancy, premature vacancy in the Constitutional Court, announced on 22.11.2019 by the President of the Republic due to the premature termination of the mandate of Judge BesnikMuçi.

Appointed Relators: Miranda Andoni.

Also, after organizing the lottery for the appointment of advisors in charge of supporting the actions of the rapporteurs for two of the vacancies, the results are as follows:

1. Advisor: BesmirRrapaj

- for following the actions in support of the rapporteur Miranda Andoni for the procedures of verification and evaluation of the candidacies of the candidates AltinBinaj, ArtanSpahiu and Gentian Mete, in the vacant position, early vacancy, in the Constitutional Court, announced on 22.11.2019 by the President of the Republic due to the premature termination of the mandate of Judge BesnikMuçi.

2. Advisor: FlorjanKalaja

- for following the actions in support of the rapporteur Miranda Andoni for the procedures of verification and evaluation of the candidacies of the candidates EugenPapandile, SonilaBejtja and ZhaklinaPeto, in the vacant position, early vacancy, in the Constitutional Court, announced on 22.11.2019 by the President of the Republic due to the premature termination of the mandate of Judge BesnikMuçi.

3. Councilor LauretaNezaj

- For following the actions in support of the rapporteur ArtMarku for the procedures of verification and evaluation of the candidacy of the candidate BesnikMuçi, in the vacant position, early vacancy, in the Constitutional Court, announced on 07.02.2018 and e-announced on 27.09.2019 by the President of the Republic, due to the premature termination of the mandate of Judge BesnikImeraj.
- for following the actions in support of the rapporteur Miranda Andoni for the procedures of verification and evaluation of the candidacies of the candidates DedëKasneci and SergjioMazreku, in the vacant position, early vacancy, in the

Constitutional Court, announced on 22.11.2019 by the President of the Republic for due to the premature termination of the mandate of Judge Besnik Muçi.

4. Counselor: Saimir Nazifi

- for following the actions in support of the rapporteur Miranda Andoni for the procedures of verification and evaluation of the candidacies of the candidates Sinan Tafaj and Shaqir Hasanaj, in the vacant position, early vacancy, in the Constitutional Court, announced on 22.11.2019 by the President of the Republic for due to the premature termination of the mandate of Judge Besnik Muçi.

The Judicial Appointments Council held its next meeting on 03.02.2020, with this agenda and continued with the discussion of the relevant points:

1. Review and approval of the draft decision “On some additions and changes to the decision no. 1, dated 08.02.2019 of the Judicial Appointments Council“ On the approval of the Internal Regulation on the Functioning of the Judicial Appointments Council ”;

2. Review and approval of the draft decision “On an addition to the decision no. 2, dated 15.02.2019 of the Judicial Appointments Council“ On the lottery procedure of assigning rapporteurs for vacant positions in each institution ”;

3. Review and approval of the draft decision “On some additions and changes to the decision no. 4, dated 11.03.2019 of the Judicial Appointments Council“ On the procedure of verification of candidates for vacant positions in the Constitutional Court and the High Inspector of Justice ”;

4. Review and approval of the draft decision “On some additions and amendments to decision no. 5, dated 02.04.2019 of the Judicial Appointments Council“ On the criteria and procedure for evaluation, scoring and ranking of candidates for vacant positions in the Constitutional Court and High Inspector of Justice ”;

5. Establishment of a working group for drafting the internal regulation regarding the duties of councilors and administrative staff of the High Court appointed to support the activity of the Council, for various administrative actions, for the creation and maintenance of registers, documentation, protocol , archives and for the administration of issues, to meet the declared commitment of JAC 2019 in Article 22 of the Rules of Procedure.

The Judicial Appointments Council held on 05.02.2020, its next meeting, continued with the discussion of the relevant points dated 03.02.2020 and finally approved:

1. The draft decision “On some additions and changes to the decision no. 1, dated 08.02.2019, of the Council of Judicial Appointments“ On the approval of the Internal Regulation for the functioning of the Council of Judicial Appointments ”;

2. The draft decision “On an addition to the decision no. 2, dated 15.02.2019, of the Council of Judicial Appointments“ On the lottery procedure of assigning rapporteurs for vacant positions in each institution ”.

The Judicial Appointments Council held its next meeting on 06.02.2020, continued with the discussion of the relevant points dated 03.02.2020 and finally approved:

1. Draft-decision “On some additions and changes to the decision no. 4, dated 11.03.2019 of the Judicial Appointments Council“ On the procedure of verification of candidates for vacant positions in the Constitutional Court and the High Inspector of Justice ”;

2. Draft Decision “On some additions and changes to the decision no. 5, dated 02.04.2019 of the Judicial Appointments Council“ On the criteria and procedure of evaluation, scoring and ranking of candidates for vacant positions in the Constitutional Court and the High Inspector of Justice ”;

3. The Council also instructed the President to prepare, within one month, with the support of the legal advisers of the High Court appointed to support the activity of the Council, the draft internal regulation on the duties of councilors and administrative staff of the Court. the High Council appointed to support the activity of the Council, to carry out various administrative actions, to create, circulate, maintain and maintain documentation and records, protocol, archives and the system of administration of affairs.

Due to the situation in the country, there are no other developments.

The High Inspector of Justice

Pursuant to the following Article 147 / d, of the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, Chapter IV, of Law no. 115/2016 “On the Governing Bodies of the Justice System”, as amended, Decision no. 2/2020, of the Assembly of the Republic of Albania “On the election of God ArturMetani, High Inspector of Justice” from 1.02.2020, the institution of the High Inspector of Justice (HIJ) was established.

In order to fulfill its constitutional duties, the High Inspector of Justice has immediately taken the necessary measures for the organization and function of this new institution. This process is being accompanied with the identification of financial costs, the provision of budget funds, the design of organizational personnel structures, the recruitment of staff, and the provision of the necessary infrastructure for its operation.

The High Inspector of Justice, during the period 01.02.2020 - 30.03.2020, although in the absence of human resources, has undertaken administrative actions related to the review, verification, as well as the investigation of claims filed by regarding actions or omissions of magistrates, which may constitute disciplinary violations.

Specifically, the High Inspector of Justice is in the process of administering and reviewing the initial volume of complaints regarding the activity of magistrates, which were submitted during the transitional period 2017-2020 to the High Judicial Council, or the General Prosecutor's Office. HIJ also from 01.02.2020, the date on which the beginning of its activity is considered, is administering all the complaints submitted to it by natural or legal persons.

The progress of these processes has slowed down because the institution of the High Inspector of Justice has faced a lack of human resources due to the suspension of employee recruitment procedures by the Department of Public Administration as a result of COVID-19 global pandemic, as and lack of inspectors. Currently, only two magistrates are commanded by the Councils at the

Office of the High Inspector of Justice. At the same time, the suspension of the activity of the courts has affected the creation of delays in providing the necessary documentation by them.

For this purpose, all the first actions have been performed for the registration of the new institution at the tax authorities, the provision of identification tools, the registration and publication of the domain (ILD.al), the hosting of the official website of the institution (www.ILD.al) , as well as the provision of an official e-mail account.

In order to start the activity of the institution as soon as possible in support of article 283, point 7, of law no. 115/2016 “On the Governing Bodies of the Justice System”, as amended, as well as Law no. 88, dated 18.12.2019 “On the budget of 2020”, the High Inspector of Justice in cooperation with the Department of Public Administration and the Ministry of Finance and Economy has approved a temporary organizational and organic structure with 40 employees, for whom they have been announced. and their recruitment procedures are underway.

At the same time, in order to exercise full organic activity in support of Article 197, point 4, of law no. 115/2016 “On the Governing Bodies of the Justice System”, as amended, by the High Inspector of Justice was sent for review and approval to the Assembly of the Republic of Albania the structure and number of employees of the Office of the High Inspector of Justice.

In the framework of staff recruitment procedures, the High Inspector of Justice in support of Article 283, point 2, of law no. 115/2016 “On the governing bodies of the justice system”, as amended, as well as Decision no. 536, dated 25.7.2019, of the Council of Ministers "On the creation of conditions for the High Inspector of Justice to verify the fulfillment of legal conditions and criteria, verification of the figure and assets of non-registrant candidates for the position of inspector", has announced opening the application procedure in order to fill the vacant inspector positions (non-registration) at the Office of the High Inspector of Justice.

Also, in support of article 211, point 2, article 204, point 1, letters "c" and "k", of law no. 115/2016 “On the governing bodies of the justice system”, as amended, by Order no. 7, dated 04.03.020, of the High Inspector of Justice, the Regulation “On the procedure and criteria for evaluation, scoring and ranking of non-registrant candidates for the position of inspector at the Office of the High Inspector of Justice” was approved.

Pursuant to Article 283, point 10, of law no. 115/2016 “On the Governing Bodies of the Justice System”, as amended, as well as Article 168 of Law no. 96/2016 “On the status of Judges and Prosecutors in the Republic of Albania”, as amended, the High Inspector of Justice has requested from the High Judicial Council and the High Prosecution Council to identify the inspectors, who will be considered as commanded at the Office of the High Inspector of Justice because they have the status of magistrate and have been assigned to conduct disciplinary investigations.

At the same time, pursuant to Article 53, point 2, Articles 54 and 55, of Law no. 96/2016 “On the Status of Judges and Prosecutors in the Republic of Albania”, as amended, the High Inspector of Justice has submitted a request for initiating procedures for commanding the position of inspector for a period of five years at the Office of the High Inspector of Justice. of 6 (six) magistrate judges;

5 (five) prosecutor's magistrates; as well as 1 (one) prosecutor's magistrates as assistant magistrates at this office.

Following the request submitted by the High Inspector of Justice, the High Judicial Council with Decision no. 69, dated 07.02.2020, has temporarily commanded as an inspector in the Office of the High Inspector of Justice, the magistrate Mrs. MarselaPepi, as well as at the meeting of 26.02.2020, has decided to open the command procedure from the ranks of judges for 6 inspector positions, in the office of the High Inspector of Justice.

The High Council of the Prosecution with Decision no. 37, dated 05.02.2020, has announced the start of the procedure for completing 4 (four) positions at the Office of the High Inspector of Justice through the command procedure, as well as with the decision no. 77, dated 04.03.2020, was commanded by Mrs. MirelaKapo, prosecutor at the Kruja Court of First Instance, in the position of assistant magistrate at the Office of the High Inspector of Justice.

Based on the legal provisions that the High Inspector of Justice is the authority responsible for verifying complaints and investigating disciplinary violations, based on Article 119 et seq., Of Law no. 96/2016 “On the Status of Judges and Prosecutors in the Republic of Albania”, as amended, the High Inspector of Justice has requested from the High Judicial Council, the High Council of the Prosecution, the General Prosecutor's Office, and the Ministry of Justice to send at the Office of the High Inspector of Justice:

Complaints filed by any natural or legal person regarding the claim of violations committed by magistrates;

(During the period 23.01.2020- 30.03.2020 it turns out that 229 complaints were submitted in total, and based on them a letter of confirmation was returned (229 such), each complainant on receiving the complaint and its review by the High Inspector of Justice).

- Disciplinary files in the investigation process;
- Ascertained problems related to the fulfillment of the functional duties of the Office of the High Inspector of Justice;
- Issues related to thematic and institutional inspections according to the requirements of Article 194, point 4, of Law no. 115/2016 “On the Governing Bodies of the Justice System”, as amended.
-

Regarding the decisions approved by the High Inspector of Justice, regarding the complaints submitted to the HLC, it turns out that they have been approved:

- 2 verification decisions after the initial review of complaints;
- 7 archiving decisions after the initial review of complaints.

○ *Evaluation process and the progress of re-evaluation institutions*

- ✚ **The Independent Qualification Commission** is a new constitutional body with a 5 year mandate, established with the new amendments to the constitution, as part of the package of justice reform with regard to the establishment of an independent and professional system free of corruption. The Parliament of Albania upon decision no. 82/2017, dated 17.6.2017,

adopted en bloc the list with 12 commissioners. The activity of the commission is based on the constitution of the Republic of Albania and the law no.84/2016 “On transitory re-evaluation of judges and prosecutors in the Republic of Albania”. The purpose of the law is the transitory re-evaluation of judges and prosecutors (re-evaluation subjects) in the Republic of Albania.

The Commission evaluates the cases of re-evaluation subjects in 4 adjudication panels composed of 3 members each, based on three criteria:

- a) Asset evaluation;
- b) Background evaluation;
- c) Proficiency evaluation.

In total, until 31 March 2020, the Independent Qualification Commission has issued **25 decisions**, out of which:

- ✓ 7 decisions on confirmation on duty of 5 judges, 2 prosecutors ;
- ✓ 7 decisions on dismissal from duty of 6 judges and 1 prosecutor ;
- ✓ 11 decisions on process interruption for 7 judges , 2 prosecutors, 1 legal assistant and 1 inspector of HIJ (Ndue Gjura).

During the reporting period 24 hearing sessions.

- ✚ **The Special Appeal Chamber** continues to exercise its function in the re-evaluation process of judges and prosecutors, after the filing of complaint by re-evaluation subjects or the Public Commissioner against the decisions of the Independent Qualification Commission. The Special Appeal Chamber is the only judicial body, to hear appeals filed by the re-evaluation subjects or the Public Commissioner against decisions of the Independent Qualification Commission.

Until 31 March 2020, the Special Appeal Chamber has announced 5 decisions. Out of 5 cases who have terminated, the Appeal Chamber has decided on:

- i. Upholding of the Decision of Independent Qualification Commission – **in 2 decisions;**
- i. Amendment of the decision of Independent Qualification Commission, by deciding the dismissal from duty of the re-evaluation subject – **in 3 decisions (1 decision belongs to 2018);**

Public participation denouncing facts is provided for under Article 53 of Law No. 84/2016. In this context, during 01.01.2020 – 31.03.2020 in Special Appeal Chamber there have been registered and treated **63** denunciations.

- ✚ **The Institution of Public Commissioners** as representative of public interest during the justice reform process exercises the following competences:

- a. Files a complaint to the Appeal Chamber at the Constitutional Court on decisions of the Independent Qualification Commission, 15 days after the notification (article 63 of the law no. 84/2016).
- b. Prepares a written report including reasons for rejection concerning non-implementation of recommendations of the International Monitoring Operation (IMO) in order to file a

complaint to the Appeal Chamber(constitutional annex, article B “International Monitoring Operation).

- c. Approves rules on activity of the institution (article 69/3 of the law no. 84/2016).

During January–march 2020, the Institution of Public Commissionershas been notified from the Independent Qualification Commission (IQC) on**26decisions and 4 decisions notified by the end of 2019, in total 30 decisions.**3of them have been subject to complaint and for27others have been decided non-complaint¹.

In the public denunciation register for January–march 2020, there have been registered **72denunciations.**

By-laws and normative acts adoptedby the Public Commissioner`s Meeting.

Regulation On the activity of the Institution of Public Commissioners.

- Internal Administrative Rules of Procedure of the Institution of Public Commissioners.
- Regulation On the Prevention of Conflicts of Interest, and Disclosure of Assets in the Exercise of Public Functions at the Institution of Public Commissioners, as amended by the Decision of the Meeting of Public Commissioners No. 7, of 16 December 2019.
- Regulation On the protection, processing, storage and security of personal data in the Institution of Public Commissioners, as amended by the decision of the Meeting of Public Commissioners No. 2, of 15 February 2019.
- Regulation On the media.

Ministry of Justice has facilitated the re-evaluation process in three main directions:

- ensuring necessary infrastructure for the re-evaluation bodies;
- ensuring financial means for re-evaluation bodies;
- cooperating with vetting bodies on requests for information submitted in view of the process of professional re-evaluation of re-evaluation subjects that is being conducted by these bodies.

In light of the above, for the period of January – march 2020, the Ministry of Justice has administered the documents received from the Independent Qualification Commission, the External Evaluation Commission, and the Special Appeals Chamber, requesting information from the Electronic Register of Notaries (ERN) for the notarial deeds carried out at the notary offices of the Republic of Albania by the vetting subjects , in total **84** requests for information.

Following the searches in the ERN, for each application, the Ministry of Justice has made available the list of notaries where the subject has performed notarial acts, pursuant to Law No. 110/2018 On the Notary.

¹In the column non-complaint there have been included 4 decisions ofIQC, notified by the end of December 2018, for which decision making has been taken in January 2019.

II. METHODOLOGY OF MONITORING

Pursuant to the Order of the Prime Minister No. 166, of 5 October 2017 On the Approval of Structure and Organization of the Ministry of Justice, the Sector of Monitoring, Priorities Delivery and Statistics has been set up at the Ministry of Justice at the Directorate of Justice Policy and Strategies, which is the responsible structure for monitoring the process and for drafting Strategic Monitoring Reports. The Monitoring, Implementation of Priorities and Statistics Sector coordinates with all responsible institutions, and then proceeds with the drafting of the monitoring report. This report covers the period from 1 January 2020 to 31 March 2020 and is drawn up on the basis of the input from all institutions included in the CJS Action Plan. The goal is to have overarching information on the progress and the challenges towards meeting the objectives of the Strategy.

Each institution has reported on the level of implementation of each objective and activity, the budget allocated, the problems encountered and the evaluation of the progress of the Strategy as a whole. In order to monitor the implementation of the undertaken commitments regarding implementation of the measures, the monitoring process has been carried out at the objective level. Verification of reported data has partially been carried out online, for those measures for which the contact points had reported upon, in order to ensure their accuracy. Statistical processing was performed by coding responses based on the reports collected.

Following drafting of the draft report, the Ministry of Justice, in support of the monitoring process, sends the consultation document to the reporting institutions, civil society, and publishes the draft report at the official website of the Ministry of Justice, which includes an e-mail address for receiving comments. At the end of the consultation process, the Ministry of Justice reflects relevant comments/suggestions on the draft monitoring report before having it approved by the Institutional Monitoring Mechanism/Steering Committee on Justice Reform.

Pursuant to DoCM No. 773, of 2 November 2016, on the adoption of the Cross-sector Justice Strategy and its Action Plan, the Ministry of Justice has managed the institutional mechanism for monitoring the Cross-sector Justice Strategy. The institutional mechanism for monitoring this Strategy is realized through a special structure, which consists of:

- The Deputy Minister of Justice;
- 5 representatives from the Ministry of Justice;
- 1 representative from the Ministry of Finance and Economy;
- 1 representative from the Council of Ministers covering issues of coordination of strategic documents;
- 1 representative from the High Judicial Council;
- 1 representative from the High Prosecutorial Council;
- 1 representative from the High Inspectorate;
- 1 representative from the Constitutional Court;

- 1 representative from the Office of the General Prosecutor;
- 1 representative from the School of Magistrates
- 1 representative from the National Bar Chamber;
- 1 representative from the National Notary Chamber;
- 1 representative from the National Chamber of the Private Bailiff Service;
- 1 representative from the National Chamber of Mediators.

During February 2018, all of the above institutions have designated their representatives in the monitoring mechanism. This mechanism evaluates and approves the periodic Monitoring Reports, in implementation of the Cross-sector Justice Strategy.

Furthermore, pursuant to the Prime Minister's Order No. 157, of 22 October 2018 On Adoption of Measures to Implement the Sector-wide/Cross-sector Approach, as well as Establishment and Operation of the Integrated Sector/Cross-sector Mechanism, five Sector Steering Committees have been established. More specifically, establishment of the Sector Steering Committee (SCC) for Justice Reform is foreseen for the Ministry of Justice.

The Sector Steering Committee on Justice Reform is chaired by the Minister of Justice and its membership is composed of the:

- o Minister of Justice;
- o Minister of Interior;
- o Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs;
- o Minister of Finance and Economy;
- o Secretary General of the Council of Ministers;
- o The Cabinet of the Prime Minister (ZOS, Advisers);
- o Department of Development and Good Governance, at the Prime Minister's Office;
- o Department of Resources, Transparency and Administration, at the Prime Minister's Office.

Invitees are: Representatives from the Assembly, HPC, HJC, JAC, GPO, SoM, HIDAACI, Ombudsman, National Chambers (of Advocates, Notaries, Mediators, Bailiffs), Donor/Focal Point for the relevant field etc., as well as others, according to decision-making by the head of SCC.

The SSC will provide a high-level management structure related to:

- o High-level political and managerial decision-making in planning and monitoring of sectoral reforms, policies and strategic framework;
- o Coordination of planning, programming and monitoring for the sectors involved, by

organizing regular dialogue with development partners;

o Provision of support in the context of the European Union accession process;

o Government policy dialogue with development partners, local government, civil society and the private sector, implementation of measures within the relevant field and sectors, and promotion and support of coordinated initiatives.

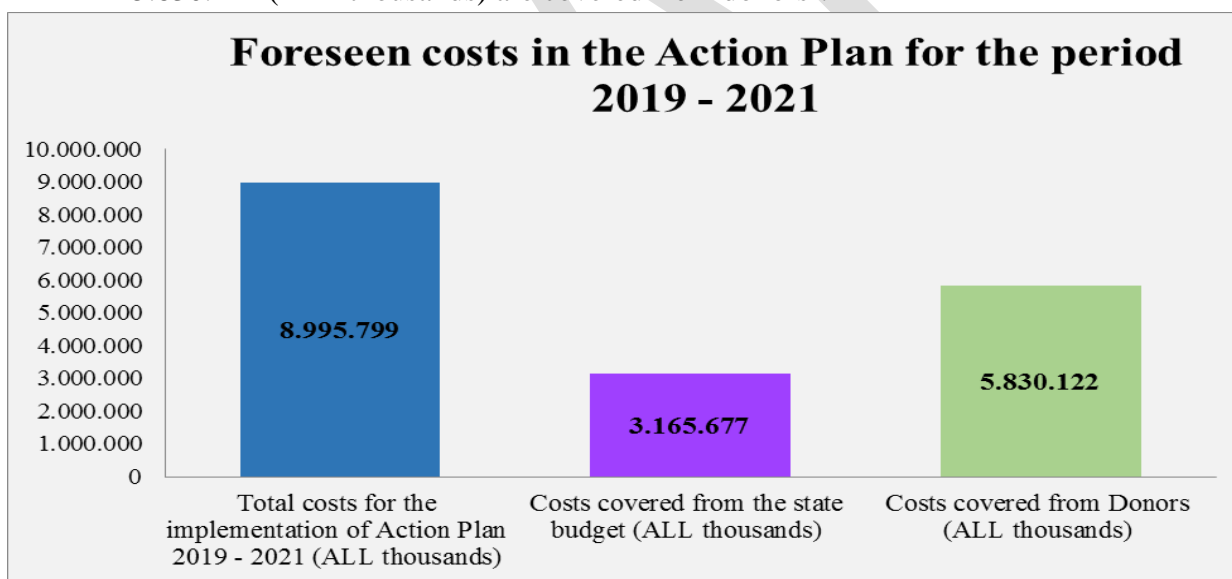
In the context of European integration, these structures will play the role of the Sectoral Monitoring Committee for IPA projects, ensuring reporting of IPA funds monitoring, by sectors.

III. FINANCIAL DISBURSEMENT

The overall cost for the implementation of the Action Plan 2017-2021 on Justice Sector Reform had been estimated at 98,385,653 Euro. In view of deepening the commitment for implementing the Justice Reform and its reflection in the implementation of the Action Plan, Ministry of Justice has reviewed the Action Plan of Cross-Sector Justice Strategy for the period 2019 - 2021. Afterwards, the Council of Ministers upon decision no. 409, dated 19.06.2019 adopted the Action Plan 2019-2021 of Cross-Sector Justice Strategy.

As to the foreseen costs of the Action Plan 2019 – 2021, it results that:

- 3.165.677 (ALL thousands) are covered from the state budget;
- 5.830.122 (ALL thousands) are covered from donors².



² The budgeting of measures on free legal professions will be covered by own revenues of Chambers, as self-funded private entities.

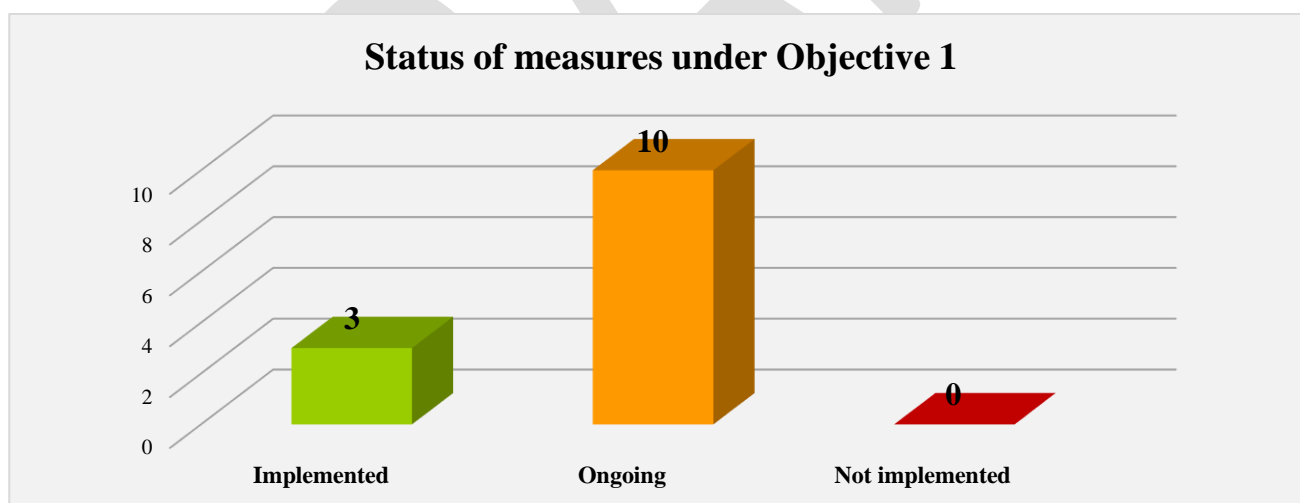
IV. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS ACCORDING TO OBJECTIVES

This chapter describes the progress achieved in view of the accomplishment of each objective of the strategy and reflects graphically the implementation status of the strategy during January – September 2019³.

Objective 1: Strengthening the independence, efficiency, effectiveness and accountability of the justice system institutions.

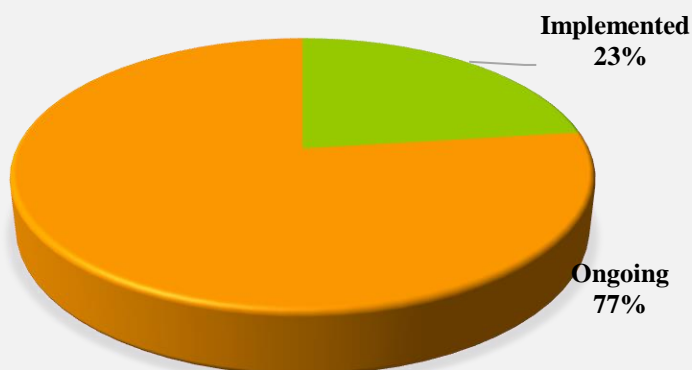
Number of measures under implementation according to Objective 1

January – March 2020		
Implementation status of measures under Objective 1	Number of measures	Percentage to the total of Objective 1
Implemented	3	23%
Ongoing	10	77%
Not implemented	0	0%
Total	13	100%



³The Action Plan and progress for each objective is reflected in annex 2 of the Monitoring Report.

Percentage to the status of measures



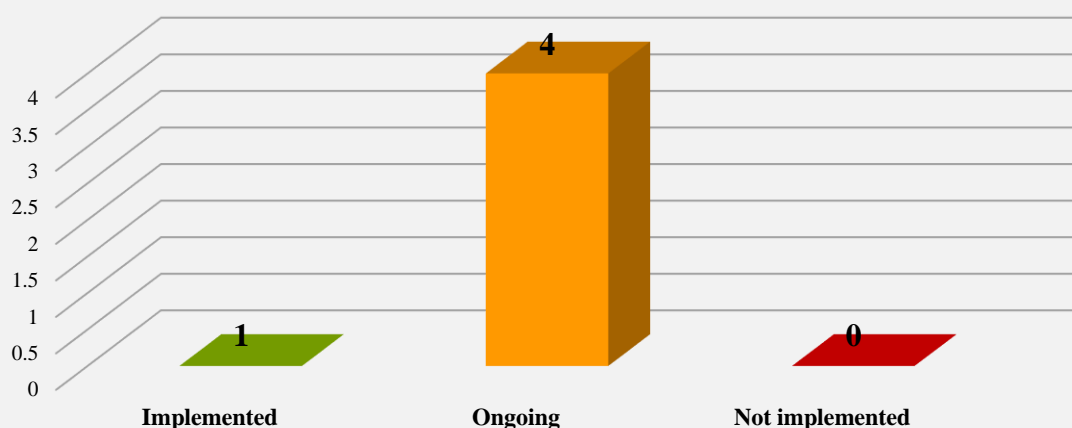
It results that from 13 measures foreseen in the Action Plan of the Strategy for objective 1, 3 of them are implemented, 10 are still ongoing. The percentage against the total progress of implementation of the Action Plan 2019 - 2021 for this objective is 23% for the implemented measures, and 77% for ongoing measures.

Objective 2: Consolidation of legal education and training as well as specialisation of magistrates and court personnel.

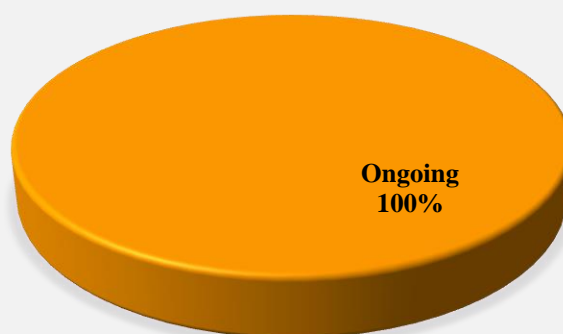
Number of measures under implementation according to Objective 2

January – March 2020		
Implementation status of measures under Objective 2	Number of measures	Percentage to the total of Objective 2
Implemented	0	0%
Ongoing	4	100%
Not implemented	0	0%
Total	4	100%

Status of measures under Objective 2



Percentage to the status of measures



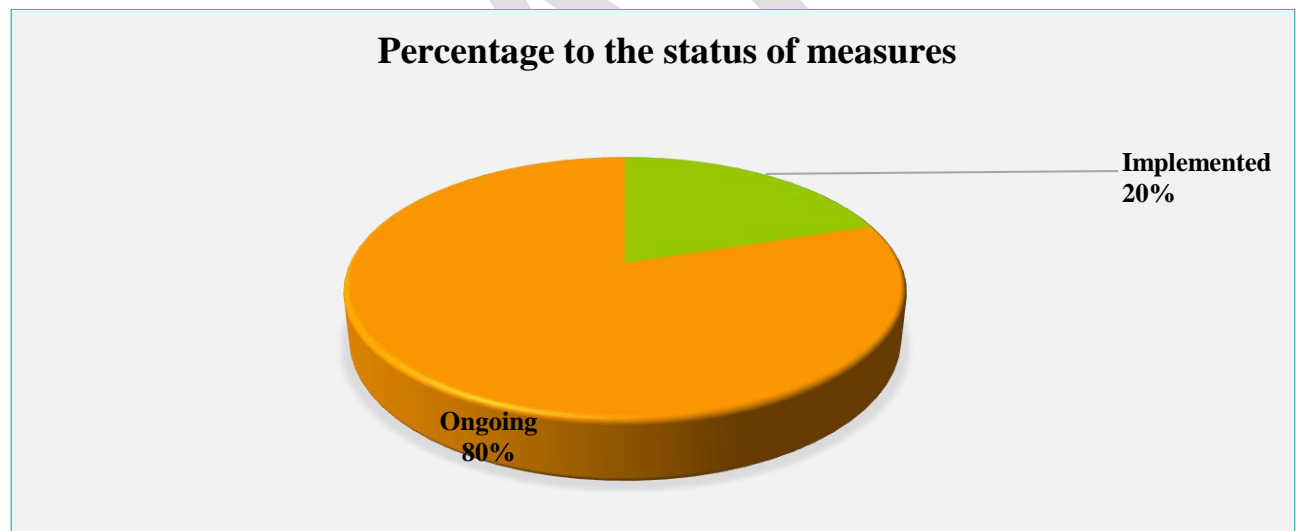
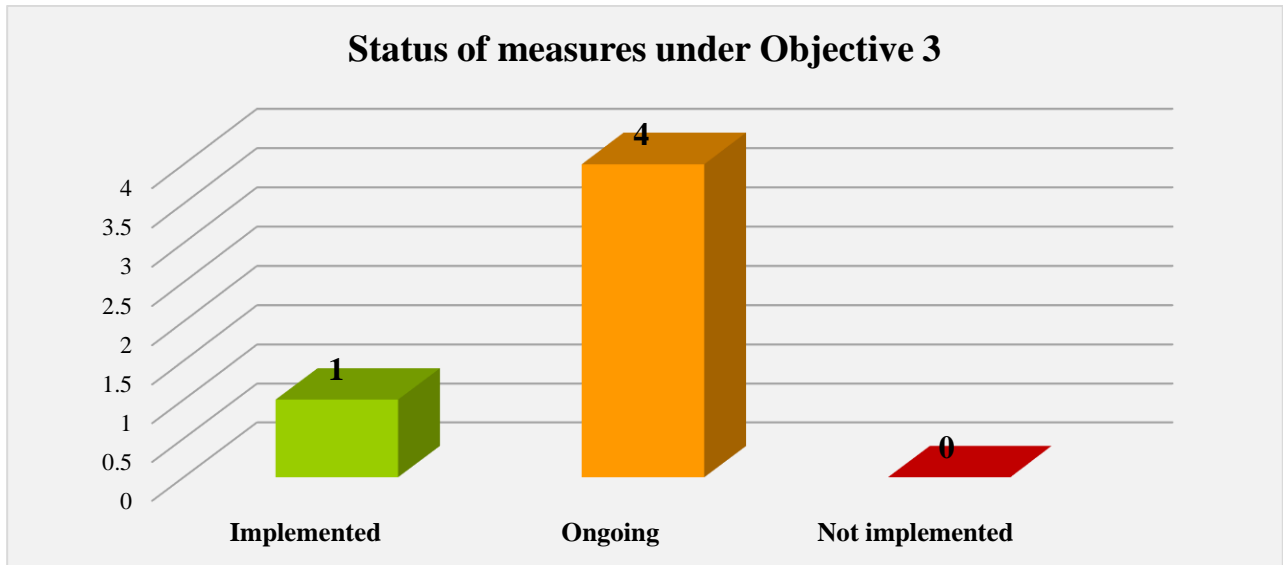
It results that from 4 measures foreseen in the Action Plan of the Strategy for objective 2, all 4 of them are still ongoing. The percentage against the total progress of implementation of the Action Plan 2019 - 2021 for this objective is 100% for ongoing measures.

Objective 3: Guaranteeing efficiency, transparency and accessibility of the judicial system, and the right to due legal process in accordance with European standards.

Number of measures under implementation according to Objective 3

January – March 2020		
Implementation status of measures under Objective 3	Number of measures	Percentage to the total of Objective 3
Implemented	1	20%

Ongoing	4	80%
Not implemented	0	0%
Total	5	100%



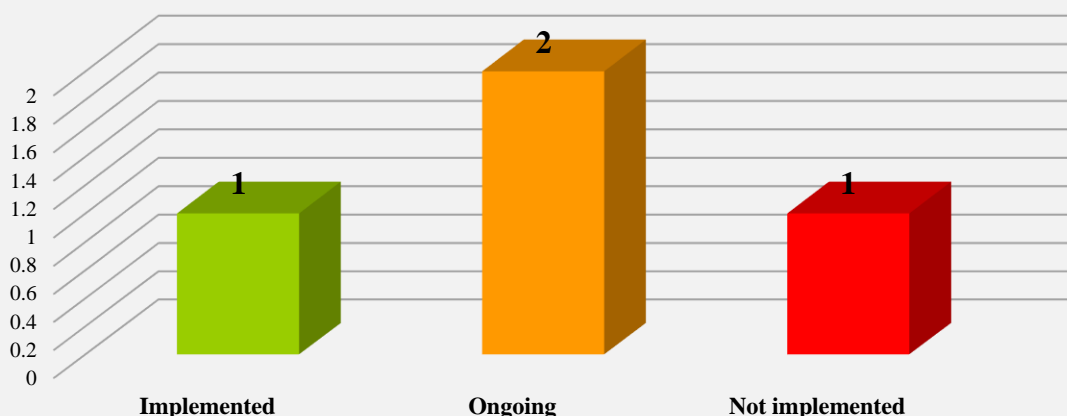
It results that from 5 measures foreseen in the Action Plan of the Strategy for objective 3, 1 of them is implemented, 4 of them are still ongoing. The percentage against the total progress of implementation of the Action Plan 2019 - 2021 for this objective is 80% for ongoing measures and 20% for implemented measures.

Objective 4: Increasing the efficiency of criminal justice system and anti-corruption measures through the consolidation of the mission, status and functions of criminal justice institutions.

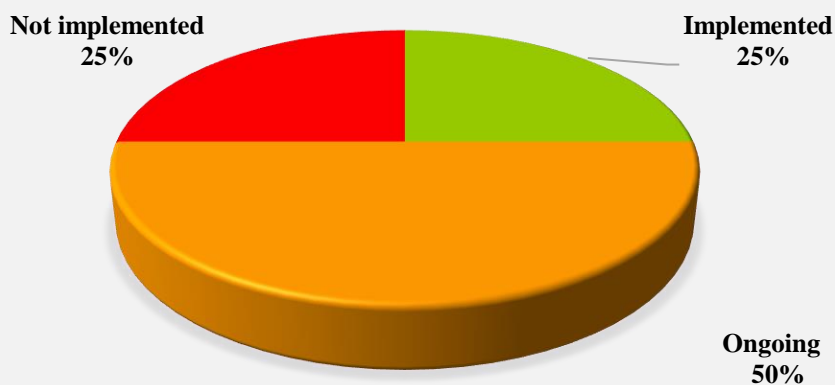
Number of measures under implementation according to Objective 4

January – March 2020		
Implementation status of measures under Objective 4	Number of measures	Percentage to the total of Objective 4
Implemented	1	25%
Ongoing	2	50%
Not implemented	1	25%
Total	4	100%

Status of measures under Objective 4



Percentage to the status of measures

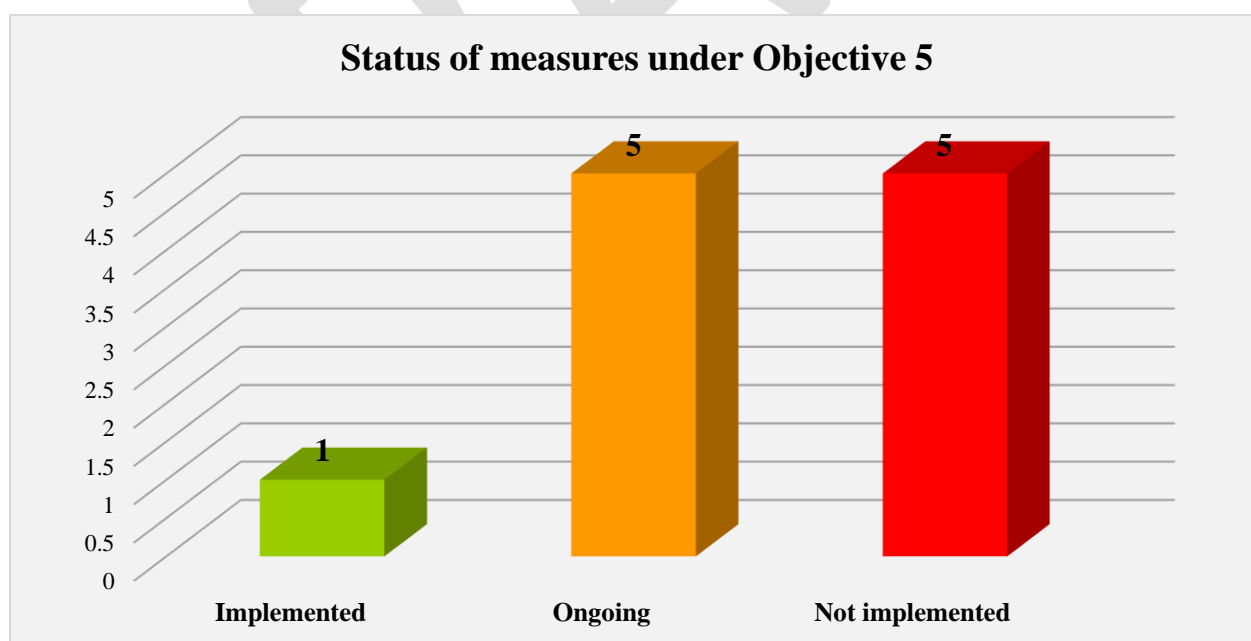


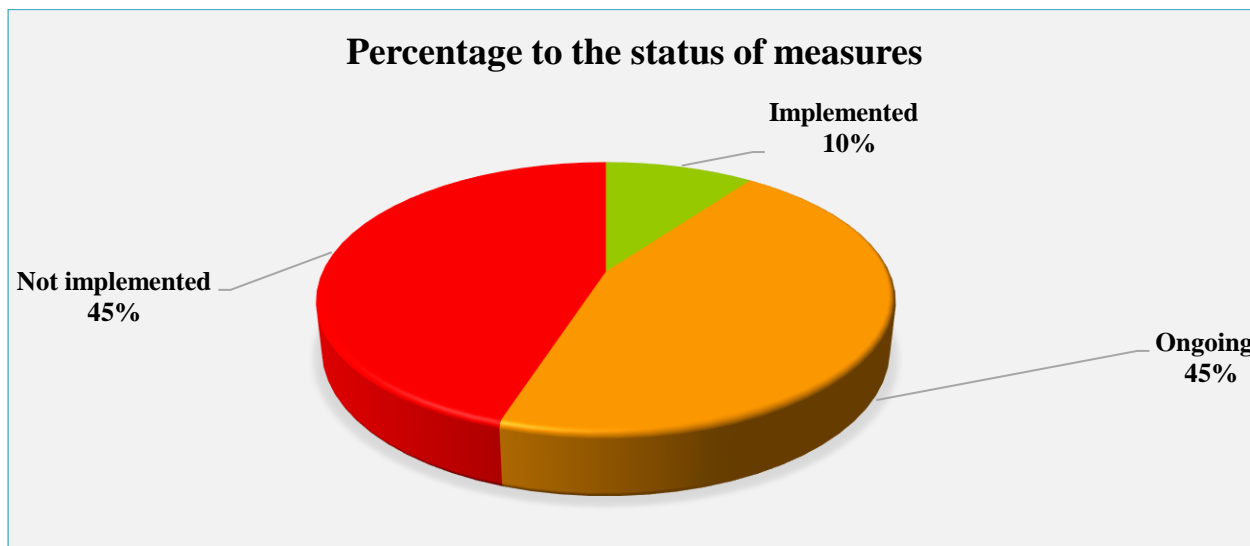
It results that from 4 measures foreseen in the Action Plan of the Strategy for objective 4,1 of them is implemented, 2 are still ongoing, as well as 1 measure is not implemented by the responsible institution. The percentage against the total progress of implementation of the Action Plan 2019 - 2021 for this objective is 25% for implemented measures, 50% for ongoing measures and 25% for measure that will start to be carried out in the future by the responsible institution.

Objective 5: Improving the functioning of the justice system by providing modern electronic systems procedures and facilities for development of strong international cooperation.

Number of measures under implementation according to Objective 5

January – March 2020		
Implementation status of measures under Objective 5	Number of measures	Percentage to the total of Objective 5
Implemented	1	10%
Ongoing	5	45%
Not implemented	5	45%
Total	11	100%





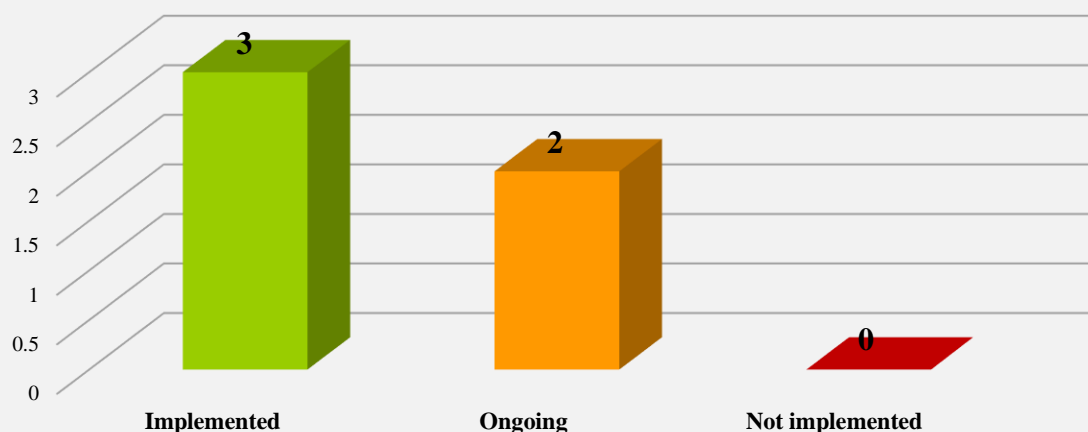
It results that from 11 measures foreseen in the Action Plan of the Strategy for objective 5, 1 of them are implemented, 5 are still ongoing, as well as 5 measures are not implemented by the responsible institutions. The percentage against the total progress of implementation of the Action Plan 2019 - 2021 for this objective is 10% for implemented measures, 45% for ongoing measures and 45% for measures that will start to be carried out in the future by the responsible institutions.

Objective 6: Enhancement of the protection of human rights in penitentiary system.

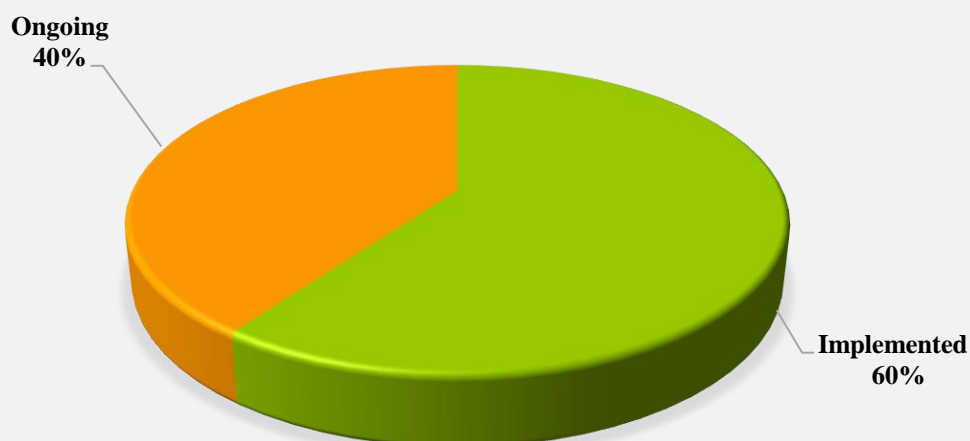
Number of measures under implementation according to Objective 6

January – March 2020		
Implementation status of measures under Objective 6	Number of measures	Percentage to the total of Objective 6
Implemented	3	60%
Ongoing	2	40%
Not implemented	0	0%
Totali	5	100%

Status of measures under Objective 6



Percentage to the status of measures



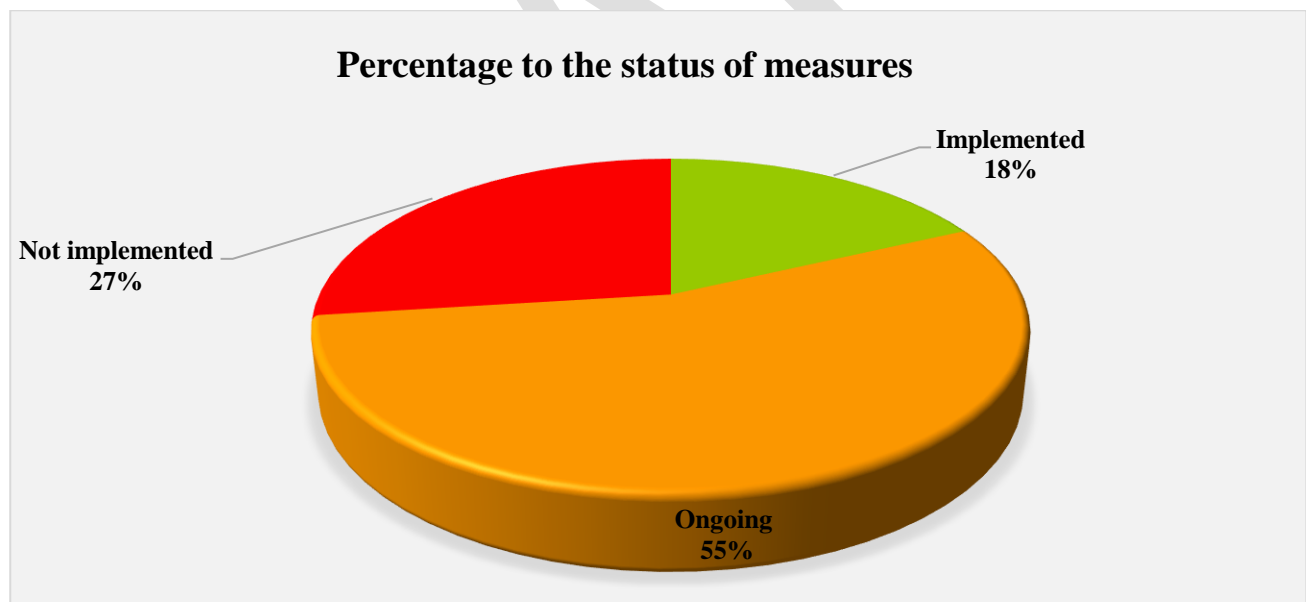
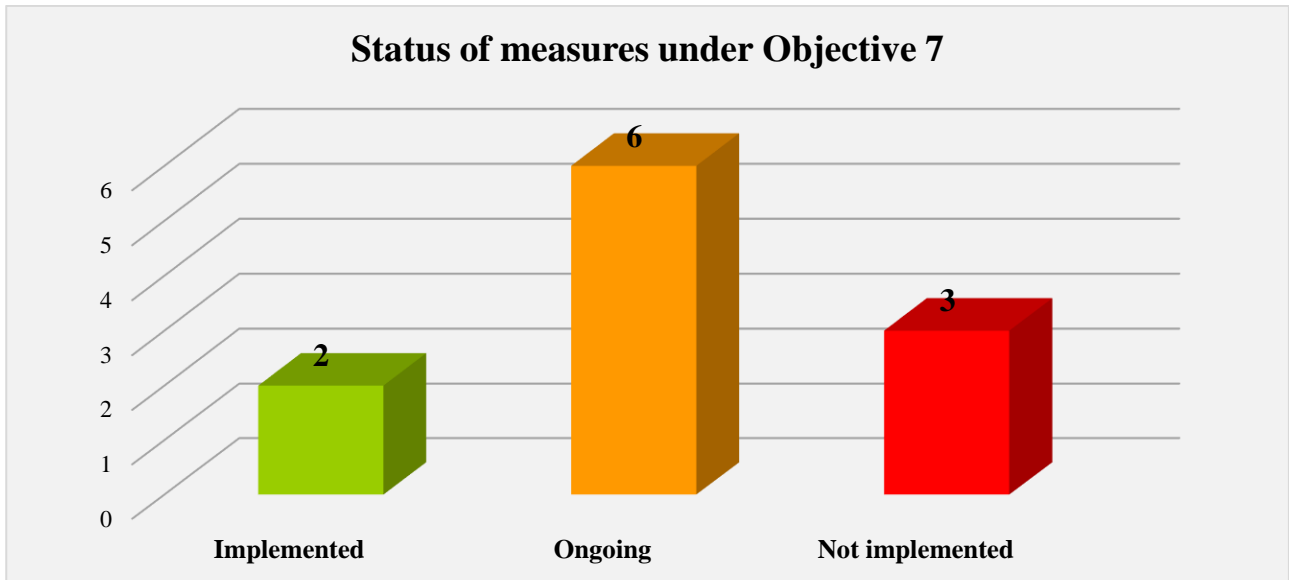
It results that from 5 measures foreseen in the Action Plan of the Strategy for objective 6, 3 of them are implemented and 2 are still ongoing. The percentage against the total progress of implementation of the Action Plan 2019 - 2021 for this objective is 60% for implemented measures and 40% for ongoing measures.

Objective 7: Improving the functioning of the Ministry of Justice and its subordinate institutions of new or substantially changed institutions.

Number of measures under implementation according to Objective 7

January – March 2020		
Implementation status of measures under Objective 7	Number of measures	Percentage to the total of Objective 7
Implemented	2	18%

Ongoing	6	55%
Not implemented	3	27%
Totali	11	100%

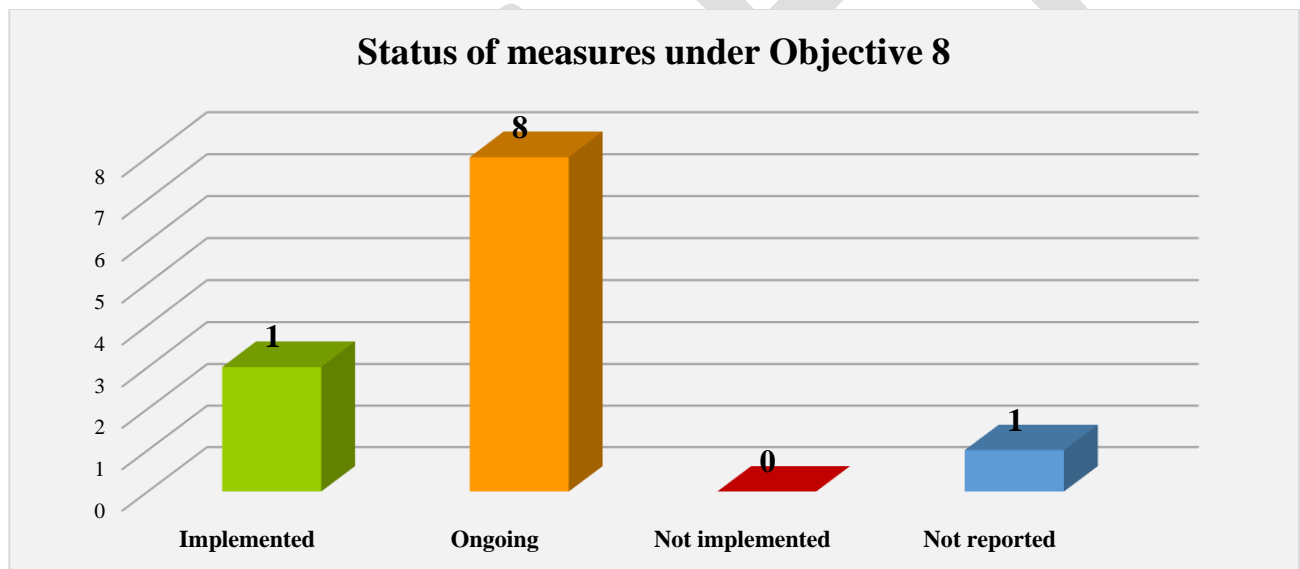


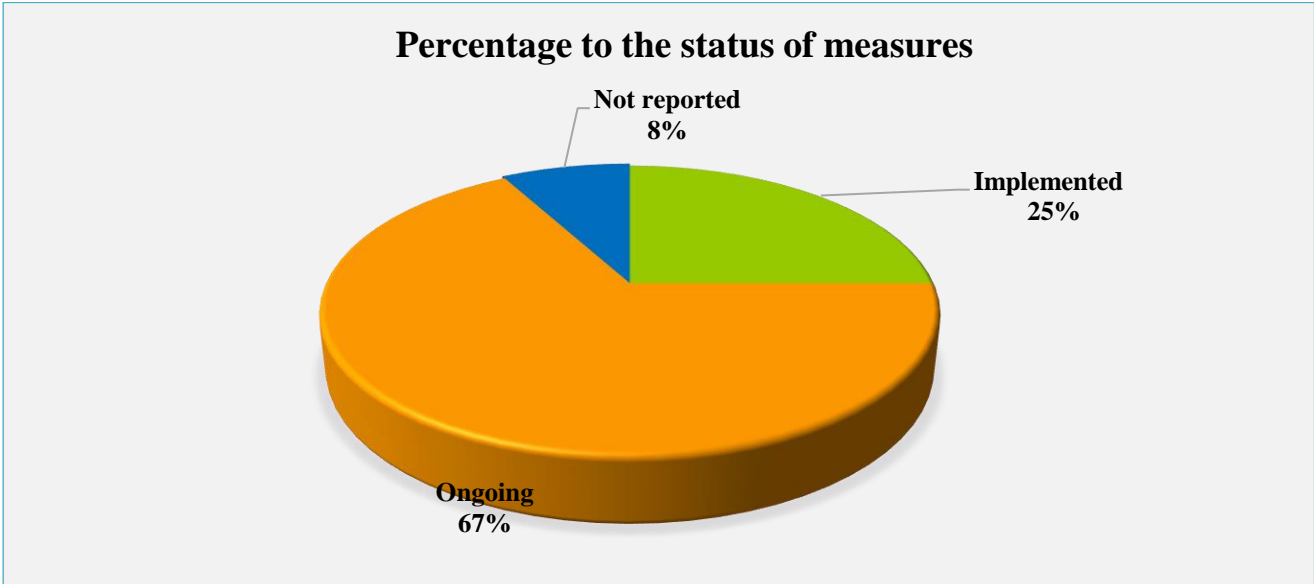
It results that from 11 measures foreseen in the Action Plan of the Strategy for objective 7, 2 of them are implemented and 6 are still ongoing as well as 3 measures are not implemented yet by the responsible institutions..The percentage against the total progress of implementation of the Action Plan 2019 - 2021 for this objective is 18% for implemented measures and 55% for ongoing measures and 27% for non implemented measures.

Objective 8: Improving the service quality of legal professions and establishing a legal framework for arbitration.

Number of measures under implementation according to Objective 8

January – March 2020		
Implementation status of measures under Objective 8	Number of measures	Percentage to the total of Objective 8
Implemented	3	25%
Ongoing	8	67%
Not implemented	0	0%
Not reported	1	8%
Totali	12	100%





It results that from 12 measures foreseen in the Action Plan of the Strategy for objective 8,8 of them is implemented, 8 are still ongoing, as well as 1 measure is not reported by the responsible institutions. The percentage against the total progress of implementation of the Action Plan 2019 - 2021 for this objective is 25% for the implemented measures, 67% for ongoing measures, as well as 8% for not reported measures by responsible institutions.

V. MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY – SEPTEMBER 2019

The most important main achievements during the 3-month period pursuant to the Action Plan 2019–2021 of Cross-Sector Justice Strategy are as follows:

- The High Judicial Council, on February 5, 2020, in close cooperation with USAID, activated the new website (www.klgj.al). The new page already fulfills the obligations defined in law no. 119/2014 “On the Right to Information” and law no. 115/2016 “On the governing bodies of the justice system”, and aims to establish proactive, transparent and informative relations with the public and the media.
- The Council has adopted and implemented a number of regulatory acts which aim to improve the efficiency and independence of the courts such as: the delegation scheme, the temporary transfer of judges, the appointment of judges to adjudicate special cases in other courts, the selection of vice presidents of courts, etc. During the first quarter of 2020, the Council addressed 163 requests for the appointment of a judge. In response to these requests, 240 judges have been appointed to try special court cases in different courts.
- The process of putting into operation the Special Courts for the Judgment of Criminal Offenses of Corruption and Organized Crime has been completed and their functioning has been announced by decision no. 286 dated 18.12.2019. The HJC has permanently appointed 5 judges to the Special Court of Appeals for Corruption and Organized Crime and temporarily 1 judge. Meanwhile, in the Special Court of First Instance for Corruption and Organized Crime, it has permanently appointed 4 judges, as well as temporarily 6 judges.
- After the completion of the candidacy procedures for each of the vacancies announced in the High Court, after verifying the legal conditions and criteria of candidacy for all competitors, as well as the evaluation according to the merits of the qualified candidates, the High Judicial Council with decisions no. 110, 111 and 112 dated 27.2.2020, decided to propose to the President of the Republic the appointment of three candidates. With decrees no. Judges S. Sadushaj, E. Pupe and I. Panda were appointed to the High Court on 11452, 11453 and 11454, dated 11.03.2020, of the President of the Republic.
- HJC, in close cooperation with the Independent Qualification Commission, for the period January - March 2020 have organized 39 draws for the selection of files for 39 subjects of transitional re-evaluation. 11 detailed and reasoned reports have been submitted to the IQC and IMO, accompanied by 55 court files for 11 re-evaluation subjects and 7 other reports are in process. In general, taking into account the work carried out since the moment of creation of the independent bodies of the transitional re-evaluation of judges until March 31, 2020, 221 evaluation reports have been submitted to the IQC and IMO.
- HPC after announcing with Decision no. 19, dated 27.01.2020, the announcement for the filling of the two vacancies in the Special Prosecution, the criteria that the candidates for prosecutor had to meet were published on the official website of the HJC.
- Candidates who expressed interest, submitted the relevant documentation and with Decision no. 84, dated 18.03.2020, HPC approved the list of candidates for prosecutors, who meet the

legal requirements, after preliminary evaluation. The number of candidates that will follow the race is 4 (four).

- On issues related to the activity of the Career Development Commission and the Evaluation of Ethical and Professional Activity, the HJC has continued to approve a number of decisions.
- Pursuant to the following Article 147 / d, of the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, Chapter IV, of Law no. 115/2016 “On the Governing Bodies of the Justice System”, as amended, Decision no. 2/2020, of the Assembly of the Republic of Albania “On the election of Mr. Artur Metani, High Inspector of Justice” from 1.02.2020, the institution of the High Inspector of Justice (HIJ) was established, thus marking a very step of important in implementing justice reform.
- In order to fulfill its constitutional duties, the High Inspector of Justice has immediately taken the necessary measures for the organization and function of this new institution. This process is being accompanied by HIJ with the identification of financial costs, the provision of budget funds, the design of organizational personnel structures, the recruitment of staff, and the provision of the necessary infrastructure for its operation.
- The School of Magistrates in cooperation with the Dutch Center for Judicial Studies and Training (SSR) and the Euralius V Mission, after the approval of the first year curriculum of the Initial Training Program for magistrate candidates, legal advisors, has started the improvement process of the second year curriculum of the Initial Training Progress for magistrate candidates.
- In cooperation with UNDP, OSFA and the Ministry of Justice, 3 Centers for the Provision of Primary Legal Aid Service have been established and are functioning, respectively in the cities of Elbasan, Durrës and Fier.
- The Ministry of Justice has carried out several awareness-raising activities, in the framework of providing free legal aid. The awareness campaign was carried out in the city of Elbasan in order to recognize the practical implementation of Law 111/2017, legal assistance guaranteed by the state, with the main actors subject to this law, as well as participants from civil society. There was also an information session / seminar held at the Re-Integration Center for Juveniles, Kavaja, in order to raise awareness and education of one of the special categories of the new law on legal aid.
- The General Directorate of Prisons in order to rehabilitate and reintegrate prisoners, which is also considered the essence of the prison system's mission, has taken continuous measures to enable the implementation of a meaningful regime of activities for this category.
 - For the reporting period, an average of 574 prisoners were employed in the prison system, of which 138 were detained.
 - Professional courses are offered in 9 IECDs which are attended every month by an average of 287 prisoners. Courses offered include foreign languages (English, Italian), painting, pyrography, electrician, plumber, tourism, cuisine, barber, tailoring, woodworking and welding.
 - The average number of prisoners who attended other educational activities throughout the prison system is 2756.
 - During this period, an average of 192 social topics per month and 37 book reviews were developed by the Social Care Sectors and 365 reintegration activities were conducted.

- A policy document on the treatment of prisoners and detainees according to their needs is being implemented, as well as educational programs for prisoners on the eve of release. The goal of these programs is the successful reintegration into the society of prisoners and the prevention of recidivist behaviors. These courses were attended by 22 prisoners.
- As a result of the implementation of Law No. 5/20120 "On Granting Amnesty", compared to 2019, the level of prison population has decreased by 5%. For the implementation of this law, the necessary and necessary measures have been taken for the effectiveness of its application as strictly as possible, in all IEPV.
- During January 2020, the Department of Regulatory and Compliance, at the Prime Ministry in order to increase capacity within line ministries, coordinated with the ministries for the expansion of the Permanent Network of RIA, increasing the number of members from each ministry, where the Ministry of Justice is also involved. In February 2020, 4 (four) training sessions on this process were organized with the support of EU technical assistance experts, with the participation of almost all members of the RIA Network. This process will continue.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The accomplishment of the justice reform is a continuous cross-sector process, where the design and measurement of the ultimate success indicators is complex, especially in a legal and institutional framework in ongoing reformation.

The successful implementation of reforms in the justice sector to ensure an effective, efficient, independent and transparent judicial system, in compliance with the best European practices remains the mission of this strategy.

During the monitoring process, some issues have been identified that have impacted on the level of implementation of the Action Plan.

During this period, implementation and monitoring, as both interconnected processes that have oriented Ministry of Justice towards reflection and conclusions, we can mention the most important ones:

- ✚ It remains problematic the responsibility of institutions to report in due time and in due quality the information on the Action Plan measures. There is a need for greater cooperation of the Chambers, in order to contribute and report concerning the implementation of the Action Plan 2019 - 2021, pursuant to Cross-Sector Justice Strategy.
- ✚ The non-submission of information on financial disbursement related to foreseen activities of the Action Plan, affects the non-real reflection of the costs for the implementation of the strategy.
 - The institutions have reported on difficulties encountered in terms of:
 - The spent budget for the implementation of activities covered by the donors (this information is not available from the contact points at the reporting institutions);
 - The spent budget for the implementation of activities covered by the state budget (lack of a methodology related to the costing of activities brings about obstacles in reporting of factual costs for their implementation).

VII. CHALLENGES

In order to improve implementation and increase the impact of the Action Plan 2019 - 2021, the important challenges for the following monitoring periods are as below:

- ✚ Ensure a comprehensive and transparent consultation process during the reporting, monitoring phases with responsible institutions and stakeholders.
- ✚ Increasing the level of awareness and accountability from the internal structures of the responsible institutions by strengthening the inter-institutional coordination.
- ✚ The conduction of a periodical monitoring process, discussion of findings and adoption of respective reports according to designated deadlines.
- ✚ The coordination of information received from contact points with the Finance Directorates at respective institutions, before reporting to Ministry of Justice.
- ✚ Raising awareness of responsible institutions involved in the Action Plan regarding the importance of ongoing work for proper and timely implementation of the AP, as well as on the importance of the reporting process.