



**Постојана Мисија на Република Северна Македонија при Советот на Европа  
Permanent Mission of the Republic of North Macedonia to the  
Council of Europe**

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**Comments of the Government of North Macedonia to the fact finding visit on civil participation in the decision-making process**

With regard to the Fact finding visit of the Conference of INGOs to the North Macedonia carried out from 25-27 March 2018 we would like to inform you about the following:

The Government of the North Macedonia established a continuing, transparent and inclusive dialogue with the civil society, where the representatives of the civil society is treated as an equal partner and corrector in the decision making process, so that the NGOs are able actively to participate in the process of developing various governmental policies.

After the evaluation of the measures that has not been implemented in the Strategy for the cooperation with the civil sector (2012-2017), taking into account the analysis of the strategic documentation of the NGOs through their direct participation, on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018, the Government adopted the Strategy for the cooperation with the civil sector together with the Action Plan for 2018-2020. The Strategy will serve as a common frame for improving the cooperation with the civil society, corrective mechanism to the governmental policies, important channel for solidarity and partner to the state and business community. Measures of this strategic document are divided in three areas:

- Normative, institutional and financial frame for the development of the civil sector.
- Democratisation and active participation of the civil sector in the process of creation and following the governmental policies with the special focus to the process of the future EU integration.
- The civil sector as an important partner in the social and economic development of the country.

The member of the civil servants dealing with the NGOs together with the 68 NGOs who accept the public announcement, took part in the preparation of the Strategy. Additionally, in the process of the preparation, government organised consultations, meetings with the working group and public consultations through the web page [www.nvosorabotka.gov.mk](http://www.nvosorabotka.gov.mk). Two open debates were held in Skopje and Bitola. The Strategy was presented to the representatives of the local administration and NGOs in Skopje, Bitola and Tetovo in September 2018. On 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019 authorities organised another open debate “Strategy for developing the favourable environment for the civil sector”.

The authorities established independent, representative and effective Council for the co-operation with the NGOs and development of the civil sector as a consultative body of the government. The lunching meeting of the Council was held on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2018 and till the end of March 2019 eleven sessions took part. The Council adopted the Rules of procedure and their own web page as a separate part of the existing web page of the Department of the Government responsible for the cooperation with the civil sector within the General Secretariat of the Government. As a part of the twining project “Process for further institutionalisation of the structural mechanisms for the cooperation between the Government and the civil sector”, financed by the EU and running by the Croatian Office for the cooperation with civil sector, two working sessions were organised for the members of the Council. Sessions were devoted to the issues of operational planning and effective communication of the

NGOs, developing communication in the area of sustainable economic growth and protection of marginalised people. Additionally, working group for the preparation of the plans for communication skills of the Council was established. On 5<sup>th</sup> June 2018 Round table was organised on the topic “Further institutionalisation of the structural mechanisms for the cooperation between the Government and civil sector”. Round table was an excellent opportunity for the participants to exchange the views on the cooperation with the Government and the role of the Council in the implementation of the governmental strategy.

Regarding the active involvement of the civil sector in the process of the future EU negotiations, working group for the cooperation of the Government with the civil sector prepared the first Draft which will serve as an model for inclusion of the civil sector in the pre-accession negotiations. For that reason the consultative meeting with the representatives of civil sector was organized on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2018. The Secretariat for the cooperation with EU organized the Conference on the topic” Experiences in the pre-accession dialogue with the EU, what to do and what not to do? The aim of the conference was to exchange the good practices and experiences with the current and future negotiators in the Region. The NGOs are involved in the process of programming and following the procedures for using the IPA EU funds in the framework of the working groups and monitoring committees that has been established.

The Government strengthen the network of civil servants who are working with the civil society. Two days working seminar for following the process of the implementation of the new adopted Strategy was organized on 16 and 17 May 2018 and coordination meetings were held with the Department for NGOs within the General Secretariat, in November 2018.

The Government established the “Open days for presenting the initiatives from NGOs”. So far there were 4 open days on the following topics:

-Practices of the cooperation between the Government and NGOs –how to improve the cooperation (8.6.2018).

-National strategy for the development of the concept of one society and the multiculturalism in the Republic of North Macedonia (24.12.2018).

-Plan for clean air (16.01. 2019) with the participation of 300 NGOs who proposed 30 initiatives that were published on the web page of the Government [www.nvosorabotka.gov.mk](http://www.nvosorabotka.gov.mk) and transmitted to the relevant ministries.

The civil sector is actively involved in the policy of creating the concept “One society for all” through the public announcement to take part in the working groups for the preparation of the National Strategy on developing the concept of one society for all and strengthening the intercultural society in the North Macedonia.

With the aim of providing the full transparency in the process of public financing of the NGOs, there is an electronic data base on the web page [www.nvosorabotka.gov.mk](http://www.nvosorabotka.gov.mk), with the detailed data of the financial support from the Government to the NGOs - 2012-2016. In December 2018 the Government organised consultations with the NGOs for the Proposed Programme for financial support of the civil sector for 2019. Based on the analysis and consultations and conclusions from the open debate held with the Ministry of Finance and the representatives of civil sector for establishing the proper model for tax system , the amendments and supplements to the Law on profit for income tax ( Official Gazette no248/18) were proposed. According to the Law, Article 4 regulated the tax income of the organisations that are registered in line with the Law on Association and Foundations as an entities for calculating and paying the tax on the overall income, if they are involved in the economic activities. In the meantime the government is working on the additional laws by which the NGOs will have to submit the data for the income they have from the non-profit and profit activities which they acquired annually.

In the course of the recognition of the specific activities of the NGOs as an employer, in the existing laws, operational programmes and social dialogue, the Government provides the possibility to the civil sector to take part in the employment measures which are part of the operational plans and programmes of the Government for employment. Within the Draft Law on internship (adopted by the Government on 11.12.2018), there is a possibility for NGOs to open the internship positions. The Draft Law for Social Security (adopted by the Government on 20.12.2018) envisaged the part for social dialogue which will create an opportunity for developing the social entities that will deal with the social services. Ministry for Labour and Social Policy already prepared the draft methodology for calculating the prices for giving the social services, as a part of the reform process of the whole system for giving the license to those who provide the social services.

The Strategy of the Government for the civil sector, also envisage the changes of the existing Law on Associations and Foundation (LAF ) with the purpose of establishing the favourable environment for the civil sector and transparent model for public financing by creating of the Fund for institutional development of the civil sector and co financing of the EU projects.