



MACEDONIAN  
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# MACEDONIA`S POTENTIAL TO ENGAGE IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION: THE STATE OF AFFAIRS

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## Macedonia`s potential to engage in development cooperation: the state of affairs

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## ACRONYMS

CMC – Crisis Management Centre  
CSOs – Civil Society Organizations  
DAC – Development Assistant Committee  
DEAR - Development education and awareness raising  
DEU – The Delegation of the European Union to Macedonia  
EC - European Commission  
EIDHR - The European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights  
EU - European Union  
GDP – Gross Domestic Product  
HLAD – High Level Accession Dialogue  
IMF – International Monetary Fund  
IPA – Pre-Accession Assistance  
MCIC – Macedonian Center for International Cooperation  
MFA – Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
NGOs – Non-governmental organizations  
NPAA – National Program for the Adoption of the Acquis  
ODA – Official Development Assistance  
OECD – Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development  
PBA - Programme Based Approach  
SAA – Stabilization and Association Agreement  
SDGs – Sustainable Development Goals  
SDSM – Social Democrat Union of Macedonia  
SDC – Swiss Development Cooperation  
SEA – Secretariat for European Affairs  
USAID – United States Agency for International Development  
VMRO-DPMNE-Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization- Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity  
WB – World Bank

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acronyms .....	3
1 FOREWORD .....	5
2 INTRODUCTION .....	6
3 POLITICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION.....	7
4 MACEDONIA AND THE EUROPEAN UNION.....	9
5 MACEDONIA AS A RECIPIENT OF OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE.....	11
6 THE POTENTIAL OF CSOS TO BECOME PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION.....	15
CONCLUSION .....	17
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	18
Annex 1. List of Macedonian csos involved in the activities of the project “Western Balkan CSOs for global development” .....	19
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	20

# 1 FOREWORD

The Macedonian Center for International Cooperation (MCIC) has been dedicated to raising awareness, networking and capacity building for involvement of a strong and active civil society in shaping quality developmental and humanitarian policies in Macedonia. In cooperation with TRIALOG, MCIC has been making efforts since 2006 to mobilize and support civil society organizations (CSOs) to work together towards raising awareness on national level on development cooperation, the need for development education and involvement in the global development agenda.

Civil society in Macedonia has a pivotal role to play in supporting the sustainable development. Globally, civil society is recognized to be a developmental actor in its own right, and a vibrant and active civil society that functions in an enabling environment and understands closely the needs of its constituencies can help achieving the ambitious Agenda 2030.

We hope that this publication will open the debate on the possibilities for participatory creation and implementation of developmental policies and legislation, already planned in the National Programme for Adoption of Acquis Communautaire, particularly Chapter 30 International Relations. Specifically, the intention is that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) engages in open and participatory approach at early stage on the issue of development cooperation and builds a solid partnership with the civil sector.

This publication is intended for all relevant stakeholders (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Secretariat for European Affairs (SEA), the Office of the vice-president for economic issues, other relevant institutions, CSOs, donors, international organizations etc.) in Macedonia involved in the development cooperation and humanitarian aid. As our main target are CSOs we hope to increase their awareness on the issue and interest to contribute to future activities.

Aleksandar Krzalovski, First Executive Director

Gonce Jakovleska, Executive Director

## 2 INTRODUCTION

Macedonia is on its way of becoming a member state of the European Union (EU) in the foreseeable future. The membership will require a shift from being recipient to becoming a donor-country with the aim of contributing to global development through financial and nonfinancial resources. To accomplish this complex task, development co-operation policies and humanitarian aid should be strategically planned, coordinated, implemented, and monitored, involving all key stakeholders including CSOs. In a globalized world where we recognize the growing interdependence, the new donor countries are becoming an important actor in the process of shaping a better future for those left behind.

The aim of this research paper is to explore the challenges that both the government and CSOs face, that determine the potential of the government to engage in development cooperation in partnership with the civil sector. The paper is based on the TRIALOG Country paper: The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2012) by Emilia Nunnari<sup>1</sup>.

The research paper contains analysis of secondary sources. Desktop research was conducted in order to review documents and statistics and gather the required data for this paper. The research included national strategy and policy documents, European Commission (EC) progress reports, reports provided by national and international civil society actors, as well as official statistics provided by the World Bank (WB) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) databases. Furthermore, input for the document was provided through communication with the MFA and SEA and through networking events with various CSOs interested or working on global development issues.

The research paper consists of six chapters: overview of the political and socio-economic situation in Macedonia; the EU-Macedonia relations and current accession process and the level of preparation of the country in terms of development policy and humanitarian assistance; Macedonia as recipient of Official Development Assistance (ODA) an overview of data and institutional arrangements; the potential of CSOs to become partners to the state in development cooperation; and finally, conclusions and recommendations are provided.

This research paper was written as part of the regional project “Development CSOs for Global Development” supporting CSOs in Western Balkan countries to build capacities on and establish structures for development cooperation. The project is led by Austrian CSO HORIZONT3000 and funded by Austrian Development Cooperation and HORIZONT3000.

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<sup>1</sup> Nunnari, E. (2012) TRIALOG Country Paper The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. TRIALOG Internet access: [http://www.trialog.or.at/images/doku/trialog\\_countrypaper\\_macedonia.pdf](http://www.trialog.or.at/images/doku/trialog_countrypaper_macedonia.pdf) [accessed 2017-08-18]

### 3 POLITICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION

The unravelling of the deepest political crisis in Macedonia began in 2014, when the SDSM, the opposition party at that time, boycotted the Macedonian Assembly and accused the party in power VMRO-DPMNE of electoral fraud. The crisis deepened when in 2015 SDSM released recordings of taped conversations, or so-called “bombs,” of high government officials, indicative of power abuses. This led to large decentralized demonstrations; the streets of the larger cities in Macedonia were flooded with citizens demanding immediate resignation and investigation into the administration’s wrongdoings. The crisis was partially resolved in 2016 with the Prizno Agreement<sup>2</sup> signed by the four main political parties in Macedonia and mediated by the EU and the United States. The political parties, however, did not secure participation, nor effective implementation of the agreement, which prolonged the crisis. The parliamentary elections were delayed twice. Finally, in December 2016, SDSM and its coalition parties won the elections and assumed power.

*Macedonia is a small landlocked country in the central Balkans with land area of 25,713 km sq. According to the latest estimation of the population size in 2016, Macedonia has a population of about 2,072,490 with a multiethnic composition. The latest census data from 2002 shows that the largest ethnic group in the country is Macedonians (64.2%) and the second largest group is Albanians (25.2%). Other minority groups are: Turks (3.9%), Roma (2.7%), Serbs (1.8%), Bosnians (0.9%), Vlachs (0.5%) and other.*

*Macedonia is a parliamentary democracy. According to the Freedom House report Freedom in the World 2017, Macedonia’s status is partly free.*

The economy felt the effects and uncertainty from the prolonged political crisis 2014-2017<sup>3</sup>. Macedonia has one of the lowest GDP per capita, PPP current international \$ (15,121.3) compared to the average of the countries members of the EU (39,629.5). Compared to Western Balkan countries, the GDP per capita is surpassed only by Montenegro (16,853.8)<sup>4</sup>. As the EC report from 2016 notes that in the past five years there were no improvements in the structure of the economy, and the dominant sector is services where half of the economy’s jobs are, followed by industry and construction (22%) and agriculture (10%)<sup>5</sup>. Compared to the average of the EU member states, the ratios are similar except that of the agricultural sector which is around 1.6 percent of GDP of the EU<sup>6</sup>.

The EC report from 2016 also states that Macedonia “has a good level of preparation in developing a functioning market economy”. However, the report emphasises other key weaknesses to the economy, “such as low competitiveness of the domestic private sector which is hampered by weak contract enforcement, the large informal economy, and difficult access to finance.” Then the report notes continuous lack of improvement of the management of public

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<sup>2</sup> The Prizno agreement or agreement from 2 June – 15 July, 2015 is a political agreement between the main political parties in the Republic of Macedonia with the mediation of the European Union. The agreement ended the Macedonian political and institutional crisis in the first half of 2015. It foresees: the participation of the then opposition party SDSM in the ministries; the early resignation of the previous prime minister Nikola Gruevski in January 2016 and a caretaker government to bring the country to general elections in June 2016, as well as a Special prosecutor to lead the investigations about the eventual crimes highlighted by the wiretapping scandal.

<sup>3</sup> World Bank Group (2017) Western Balkans Regular Economic Report No.11 Faster growth, more jobs Internet access: <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/310431491458109659/WBRER-11-v6.pdf> [accessed 2017-08-18]

<sup>4</sup> The World Bank statistics: GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$). Internet access:

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.CD?end=2016&locations=AL-MK-XK-RS-ME-BA-EU&start=2012&view=map> [accessed 2017-06-08]

<sup>5</sup> EC Progress Report on Macedonia (2016) Internet access: [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key\\_documents/2016/20161109\\_report\\_the\\_former\\_yugoslav\\_republic\\_of\\_macedonia.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2016/20161109_report_the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia.pdf) [accessed 2017-06-10]

<sup>6</sup> European Central Bank: Structure of the euro area economy. Internet access: <https://www.ecb.europa.eu/mopo/eac/html/index.en.html> [accessed 2017-06-08]

finances and increased public debt, the education curricula, low innovation rates and needs for public infrastructure.

Current registered unemployment rate in Macedonia according to the State Statistical Office is 22.9% i.e. 218,601 unemployed people from the active population are searching for job opportunities<sup>7</sup> (Staggering are the percentages of the unemployed among the youth, with 46,1% unemployment rate between 20-24, and 35,2% are between 25-29 years old.<sup>8</sup>)

According to the EC progress report 2016 poverty rates continued to decline in 2015, driven by the positive labor market outcomes before the slowdown in 2016. The number of people living in poverty in Macedonia remains high, or more precisely 36,1% of the population lives below the poverty line.<sup>9</sup> Minorities, Roma people in particular, are even more drastically affected; close to 30% of the Roma, population is unemployed.<sup>10</sup>

The brief overview of key indicators of the political and socio-economic situation in Macedonia in the past five years, shows serious backsliding of the political situation which further influences the socio-economic situation. The lack of reforms and improvements of key importance to the wellbeing of the citizens so far, presents a significant challenge for the state and civil society to even engage in the discussion and planning of development policies.

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<sup>7</sup> Republic of Macedonia State Statistical Office. Country Indicators. Internet Access. [http://www.stat.gov.mk/KlucniIndikatori\\_en.aspx](http://www.stat.gov.mk/KlucniIndikatori_en.aspx) [accessed 2017-06-18]

<sup>8</sup> Republic of Macedonia State Statistical Office. Country Indicators. Internet Access. <http://makstat.stat.gov.mk/> [accessed 2017-06-18]

<sup>9</sup> EC Progress Report on Macedonia (2016) Internet access: [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key\\_documents/2016/20161109\\_report\\_the\\_former\\_yugoslav\\_republic\\_of\\_macedonia.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2016/20161109_report_the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia.pdf) [accessed 2017-06-10]

<sup>10</sup> Youth Unemployment in the Republic of Macedonia: Challenges and Perspectives. Internet Access. [https://www.etf.europa.eu/eventsmgmt.nsf/\(getAttachment\)/10444B8E32BDE785C12580350038B14B/\\$File/Presentation\\_fyROM.pdf](https://www.etf.europa.eu/eventsmgmt.nsf/(getAttachment)/10444B8E32BDE785C12580350038B14B/$File/Presentation_fyROM.pdf) [accessed 2017-06-18]



## 4 MACEDONIA AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

In over a decade, under the rule of the previous conservative party VMRO-DMPNE, the status quo of Macedonia's accession to the EU continued, while maintaining recommendations for negotiations. Having in mind the long duration of the status quo, particularly the backsliding in the areas of political criteria key for negotiations, this situation can be seen as a regres. Furthermore, the bilateral dispute with neighboring Greece over the historical and territorial reasons related to the use of the name "macedonia"<sup>11</sup> still persists.

An analysis of the public opinion done by IDSCS, shows that the citizens support for Macedonia becoming an EU member has a multiannual trend of declining support and continuous dissatisfaction with the domestic reform capacities and engagement with the previous government. The analysis shows that the trend of declining support for the EU is not a result of a growing Euroscepticism, but it is more related to the name issue with Greece. Main reason for the support are the expectations of material and economic gains from the membership, or moreover the expectations of improving the living standards.<sup>12</sup>

The EU and Macedonia maintained dialogue through meetings of the highest joint bodies, namely the Stabilisation and Association Committee and the Stabilisation and Association Council until 2015. A High Level Accession Dialogue (HLAD)<sup>13</sup> was launched by the government and the EC on March 15, 2012. Political-level meetings were held in 2012 and 2013, and no meetings took place in 2014 due to the political crisis.<sup>14</sup> In 2015, the EC stated that it was prepared to extend its recommendation, conditional on the continued implementation of the Przino Agreement<sup>15</sup> facilitated by Commissioner Hahn and three Members of the European Parliament in 2015, as well as the substantial progress in the implementation of the 'Urgent Reform Priorities'.<sup>16</sup> Due to the political crisis during 2016, the dialogue ceased until favourable conditions for dialogue were created. The process of accession negotiations<sup>17</sup> has been conditioned with taking up the necessary reforms in the areas of rule of law, fight against organized crime and corruption, and record of accomplishment of investigations, prosecutions, and convictions at all levels in the fight against organized crime and corruption.

According to the latest EC report from 2016, Macedonia has different level of progress in fulfilling the criteria for EU membership. The report notes that the country's continuation of the most severe political crisis was followed by democratic backsliding and challenges in the rule of law, in particular due to state capture affecting the functioning of democratic institutions and key areas of society. Some level of preparation was assessed in terms of reform of the public administration, the judicial system and fight against corruption and organized crime, however it's

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<sup>11</sup> Klekovski, S. (2014) The name dispute 2013. MCIC. Internet access: <http://mcms.mk/images/docs/2014/spotot-za-imeto-makedonija-2013.pdf> [accessed 2017-06-18] The name dispute became visible after the independence in 1991 when Greece opposed the use of the name Macedonia calling upon historical and territorial reasons. Greece considered to have the exclusive right to use the name for its region Macedonia. Even though Macedonia according to the Arbitrary commission for former Yugoslavia, fulfilled the conditions for recognizing independence, Greece blocked the recognition by the EU as well as Macedonia's acceptance in the UN. Since then, no solution to the name dispute could be reached acceptable for both sides.

<sup>12</sup> Damjanovski, I. (2016) Analysis of the public opinion for the Macedonian EU accession process 2014-2016, IDSCS. Internet access: <http://idscs.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/MK-Analiza-proces-pristapuvanje-kon-EU-2014-2016.pdf> [accessed 2017-06-18]

<sup>13</sup> HLAD focuses on five key areas: protecting freedom of expression in the media, strengthening the rule of law, reforming public administration, improving the election process, and developing the market economy.

<sup>14</sup> EC progress report 2014 on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia published by European Commission. Internet access: [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key\\_documents/2014/20141008-the-former-yugoslav-republic-of-macedonia-progress-report\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2014/20141008-the-former-yugoslav-republic-of-macedonia-progress-report_en.pdf) [accessed 2017-06-10]

<sup>15</sup> Przino agreement (2015) Internet access: [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/news\\_corner/news/news-files/20150619\\_agreement.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/news_corner/news/news-files/20150619_agreement.pdf) [accessed 2017-06-18]

<sup>16</sup> European Commission (2015) Urgent reform priorities for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Internet access: [https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/urgent\\_reform\\_priorities\\_en.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/urgent_reform_priorities_en.pdf) [accessed 2017-06-18]

<sup>17</sup> Ristevska Jordanova, M., et al (2016) The WESTERN Balkans and its EU integration : 2015 comparative overview. European Policy Institute (EPI) – Skopje. Internet Access. [http://ten.europeanpolicy.org/images/regional\\_analysis/the\\_western\\_balkans\\_2015\\_comparative\\_overview.pdf](http://ten.europeanpolicy.org/images/regional_analysis/the_western_balkans_2015_comparative_overview.pdf) [accessed 2017-06-18]

a very limited progress, and the lack of political commitment fails to tackle substantial reforms. Furthermore, the report states that as regards to its ability to assume the obligations of membership, Macedonia is moderately prepared in most areas, including in the areas of competition, transport and energy. Moderate level of preparation is also reached in terms of coping with competitive pressures and market forces within the Union under the economic criteria. Finally, the progress report notes the good level of preparation in developing functioning market economy, but at the same time lists numerous weaknesses provided in chapter 3 of this paper.

The EU provides significant financial and political support in Macedonia to ensure the development of civil society as a crucial component of any democracy. The importance of strong civil society was put forward in the agenda of the EU in 2014 with the introduction of the *Guidelines for EU support to civil society in enlargement countries, 2014-2020*<sup>18</sup>. CSOs in Macedonia can access EU Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) funds and European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR) funds through the Ministry of Finance and the Delegation of the European Union (DEU). Furthermore, CSOs can apply to other EU community programs such as Progress, Erasmus+, Europe for Citizens 2014-2020, Horizont2020, Creative Europe Programme, and COSME<sup>19</sup>. However in terms of funds for increasing CSOs capacities in development, two key programs such as the Development education and awareness raising (DEAR) program<sup>20</sup> and EU Aid Volunteers<sup>21</sup> are only allowing Macedonian CSOs to participate as associates.

As stated in Chapter 30 of the EU *acquis communautaire* in the area of humanitarian and development policy, applicant countries such as Macedonia are required to progressively align their policies towards third countries and its positions within international organizations with policies and positions adopted by the Union and its Member states.<sup>22</sup> Macedonia is lagging behind and made no progress towards the legislative alignment and structure for development policies. However, first steps were taken in 2010 and 2011.<sup>23</sup> In 2010, a Unit for humanitarian and development aid was established within the MFA with two employees responsible for its activities.<sup>24</sup> Little progress was made concerning the area of development policy and humanitarian aid in 2011 with some improvements on coordination among responsible institutions for humanitarian aid.<sup>25</sup> From 2012 to 2016, no progress was reported related to the development policies. In terms of the established structures for development policy, the Unit for humanitarian and development aid at the MFA is not functional.<sup>26</sup> With regards to humanitarian aid, since 2012 MFA coordinated country's humanitarian aid to Turkey in a wake of the Van earthquake in 2011. Also, Macedonia became a member of EU's civil protection mechanism, which enables it to participate in the European disaster response system.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Guidelines for EU support to civil society in enlargement countries, 2014-2020 (2012) Internet access: [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/civil\\_society/doc\\_guidelines\\_cs\\_support.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/civil_society/doc_guidelines_cs_support.pdf) [accessed 2017-06-21]

<sup>19</sup> 2016 CSO Needs Assessment Report on Macedonia (2016) Internet access: [http://www.tacso.org/data/dokumenti/pdf/doc2016\\_nar\\_mk\\_eng.pdf](http://www.tacso.org/data/dokumenti/pdf/doc2016_nar_mk_eng.pdf) [accessed 2017-06-21]

<sup>20</sup> The aim is to inform EU citizens about development issues, mobilise greater public support for action against poverty, give citizens tools to engage critically with global development issues, to foster new ideas and change attitudes.

<sup>21</sup> EU Aid Volunteers brings together volunteers and organisations from different countries, providing practical support to humanitarian aid projects and contributing to strengthening the local capacity and resilience of disaster-affected communities.

<sup>22</sup> EU *Acquis communautaire*, Chapter 30. Internet access: [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/conditions-membership/chapters-of-the-acquis\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/conditions-membership/chapters-of-the-acquis_en) [accessed 2017-06-14]

<sup>23</sup> Nunnari, E. TRIALOG Country paper: The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2012). Internet access: [http://www.trialog.or.at/images/doku/trialog\\_countrypaper\\_macedonia.pdf](http://www.trialog.or.at/images/doku/trialog_countrypaper_macedonia.pdf) [accessed 2017-06-14]

<sup>24</sup> EC Progress Report on Macedonia (2010). Internet access: [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key\\_documents/2010/package/mk\\_rapport\\_2010\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2010/package/mk_rapport_2010_en.pdf) [accessed 2017-06-16]

<sup>25</sup> EC Progress Report on Macedonia (2011). Internet access: [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key\\_documents/2011/package/mk\\_rapport\\_2011\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2011/package/mk_rapport_2011_en.pdf) [accessed 2017-06-16]

<sup>26</sup> Official communication of MCIC with MFA

<sup>27</sup> EC Progress Report on Macedonia (2012). Internet access: [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key\\_documents/2012/package/mk\\_rapport\\_2012\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/pdf/key_documents/2012/package/mk_rapport_2012_en.pdf) [accessed 2017-06-18]

Macedonia's National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis Communautaire (NPAA) was first adopted in 2006 and is reviewed and updated annually. A NPAA document from 2014, mentions that until 2015, a Strategy on development cooperation will be adopted, however this activity is not planned in the later NPAA<sup>28</sup>. According to NPAA revision 2016, Macedonia list several priorities for short and medium terms in the development policy (3.30.3) and humanitarian aid (3.30.4.) sectors<sup>29</sup>

In the area of developmental policy, Macedonia is set to achieve one goal which is introducing appropriate institutional model and legal framework for creating developmental aid policy by the end of 2017. First, adoption of a methodology for the assessment of provided aid and introduction of mechanisms for the unification of data is planned; and secondly the adoption of a Law on Development Policy. Thirdly, MFA is set to sign a Memorandum for Cooperation with other countries or specialised agencies of other countries in order to implement trilateral projects. In short term, the MFA as key institution for development cooperation will introduce the principles and political commitments of EU and other relevant international documents (European Consensus on Development,<sup>30</sup> Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action,<sup>31</sup> The Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation, <sup>32</sup> Policy Coherence for Development)<sup>33</sup> as well as more intensive inclusion in the UN Agenda 2030<sup>34</sup> of other line ministries for a better co-operation and more efficient results. Regarding the midterm period, geographical and thematic priorities will be defined, than database will be created for the accessible capacities of the country for implementation of development cooperation, and a mechanism for unification of data on the granted development assistance. The Law on the Implementation of the Development Policy has been postponed for 2017. In addition, intensified cooperation with civil society sector is planned as well with other EU member-countries and specialized agencies in other countries in order to implement trilateral developmental projects.

For the humanitarian aid policy, two goals with five measures are planned. Macedonia intends to adopt EU regulation 31996R1257 for humanitarian aid and harmonize with the "European consensus on humanitarian aid". Besides, it intends to promote international bilateral agreements of the Crisis Management Centre (CMC) and to enhance the capabilities of the Regional Network Centre, appropriate data exchange, and mutual assistance in disasters and crisis situations. In addition, amendments of the Law for protection and rescue and Law on firefighting are planned as well as the reorganization in the structure of the Directorate for protection and rescue and the improvement of the legal frame based on EU lessons on civil protection in the long term.

The new government in power led by SDSM, has a challenging work towards fulfilling the criteria for EU membership and finally opening the negotiations, including the preparation for development policy and humanitarian assistance. The EU has continuously supported civil society in developing its capacities to support the democratization of the country. This should be effectively used by the government for quality revision of the planned goals for development policy in the NPAA ambitiously set to be fulfilled by the end of 2017, at early stage and in a participatory manner.

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<sup>28</sup> Government of the RM, SEA. (2013) National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis Communautaire, revision 2014-2016. Internet access: <http://www.sep.gov.mk/en/content/?id=13#.WZoHNigjHIW> [accessed 2017-06-18]

<sup>29</sup> Government of the RM, SEA (2015) National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis Communautaire, revision 2016 Internet access: <http://www.sep.gov.mk/en/content/?id=13> [accessed 2017-06-17]

<sup>30</sup> The European Consensus on Development (2017) Internet access: [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/policies/european-development-policy/european-consensus-development\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/policies/european-development-policy/european-consensus-development_en) [accessed 2017-08-18]

<sup>31</sup> Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action. Internet: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/parisdeclarationandaccraagendaforaction.htm> [2017-08-18]

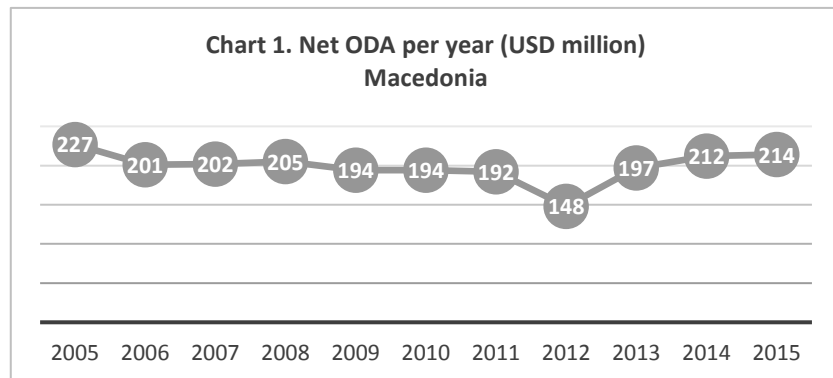
<sup>32</sup> Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (2011) Internet: <http://www.oecd.org/development/effectiveness/busanpartnership.htm> [2017-08-18]

<sup>33</sup> Policy Coherence for Development. Internet: [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/policies/policy-coherence-development\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/policies/policy-coherence-development_en) [2017-08-18]

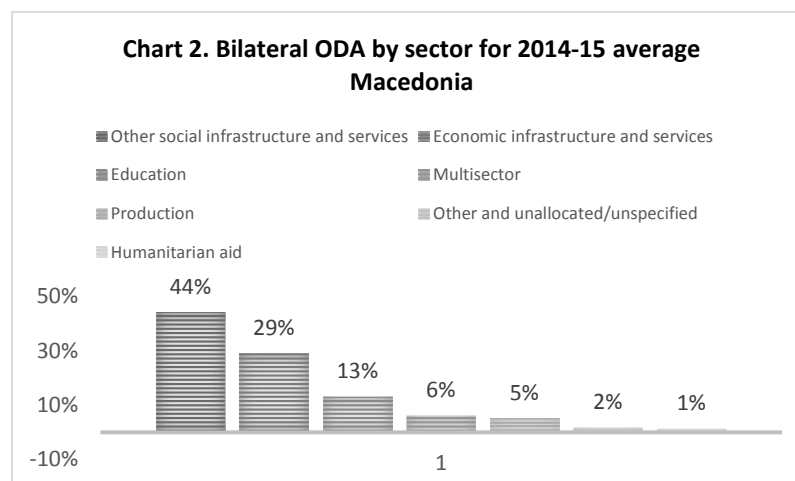
<sup>34</sup> The Sustainable Development Agenda. Internet: <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/> [accessed 2017-08-18]

## 5 MACEDONIA AS A RECIPIENT OF OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

Macedonia is included among Upper Middle Income Countries (advanced since 2010)<sup>35</sup> in the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) List of Official Development Assistance (ODA) Recipients. As the OECD Recipient Aid Chart shows, the Net Official Development Assistance<sup>36</sup> Macedonia received was reported at 214 million USD in 2015.<sup>37</sup> From 2012 to 2015, the ODA has significantly risen, after years of steady decline, from 148 to 214 million USD. Even though the OECD data can provide basis for analysis of the received aid in terms of amount, sectors and donors, etc., still there is a lack of available in-depth data on the interventions (projects) realized with the assistance and its effects on one single location such as the web site or a database of the Secretariat for European Affairs as a body designated to coordinate the foreign assistance. Macedonia is among



Almost half (44%) of the ODA is allocated to **other social infrastructure and services**



(social/welfare services; employment policy and administrative management; housing policy and administrative management; low-cost housing; multisector aid for basic social services; culture and recreation; statistical capacity building; narcotics control; social mitigation of HIV/AIDS); than third (29%) is intended for **economic infrastructure and services** (transport and storage; communications;

energy generation; distribution and efficiency; banking and financial services; business and other services), while 13% are for **education** (education policy and administrative management; education facilities and training; teacher training; educational research; basic, secondary and post-secondary education).<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup> DAC List of ODA Recipients (2014) Internet access:

<http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/documentupload/DAC%20List%20of%20ODA%20Recipients%202014%20final.pdf> [accessed 2017-06-07]

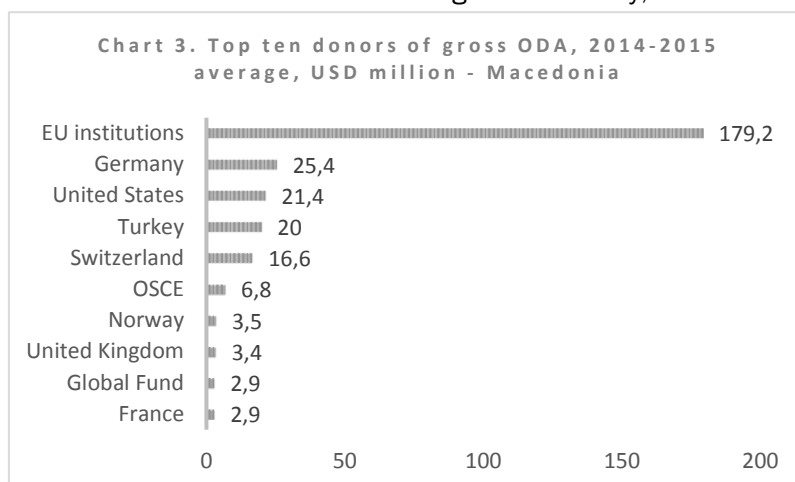
<sup>36</sup> Gross ODA is the amount that a donor actually spends in a given year. This figure becomes net once repayments of the principal on loans made in prior years (but not interest) are taken into account, as well as offsetting entries for forgiven debt and any recoveries made on grants. In some cases, repayments exceed gross amounts, which is why net figures sometimes appear as negative values.

<sup>37</sup> OECD DAC Aid at glance by recipient (2017) Internet access: [https://public.tableau.com/shared/H7S955GJC?:display\\_count=yes](https://public.tableau.com/shared/H7S955GJC?:display_count=yes) [2017-06-08]

<sup>38</sup> The list of CRS purpose codes and voluntary budget identifier codes (2017) Internet access:

[http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/documentupload/CRS\\_BI\\_VOLUNTARY\\_purpose\\_codes2016flows\\_en\\_July17.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/documentupload/CRS_BI_VOLUNTARY_purpose_codes2016flows_en_July17.pdf) [2017-06-08]

According to the Top Ten Donor ODA for Macedonia chart, the main donor is the EU, the second is Germany and USA the third. Other donors are in following order: Turkey, Switzerland, OSCE, Norway, United Kingdom, Global Fund, and finally, France.<sup>39</sup>



The key institution in Macedonia for aid coordination is the Secretariat of European Affairs, which in 2009 introduced the Programme Based Approach (PBA), as a mechanism for strengthening the aid management. The goal was to further improve the aid effectiveness, by focusing the

external development assistance to a few priority sectors (mutually agreed with the international partners) and by ensuring systematic strengthening of national programming and implementation capacity. In long run this was expected to provide more integrated response to national program/sectoral priorities, better preparedness for the EU IPA programming and meeting the global principles of the Paris Declaration.<sup>40</sup> However, there are almost no available updated information on the effects of the programming approach on the web site of SEA, nor further details on the goals and scope of received foreign support from other donors rather than the EU. As the dominant donor is the EU, particularly since the establishment of the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) I and II, many different EU member states provide funds through IPA, and not individually. However, some local embassies and agencies continue to provide additional support. Regarding the involvement of Macedonia in the selection of priority areas, it depends on the approach the donors choose to have. Some of the donors pursue their own priorities for which they provide funds or other nonfinancial support, and some leave it to the Government of the Republic of Macedonia to decide how the funds should be most effectively used<sup>41</sup>.

Macedonia is receiving a significant amount of development assistance on annual basis. However there is a lack of availability of key information on the web-site of the key institution for aid-coordination SEA regarding the usage of the funds (aid), as well as lack of coordination in funds distribution among different donors. All this leads to the conclusion that CSOs should not overlook the official development assistance data, and engage in planning, implementing, monitoring and advocating to improve the effectiveness of the distributed funds.

Another important source of development for Macedonia is remittances. Remittances<sup>42</sup> have been widely discussed as a source for development, which is much higher than the ODA, and more stable than foreign direct investments<sup>43</sup>, but also as having a crucial role of funding,

<sup>39</sup> OECD DAC Aid at glance by recipient (2017) Internet access: [https://public.tableau.com/shared/H7S955GJC?:display\\_count=yes](https://public.tableau.com/shared/H7S955GJC?:display_count=yes) [accessed 2017-06-08]

<sup>40</sup> Secretariat for European Affairs. Internet access: <http://www.sep.gov.mk/content/?id=261#.WWNxfoiGPIU> [accessed 2017-06-08]

<sup>41</sup> Interview with the representative from the Secretariat for European Affairs

<sup>42</sup> The sixth edition of the International aaFund's (IaMF) Balance of Payment Manual and International Investment Position Manual (BPM6) defines remittances as "household income from foreign economies arising mainly from the temporary or permanent movement of people to those economies. Remittances include cash and non-cash items that flow through formal channels, such as via electronic wire, or through informal channels, such as money or goods carried across borders..."

<sup>43</sup> Migration on Development Brief: Migration and Remittances Team, Development Prospects Group (2015). Internet access: <https://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1288990760745/MigrationandDevelopmentBrief24.pdf> figure 2, p. 5 [accessed 2017-06-20]

the SDGs<sup>44</sup>. An IMF country paper on Macedonia from 2014<sup>45</sup>, has found that in recent year's workers remittances are by far the most important financing flow in the balance of payments of Macedonia. Furthermore, the report concludes that, "from a developmental perspective remittances can be expected to play a crucial role in poverty reduction, consumption smoothing, and the funding of small-scale investment projects, thus alleviating financial constraints for underserved segments of the population and ultimately allowing for better risk diversification within the public debt portfolio."

In this regard, it is important to note that in the last two decades, there was an overall outflow of about 200.000 people mainly residing in Australia, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, the USA, Canada, and Turkey<sup>46</sup>. According to the WB's estimates, more than 70% of remittances come from Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, but also other survey-based sources list the USA. If we compare available recent data from the OECD database, both foreign direct investment (296 million USD in 2015)<sup>47</sup> and remittances (306 million USD in 2015)<sup>48</sup> are greater in numbers than the ODA to Macedonia (214 million USD in 2015),

The state has already recognized the important role of remittances. Through, the National bank of the Republic of Macedonia the state attempted to improve their measurement, but also through other relevant institutions and mechanism engaged in various activities in recognizing diaspora potential contribution, and as of 2017, the new government assigned a minister in charge of diaspora affairs. CSOs in Macedonia have also contributed in the area of remittances measurement and assessing their potential and effects<sup>49</sup>. These processes and engagement of stakeholders provides potential of Macedonia to incorporate the remittances when shaping developmental policies.

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<sup>44</sup> Daramy Ade. (2016) Remittances are three times greater than aid – how can they go even further? The Guardian. Internet access: <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2016/may/11/remittances-three-times-greater-aid-sdgs> [accessed 2017-06-21]

<sup>45</sup> International Monetary Fund Country Report no. 14/232 (2014) IMF Internet access: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2014/cr14232.pdf> [accessed 2017-06-21]

<sup>46</sup> Bornarova S., Janeska V., (2012), "Social Impact of Emigration and Rural-Urban Migration in Central and Eastern Europe," Final Country Report, EC DG Employment. Internet access: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=8845&langId=en> [accessed 2017-06-14]

<sup>47</sup> The World Bank statistics: Foreign direct investment, net inflow. Internet access: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.KLT.DINV.CD.WD?locations=MK> [accessed 2017-06-08]

<sup>48</sup> The World Bank statistics: Personal remittances, received. Internet access: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.CD.DT?end=2015&locations=MK&start=1996> [accessed 2017-06-14]

<sup>49</sup> International Monetary Fund Country Report no. 14/232 (2014) IMF Internet access: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2014/cr14232.pdf> [accessed 2017-06-21]

## 6 THE POTENTIAL OF CSOs TO BECOME PARTNERS IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The future role and added value of the CSOs in Macedonia related to development cooperation as a catalyst of global development will depend significantly on the environment the government creates and implements towards the civil sector.

The legal framework that guarantees the freedom of association, assembly and expression is solid<sup>50</sup>. Namely, Article 20 of the Constitution and series of laws, primarily the Law of Associations and Foundations (LAF) guarantee freedom of association.

According to LAF, the basic organizational forms are associations, foundations, alliances, and organizational forms of foreign organizations. Even though freedom of association was legally set, in practice in the past three years, CSOs faced an increased number of indirect forms of pressure through inspections and media propaganda. Positive change in the freedom of association was observed in 2014, with the exclusion of CSOs from the obligations imposed by the Law on Prevention of Money Laundering and Other Proceeds from Crime and Financing Terrorism.

The freedom of assembly and expression are legally guaranteed, however there are inconsistencies in the implementation of the legislation. During 2016, there was increased practice of the right to assembly, and most of the peaceful gatherings (the protests led by the “Colourful Revolution” movement lasted a total of 100 days) were enabled and protected by the police, however in two major isolated cases in 2015 and 2016 the police used disproportionate and indiscriminate excessive force on the peaceful members of the assembly. The freedom of expression and media has been seriously hampered. CSOs were facing indirect pressures and practiced self-censorship and care. The media provides insufficient space for its activities, and was actively used by the previous government as a tool for spreading hate speech on CSOs.

The unfavourable financial framework for CSOs is hampering their work and limiting their potential for development. Tax legislation continued to treat CSOs the same as the other profit entities (Law on personal income tax), and with certain regulations even in a less favourable position (Law on profit tax). Furthermore, the lack of transparency and accountability of the distribution of public funding to CSOs, prevents the state to become a significant source of sustainability for CSOs. The allocated amount of funds distributed to CSOs is insufficient to cover their needs (only 14% of 4,6 million EUR are available through public calls, 34% are for political parties, 32% for social protection organizations and 14% for sports federations), as well as the period (annually) and the type (institutional support available only for several CSOs and there is no co-funding for EU and other projects).

### *Key data on CSOs in Macedonia for 2015:*

- Total number of CSOs registered: 14.245
- Total number of CSOs reregistered 4.156 (2013)
- Number of CSOs that submitted final financial reports: 1.497
- Number of CSOs that submitted only declaration/decision: 2.651
- Total CSO income: EUR 86.374.631
- Total CSO Expenditure: EUR 69.196.978
- Number of CSO employees: 1.990

*CSOs in Macedonia are mostly active in the area of good governance (democracy, human rights, and rule of law), education, science and research, environment, culture and other.*

### *Sustainability of CSOs continues to be a key challenge.*

*Most of the CSOs (64%) have annual budgets under EUR 2,500. The funding predominantly comes from membership fees and foreign sources<sup>1</sup>. The biggest foreign donors are the EU, USAID, Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), and foreign state resources (embassies).*

<sup>50</sup> Chapter 6 is based on the findings from the MCIC’s annual reports on the enabling environment for civil society development in Macedonia for the period 2013-2016, and they are fully listed in the Bibliography.

Substantial civic dialogue between the government and civil society remains undeveloped. The key mechanism envisaged to develop the dialogue was the Council for cooperation between the government and civil society. However, the process of its establishment was lacking effective consultations and finally led to its boycott by the CSOs that mainly advocated for its existence. Another important body is the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs operating since 2004 as part of the General Secretariat of the Government; however, its role is limited mainly because of the lack of independence in decision-making and its own budget. The relevant governmental institutions failed to reach the completion of key goals of the Strategy for Cooperation between the government and the civil sector between 2012 and 2017 (49% of the measures have no progress, only two measures were fully implemented). Finally, the very important aspect of involvement of civil society in law making and policy creation processes seriously deteriorated in the last three years.

The trend of deterioration of the democratic governance in Macedonia in general, and particularly of the environment in which civil society operates, brought a variety of challenges and opportunities to civil society. CSOs advanced their knowledge and experience (evidence based policy solutions, advocacy, raising awareness, etc.) and supported the resolution of the deep political crises in the past three years. The trend of maturation of civil society translated into increased numbers of social movements and joint efforts on different issues. In addition, certain CSOs have proven to be the key to assisting the state in providing safe transit of refugees through Macedonia mainly during the refugee wave in 2015. These capacities provide a starting point for CSOs as a developmental actor.

The civil sector in Macedonia is insufficiently informed and engaged in developmental issues, mainly due to working on burning internal problems and trying to remedy the failure of the past government to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria that led to stagnation of the EU integration process. CSOs made their first attempt in 2011 to organize themselves and prepare for the issue of development cooperation supported by the TRIALOG project<sup>51</sup>, and again in 2016 through the project Western Balkan CSOs for global development<sup>52</sup>. By focusing their attention and capacities on core societal problems, combined with the lack of funding for activities related to development cooperation, the failed future of such CSOs networking initiatives is indeed determined. However in light of the Global Agenda 2030 and the SDGs there might be a possibility for different outcome.

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51 TRIALOG was a project that ran from 2000 to 2015 to strengthen civil society organisations (CSOs) in the enlarged EU for active engagement in global development. Internet access: <http://www.trialog.or.at/>

52 [http://www.horizont3000.at/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/TRIALOG\\_Westbalkan.pdf](http://www.horizont3000.at/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/TRIALOG_Westbalkan.pdf)



## CONCLUSION

The government and the CSOs face numerous challenges to engage in development cooperation as potential partners. Firstly, the continued political crisis further influenced the stagnation or according to some indicators worsening of the socio-economic situation in Macedonia in the past five years. The lack of reforms and improvements of key importance to the wellbeing of the citizens so far, presents a significant challenge for the government, as well as civil society to consider engaging in the discussion and planning of development policies.

The second challenge is the fact that formal negotiations for EU membership have not started. The previous government in over a decade of ruling kept the status quo of Macedonia's accession to the EU, while maintaining recommendations for negotiations. Having in mind the long duration of the status quo, particularly the backsliding in the areas of political criteria key for negotiations, this situation can be seen as a regres. Furthermore, the lack of progress on the bilateral dispute with neighbouring Greece over the historical and territorial reasons related to the use of the name "macedonia" persists. However, the EU strongly supports the idea of Macedonia advancing in its aspiration to become a member state, and in this regard provides significant financial and political support to ensure the development of civil society as a crucial component of any democracy. In terms of legislative alignment and establishment of structures for development policies according to Chapter 30 of the EU's Acquis Communautaire in the area of development policy and humanitarian assistance, Macedonia showed lack of progress after 2010. In 2010, MFA established a Unit for humanitarian and development aid with two employees responsible for its activities, which is currently not functional. According to the NPAA, the MFA has planned to accomplish detailed measures and activities until 2018, amongst which intensified cooperation with civil society sector.

Furthermore, Macedonia is still a recipient country of ODA from different donors on annual level. The assistance has significantly risen since 2012 (214 million USD in 2015), after years of steady decline. The main donor is the EU and almost half (44%) of the ODA is allocated to other social infrastructure and services. However, the lack of availability of key information on one place such as the web-site of the key institution for aid coordination SEA regarding the usage of the funds, as well as the lack of coordination in funds distribution among different donors is undermining donors accountability to the citizens. Another important source of development for Macedonia is remittances. Certain processes (the trials of the National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia to measure remittances) and engagement of stakeholders (the government by appointing minister of diaspora affairs and the policy work done by CSOs) provides potential of Macedonia to incorporate the remittances when shaping developmental policies.

Finally, the provision of an enabling environment for civil society development by the government is paramount if CSOs are to fulfil the role of developmental partners in future. In the past three years, CSOs faced growing number of indirect pressures, via inspections and media propaganda. Practicing the freedom of assembly intensified, and although the police enabled peaceful assemblies, there were many cases of an excessive police presence and limitations. Sustainability remains to be the biggest challenge for CSOs, mostly due to the absence of reforms regarding state funding for CSOs, and the tax laws still not being favourable for CSOs. Finally, the dialogue between the government and civil society has deteriorated due to the controversial process of establishing the Council for cooperation between the government and civil society, but also because of the increased number of adopted draft-laws without consultations. Facing a relatively enabling environment, CSOs managed to put their knowledge and experience into constructive use by supporting the resolution of the deepest political crisis and contributing to the process of safe transit of refugees through Macedonia mainly during 2015. Still the civil sector in Macedonia is insufficiently informed and engaged in developmental issues, mainly due to focusing their attention and capacities on core societal problems, combined with the lack of funding for activities related to development cooperation, the failed future of CSOs networking initiatives is highly probable.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### What can the Government do?

- ✓ Provide an enabling environment for civil society development, with legal guarantees for freedom of association, assembly and expression being appropriately implemented in practice and increased financial viability and sustainability of the CSOs;
- ✓ Review and analyse the effects of the programme of aid coordination implemented by the Secretariat of European Affairs, in order to provide most effective results of the obtained aid, as well as provide accountability towards the public;
- ✓ Recognize civil society as partner in reducing poverty and increasing human development, and force for citizen participation and democratization and develop their capacity to work together with the government on the issue of development;
- ✓ The MFA should create mechanism for institutionalized dialogue between all actors in development and secure effective participation of CSOs, by providing them sufficient time for consultations and organizing transparent and accountable selection of CSOs representatives;
- ✓ The MFA should follow up on the NPAA revision document 2016-2018 in 3.30.3 Development policy, and consult with CSOs on the planned activities;
- ✓ The MFA should include different actors from the early phase of developing the Law and Strategy on development policy, since creating a unified national vision on development cooperation will be an essential to obtain greater solidarity across all sectors and among line ministries facing limited resources;
- ✓ The MFA should consider the regional experiences of recent EU member countries in the creation and implementation of development policy and in establishment of a development cooperation agency;
- ✓ The MFA should increase cooperation and coordination with the Office of the vice-president for economic issues in ensure that developmental policies are integrated with the SDGs;
- ✓ The MFA should work towards increasing the public awareness and obtain support by developing well-defined strategies to effectively communicate Macedonia's involvement in Agenda 2030, as well as the commitments of our country as part of the EU to reach up to 0.7% of GNI as ODA target;

### What can civil society do?

- ✓ Get informed about the issues of development cooperation and the Agenda 2030 by taking part in global initiatives and by participating in regional projects to build experience;
- ✓ Continue networking and exchange of information on this issues, in order to provide strong singular voice;
- ✓ Engage in raising awareness among civil society and public on the issues of global development, as well as the need for global education;
- ✓ Monitor and analyse the implementation of the planned activities regarding development and humanitarian policies (NPAA), as well as the aid that Macedonia receives;
- ✓ Support the relevant institutions (MFA, SEA and the office of the vice-president for economic issues) to provide representative and effective involvement of CSOs;
- ✓ Exercise pro-activeness in the design, delivery and evaluation of development policy and programs.

## **ANNEX 1. List of Macedonian CSOs involved in the activities of the project “Western Balkan CSOs for global development”**

1. Ajde Makedonija, Skopje
2. ALDA, Skopje
3. Association For Democratic Initiatives, Gostivar
4. Balkan Civil Society Development Network, Skopje
5. Eco Guerilla, Tetovo
6. European Policy Institute, Skopje
7. First children's embassy in the world – Megjashi, Skopje
8. Go Green, Skopje
9. Habitat for Humanity Macedonia, Skopje
10. Helsinki Committee Of The Republic Of Macedonia, Skopje
11. InSoC - Initiative for Social Change, Skopje
12. Leaders for Education, Activism and Development, Skopje
13. Macedonian Center for International Cooperation, Skopje
14. National Council for Gender Equality, Skopje
15. Polio Plus-Movement against disability, Skopje
16. Red Cross of the city of Skopje

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