

CITIZENS FOR CHANGE

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Photo: Organization of Women of the Municipality of Sveti Nikole



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CIVIC PARTICIPATION IS RIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL

The focus of this issue of Citizens for Change is civic participation. A topic which was not only discussed by CSOs in this quarter, but also practiced.

The colleagues from Pro Local Bitola did this at regional and local level, in the whole of Pelagonija. Together with their partners from the sector and the municipalities from the region, they included the young people whose proposals and analyses have contributed to creating more fair local policies for all nine municipalities. "These solutions were not written behind closed doors, but are rather a result of a process where the young people themselves have identified the problems", says Emilija Gjeroska from "Pro Local".

Women activists from local communities and representatives of women's organizations, organised by "Akcija Združenska" – Skopje, came to the Parliament to officially present their demands to women MPs. They asked for changes in the Law on Local Self-Government that would provide for a multi-phased procedure for citizen participation, with a special focus on the guaranteed participation of women.

Center for Climate Change published their Shadow Report on Chapter 27 which reveals that the situation with the environment is at a standstill. They appealed to the Government, Parliament and the institutions in charge to urgently adopt the Chapter 27 laws that are stuck and to provide stable financing for the environment sector; they said that the consequences of the institutional passivity are directly felt by the citizens because of the deterioration of their health and the degradation of the natural resources.

In support of all CSO initiatives, especially when it comes to civic participation, Civica Mobilitas has organised the second **National Forum – Fair of CSOs in cooperation with the RNM government**. The statements of the representatives of the central government were more than encouraging when it comes to cooperation and participation of CSOs. The Prime Minister Mickoski informed about the Government vision of the civil sector as strong, independent, professional and sustainable, a real partner in the creation and implementation of state policies. "A sector that strengthens democracy, protects the rights of the citizens, monitors the work of the institutions and helps to close the gap between the institutions and the people", said he.

What remains for all of us is a lot of work to convince those who are skeptical that civic participation is not yet another "popular" topic for the CSOs but rather out responsibility as CSOs and as citizens. We should be aware that our participation in the community, at work, in the institutions can make a change only if the former exists. The processes in which more citizens participate create more realistic policies because they include various perspectives. Our activity makes the society more just, stronger and more sustainable.

Have a pleasant reading!

Gonce Jakovleska
Civica Mobilitas
National Coordinator for ICO

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THEME

CIVIC PARTICIPATION

The Pelagonija Region Involves the Young People in the Decision Making



Better public transport, functional youth councils and new programmes for intergenerational support is only part of the measures that were unanimously adopted by the fourth meeting of the Regional Youth Platform in the Pelagonija region. This event, organised by “Pro Local” is a significant step forward in the civic participation where the young people via direct proposals and analyses participated in the creation of more fair local policies for all nine municipalities in the region. The Regional Youth Platform was established in March 2024 and it is a joint mechanism for the nine municipalities and CSOs in the Pelagonija region.

One of the most innovative adopted measures was the programme for peer mentorship and tutorship, where there would be also retired professors and experts included alongside the students. With this model, the young people will have a free of charge support in their education, while at the same time the intergenerational solidarity will be strengthened. Apart from this, the measures also include specific steps for a more accessible public transport adjusted to the needs of the high school and university students, especially from the rural areas, as well as better use of the sport infrastructure and creation of safe spaces for their active free time.

The Swiss Ambassador H.E. Christoph Sommer and the Mayor of Bitola, Toni Konjanovski said that the involvement of the young people is a precondition for development and sustainable future and that these measures have to

immediately be included in the budgets to make a real change. As Emilia Gjeroska from “Pro Local” states, these solutions had not been written behind closed doors, but were rather a result of a process where the young people themselves had identified the problems. The Regional Platform, which has already implemented 16 initiatives involving more than 250 young people, proves that the civic sector was the key bridge between the young people and the institutions in the fight against stagnation and preservation of the potential in the local communities.

Within the event, there was also a Thematic Forum on the debate on equal opportunities for the young people in different municipalities. The message was that there was no future if the Law on Youth Participation remains only a formal obligation on paper. The initial findings of the national assessment made by “Pro Local” showed that the implementation of the law varies drastically, as functional youth centres still do not exist in much smaller and rural areas, as well as councils and stable financial support. At the Forum, it was stressed that CSOs were the bridge in these areas, and the involvement of the young people in the decision making should not be seen as an expenditure, but rather as an investment in keeping them in the communities.

The activities are part of the project “Youth Policies Fit for the Young People”, supported by the Swiss Government via Civica Mobilitas.



Local Community Activists Entered the Parliament for the First Time

For the first time, activists from local communities and representatives of women's organizations entered the Parliament to officially present their demands to female MPs. The meeting that was organized by "Акција Здружenska" – Skopje took place at the Club of Women MPs, where 16 women from rural areas and eight local organizations asked for real changes in the Law on Local Self-Government.

The main point of the meeting was the need of local changes that would provide multi-phased procedure for citizen participation, with special focus on guaranteed participation of women, strengthening of local self-government and providing spatial and financial resources for women's participation to become real and sustainable. Marija Savovska, the Executive Director of "Акција Здружenska" stressed that women's leadership and access to services must not depend on the good will of the municipalities, but they demand for an urgent national response.

Lenche Hristova from the Women's Organization – Strumica added up to this by calling the women MPs to support the changes of the Law on Self-Government at the 52nd plenary session.

The representatives of the local associations indicated serious structural problems. Elizabeta Stojanova from the women's circles in Sachevo warned that there were local stereotypes and closed institutions as obstacles for inclusion, while Fadrije Mustafovska from "Radika-De" assessed that women from rural areas are often invisible for public programmes because of lack of property, education and mobility.

Especially dramatic were the testimonies for lack of safe drinking water. Ivana Cvetkovikj Stojcheva from "Mother" Kumanovo shared data from the Institute for Public Health



for 2024, according to which almost 43% of the water samples from Kumanovo villages are bacteriologically unsafe.

"The inhabitants in 44 villages manage themselves when it comes to water, and the non-functional sewage network directly affects the health and the land", she stated. Zheljka Diklikj Ilievska from the village of Pchinja confirmed that this is also an economic burden, saying that her family spends 40 Euro per month only for bottled drinking water and additional 50 Euro for the household needs.

The meeting ended with a clear appeal: the demands of the local women is not an issue of wish, but rather basic human rights, health, economic security and democratic participation. The organisers asked that the institutions provide lasting mechanisms and resources (financial and technical) that would provide that women's activism remains a sustainable part of local decision making.

This activity is part of the project 'Women Take the Lead in Local Communities', funded by the European Union and co-funded by Sweden

CSOs 12 Times More Efficient in Fighting HIV

On the occasion of 1st December – World AIDS Day, CSOs sent an alarming call to the institutions for a timely diagnosis and continuous therapy. At the national conference organized by HERA Health Education and Research Association, in partnership with the associations "Stronger Together", ESE Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality and the Initiative for Women's Rights from Shuto Orizari, it was stressed that the global goals stipulate 95% of diagnosed people, and in North Macedonia, 71.4% of the people living with HIV know their status. This means that three out of ten people do not know that they have HIV, which keeps the transfer active and makes the control of the epidemics more difficult.

Civic participation in this sector has proven crucial. The data show that CSOs reveal new cases with 12 times higher efficiency than the health care system, thanks to their direct access to vulnerable communities.



Still, instead of support, the coverage with preventive services in the last five years has dropped for one third due to cuts in the funds of the state HIV programme.

The Swiss Ambassador, H.E. Christoph Sommer stressed that one needs a systematic approach and predictable financing to decrease infections, stressing the long-term support of Switzerland for the Macedonian civil sector via “Civica Mobilitas”. He stressed that in the global fight against HIV, Switzerland has allocated 64 million Swiss francs for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria for the period of 2026-2028.

At WHO they stress that the country has to continue with the integration of the services in the primary health care and expand the access to PrEP (prevention therapy).

“The continuous accessibility of the therapy is most important for the people living with HIV, because it enables healthy and normal life and prevents the further transfer of the virus. This year, 24 months of medications have been secured, which significantly decreases the risks from interruption in the treatment. However, in order to stop the growth of the epidemics, we have to invest in testing and early diagnostic, so that each newly diagnosed person can receive a modern therapy immediately,” said Andrej Senih, the Executive Director of “Stronger Together”, the Association for Support of People Living with HIV.

The conference and the activities of the project “Advancing the Health Rights of Girls, Women and Vulnerable Groups” are supported by the Swiss Government via Civica Mobilitas.



Shadow Report on Chapter 27 Reveals that Environment Had a Standstill in 2024 and 2025



While the European standards become stricter and stricter, the Macedonian progress in the environment protection has been stagnating, which is the main conclusion of the fourth Shadow Report on Chapter 27 prepared by “Platform 27” coalition. This document is an important example of civic participation in the Euro integration process, where CSOs act as a direct monitoring and corrector of the state institutions. According to the findings for 2024 and 2025, the period has been a “standstill”, because the key laws on waters, nature and climate action have been procedurally stuck for years without any meaningful explanation on their postponing.

The situation in the field has remained alarming because air pollution is still far above the European limits, and as much as 70% of the waste waters in the country are

released without any purification. Additionally, although the regional waste management systems exist in the strategic documents, in practice the cities often face being piled up with garbage due to the non-functioning of the public enterprises. This stagnating trend is reflected in the environment protection, where, despite the strong pressure and initiatives of the civil society, in the last two years the state has not managed to make a single new protected area, leaving the processes on Belchishko Blato, Studenichishko Blato, Kozhuf, and even re-protecting Mavrovo National Park unfinished.

CSOs included in this monitoring, the Center for Climate Changes, Eco Svest, the Macedonian Ecological Society (MED) and Mileaucontact Macedonia appeal the Government, the Parliament and the institutions in charge to urgently adopt the stuck laws related to Chapter 27 and provide stable financing of the environment sector. They say that the consequences of the institutional passivity are directly felt by the citizens by health deterioration and natural resource degradation. The report is part of the project “Regional Partnership for Better Implementation of the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans at Local Level”, which the Center for Climate Changes has been implementing with seven more partner organizations, with the support of the Swiss Government via Civica Mobilitas.

Information has been taken from the report of Meta.mk news agency.

The Effects of the Financial and Energy Crisis on Policies and Citizens



“How has the energy crisis affected the quality of life of the Macedonian citizens?” This was the main topic of the two public debates held in Skopje in September and October 2025. At the debates, the findings of the comprehensive researches on the consequences of the increased budget expenditures of the 2022 crisis were presented before more than 70 representatives and there was a discussion on the recommendations.

In What Environment Do the Organizations Focusing on Gender Issues Work

The Macedonian Center for International Cooperation has published **The Research in Focus: Monitoring of the Enabling Environment for Organizations Working in the Area of Gender Equality and Women’s Rights**, which provides a comprehensive evidence based analysis about the conditions in which these organizations work in North Macedonia.

The findings show that these organizations face fragmentation and poor coordination. This limits the possibilities for structured cooperation and joint advocacy. The former civic platforms are largely inactive, which leaves a gap in the effective presentation of joint interests.

Apart from this, women activists and organizations focused on gender issues have problem with their capacities, they often do not have sufficient institutional and professional support for developing leadership, management skills and long-term sustainability.

When it comes to financing, it remains highly instable, with municipalities showing limited liability for support of essential services, and the government mechanisms are vulnerable to political influence. The projects funded by the EU and the international donors often face obstacles because of poor or non-existent obligations for co-financing by the state.

The data are alarming: in order to cover the expenses of the energy crisis, the state has cut at least 220 million Euros from the planned capital investments. Instead of new kindergartens, elderly homes, renovation of health care institutions and student dormitories, these funds were geared to covering dept and energy holes. For example, out of the planned 14 million Euros for rehabilitation and upgrade of health care facilities, there were barely 3.5 million spent, while social welfare has been left without the crucial projects for caring about the most vulnerable categories.

The situation is similar at local level. The municipalities and the City of Skopje have not implemented construction projects worth 51 million Euro or 3 billion denars. The debates stressed that untransparent planning and rebalances often “cover” these shortages under the category capital expenditures, although they do not create new value for the citizens.

This activity is part of the project “Using Data on Real Owners to Decrease Corruption”, supported by the Swiss Government via Civica Mobilitas. The findings stress the necessity for close civic participation in the control of the public funds as the only way to secure responsible spending of the budget.

The research results also show that initiatives led by women, the agriculture programmes and academic research in the area of gender studies remain insufficiently funded and unrecognized, despite their significance for the social and economic inclusion. Gender equality and rights of women are often marginalized in the public discourse, with a limited number of campaigns or efforts to normalize the participation of women in decision making and civic life.

All conclusions of this analysis have been translated into recommendations that can respond to current challenges.

The data of the research were collected in the course of 2025 via desk research, semi-structured interviews with CSO representatives, activists and institutional stakeholders, as well as via a case-based analysis.

Promotion of Comparative Analysis and Recommendations in the Fight against SLAPP Lawsuits



As part of the Days of Media Literacy, at the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services (AVMU), there was an event dedicated to increasing the resilience of the media community to legal pressures. The focus was on the strategic lawsuits against public participation, known as SLAPPs, which are more and more used as a tool to silence the journalists. The event is an example of civic participation, where the journalist organizations and experts directly influence the creation of legal mechanisms for protection of public interest. Central part of the event was the presentation of the **Comparative Analysis on Dealing with SLAPPs** in the EU and Western Balkans countries, prepared by Zharko Aleksov and Zharko Hadzi-Zafirov. The analysis shows that there are serious gaps in the Macedonian regulations, especially the absence of mechanisms for early dismissal of abusing lawsuits, which

leaves the journalists exposed to a long-term financial and psychological pressure. The authors have recommended a set of legal and institutional measures that would enable faster reaction of the courts and better prevention of these cases.

AJM president, Mladen Chadikovski and the Executive Director Dragan Sekulovski said that the fight against SLAPPs is crucial for the independence of the media, because the pressures often come from powerful political and economic centres. Sekulovski stressed that there is a need for an urgent coordination among the institutions to approximate to the new European Directive on SLAPPs. This process was supported by Leona Kicheec, the representative of the Ministry of Justice, who stressed the preparedness for a dialogue on future reforms. Secretary General of the European Federation of Journalists Ricardo Gutiérrez also stressed the importance of solidarity and coordinated approach by the journalist organizations at European level.

Decrease and prevention of SLAPPs asks for a constant interinstitutional cooperation, essential legal improvements and practical mechanisms for support of the journalists who are subject to legal pressures.

The publication has been prepared as part of the project “Training – Academy of Journalists and Media workers, T-AJM”, financed by the European Union and the Association of Journalists of Macedonia (AJM), in partnership with the Initiative for European Perspective (IEP) and the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ).

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Young People from Gostivar and Shtip Discovering the Values of Volunteering

The International Volunteer Day, 5th December was marked by youth activism, via the events organised in the resource centres in Gostivar and Shtip. With the joint message that volunteering transforms young people into active citizens, tens of young people debated on the power of helping without expecting anything in return. In Gostivar, the focus was on recognizing various forms of volunteering, from direct humanitarian assistance in the community, to active advocacy and philanthropy. The participants used interactive exercises to analyse

the differences between volunteering and internship, concluding that it is the volunteering engagement that is the best school to develop skills to solve local challenges.

This enthusiasm for community building was also seen in Shtip, where more than 70 participants discussed if volunteering values are successfully transferred to future generations. While in Gostivar they learned about the theoretical frames of activism, the students of “Dimitar Vlahov” primary school practically showed

their engagement by making creative cards for the older volunteers as a token of their appreciation. Dejan Andov from the Union for Youth Work stressed that “volunteering is an act of setting higher standards on how all people in our society should act, something with which one shows love for the community”. For Andov, volunteering is the purest form of civic participation and mover of positive changes.

In both cities, the conclusion of the young people was identical: bigger support from the institutions is needed, as well as more positive examples that would inspire the new generations to be brave and create their own success stories. These activities are part of the project “EU Support to Civil Society Resource Centre – Phase 2”, funded by the European Union. They were implemented by the National Foundation for Civil Society Development “Civil Society Resource Centre”, the Macedonian Center for International Cooperation, the Association for Democratic Initiatives Gostivar and Media Plus Shtip.



200 Volunteers Planted around 5,000 Plants on Borenka on the Occasion of World Volunteering Day

5th December – International Volunteer Day and World Soil Day is the date which reminds that the care about earth and community starts with us ourselves. After eight successfully implemented autumn actions, the ninth volunteer foresting action – Borenka, was implemented this season near Demir Kapija, at Goceva Forest location. More than 200 young volunteer scouts, among whom members of the scout brigade “Dimitar Vlahov” from Veles, volunteers from Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as members of the RM Army joined in the field. Together with the expert teams of “National Forests” public enterprise, they marked the holiday by creating new life at the burnt and degraded areas around the country.

With the joint work of the Scout Association of Macedonia and “National Forests” approximately 40,000 trees were planted at nine locations around the country. This result, with an average of 5,000 seedlings per action once again confirms the power of volunteering and the excellent field coordination.

The foresting has been implemented by National Forests, and it has been supported in cooperation with GEF6 – Sustainable Land Management project, which is a project of the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, as well as the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).



Investment as a Crucial Financial Skill of the Young People

At the time when the young people even earlier face the need to independently manage their income, financial education has become a crucial skill for progress. For this purpose, at the premises of “Up Hub” in Strumica there was an educational lecture dedicated to investment in securities and smart management of personal finances. The event provided open space where the young people got acquainted with the real experience and practical steps to make informed decisions.

The lecturer Ivan Ivanovski used an interactive discussion to say that investment is not a skill that is learned overnight, but rather a process that demands knowledge, patience and discipline. “The financial freedom is a result of a responsible attitude towards one’s own finances”, he stressed, encouraging the participants to think long-term. This activity is part of the project “Youth Network for Financial Literacy at the Southeast” supported by the Swiss Government via Civica Mobilitas, which is implemented by the associations “Promo Idea”, “Novus” from Strumica, as well as “Kruna Plus” from Radovish. With initiatives like this, the young people in the Southeast region obtain powerful tools for timely information, building foundations for a more secure and financially independent future.



Marking Children’s Week in Tetovo



On the occasion of Children’s Week that is marked every year in the first week of October, the Macedonian Civic Education Center (MCEC) stressed one of the most important messages for every child – that with rights there are also responsibilities, and that learning and respect

have no limits of language, ethnic affiliation or ability.

The MCEC team visited “Bratstvo Migjeni” primary school in Drenovec – Tetovo, where there was a joint intercultural class in computer science with the participation of students that learn in Macedonian and Albanian. Led by two teachers, they worked side by side, using digital tools to research topics related to equality, empathy and responsibility. From this activity, the students were supposed to learn that every child has the right to education and safety, but also an obligation to behave with goodness and respect to others.

The activity is part of the project “Inclusion of Children with Special Educational Needs”, implemented by the Association for Assisting Technology “Open the Windows”, in cooperation with the Macedonian Civic Education Center (MCEC), with the financial support of “Pestaloci” children’s foundation.

“We remain dedicated to creating inclusive environments in which all children, regardless of their origin or abilities, can achieve their full potential and feel valued as equal members of the community,” stressed the MCGO representatives, reminding that the responsibility for these areas is joint, for the teachers, parents and the whole community.

Discussion on the Rights of People with Disabilities



On the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities – 3rd December, in Skopje there was a discussion on the topic of “Introduction of the Convention for the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities and the Role of the Ombudsman”. The event, organized by the Ombudsman and HERA – Health Education and Research Association provided direct dialogue between the institutions, the persons with disabilities and their families on the real challenges that they face in their everyday lives.

Vaska Bajramovska-Mustafa, Deputy Ombudsman, reminded that although the state had ratified the Convention in 2011, its practical implementation is still far from complete. The discussion revealed the key systemic problems: difficult access to functional assessment of disability, irregular payment of personal assistants and other caregivers, lack of educational assistants in the schools and physical inaccessibility of health care institutions.

The main message from the meeting was that the change starts by listening to the needs of the citizens. The participants asked for strengthening of the tie between the Ombudsman and the persons with disabilities, as well as bigger competencies of this institution for faster resolution of specific cases. “The Convention is not only an international obligation, but rather a basis for an inclusive society”, stressed the organisers, underlying that civic engagement is crucial for pressure on the institutions until there is a dignified life for everybody.

The information on this event has been taken from the reports of the Media Information Agency (MIA).



Platform for Femicide Monitoring Launched



On the occasion of the International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women and within the campaign “16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence”, the OSCE Mission in Skopje promoted the Platform for Femicide Monitoring (“Femicide Watch”).

This first national observatory of this kind aims to identify the systemic gaps and enable early, coordinated action to prevent murders of women.

At the event, speaking to high government officials, judges, prosecutors and CSOs, Ambassador Kilian Wahl said that femicide could be prevented only with joint responsibility, because isolated work of the institutions leaves the risks unnoticed. “Real prevention starts with early action and joint responsibility”, said Ambassador Wahl.

The crucial contribution of the civil sector in this process was stressed by Uranija Pirovska, the Executive Director of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights. She warned about the serious institutional shortcomings in the cases when the victims had previously reported violence, but there was no appropriate protection.

According to Pirovska, by establishing standards for data collection and intersectoral accountability, the Platform will significantly strengthen the capacities for prevention and reaction to femicide. “Femicide Watch” is not only a statistical tool, but also a mechanism that should transform the way in which the state protects women, turning the analyses into specific policies that would save lives.



“Luludi”: Human Rights Are not a Privilege

Marking of 10th December – International Human Rights Day this year has served as a powerful reminder that the right to life without violence, discrimination and fear has to be a reality for each person, with a special stress on Roma women and girls who often remain at the margins of the system.

The Roma Association for Women and Youth “Luludi” which on daily basis acts in the field with education and providing culturally sensitive services, sent a clear call to the institutions to urgently strengthen protection mechanisms. Their message is clear: the institutions have to finally provide timely, efficient and non-discriminatory protection, supported by continuous financing of specialized services that would respond to specific needs of Roma women and other marginalized groups.

For real changes, the association insists on full transparency and accessibility of information, that have to be available in a language and format understandable for the community, including in Roma languages. This reform process must not take place without direct involvement of the Roma women’s organizations in the creation, implementation and monitoring of the policies for protection from violence. Only by regular data collection and their thorough intersectional analysis – which takes into consideration sex, ethnic affiliation, age and socio-economic status, the state can create measures based on real evidence, rather than on assumptions.

“We believe in a system where the institutions provide timely and effective protection, and the community is not a silent witness, but an ally which shows empathy, solidarity and support. Human rights are not a privilege. They apply



10 ДЕКЕМВРИ - МЕЃУНАРОДЕН ДЕН
НА ЧОВЕКОВИТЕ ПРАВА

**ЧОВЕКОВИТЕ ПРАВА НЕ СЕ ПРИВИЛЕГИЈА.
ТИЕ ВАЖАТ ЗА СИТЕ - СЕКОГАШ И СЕКАДЕ!**



**10 DECEMBER - INTERNATIONAL HUMAN
RIGHT'S DAY**

to all – every time and everywhere”, said the people from “Luludi” RAZM. The Roma association remains open for cooperation and joint initiatives that will contribute to better protection and complete fulfilment of the rights of Roma women and girls.

Debate and Training on “Equality and Non-discrimination”

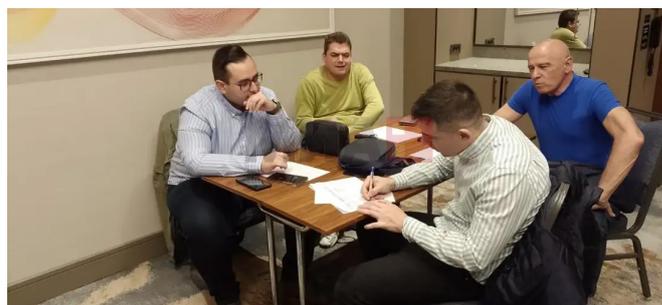
The associations “Axios” and “ZETA – Organization for Disabilities and Justice” organised a debate and training on “Equality and Non-Discrimination”, as part of the project “Inclusive Equality”. The main goal of this initiative is strengthening the capacities of the local authorities and CSOs with the associations of people with disabilities, and a special focus on equality, non-discrimination and inclusive equality.

The trainers Elena Kochoska and Julijana Klimoska explained different ways of equality through an interactive dialogue, stressing that only formal equality before law is not enough if certain groups, because of their identity features, remain excluded from social developments. The inclusive equality, as a highest form, implies direct participation of the citizens in the decision making. “The principle of inclusiveness states that the right is with the citizen, and he should decide how to use it”, stressed Kochoska, saying that the citizens should be asked what they need as early as the local policy planning phase.

Separate part of the debate was dedicated to discrimination and power of language, and it was stated

that the inappropriate and insulting terms for people with disabilities additionally marginalize these citizens. Such is the term “cripple” and “invalid” and all terms deriving from them. The message of the participants was clear: “We are neither in-valid nor useless” – dignity and equal opportunities have to be the foundation of each democratic society that strives to real justice.

The information about this event have been taken from the reports of the Media Information Agency (MIA).



New Eco Ambassadors in Prilep – Local Activists for Direct Protection of the Environment

With a three day intense training held in October, Prilep had its first core of local eco-ambassadors, prepared to act as a crucial ring between citizens and local authorities. This initiative of “Station PET” association from Prilep equipped the activists with practical tools for civic advocacy, understanding of ecological policies and organizing of public actions. Instead of theoretical knowledge only, the participants worked on real examples, analysing the Local Environmental Action Plan of Prilep and detecting the most pressing problems in the community – from non-functionality of the local communities and lack of green zones, up to the issue for waste selection and the need of bigger engagement of the communal inspectors.

The training did not create only educated individuals, but also a new network of leaders who will ask for responsibility and transparency from the institutions via direct mediation. By identifying the specific local challenges and creating solutions for better environmental practice, these eco-ambassadors have become a moving force for a greener and more active community.

The activity is part of the project “Eco Initiative: Citizens and Local Government in Action for Environment Protection!” supported by the European Union, which once again confirms that the real change starts with mobilization at local level and cooperation between the citizens and decision makers.



“Disinfo Radar” of Metamorphosis Foundation Presented at 2025 Paris Peace Forum

The Macedonian innovation for dealing with disinformation “Disinfo Radar” of Metamorphosis foundation, was among the 30 global solutions presented at 2025 Paris Peace Forum, which took place on 29th and 30th October. The selection in a strong world competition is a confirmation for the long-term leadership of Metamorphosis in the protection of democratic values and media integrity of the Western Balkans.

Instead of only reactively denying fake news, “Disinfo Radar” functions as an early warning system which forecasts the harmful narratives before the latter cause ethnic tensions or polarization. Combining human expertise with analysis assisted by artificial intelligence, this system equips the media and civil sector with timely information to act proactively. “Disinfo Radar” was a result of the work of the regional project “Western Balkans Anti-Disinformation Hub”, supported by the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Its presentation at the forum confirms the regional influence of the Foundation and opens new possibilities for cooperation with global partners and mentorship via the Scale-Up Program (SCUP).

This success is a proof that the local civic initiatives not only follow the world trends, but also actively follow innovative solutions with global impact.



“Support Kochani” Disbursed the Fourth Shipment of Compressive Clothing, Worth MKD 452,537 to People Affected by the Fire in Kochani

The new delivery of compressive clothes, worth more than 450,000 denars has already been delivered to Kochani General Hospital, enabling the patients to have crucial support in the process of their long-term rehabilitation. The donation covered 44 personalised items of clothing made to fit 14 patents, and it is a result of the massive support of the citizens and business community. The funds were provided solely via voluntary donations from the country and abroad, which once again confirms the strong social solidarity when needed the most. “The support that we have received from the community enables us to continuously help the affected people and provide timely medical equipment”, stress the people from the Initiative. They have stated that they remain fully committed to transparency and continuous care for the wounded until their full recovery.



From Recycled Clothes to Theatre Costumes

In Struga, there was a creative workshop on costume design for students age 10 to 14, as part of the initiative “The Voice of the Lakeside”. Via the cooperation of the association “Art Manija” from Kumanovo and “Solaris” team from Struga, the young participants had a rare chance to enter behind the stage of the theatrical art and learn the basic principles in costume design. What makes this workshop special is its environmental approach. The children created costumes for a theatre play using exclusively old and recycled clothes. In this way, via play and art, they learn about the protection of the environment while at the same time they shape the visual identities of the characters from “Peter Pan – the Great Battle” play. This activity has been supported by the project “Culture for Development” of the Swiss Government, implemented by “Heartefact Fund”, confirming that culture is a powerful tool for education and development of the new generations.

The information in this event has been taken from the reports of the Media Information Agency (MIA).



More than 1,000 Young People in the Focus of the New Social Entrepreneurship Projects

Ten local CSOs from different parts of the country have officially started their projects on support to young people and social entrepreneurship, within the project “Resilient and Inclusive Pathways for Social Entrepreneurship for the Young People via Capacity Building of Local CSOs in North Macedonia”. At the first official meeting with the grantees the contracts for implementation of innovative ideas were signed, which have the potential to transform the lives of more than 1,000 young people in North Macedonia.

The selected organizations will work on creating “local ecosystems” where the vulnerable groups of young people, including Roma, women and people with disabilities, will receive the knowledge and resources on economic integration. As the coordinator Anelija Mitrovska stressed, the goal is to use social entrepreneurship as a powerful tool for employment and community empowerment.

Besides the support to individuals, the project will also help the sustainability of 30 social enterprises, stimulating solutions that are at the same time economically stable and socially responsible.

The grantees are the associations: “Business Women”, Association for Democratic Initiatives – ADI from Gostivar, “Aqua” from Struga, CEED Macedonia, LAG “Agro Leader” from Krivogashtani, MKC – Bitola, “Kombo”, “Step Forward” from Valandovo, “Hope” from Makedonska Kamenica and “ProAgro Farmers” from Strumica. This initiative, supported by the European Union, traces the path to inclusive society where every young person has an equal chance for economic progress and personal development in their own municipality.

Successfully Completed Fifth Edition of “Agro Fair Strumica 2025”

The Strumica square “Goce Delchev” was the centre for Macedonian agriculture for the fifth year in a row, uniting more than one hundred exhibitors at the jubilee edition of “Agro Fair Strumica 2025”. The event, organised by the association “ProAgro Farmers” offered a rich programme. By presenting the most modern equipment and innovative solutions for protection, and tasting of traditional homemade products, honey and winter preserves, the Fair has once again confirmed its role as a key platform for connecting the producers to users and promoting the Macedonian food. The central part of the event was dedicated to those who are the pillar of the rural development – women and young farmers. “Women Farmers” of the year were Katerina Trajkova from Dolno Chichevo near Veles and Slavica Malinova from Kuklish

near Strumica, while the “Young Farmer” awards were given to Vasil Gavrovski from Bosilovo, Kristina Todorova from Negotino and Riste Gocevski from Monospitovo. These awards are not only personal success, but also an encouragement for the new generations who put in effort and innovations in domestic production. The fair, supported by the Municipality of Strumica and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy has shown that the future of our rural communities is in the support to these hard working communities.

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

More than MKD 200,000 Collected at Konekt’s Charity Fashion Auction

Within the campaign “Days for Donating”, on 4th November 2025 in Skopje, there was the third edition of the charity fashion auction “Fashion with a Cause”. The event, organized by the association “Konekt”, in cooperation with Skopje Fashion Weekend, and supported by the Embassy of France united more than 150 fashion and philanthropy fans around a joint cause, i.e. support to crucial civic initiatives.

At the auction, there were unique creations of 23 well-known designers, new fashion names and craftsmen. Among the exhibited works of Nikola Buleski, Nikola Eftimov, Lidija Georgieva, Izet Curi and many others, the highest bidding was made for the dress by the designer Natalija Terzijoska (Terzija), which was “sold” for 18,000 denars. With the bidding and individual donations, there were more than 200,500 denars collected, to be distributed via Konekt’s donor fund.

The collected funds will provide grants for four strategically important areas: support to volunteer firefighters to protect the forests, development of technology for children with disabilities by using most recent technologies, work on the first lending place for aids for people with cancer and educational programmes for young people who build their career here. With the powerful messages of the anchors Ana Zafirova and Ognjen Janeski, the event stressed the importance of togetherness. It is these

initiatives that are an essential part of creating an enabling environment, where sustainable future is built and real problems in the community are resolved by philanthropy and cooperation among the citizens, businesses and CSOs. “Days for Donating” is Konekt’s national campaign which inspires individuals, families, businesses and communities to join and donate together for the initiatives mentioned in various ways and at various events, as well as via www.opop.mk and the phone line 143 333.



Government and Civil Society Deepen Their Cooperation



The Council for Cooperation between the Government and Civil Society has rounded up the final quarter of 2025 with sessions on strengthening the enabling environment for the civil sector.

At the fifth session, the Council members nominated representatives in the working group for the new Strategy on Transparency (2027-2029): Danche Danilovska-Bajdevska from Metamorphosis Foundation, German Filkov from Center for Civil Communications and Mileva Gjurovska from “European Movement”. At the same time, the Council made a decision to establish a separate working group that will work on transformation of the Code of Good Practices for Financial Support to Citizen Associations and Foundations into a legally binding act. This process envisages essential changes in the way of planning and decision making on funds, introduction of independent committees, strict rules on conflict of interests, involvement of experts and defining the right to appeal and the reporting systems. This aims towards bigger accountability and more efficient distribution of state aid for the associations and foundations.

At the session there were also two permanent working groups established. The working group on communications is made of Nikica Kusinikova from “Konekt”, Bojana Bosilkova from the Ministry of Justice and Dragica Vuchkovikj from “Ecodrvodekor” Bitola. The second working group is on cooperation with the organizations active at local level, and it will be made of Tea Zografska from the National Council on Gender Equality Skopje, Emilija Gjeroska from “Pro Local” Bitola, Monika Ilioska Kantardzioska from “Coalition Now” Prilep, Dragica Vuchkovikj from “Ecodrvodekor” Bitola and Valentina Velichkovska from MCIC. With the establishment of the permanent working groups on communications and cooperation with organizations at local level, there is also a new structure for professional supervision and more direct communication with the sector throughout the country.

The sixth session of the Council took place as part of the National Forum—CSO Fair “Cooperation of the Government and the Civil Society”, in the presence of Government Secretary General Igor Janushev. “One of the principles based on which the Government works on improving the

cooperation and relations with CSOs is the principle of openness and transparency, as necessary instruments for building equality before the law and responsibility with the decision makers. The Government has shown its open and honest approach towards the involvement of CSOs in the processes for public policy creation, precisely with this reestablishment of an independent, representative and effective Council for Cooperation between the Government and the civil society”, stressed Janushev.

At this session, the focus was on the changes in the Law on Associations and Foundations, where Nikica Kusinikova (member) and Emilia Gjeroska (deputy member) were nominated as representatives in the Working Group on Changes and Additions to the Law. The members of the Council, apart from ZZF also discussed current issues related to the enabling environment for CSOs – around state financing of CSOs, using the Single National Electronic Register of Laws (ENER) etc.

At the last session of the Council for 2025, the members discussed the possibilities for improving the legal framework for work of CSOs by changes in the Law on Associations and Foundations, Law on Donations and Sponsorships in Public Sphere and the Law on Volunteering, as well as about adoption of a Law on Social Enterprises. The Council reviewed the Draft-Passports of indicators for monitoring the implementation of the 2025-2028 Government Strategy for Cooperation and Development of the Civil Society and informed about the information meetings with CSOs in the Pelagonija and Eastern Planning Region, as well as about part of the campaign of the Civic Society Resource Centre on informing CSOs about the role of the Council for Cooperation between the Government and the Civil Society.

At the same time, there was a discussion on the possibilities for opening a channel for direct communication (e-mail, forms) to collect initiatives from CSOs, which should be part of the Communication Strategy of the Council.

Consultations on Standardizing the Rules for State Financing of CSOs in the Republic of North Macedonia

Within the efforts to improve the enabling environment for the civil society, on 18th December 2025 there was a consultation in Skopje on “Standardizing the Rules that Regulate State Financing of CSOs – Models, Challenges, Solutions and Legal Framework”. The event, organised by the EU funded project, “Technical Supply for Improving the Enabling Environment for CSOs in the Republic of North Macedonia” united the key stakeholders from the civil sector, relevant state institutions and members of the Working Group for changes to the Law on Associations and Foundations (ZZF) and the Council for Cooperation between the Government and the Civil Society.

The main focus of the discussion was the need for reforming the existing system, since there is no specific legal document that would regulate these processes in detail.

An additional challenge is the fact that the 2007 Code of Good Practices is used only as “soft law” in absence of binding legal norms. The need to change ZZF has been discussed for quite some time, and the process started in 2022 by establishing the first working group; on 25th June 2025, the Ministry of Justice established a new working group to complete the changes by the end of 2025.

The biggest challenges were to define the type, scope and method of state financing by transparent and accountable solutions based on international practices. The consultations were directed to identifying best practices that can be standardized, but also to detecting the most frequent bad practices in public calls for financing, in order to appropriately address them in the legal changes

The conclusions and recommendations from this dialogue should contribute to creating a legal frame that would reflect the real needs of all involved parties and provide sustainable state financing for CSOs in the country.

At the end of December 2025, the Draft Law on Associations and Foundations was placed on ENER with 30 day deadline for comments, i.e. by 30th January 2026. After the completion of this consultation period, it is anticipated to have public discussions on the draft itself.

The complete consultation process will be taken into consideration when finalizing the final document, which is to be reviewed again by the working group in the coming period.



JUBILEE

35 Years of Voice, Solidarity and Changes

Three and a half decades of dedicated work, solidarity and perseverance behind the name of Women's Organization of the Municipality of Sveti Nikole (OZOSVN). This jubilee marks an active contribution to the community and long-term impact on the quality of life of women, youth and vulnerable groups. The story started in December 1990, when seven women activists, led by the first president, Vera Zlateva, established the organization as a symbol of free association and fight for human rights.

Today, OZOSVN is a regional leader that is active in the Vardar and Eastern regions, but also at national level. Their credibility was confirmed in 2025 when they received the Sign of Trust from Konekt, a top certificate for professional and transparent work. The current president, Daniela Paneva, stresses that their work is not only a mission, but a proud obligation on daily basis to give a voice to those who most often remain invisible in the society.

The work of the organization is strategically divided in three key areas that cover health, youth and human rights. Throughout the years, more than 10,000 women and girls have been directly included in their activities, receiving education or psycho-social and free legal aid. This help in the field has been essential, especially in the rural areas where the OZOSVN activists personally visit the women who need advice or protection, believing that changes are possible only if one goes among the people.

“People come to us with uncertainty and fear and they leave with knowledge and specific directions on how to fulfil their rights. This is what gives us the energy to continue every day”, says the coordinator of the executive office Jasmina Trajcheva. The work of the Women's Organization of the Municipality of Sveti Nikole has been recognized outside the local community as well, as the results speak for themselves. The activities are part of the long-term strategy for systemic changes, legal changes, civic advocacy and building a society that respects equality, human rights and democracy.

After 35 years of existence, with more than 300 members and dozens of active volunteers, OZOSVN remains a pillar of the civil society. “We look at the future with the same dedication as in 1990. Our vision is clear – a society in which every woman, every child and every young person has a voice, support and opportunity for a dignified life”, concludes Paneva. The 35 year jubilee is not only a figure, but rather a testimony of continuity, perseverance and trust in the changes that start from the local community.





NEWS
**FROM CIVICA
MOBILITAS**

When it comes to prevention, the consequences are costly – civil society organizations and institutions are calling for greater investment in prevention



Civil society organizations and institutions from the health sector opened a public dialogue to promote access to quality preventive health services for women, girls and vulnerable groups, at the thematic forum „When prevention is saved, the consequences are costly“ held on 15.10.2025.

The main conclusions of the discussion are that it is necessary to involve citizens and civil society organizations in the planning and implementation of preventive programs, to recognize civil society organizations as providers of preventive health services, to increase prevention budgets, as well as to strengthen citizens' awareness of their right to preventive health care.

At the forum discussion, citizens and representatives of civil society organizations shared personal testimonies about access to cervical cancer screening programs and gynecological services in rural areas, youth sexual and reproductive health challenges, experiences with the Maternal and Child Health Protection Program, as well as HIV prevention conditions.

The forum provided a two-way discussion, which was also attended by representatives of the Ministry of Health, the Institute of Public Health and the Inter-Party Parliamentary Group on HIV and SRH.

The event was held as part of the project „Promoting the Health Rights of Women, Girls and Vulnerable Groups“, within the framework of which, in the past period, a monitoring analysis of four preventive health care programs was carried out.

[Read the complete news.](#)

Switzerland's new ambassador reaffirms commitment to civil society



On 16 October, the Civica Mobilitas team held its first meeting with the newly appointed Ambassador of Switzerland to North Macedonia, H.E. Christoph Sommer. „I believe that civil society is a very important area to focus on,“ the ambassador stressed, affirming that supporting civil society organizations is one of Switzerland's priorities.

Aleksandar Kržalovski, the leader of the program team and director of the Macedonian Center for International Cooperation (MCIC), in his address made a brief introduction to MCIC, the organization implementing the program and one of the largest civil society organizations in the country.

Speaking about Civica Mobilitas, the largest civil society support program in the country, supported by the Government of Switzerland for almost 20 years, he introduced Ambassador Sommer to the achievements of the three phases of implementation in which MCIC is involved.

Kržalovski dwelt on the process of capitalization, which will encompass everything that has been achieved in these nearly 20 years. In doing so, the capitalization will give a broader scope to the results of Civica Mobilitas by looking at the context in which the activities were carried out, their compatibility with important developments in the country and its strategic goals such as the European integration process. Ambassador Sommer was presented with the initial version of the timeline of the capitalization of Civica mobilitas made as a digital tool to help navigate through the achievements over the years.

Bearing in mind that Civica Mobilitas is largely aimed at financial support of civil society organizations, the Ambassador was presented with another digital tool i.e. a dashboard where you can see all supported organizations, types of grants, sectors in which they worked, regions

where activities were carried out, etc. In terms of grants, the platform grants.mk through which the application process takes place was also presented.

State funding was one of the topics that was discussed the most, not only in terms of financial support but also in terms of establishing a transparent system of support for civil society organizations that would allow to build a relationship of trust between organizations and institutions at the central and local levels.

Cooperation between civil society organizations and the business sector brings many mutual benefits



„The reason we all want to cooperate is because we all want to benefit. Whether you come from the business sector or from the civil sector, you need to start developing a more complex understanding of mutual benefits,“ Simon Forrester, the international expert of Civica mobilitas, told the participants of the workshop „Strengthening Cooperation between the Private Sector and Civil Society Organizations“, which took place on October 21 in Skopje.

More than 20 representatives of civil society organizations and companies gathered in the premises of MCIC and discussed common interests, challenges and opportunities for new partnerships. Forrester encouraged participants to share their experiences so far in this area.

„I hope that businesses will be more open to different experiences, knowledge and potential support of the organization,“ said Mila Josifovska Danilovska of the Metamorphosis Foundation. She explained that their programs are focused on media literacy, digital transformation and social responsibility and that although they have so far collaborated mainly with companies outside the country, such as Facebook and Google, they are interested in working with domestic companies.

[Read the complete story,](#)

Speaking about the challenges faced by civil society organizations in their work, the Ambassador pointed out that they need to be resilient and learn to function in any conditions.

The Civica Mobilitas team thanked Switzerland for its support to civil society organizations so far and wished the new ambassador a successful job.

When Saving Becomes a Political Responsibility



„Saving at the state level does not mean giving up spending, but streamlining it and directing it towards value-added policies – education, healthcare, infrastructure and innovation,“ says Blagica Petresky, executive director of Finance Think, explaining the essence of public finances succinctly: „Government should save on inefficiencies, not on the future.“ On World Savings Day (31 October), when the world talks about financial literacy and rational use of resources, she reminds us that money – whether personal or public – should not only be kept, but used responsibly.

At a time of inflation, when citizens are facing rising prices, and promises of higher wages and pensions often sound like an easy solution, it is especially important that they have access to accurate and verified data. The Economic Compass offers the right direction.

„Inflation is a macroeconomic indicator that citizens feel directly through price increases, but they don't always understand its drivers and causes. Therefore, through the Economic Compass, we monitor these phenomena in a timely manner, point out risks and encourage corrective mechanisms among policymakers, while informing citizens with verified and understandable data. And we're already seeing that such a mechanism works – we appealed for higher inflation risks back in the first quarter, and over the summer policymakers aligned their rhetoric on potential causes and announced a correction of measures. It shows that timely information can have a real impact on better policy-making and stabilization of expectations,“ Petresky explains.

[Read the complete story.](#)

What Did the Candidates Talk About During the Election Campaign: Final Review of Media Coverage of the 2025 Local Elections

The 2025 local elections shaped the public agenda more than any other event of the year. Over 25,700 media articles and 3,600 social media posts were dedicated to the electoral process, generating more than 860,000 interactions. The most intense days were 19 October and 2 November, when the media and the public followed the results..

The topics that appeared most frequently in the public sphere were local governance, infrastructure, education, and public services. Candidates who promised measurable and concrete results performed the best.

Education and schools were the most exposed topic, with 17,896 media posts and nearly 350,000 interactions. The focus was on renovating old schools, building new ones, and improving conditions for students.

The second most prominent topic was infrastructure and public services. Promises for new streets, sewage systems, parks, and health clinics dominated this category.

Although in the early weeks the environment was the most exposed topic—due to the situation with Skopje’s landfills and the fire in Trubarevo—the volume of posts decreased as the campaign went on, then rose again toward the end, especially with posts about uncollected waste in the capital.

“Civil Sector Helps in Bridging the Gap between the Institutions and the People”

“No government, no matter how strong it is, can carry the changes itself. And no civil society, no matter how developed it is, can fulfil its role without institutions that are open, transparent and ready for dialogue”, said the Prime Minister Hristijan Mickoski at the opening of the National Forum – Fair of CSOs organized by Civica Mobilitas and the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia on 26th November 2025 at the Parliamentary Club in Skopje.



A smaller portion of posts covered ethnic and coalition issues, such as the agreements between VMRO-DPMNE and Vlen, as well as weaker mayoral election results for DUI, which were framed as a turning point in interethnic relations.

Local accountability was also a key theme. Civil society organizations such as Civil and Vistinomer monitored violations of the pre-election silence and fact-checked campaign promises. They noted that most media outlets reported statements without deeper analysis.

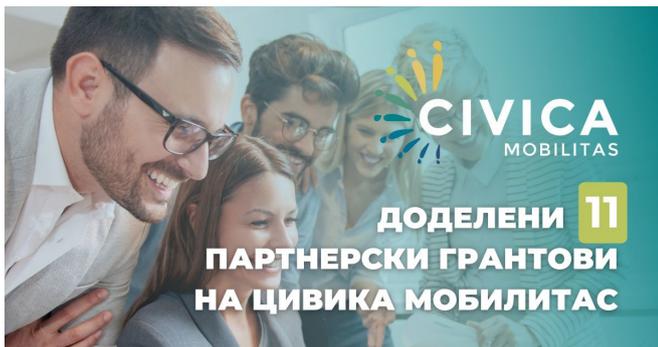
[Read more.](#)

Prime Minister Mickoski spoke about the vision of the Government on the civil sector as strong, independent, professional and sustainable, a real partner on the creation and implementation of state policies. “Sector that strengthens democracy, protects the rights of the citizens, monitors the work of the institutors and helps in bridging the gap between the institutions and the people”, added he.

The participants were greeted by the Ambassador of Switzerland, H.E. Christoph Sommer. “In the essence of each functional democracy there is a strong civil society. It connects people with decision makers by advocacy for changes oriented to citizens, by giving the voice to those who might otherwise not be heard and by monitoring the work of the state institutions with respect to the access and quality of public services, as well as efficient and transparent use of state budget”, said he. According to Ambassador Sommer, the civil society organizations come from the needs and aspirations of their communities.

[Read the complete story.](#)

Eleven Civica Mobilitas Partnership Grants Awarded



The Grant Selection Committee has reviewed the applications submitted by the organizations to the Civica Mobilitas Partnership Grants Call (CM-PG-2) which was open until 15th October 2025.

There were 111 applications of 248 CSOs that were received for this call (111 project applicants and 137 partners). Out of these, 100 met the administrative criteria and they were submitted to the Committee.

Below are the organizations that were awarded partnership grants:

- Institute for Democracy “Societas Civilis” Skopje, in partnership with the Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research Skopje, will implement the project “Local Inspectors under a Magnifying Glass: Improving the Legality and Responsibility of the Local Inspection”.
- Association of Journalists of Macedonia Skopje, in partnership with the Foundation for Media and Civil Society Macedonian Institute for Media Skopje, will implement the project “Strengthening Ethical Standards for Bigger Trust in Media”.
- CSO Youth Can Skopje in partnership with the CSO SUPORTCO Kochani will implement the project “Connected in Crisis: Young People that Build Resilience and Togetherness”.
- Resis Research Institute on Social Development Skopje in partnership with the Association Council of Media Ethics of Macedonia Etica Press will implement the project “Community Media for Stroger Social Society”.
- Youth Alliance Association – Krushevo in partnership with the Association Center for Intercultural Dialogue Kumanovo and the Association Institute for Community Development Tetovo, will implement the project “My Voice in My City”.
- Konekt Association Skopje in partnership with the Foundation Apolonia Gevgelija will implement the project “Changes for Sustainability”.
- Green Institute Association for Environmentally Sustainable Development Skopje in partnership with the National Association of Private Forest Owners Berovo will implement the project “Zero Biowaste: Systemic Changes via Partnership with the Citizens”.
- First Children’s Embassy in the World – Megjashi in partnership with the Association Impetus – Center for Internet, Development and Good Governance Skopje will implement the project “Safe Internet Space for Children and Young People”.
- Association of Ecologists Natura Struga in partnership with the Association Scout Brigade Mirko Mileski Kichevo will implement the project “Citizens for Clean Air”.
- Association for Assistive Technology Open the Windows Skopje in partnership with the Association for Disabilities and Justice ZETA will implement the project “Advocacy for Digital Inclusion”.
- Association for Legal Research and Analyses Center for Legal Research and Analyses Skopje in partnership with the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association will implement the project “Mentorship in Judiciary and Youth Engagement on Gender Equality”.

The new grantees will work in six different sectors: advancing of digital transformation, enabling environment for CSO development, fight against corruption and investigative journalism, social cohesion, gender equality and green initiatives. The activities will take place in the period of 10 to 12 months.

The selected organizations are from the Skopje North-East, Polog, East, Pelagonija, South-East and South-West regions in Macedonia and they will work locally, regionally and at national level.

The total Civica Mobilitas support for these partnership grants is around MKD 32,600,000.

Stories about Women Who Have Learned that Discrimination Is not “Normal”



Discrimination against women is rarely recognized immediately. It is hidden behind “that is the way the system functions”, behind shame and fear of consequences. For many women, the first step is not an institutional report, but rather an inner struggle, i.e. if what they experience is injustice or just something that has to be accepted. The cases that CSOs work with show that discrimination as an occurrence can be manifested in different ways and in different environments – at work, in the institutions, on the street, etc. They also show something else, that the change starts when the women receive information, support and encouragement to speak up.

“Walking the dog in front of the building, one of the daily routines of a trans girl, has caused interested with an unknown man, who recorded her on his mobile phone without her agreement. When she asked that the footage

is deleted, the man denied that he had recorded her and refused to show her his phone. After this, upset and humiliated, she reported the case in the police, a step that she would not dare to take before. This was not the first time that she had felt humiliated. Previously she had been denied entrance to a restaurant, and a taxi driver that had called left the moment he saw her. For years, she had experienced situations like this as something that “had to be”, tell the people at the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights – HCHR, on one of the many experiences of the girls who had faced discrimination.

This trans woman had not known for a long time that what she was experiencing actually had a name – discrimination. She knew even less that there were protection mechanisms and that she had the right to ask for help. Via multiple conversations with a paralegal from the Coalition Margins she had gradually started to recognize the different ways of discrimination based on gender identity. The support was not only informative, but also encouraging. The paralegal helped her understand that she was not alone and that her experience could not be described only as “hypersensitivity” but also as a real violation of her rights.

[Read the complete story.](#)

Joint Achievements in Civica Mobilitas in 2025

The year that we have left behind is a year of joint efforts, ideas and activities with which we have created space for dialogue, participation and solidarity. Together we have contributed that the citizens are louder, more active and more involved, because we believe in a civil society that is dynamic, responsible and important for the development and quality of life of all citizens.

At the same time, we have remained true to our role – to monitor, indicate, advocate and offer alternative solutions with respect to policies and practices of the institutions and private sector, always led by the public interest.

In the coming year, let us continue to strengthen the civil society, deepen mutual cooperation and increase our joint impact where it is most necessary.

With honest wishes for good health, happy and successful new year, we remind you of some of our joint achievements.

In the course of the year, one of Civica Mobilitas biggest events – the Networking Meeting has united more than 80 representatives of 65 CSOs.

The event provided an open and joint discussion about the key challenges and priorities at local level, especially in the

context of the local elections held in October 2025.

The meeting resulted in formulating joint proposals for the programmes of the candidates for mayors and initiated the process of re-establishing the Civic Platform, as a mechanism for uniting an coordinated action of the civil society. The proposals were based on experience and priorities identified by the organizations in their local communities and aimed to improve the transparency, accountability, civic participation and quality of public services. This activity additionally strengthened the role of the CSOs as a significant partner for the local authorities in the processes of advocacy and public policy creation.

Civica Mobilitas has submitted these proposals to the candidates for mayors and municipal council members at 2025 local elections.

[Read the complete news.](#)



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Stories from the Civil Society



Civic Impulse



**Code od Conduct for Civil
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**State funding for Civil Society
Organizations**



**Civica Mobilitas
Community**



**Civica Mobilitas
ePlatform**

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