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Two years have passed since the conflict which brought Macedonia close to civil war, occurred. Although a lot has been done since then in terms of assistance, it is felt that the former crisis areas as well as the rest of the country have not yet recovered, and the situation of the society as a whole is still considered fragile.

With this in mind, the Macedonian Centre for International Co-operation (MCIC), a nongovernmental and non-profit organisation founded in 1993, and active in the fields of development, rehabilitation and relief, decided together with the Royal Netherlands Embassy to carry out a comprehensive study. The aim was to assess the progress made in reintegrating IDPs and refugees displaced during the 2001 crisis, to assess the progress in revitalizing the areas affected by conflict and, last but not least, to provide recommendations to conclude or at least to enhance these processes.

The study was carried out as a joint venture of MCIC and FAKT – a non-profit consultancy firm based in Germany, and local consultants. Phase one, which concentrated on collecting and analysing secondary data, took place from July to August 2003, while the actual field work - phase two - was conducted from 22 September to 6 October 2003.