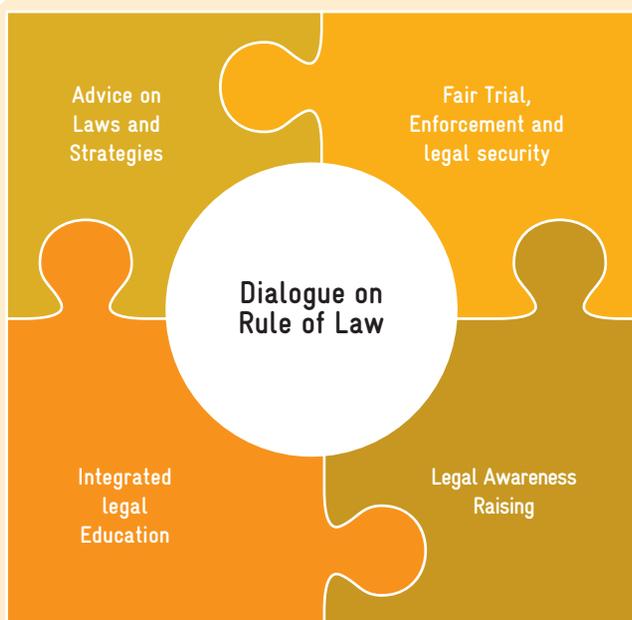


Legal Approximation towards European Standards in the South Caucasus

Establishing the rule of law and European standards through legal reform

Client:	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Partners:	Ministries of Justice, High Judicial Councils, Courts, Judicial Academies, parliamentary commission, universities
Duration:	05/2015 – 03/2017
Budget:	7 Mio. Euro
Countries:	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia



◀ Example - the way we achieve impacts:

The activities of GIZ create new platforms for regional cooperation. Each year young lawyers from the South Caucasus participate in the Winter Academy "Transformation Lawyers – Legal Dialogue for Legal Transformation", which GIZ conducts in cooperation with the Hertie School of Governance and the Bucerius Law School in Germany. Highly qualified and eligible candidates from the judicial administration, judges, attorneys and representatives of civil society participate in a challenging application process. During the three week seminar in Germany, the participants learn about new trends in different areas of law which are of relevance to reform processes in their respective countries. They also have the opportunity to improve their soft skills, such as negotiation and mediation techniques. Former participants then join the alumni network "Transformation Lawyers" and continue their cross-border legal discussions long after leaving the seminar. "Cooperation matters" and "the common value is justice" are only two of many responses given by alumni when asked to sum up their experiences during the Winter Academy in one short slogan.

◀ Objectives

The objective is for South Caucasus countries to reform their legal and judicial systems in accordance with EU standards and make use of instruments for regional cooperation. The advisory approach of GIZ supports regional dialogue on the rule of law and the dissemination of information regarding the content and best practices of reforms from other countries.

◀ Challenges

The use of the justice system as a service for citizens in the countries of the South Caucasus is a complete shift from the approach predominantly followed until now. The realisation of citizens' private interests via the judiciary requires modern instruments employed within a well implemented legal framework.

◀ Activities

Our fields of activities include the facilitation of dialogue on the rule of law between the countries of the South Caucasus and Germany and within the countries of the region; the provision of advisory services on strategies and legal acts, particularly in the fields of private and administrative law and the EU-acquis; the strengthening of fair trials, enforcement and legal security; co-ordinated cooperation of judicial and legal educational institutions and raising awareness among the population of the content of legal and judicial reforms.

◀ Impacts

Citizens have a more profound trust in the newly structured judicial institutions and through administrative courts they can defend themselves against actions by the state. They use instruments of civil law to protect their private interests. Professional legal practitioners and legislators orient themselves towards EU standards. Universities and other institutions of legal education jointly reform the legal and judicial education system in a way which is practice-oriented.

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