

Law Program

In 2021, the Law Program worked on four main topics: crime and justice, victims of crime, migration and integration, and fundamental rights.

- **Crime and justice.** Work in this area focused on the prevention of and fight against radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism. Additional efforts were invested in protecting the rights of suspects and accused by enhancing the presumption of innocence in the context of media coverage of criminal proceedings, improving the capacity of judicial and law-enforcement authorities to properly disclose information on criminal cases, and promoting alternatives to pre-trial detention.
- **Victims of crime.** CSD continued to work towards the improvement of the situation of victims of human trafficking, women, children, and migrant victims. Work in this field addressed the treatment and appropriate financial compensation to victims of crime and included trainings and capacity building workshops.
- **Migration and integration.** CSD focused on eradicating the discrimination and marginalisation of vulnerable groups, such as migrants and Roma. Efforts were directed at enhancing social inclusion through modern technologies such as ICT-based public services, improving vulnerable groups' access to basic services and ensuring their civil and social rights, for instance, the rights to housing, employment, and education. The impact of perceptions on migration flows and related border security concerns were also examined.
- **Fundamental rights and equality.** As a member of the FRANET network of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, CSD collected data and conducted field-work research for the Agency's comparative studies. Research topics included, among others, children in criminal proceedings, detention conditions, migration, and fundamental rights implications of COVID-19. CSD continued to promote the Bulgarian Diversity Charter, which attracted new signatories, and granted its first Diversity@Work Award.

I. Crime and justice

In 2021, CSD continued to actively contribute to several pan-European initiatives aimed to strengthen the capacity of judicial, police, and correctional services for preventing and countering radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism.

Seeking to facilitate **decision-making on cases of radicalisation**, and to support prison and probation staff in the execution of sentences, on 21 December 2020, CSD, in collaboration with the General Directorate for Execution of Sentences at the Bulgarian Ministry of Justice and experts of the Italian Ministry of Justice, held an [online train-the-trainer course](#) on countering radicalisation in prisons. The course was aimed at professionals within the penitentiary system and involved the use of innovative internet-based applications with elements of virtual reality.

Considering that terrorism and radicalisation are transboundary issues, CSD continued to work for enhancing the **cross-border cooperation between stakeholders** at the EU level through expansion of existing grassroots legal training networks and delivery of up-scalable capacity-building tools adaptable to the national contexts. Efforts in this direction combined a train-the-trainer methodology with a cascade training for relevant practitioners. Another topic explored during the year was the implementation of the Stockholm Roadmap in cases of terrorism and radicalisation with the purpose of promoting the harmonisation of counter-terrorism and counter-radicalisation policies and practices with criminal procedural rights standards. To raise awareness and engage public and civil society stakeholders, a series of publications that examine the application of

human rights law at the different stages of terror-related criminal proceedings were developed, including two comparative legal studies on the [implementation of the Stockholm Programme Roadmap in terror-related cases](#) and on the [legal and policy landscape for upholding criminal procedural rights in the context of counter-terrorism](#), as well as a [brochure](#) on data sharing on terror-related crime suspects and accused persons in the context of the Stockholm Programme.

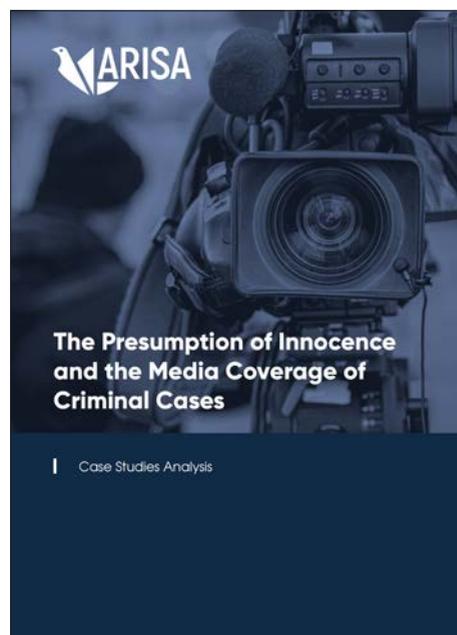
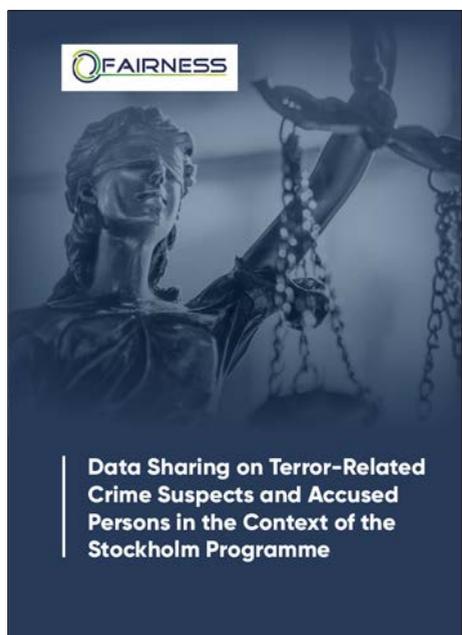
To strengthen the capacity of national judicial and police authorities to effectively implement the available instruments for international cooperation in criminal matters, CSD focused its efforts on [promoting the use of the European Investigation Orders \(EIO\)](#). Following up on the Judicial Living Lab held in 2020, in 2021 CSD developed a factsheet on the EIO and money laundering offences and further promoted the topic by producing two blog posts (on the link between the [EIO and fundamental rights](#) and on

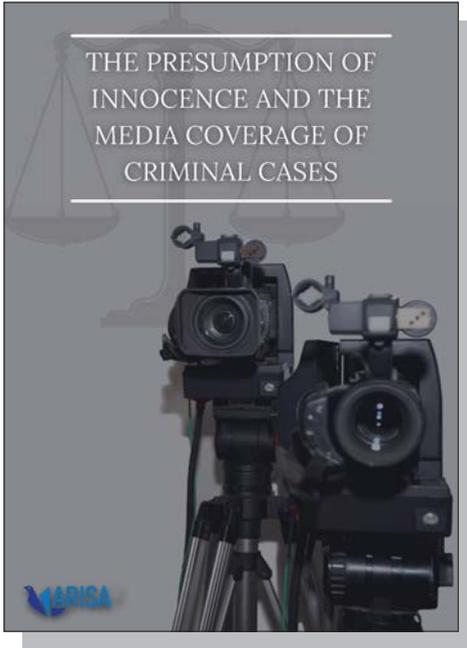




the Bulgarian experience in implementing EIO) and taking part in an [best practices sharing conference](#) held in Venice on 22–23 September 2021.

The **rights of persons suspected or accused** of committing a crime continued to be a main topic of CSD’s activities in the area of crime and justice. In cooperation with partners from Italy, Spain and Greece, CSD explored the [link between the presumption of innocence and media coverage of criminal cases](#), in particular the impact on suspects and accused of the disproportionate disclosure of information about criminal proceedings and the way criminal cases are reported by the media. In 2021, CSD produced several reports shedding light on different problems related to the implementation of the presumption of innocence in highly publicised criminal cases. The collection *The Presumption of Innocence and the Media Coverage of Criminal Cases* (also available as an [interactive online publication](#) and accompanied by a special [promotional video](#)) presents a compilation of articles that tackle various aspects of the issue, including ECHR case law and media coverage of terrorism cases. It was followed by a case study





report suggesting standards to judicial authorities and the media based on the analysis of selected [criminal cases](#) from different countries across the EU. A particular focus was also put on the development of unified international standards for communicating information to the public that aim to ensure the proper observation of the presumption of innocence while reporting details about pending criminal proceedings. The standards were formulated specifically to serve as guiding principles to public authorities and media practitioners.

Building upon its long track record in **prison research**, CSD continued to actively promote the [increased use of alternatives to pre-trial detention](#), in particular by laying the groundwork for the application of common fundamental rights standards with respect to pre-trial detention and its alternative measures. In 2021, the CSD team contributed to two major reports on the topic: [Legislative analysis and pre-trial detention impacts](#)

and [Pre-trial detention alternatives: best practices mapping](#).

The ongoing progress of science and technology in the twenty-first century poses multifaceted security and legal challenges by exacerbating known and enabling novel forms of crime. To respond to these challenges, CSD continued to work towards the development and introduction of a [methodology](#) for assessing states' capacity for countering the misuse of CBRN knowledge and materials that aims to enhance understanding of **emerging chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats**, and inform the development of comprehensive risk-based approaches for strengthening relevant rules and international norms.

II. Victims of crime

CSD continued its efforts towards improving the situation of victims of crime through streamlining multidisciplinary work for their protection, especially of women, children and migrant victims, and through enhancing stakeholder cooperation.

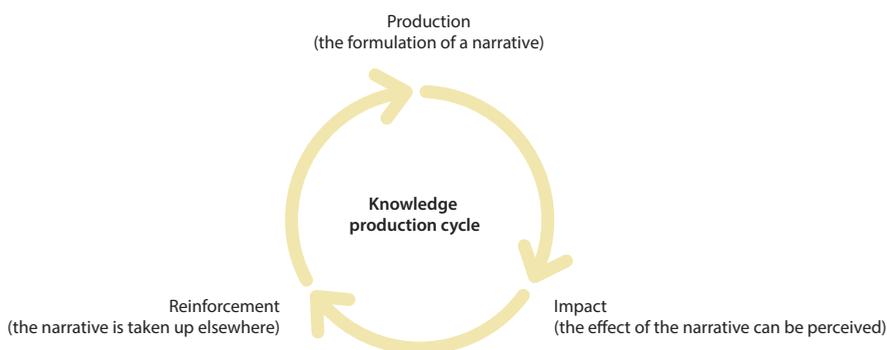
In an effort to improve the criminal justice response towards the needs of victims, CSD, together with partners from Romania, Germany, Finland and Spain, developed an [Action plan for developing victim-centred and trauma-informed criminal justice system](#). The action plan combines knowledge and ideas from different disciplines (law, criminology, and psychology) and builds on the idea that the protection of victims should be understood and achieved on multiple fronts, via legislation, in criminal proceedings as well as in society. The challenges and perspectives before the victims of crime amid the COVID-19 pandemic and political instability in Bulgaria

were discussed at a national **round-table discussion** with representatives of law-enforcement, the prosecution, NGOs and the academia. Among the topics debated were: legislation reforms and multidisciplinary cooperation and referral mechanisms, support services to victims of crime and the wider recognition of electronic evidence, further improvement and adaptation of the services provided to vulnerable group of victims of crime experiencing violence (women, girls, children, etc.), specific challenges related to the new types of violence in a digital environment, introduction of restorative justice, prevention of victimisation, and the balance between practitioners' professional training and the support provided to victims. To further promote the results of its work at EU level, CSD delivered a presentation at the international conference *Talking about trauma: Towards a victim-centred criminal justice system* held online on 17 September 2021.

III. Migration and integration

CSD continued its effort to explore **new technologies for better integration of refugees and migrants**, in particular for facilitating their interaction with institutions and service providers. Together with fourteen research institutes, government agencies and private companies from all across Europe, CSD supported the sustained service delivery of the IMMERSE Platform, containing a wide spectrum of resources and services for migrants from job offers to institutional contacts. Experts from the Center carried out an in-depth analysis of migrant and service provider feedback in Spain collected throughout the course of the past year. CSD additionally contributed to the upcoming academic handbook *Information and Communications Technology in Support of Migration – Security Informatics and Law Enforcement* with a critical chapter on key stakeholders' role in the creation

The knowledge production cycle



Source: CSD study on migration narratives (as presented during the 18th IMISCOE Conference 7 – 9 July 2021).

and distribution of narratives about migration and integration. A preliminary version of this research was presented during the *18th Annual International Migration, Integration and Social Cohesion in Europe (IMISCOE) Conference* (7–9 July 2021, Luxembourg/online) in collaboration between CSD and Sheffield Hallam University.

CSD continues to actively participate in the joint initiative of 25 research institutes and law-enforcement authorities from 15 countries aimed to explore the **impact of novel technologies and social media on perceptions of Europe in countries abroad**. In 2021, the CSD team contributed to the publication of the brochure *Migration to the EU: A Review of Narratives and Approaches*, presenting the current knowledge on **migration narratives about the European Union and the approaches to migration** across different countries. It maps the landscape of narratives on migration and Europe as a basis to understanding migration flows and decisions as well as migration-related policies, perceived threats, and best practices to address migration challenges at the local, national and international levels.

In the field of integration and social inclusion, CSD continued to support the prevention of and fight against anti-Gypsyism through training of professionals and empowerment of Roma. In 2021, CSD jointly with partner organisations from Italy developed an action plan for implementing a pilot model that brings together Roma communities, local authorities, professionals and the civil society. The purpose of the action plan is to prevent discrimination and promote social integration in key areas such as access to services, education, and housing.

IV. Fundamental rights

In 2021, CSD was involved in several activities that aimed to strengthen fundamental rights in Bulgaria through monitoring and evaluation of the potential risks of violation, including in the context of the ongoing state of emergency due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The **Bulgarian Diversity Charter**, a joint initiative of CSD and the Bulgarian Business Leaders Forum designed to encourage **social inclusion in the workplace**, continued to attract new signatories. Since its launch in September 2020, the Charter has been signed by 35 Bulgarian companies and civil society organisations. On 11 May 2021, in the framework of the European Diversity Month, the Charter held its first **webinar** on sharing best practices in diversity and inclusion in the workplace. The event featured a keynote address by a senior officer from the European Platform of Diversity Charters with the European Commission. Earlier during the year, the Charter announced the first winner of the Diversity@Work Award granted to companies that implement and promote policies of equal treatment, diversity and inclusion.

As a member of the **FRANET** multidisciplinary network of the **EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)**, CSD continued to monitor the protection of fundamental rights in Bulgaria. In addition to its regular contribution to FRA's annual *Fundamental Rights Report*, CSD delivered reports on the legal environment and space of civil society organisations in supporting fundamental rights, on guardianship systems for unaccompanied children, and on criminal detention conditions. The periodic reporting on the migration situation in Bulgaria that started back in 2015 continued for

a sixth consecutive year (the full collection of monthly reports is published on the [FRA website](#)), and the new periodic reporting on the fundamental rights implications of the COVID-19 pandemic which started in 2020 resulted in the publication of a seventh consecutive [bulletin](#).

In 2021, CSD was involved in FRA's research on procedural safeguards for children who are suspects or accused persons in criminal proceedings. CSD experts conducted interviews with judges, prosecutors, police officers, lawyers, social experts and psychologists as well as with children involved in criminal proceedings, and delivered two country studies up for publication next year. At the same time, the results of the fieldwork on the presumption of innocence, in which CSD was involved, were officially released by FRA in March 2021 with the publication of the report *Presumption of innocence and related rights: Professional perspectives*. CSD also continued to support the joint initiative of FRA and the Bulgarian National Statistical

Institute on developing novel approaches to generating data on hard-to-reach populations at risk of violation of their rights.

Fundamental rights were also in the focus of some of CSD's radicalisation-related initiatives. On 24 November 2021, CSD held an online [training](#) event entitled "Fundamental Rights in the Context of Prevention and Countering of Radicalisation and Terrorism". The event brought together legal, judicial, and law-enforcement professionals, as well as academic practitioners. CSD is also involved in activities aimed at strengthening international cooperation in the area of radicalisation with a special focus on fundamental rights and with the objective to achieve better coordination and cooperation between EU Member States, EU institutions and agencies, the Council of Europe and the UN for ensuring a balanced approach to the prevention of radicalisation, whereby security considerations are weighed up against fundamental rights guarantees.