

# Introduction

2020 was a year of crisis, but a crisis granting the opportunity, particularly to organisations integrated in the knowledge economy, to transform work processes and optimise the modes of internal communication, at the same time keeping creativity intact. Throughout the year, CSD continued to build its innovative thrust in a number of key areas:

- anti-corruption and state capture, foreign economic and media influence, energy governance and transition to a low-carbon economy, hidden economy and undeclared work;
- assessment of organised crime threats, conventional crime and policing, countering radicalisation and violent extremism;
- integration of migrants, fundamental rights, equality and ethics, victims of crime, social inclusion of vulnerable groups.

In all of these critical areas CSD sought (and in most cases managed) to produce innovative approaches and instruments for policy oriented and policy impactful analysis, reaffirming its position of a think tank with teeth. Having such capacity is immensely important amid today's growing illiberal and populist trends in Europe and the world. To this end, the innovative policy instrument *State Capture Assessment Diagnostics* (SCAD) developed by CSD and already applied in several countries across Europe could play a pivotal role not only in implementing EU policies (the Rule of Law Mechanism), but also in designing capture proofing strategies for regions beyond Europe (Latin America and Africa). This is also why the Center's work to examine and provide solutions for countering malign foreign influence (in Europe and worldwide) have been central and have, in the last five years, led to cutting-edge analyses of wide international impact.

At the close of the year, CSD won the international Anti-Corruption Excellence Award 2020 established by the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Center (ROLACC) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The award acknowledges CSD's achievements in coalition building and monitoring of anti-corruption, including the establishment of the *Coalition 2000* and the *Southeast European Leadership for Development and Integrity (SELDI)* anti-corruption initiatives. It notes CSD's innovative policy instruments: Corruption Assessment Reports, the *Corruption Monitoring System (CMS)*, the *Monitoring Anti-Corruption Policies Implementation (MACPI)*, and the *State Capture Assessment Diagnostics (SCAD)*.



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