*The Ministry of Justice of Montenegro and the Administration for Execution of Criminal Sanctions are actively working toward implementing the recommendations of:*

* *the Committee against Torture (CAT), given in the Concluding Observations on the 3rd Periodic Report on Montenegro of 13 May 2022,*
* *the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT), given in the latest periodical report published in February of 2019 and recommendations given after the ad hoc visit in June 2022, which concerns the prison system.*

*In the reporting period, professional training and training of employees in the Institute for the Execution of Criminal Sanctions continued, with special emphasis on topics:” International and domestic standard in protection against torture, ill-treatment, non-humorous and degrading behavior in relation to persons deprived of liberty - application of recommendations contained in the opinions of the Protector of Human Rights and Freedoms of Montenegro, given in relation to the Institute for the Execution of Criminal Sanctions". There are also trainings on the topics " Powers in the performance of security and means of coercion, and procedures in the use of means of coercion, Violence among prisoners, Use of force.*

*One disciplinary proceeding for breaching official duty were initiated during 2023, but did not contain elements of abuse of power or authority in respect of violent and inappropriate behavior towards a persons deprived of their liberty.*

*According to the Personnel Plan of the Administration for Execution of Criminal Sanctions for 2023, it is planned to employ 42 executors in the Administration for Execution of Criminal Sanctions in all prison services, predominantly in the Security Department. Advertising procedure is started to fill planned positions.*

*At its fifth session of the second regular (autumn) session, the Parliament of Montenegro adopted the Law on Amendments to the Law on Execution of Imprisonment, Fines and Security Measures, which was published in the Official Gazette of Montenegro No. 3/23 of 10 January 2023.*

*At its session of 26 January 2023, the Government of Montenegro adopted the Decree on the amendment of the Decree on the uniform, title marks, weapons, vehicles and special equipment of security officers in the Directorate for Execution of Criminal Sanctions ("Official Gazette of Montenegro", No. 18/23).*

*At its session of 09. February 2023, the Government of Montenegro adopted Information on the needs to enroll participants in the Educational Program for the profession of prison policeman.*

*At its session of 28 June 2023, the Government of Montenegro adopted the Strategy for the Execution of Criminal Sanctions 2023-2026 and the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy for the Execution of Criminal Sanctions 2023-2024. The goal of this strategic document is the continuation of the work initiated with the previous strategy, primarily through the further improvement of the intersectoral cooperation, strengthening the efficiency of the overall system where the dominant emphasis will be on the following areas:*

* *Enhancing the prevention and protection against ill-treatment and the respect of human rights;*
* *Enhancing the institutional capacities of IECS;*
* *Re-socialization for detained and sentenced persons;*
* *Enhancing the institutional capacities of the Directorate for Probation.*

*The Minister of the Ministry of Justice of Montenegro adopted the Ordinance on the verification of knowledge, competence and skills of candidates on the internal advertisement in the Directorate for the Execution of Criminal Sanctions published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro No. 65/23.*

*The Administration for Execution of Criminal Sanctions (UIKS) signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Faculty of Medicine in Podgorica for the purpose of education and professional development of medical staff both in the theoretical and practical part of training, among others, on the topic of emergency situations.*

*The Administration for Execution of Criminal Sanctions (UIKS) signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Public institution for housing, rehabilitation and resocialization of users of psychoactive substances in Podgorica for the purpose of education and professional development of UIKS's staff both in the theoretical and practical part of training, on the topic of treatment of PAS users in prisons.*

*Memorandum of Cooperation signed between the Administration for Execution of Criminal Sanctions and the Health Center Podgorica in order to educate staff, joint participation in the development and application of projects in order to improve the quality of health care.*

*Within the United Nations Agency' for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment project "Young international consultants to support the Directorate for Information and Communication Technologies of Justice and Data Security of the Ministry of Justice"  in the Ministry of Justice were engaged 5 employees with the financial support of the Kingdom of Norway.  As part of this project, during the year 2022, electronic surveillance equipment (EMS) donated to the Ministry of Justice, which is used in the process of executing a security measure of a restraining order, with a total value of 744,938.00 USD. Also, during September and October 2023, with the aim of promoting the system for electronic monitoring of convicted persons and improving knowledge in the field of gender-based violence, in partnership with selected NGOs, four information sessions were held for representatives of the judiciary, prosecutor's office, police, and centers for social work and the non-governmental sector.*

*The third cycle of the Horizontal Program for the Western Balkans and Turkey, which aims to continue improving the protection of the human rights of detained and imprisoned persons in Montenegro, is continued. The third cycle of this horizontal program is also financed by the European Union and the Council of Europe, and the implementation period is I quarter of 2023 - IV quarter of 2026.*

*The Pompidou Group of the Council of Europe, in cooperation with the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Health, started the implementation of project activities aimed at improving the knowledge and skills of employees in the prison system of Montenegro on the treatment of addiction to psychoactive substances. The planned period of realization of the project activities is I quarter of 2023 - I quarter of 2024.*

*A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Administration for the Execution of Criminal Sanctions and the German non-governmental organization "Help-Hilfe zür Selbsthilfe" on October 3, 2023. The implementation of the project components specified in the Memorandum of Understanding will achieve the expansion of work activities for prisoners within the prison system, as well as their successful rehabilitation and reintegration through occupational therapy will raise.*

*In order to reduce the overcrowding in prisons and improvement of the conditions of the persons deprived of their liberty, in addition to strengthening the alternative criminal sanctions system, the construction of 4 new facilities is started: a Special Health Institution, a Multifunctional Facility, an Entrance and an Open prison unit, as well as the construction preparatory activities of Prison for the northern region of Montenegro in the Municipality of Mojkovac continued. Regarding the project "Construction of Special Health Institution, New Reception, Open-type Prison and Multifunctional Facility", in the reporting period the Main project for the four facilities (Special Health Institution, New Reception, Open-type Prison and Multifunctional Facility) was developed and revised. On December 2, 2019, the IPA 2018 Financial Agreement between the European Commission and Montenegro entered into force, which provided for an allocation of € 13,516,733 for the EU Project for Improving Access to Justice and Fundamental Rights, including the amount of € 4,378,311.00 allocated for financing the construction of four facilities (Special Health Institution, Reception, Multifunctional Facility and Open-type Prison) within the Directorate for Execution of Criminal Sanctions. The construction of these facilities began in January 2023, and the works are planned to last 24 months.*

*The technical documentation was prepared within the project "Mojkovac Prison construction project for the northern region of Montenegro", which was funded by a grant from the Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF) in the amount of EUR 1,200,000.00. This technical assistance was implemented by the consortium WBIF Infrastructure Project Facility 7 (IPF7), and the implementation period is November 2019 - November 2021. The construction of the Prison facility for the northern region of Montenegro in the Municipality of Mojkovac will be financed by a loan granted from The Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) in the amount of EUR 15,000,000.00. The audit of the main project of the construction of a Prison for the northern region of Montenegro in the municipality of Mojkovac is ongoing, as well as activities on the creation, audit or implementation of other related projects (substation, hydrotechnical infrastructure - water infrastructure, access road, etc.).*

*In accordance with the Working Program of the Ministry of Justice for 2023, the Analysis of the state of existing spatial capacity in the Investigation prison Podgorica with the proposals of the measures aimed at improving the conditions in this unit, is planned to be draft. This Analysis will be sent on consideration at the Government's session.*

*Within the project of the Ministry of Health "Prevention of HIV/AIDS among prison ers-education and advisory support" NGO Juventas conducted activities with persons deprived of liberty:*

* *Informative and educational workshops on HIV/AIDS;*
* *Informative and educational workshops on HIV/AIDS for minors in prison;*
* *Group info sessions with people with a history of psychoactive substance use;*
* *Individual consultations with professional workers;*
* *Training for employees of the Administration for Execution of Criminal Sanctions.*