



**OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP NATIONAL ACTION PLAN
2021-2023**

Skopje, October 2021



INTRODUCTION	5
PREVIOUS EFFORTS UNDER THE OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP	6
OGP NATIONAL ACTION PLAN 2021-2023 - OPEN GOVERNMENT	7
OPEN GOVERNMENT	13
1. TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, PROACTIVITY AND INCLUSION	13
1.1. Public disclosure of beneficial ownership in companies that are awarded public procurement contracts	13
1.2 Proactive publication of information on the institutions' official websites	16
1.3 Publish basic information on public procurements on the institutions' official websites	20
1.4 Improve access to information and number of open data published by local self-government units (LSGUs)	24
1.5 Ensure free access to data for civil society organizations	26
1.6 Fiscal transparency and accountability at local level and improved involvement of citizens through innovative mechanisms and tools	32
2. ANTICORRUPTION AND PROMOTION OF GOOD GOVERNANCE	35
2.1 Public procurements as open data	36
2.2 Improve mechanism for monitoring asset declarations by elected and appointed officials	38
2.3 Publish files on appointment of managers/directors at public institutions by the Government of RNM	40
3. PROMOTE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES	43
3.1. Employment policies and services based on citizens' priorities	44
3.2. Preventive healthcare policies and services based on citizens' priorities	48
3.3 Education policies and services based on citizens' priorities	53
3.4 Local policies and services based on citizens' priorities	57
3.5. Available e-services in rural areas	61
3.6 Better access to guaranteed forms of protection for victims of human trafficking	65
3.7 Improve protection mechanisms for victims of harassment in the workplace (mobbing)	71
3.8. Provide access to therapy and health services for people who use drugs after having served their imprisonment sentence	75
4. ACCESS TO JUSTICE	81
4.1 Promote protection of sex workers and persons who use drugs	81



4.2 Promote access to justice for socially disadvantaged and citizens at social risk.....	85
4.3 Access to justice for women who suffered domestic violence	91
4.4 Legal empowerment of citizens through available information and open institutions	99
5. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION	108
5.1. Reduce climate change impact and protect the environment from agriculture activities	108
5.2. Access to information on air pollution levels.....	111
OPEN PARLIAMENT.....	117
OPEN JUDICIARY	141



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ESARNM	Employment Service Agency of the Republic of North Macedonia
ASPI	Agency for Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information
BPP	Bureau of Public Procurements, Ministry of Finance
BDE	Bureau for Development of Education
BS	Banking sector
BJF	Bureau of Judicial Forensic, Ministry of Justice
CSOs	Civil society organizations
GS of GRNM	General Secretariat at the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia
SLI	State Labour Inspectorate, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
SCPC	State Commission for Prevention of Corruption
SEI	State Education Inspectorate, Ministry of Education and Science
ZELS	Association of Local Self-Government Units
EPPS	Electronic Public Procurement System
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
CEA	Chamber of Enforcement Agents
LEI	Local educational institutions
Moi	Ministry of Interior
MESP	Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning
MoH	Ministry of Health
MAFWE	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy
MISA	Ministry of Information Society and Administration
MLS	Ministry of Local Self-Government
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MES	Ministry of Education and Science
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MLSP	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
MoF	Ministry of Finance
NAP	National Action Plan
NAP5	Fifth Open Government Partnership National Action Plan 2021-2023
BCs	Basic courts
OGP	Open Government Partnership
RC	Rural Coalition
RNM	Republic of North Macedonia
CoE	Council of Europe
DES	Directorate for Execution of Sanctions, Ministry of Justice
HIFRNM	Health Insurance Fund of the Republic of North Macedonia
FOSM	Foundation Open Society - Macedonia
CRRNM	Central Register of the Republic of North Macedonia
SWCs	Social Work Centres



INTRODUCTION

The Republic of North Macedonia (RNM) has received global recognition for results delivered as part of open government processes. Since 2011, when the country joined the initiative for Open Government Partnership (OGP), RNM has committedly followed the need for greater civic engagement and participation in decision-making, introduction of higher integrity standards and greater access to technology for all citizens.

Its commitment to openness has created many benefits, making the government more transparent and accountable, creating potential for development of dynamic environment for inclusion, efficient management of public resources, building integrity systems, enabling environment at local level, access to information and open data. By opening and making resources publicly available, we have managed to promote dialogue, innovation and use of technology, thereby making the lives of citizens better and easier.

Based on success achieved under the initiative's previous expansion to include the Assembly of RNM, in addition to commitments related to Open Parliament, this cycle also includes commitments for Open Judiciary. Hence, in order to respect independence of work performed by legislative and judicial branches of government in RNM, Macedonian iteration of the Open Government Partnership was adjusted to reflect this inclusion and accommodate the broader meaning of government as governing authorities. Consequently, all future communication and implementation of this initiative will reflect the local formulation which is back-translated as **PARTNERSHIP FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT**.

The Fifth Open Government Partnership National Action Plan 2021-2023 (NAP5) builds upon previous work dynamics, by assuming commitments aimed at increasing public participation and delivering solutions that are truly transformative. Also, it acknowledges the need for the public sector to embrace the innovative approach to creation of policies that meets citizens' needs and responds to contemporary trends.

NAP5 reaffirms the need to further previous commitments and improve their quality. It is aimed at implementing efforts related to access to justice, legal empowerment of citizens and promotion of legal protection, especially for youth, marginalized groups and women, promotion of public service delivery, continuation of activities for public disclosure of information on beneficial ownership, opening new datasets, and activities to prevent corruption, as well as environmental protection and addressing the issue of air pollution. It is expected that implementation of commitments under this two-year action plan will result in actual recognition of results, with citizens being able to confirm changes made.

Commitments assumed under NAP5 include:



OPEN GOVERNMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transparency, accountability, proactivity and inclusiveness• Anticorruption and promotion of good governance• Delivery of public services• Access to justice• Environment and climate change
OPEN PARLIAMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parliament for the citizens, with open response and open recovery from the COVID 19 pandemic• Improved ICT infrastructure• Civic participation / Open Parliament
OPEN JUDICIARY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to information and data• Improved performance track-record

PREVIOUS EFFORTS UNDER THE OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP

To present, RNM has implemented [four action plans](#) (2012-2014; 2014-2016; 2016-2018 and 2018-2020) under this global initiative and has achieved significant results in various areas of importance, including fiscal transparency and open finances, cooperation with the civil society, access to public information, participatory policy creation, public services, enabling legal environment for social agreements, open data, anticorruption, public procurements, transparency at local level, access to justice, and climate change.

A good practice introduced under OGP concerns establishment of links between NAP commitments and UN Sustainable Development Agenda by 2030, especially SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, SDG3: Good Health and Wellbeing, SDG11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG13: Climate Action, and SDG17: Partnership for the Goals.

Basic precondition for success of the Open Government Partnership is participation of civil society organizations and institutions. Civil participation is of crucial importance for open government and essential element of the national cycle for development of action plans.

In order to ensure full compliance with requirements of this initiative and following OGP Handbook and OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards and Development of Multistakeholder Forum, the



Council for Coordination and Monitoring the Open Government Partnership Process and OGP National Action Plan 2018-2020 (hereinafter: OGP Council) was formed in 2020.¹ OGP Council and Working Group comprised of all stakeholders in implementation of OGP National Action Plan 2018-2020 (hereinafter: OGP Working Group) provide the structure for coordination, monitoring and implementation of the Open Government Partnership in the Republic of North Macedonia.

Hence, the fifth cycle was supported by OGP Council and OGP Working Group, providing a structured method to maximize participation and contribution of both, representatives from the public sector and the civil society, through the established [CSO Network for Open Government Partnership²](#) (hereinafter: OGP Network).

Moreover, the web-portal designated for Open Government Partnership was designed and put into operation (www.ovp.gov.mk) and serves as focal point for consultation, monitoring, participation, networking and reporting to all stakeholders and interested parties. OGP web-portal is an online platform for interaction and exchange of information in four segments of this process: consultations for development of national action plans, monitoring implementation of NAPs, and monitoring performance of OGP Council and OGP Network.

OGP NATIONAL ACTION PLAN 2021-2023 - OPEN GOVERNMENT

The Ministry of Information Society and Administration, in cooperation with OGP Council and OGP Network, and supported by OGP Secretariat and the Foundation Open Society – Macedonia and its partner organizations, i.e. Center for Civil Communications and Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women - ESE, continued to provide support and active engagement in the co-creation process for NAP5.

In order to provide a systematized method for planning and organizing consultation processes that would ensure timely, unhindered, inclusive and transparent co-creation process for the new NAP, the method for co-creation of NAP was developed in 2020, including the procedure for stakeholder consultations in respect to definition of new priority areas and commitments under the OGP process, as well as timeline, open call for participation in NAP5 co-creation and guidelines for completing the questionnaire on assessment of NAP implementation in the period 2018-2020 and the need for civil society participation in development of NAP5. Moreover, OGP Network developed materials for the consultation procedure, such as: plan to promote the open call, educational materials and criteria to assess relevance and connection to OGP principles. All [documents](#) are available on OGP web-portal.

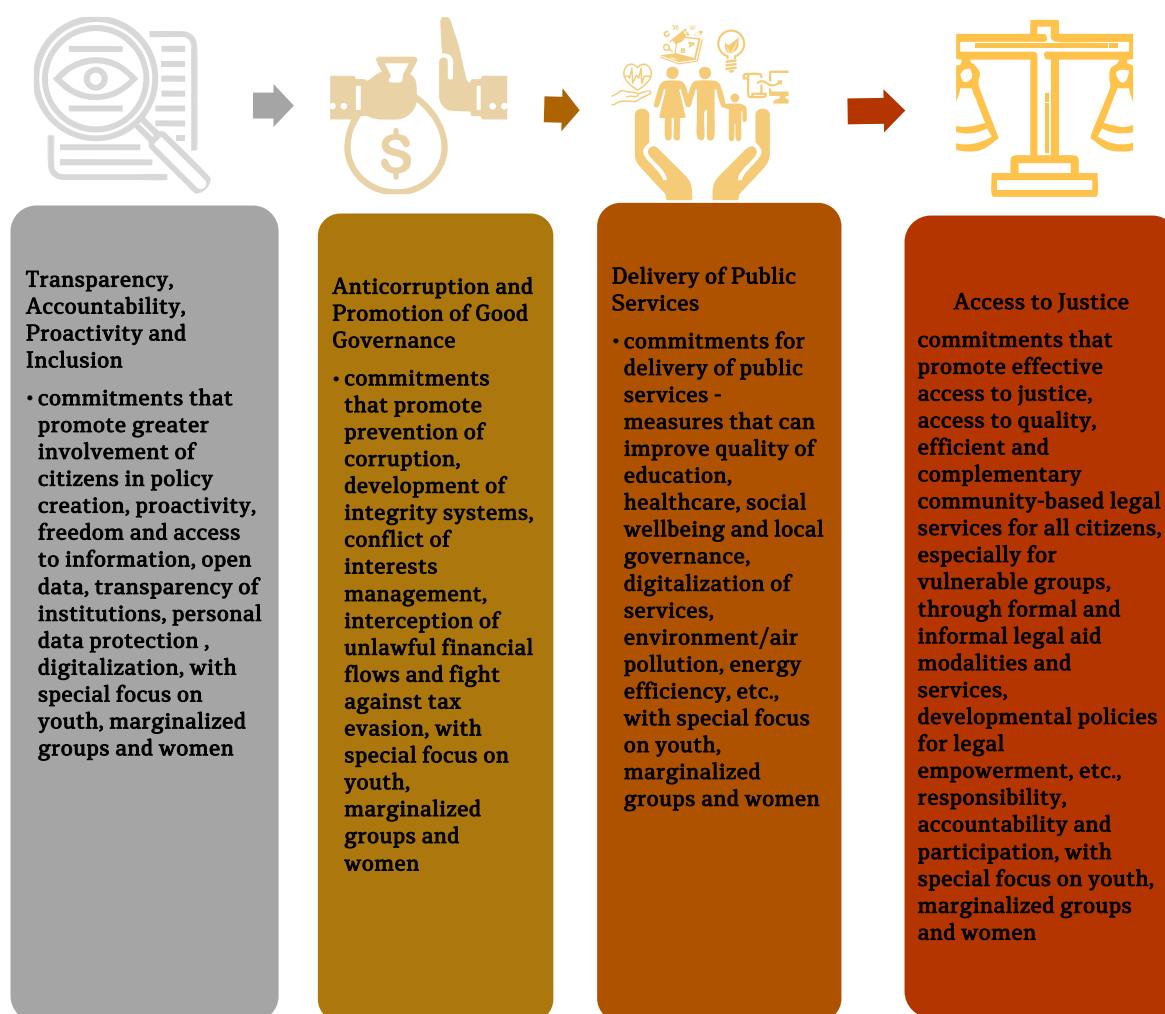
Under predictable and adequately regulated procedure for NAP co-creation, in a dynamic and inclusive environment, the process for development of the fifth Open Government National Action Plan 2021-2023 started in September 2020.

¹ <https://ovp.gov.mk/%d1%81%d0%be%d0%b2%d0%b5%d1%82-%d0%b7%d0%b0-%d0%be%d0%b2%d0%bf/>

² OGP Network works on initiation, encouragement, support, implementation and monitoring of OGP process and stimulates authorities and other institutions to increase their transparency, accountability and openness for participation. More than 70 civil society organizations are involved in OGP Network.



Results from the open call for participation in the co-creation process for OGP National Action Plan 2021-2023, interest expressed for participation in working meetings for one or more priority areas³ and new ideas and issues submitted for reconsideration under the co-creation process (social protection, culture, science, education, health, digitalization, etc.), imposed the need for merging, regrouping and expanding priority areas to be covered by the new action plan. Accordingly, OGP Council defined several priority areas and formed corresponding working groups that continued activities for co-creation of the action plan, as follows:



Activities implemented as part of the co-creation process included 3 online informative-educational meetings; 12 online meetings to identify needs and problems; analysis of ongoing activities taken to

³ Access to Information; Integrity and Good Governance; Fiscal Transparency; Open Data; Transparency at Local Level; Access to Justice, Climate Change



address problems, institutions involved, and setting priorities; workshops for identifying and developing commitments; and more than 60 individual meetings for defining and aligning proposed commitments; OGP meeting at ministerial level; 2 e-workshops on transparency and accountability in the public sector and management based on interests and needs of citizens, all of which contributed towards final definition of commitments that form part of the new action plan.

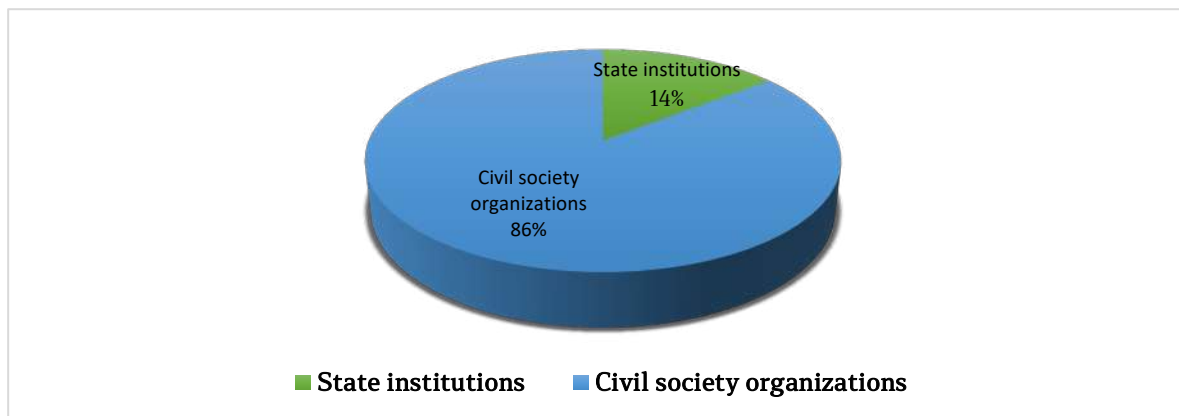
Timeline of NAP5 co-creation process



Under conditions of COVID-19 pandemic, all communications and the co-creation process were implemented online, with timely dissemination of information about ongoing activities and processes, online events, open calls and possibilities for participation posted on OGP web-portal and OGP Network.



[Stakeholder participation and representation in NAP5 co-creation process](#)



Throughout the process for development of this action plan, the Government of RNM continued its good practice of linking NAP commitments to UN Sustainable Development Agenda by 2030, especially SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, SDG3: Good Health and Wellbeing, and SDG13: Climate Action.

More specifically, NAP5 identifies links between OGP and three SDGs and six targets:

- SDG3: Good Health and Wellbeing
 - ✓ SDG target 3.8: Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential healthcare services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all;
- SDG13: Climate Action
 - ✓ SDG target 13.3: Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning;
- SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
 - ✓ SDG target 16.3: Promote the rule of law at national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all;
 - ✓ SDG target 16.5: Significantly reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms;
 - ✓ SDG target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels;
 - ✓ SDG target 16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels;
 - ✓ SDG target 16.10: Ensure public access to information and protection of fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.

Implementation of 23 commitments will directly work on achieving progress in respect to SDG16, i.e. will contribute to improved efficiency, accountability and transparency of institutions by promoting access to justice, access to information and protection of fundamental rights, and will lead to reduced corruption. Additionally, 2 commitments are aimed at ensuring progress in respect to SDG3 and SDG13, i.e. improve citizens' satisfaction with public services in education and healthcare, but also environmental protection and access to information in this area.



Hence, the broad virtual consultation process and advanced practices based on experiences from development of previous OGP National Action Plans, advice and recommendations provided by OGP Secretariat, recommendations from OGP Independent Reporting Mechanism, creative proposals put forward by stakeholders and 350 representatives from the government and the civil society, resulted in the Draft OGP National Action Plan 2021-2023, which includes 23 commitments and 95 milestones under 5 priority areas.

[Overview of commitments per priority area under NAP5 - Open Government](#)

Transparency, Accountability, Proactivity and Inclusion

- Public disclosure of beneficial ownership in companies that are awarded public procurement contracts
- Proactive disclosure of public information on the institutions' official websites
- Publication of basic information about public procurements on the institutions' official websites
- Improve access to information and number of open data published by local self-government units (LSGUs)
- Ensure free access to data for civil society organizations
- Fiscal transparency and accountability at local level and improved participation of citizens through innovative mechanisms and tools

Anticorruption and Promotion of Good Governance

- Public procurements as open data
- Improve mechanism for monitoring asset declarations of elected and appointed officials
- Publish files on appointment of managers/directors at public institutions by the Government of RNM



Promote Delivery of Public Services

- Employment policies and services based on citizens' priorities
- Preventive healthcare policies and services based on citizens' priorities
- Education policies and services based on citizens' priorities
- Local policies and services based on citizens' priorities
- Available e-services in rural areas
- Better access to guaranteed forms of protection for victims of human trafficking
- Improve protection mechanisms for victims of harassment in the workplace
- Provide access to therapy and health services for persons who use drugs after having served their imprisonment sentence

Access to Justice

- Promote protection for sex workers and persons who use drugs
- Promote access to justice for socially disadvantaged and citizens at social risk
- Access to justice for women who suffered domestic violence
- Legal empowerment of citizens through available information and open institutions

Environment and Climate Change

- Reduce climate change impact and environmental protection from agriculture activities
- Access to information on air pollution levels

Work on Open Government is a continuous commitment and this action plan covers number of possible, but rather ambitious efforts to promote transparency and accountability of the government, the parliament and the judiciary.

This document promotes openness and possibility for further expansion and deepening of priorities given below, in close cooperation with all stakeholders in the Open Government Partnership.

Overall process of implementation and monitoring will be supported by the Ministry of Information Society and Administration, OGP Council and OGP Network.



OPEN GOVERNMENT

1. TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, PROACTIVITY AND INCLUSION

1.1. Public disclosure of beneficial ownership in companies that are awarded public procurement contracts

October 2021 - August 2023

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>On 27 January 2021, the Republic of North Macedonia established the Registry of Beneficial Ownership in order to increase transparency of ownership structures among legal entities in the country and to comply with international and EU standards for combating money laundering and financing terrorism. All legal entities were given a deadline, 27 April 2021, for free-of-charge enlistment of data on beneficial ownership.</p> <p>As part of its enhanced accountability and responsibility measures for crisis relief awarded to individual countries to deal with the consequences of COVID-19 pandemic, IMF requires the countries that are awarded relief funds (RNM included) to implement safeguard mechanisms, including public disclosure of beneficial ownership in companies that are awarded tenders by the state. Although the requirement for information disclosure came as a result of relief efforts related to the coronavirus crisis and increased corruption risks, it becomes standard in public procurement in many countries across the world.</p> <p>To present, establishment of such mechanism in RNM was not possible due to non-existence of the Registry of Beneficial Ownership. On the other hand, public procurements in the country are continuously linked to widespread corruption and wrongdoings, suspicion of previous arrangements among companies and creation of artificial competition, which cannot guarantee the best value for the money spent. U.S. State Department's last report on investment climate in the Republic of North Macedonia cites corruption (and nepotism) in public procurements as problem for potential investors.</p> <p>Transparency of data from this registry allows backtracking of actual ownership, control and ultimate beneficiaries in all legal entities. This helps the fight against corruption, reduces investment risks and improves good governance.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	<p>The commitment implies public disclosure of information on beneficial ownership in companies that are awarded public procurement contracts in the Electronic Public Procurement System, i.e. under the section designated for notifications on contracts signed and publication of procurement contracts.</p> <p>This mechanism will additionally enhance anticorruption efforts, i.e. it will prevent public money ending up in private pockets of public officials; will detect and prevent unlawful arrangements among companies in public procurements and will prevent illusionary competition in tender procedures among companies with same beneficial ownership. On the other hand, it will allow the public to monitor cost-effectiveness in public spending, detect the so-called red alerts for corruption, and will also support accountability in public spending.</p>



<p>How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?</p>	<p>Transparency in public procurements is considered an essential tool for reducing corruption and enabling fair and competitive bidding among companies. Transparency means publicly available information about the overall cycle of public procurement in order to ensure accountability. This information includes those on beneficial ownership in companies that are awarded state tenders. In that, information referred above does not concern only company managers and responsible persons, but beneficial owners, i.e. those who have final benefit from and control over the company in question. To present, such information remained unknown or unavailable not only for companies that are awarded public tenders, but for all companies in the country. Creation of the Registry of Beneficial Ownership and public disclosure of real company owners would allow this information to be known also in respect to economic operators that are awarded tenders, i.e. public procurement contracts. Implementation of this commitment will have a primarily preventive effect in respect to corruption and will allow detection and prevention of corruptive deals in public procurements. Although persons responsible for implementation of public procurements are obliged to deposit statements on conflict of interests in procurement procedures or to recuse themselves from decision-making, this is done only in relation to already known company persons (manager, owner, etc.). Beneficial owners were not covered by this preventive measure, as they were unknown in the first place. This measure will prevent companies with conflict of interests to participate in tender procedures, and in the cases where they submit bids it would be easier to detect existence of such conflicts and to prevent corruptive actions. The commitment is expected to have positive effect in respect to increased competition, i.e. it is expected to facilitate entry of other companies in public procurements, which will inevitably lead to better quality of procurements and better public services. At the same time, the measure supports accountability and good governance of institutions due to public disclosure of information about beneficial ownership of companies that are awarded tenders.</p>
<p>How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?</p>	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it provides access to completely new information, improves quality of information on public procurements and completes the set of information that could allow detection and prevention of corruption, and improves public availability of information, making this piece of information public and easily available to citizens, free of charge.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION because it creates and improves opportunities and conditions for public participation and influence in decision-making, whereby civil society organizations and investigative journalists are able to detect and report corruption.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because it creates and improves accountability rules, regulations and mechanisms for public officials.</p>
<p>Additional information</p>	<p>Implementation of this commitment does not require additional budget funds because it concerns automated retrieval of information kept by the Central Register of RNM and their publication on the government's website for public procurements (EPPS), which already allows such technical function.</p> <p>Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions</p>



		<p>SDG target 16.10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements</p> <p>SDG target 16.5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms</p> <p>Measures anticipated under this commitment contribute to improved access to public information through efficient implementation of laws and better information dissemination to citizens.</p>			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
1.1.1	Reach agreement on the criteria for disclosure of beneficial ownership in public procurement contracts, method of commitment implementation and necessary legal and technical preconditions	<p>Agreement is reached on the criteria (value threshold) for public procurement contracts subject to disclosure of beneficial ownership (yes/no)</p> <p>Agreement is reached on specific technical solution for automated retrieval of information on beneficial ownership from the Central Registry into EPPS (yes/no)</p>	MoF, CRRNM и BPP	October 2021	August 2022
1.1.2	Publish names of beneficial ownership in legal entities that are awarded public procurement contracts	Number of contracts awarded according to the criteria agreed (contract value threshold) which are subject to disclosure of beneficial ownership	BPP	October 2022	continuous
		New commitment			
Lead implementing institution		CRRNM and BPP			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		CRRNM, Vladimir Naumovski BPP, Goran Davidovski			
Title/Department		Advisor to IT Development Director, CRRNM Assistant Head of Sector on Monitoring the Public Procurement System and EPPS Management, BPP			
E-mail		vladimir.naumovski@crm.org.mk goran.davidovski@bjn.gov.mk			
Telephone		+389 2 3288 130, mob. +389 75 284 050 +389 2 3255 693			



Other actors involved	Ministries/Agencies	MoF and GS at GRNM
	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Center for Civil Communications German Filkov, gfilkov@ccc.org.mk

1. TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, PROACTIVITY AND INCLUSION

1.2 Proactive publication of information on the institutions' official websites

October 2021 – August 2023

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>This commitment concerns the so-called active transparency of institutions, which means publishing information on own initiative, without being addressed with request for information.</p> <p>The commitment will allow fast, easy and continuous access to basic information on operation of state institutions for citizens, companies and all other interested groups.</p>
--	---



	<p>In spite of the fact that, starting in late 2019, the new Law on Free Access to Public Information mandates institutions to publish such information on their websites, only a small number of them have complied with this obligation. According to 2021 Index of Active Transparency developed by the Center for Civil Communications, on average, ministries and the government publish 79% of required information, while municipalities publish only 60%. Individual percentages calculated per institution range from 10% to 100%. The same research conducted among public enterprises shows they publish 41% of required information. It is estimated that other institutions (around 1,200 in total) that were not covered by the civil society monitoring efforts publish even less information, although their information are equally important for citizens.</p> <p>In the meantime, the government adopted several measures to encourage publication of such information, but only in respect to governmental institutions, municipalities and public enterprises in which it appears as founding entity.</p> <p>In its performance audit report on quality of services provided by LSGUs on their websites, the State Audit Office has found that: “current quality of services provided by LSGUs on their websites does not ensure effective and fast service delivery and does not guarantee same treatment, equal access and availability for all citizens”.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	<p>This commitment implies enhanced efforts by the Agency for Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information aimed at improving active transparency of information holders.</p> <p>In 2016, before the start of enhanced efforts for active transparency of governmental institutions and municipalities, the average share of information published by these institutions accounted for 45%, while in the case of public enterprises, it accounted for only 28%. Having in mind the increase noted in respect to active transparency of these institutions after implementation of specific measures, improvements are expected with other institutions as well. Implementation of this commitment will increase availability of information that is important for people’s lives and work, and will reduce pressure for obtaining information by means of request for information.</p> <p>Adequate and timely access to information is precondition for effective participation of citizens in policy creation and for quality and timely delivery of services by state institutions.</p>
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>It is believed that the obligation for institutions to provide annual reports on compliance with article 10 of the law, i.e. the scope of published information on their operation, will contribute to increased disclosure of such information and compliance with article 10; however, the law does not anticipate misdemeanour sanctions in the case of non-compliance with this legal obligation.</p> <p>Development and publication of reports on compliance with article 10 will allow citizens and civil society organizations better insights about the level of basic information published by institutions, thereby increasing pressure on institutions to publish more information.</p> <p>Otherwise, implementation of this commitment should result in institutions proactively publishing:</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> information on regulations and decisions of authorities, thereby enabling the citizens' right to be informed about their rights and responsibilities in the society; information that citizens need to hold the authorities accountable; information that citizens need to be able to participate in decision-making; and information that citizens need to be able to access services provided by public institutions; <p>Institutions that proactively publish information will also benefit from such practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> active transparency helps institutions be more responsible in public spending; by complying with this obligation, institutions promote the principles of good governance and integrity; and institutions are more efficient in their operation on the account of better management of information at their disposal. 			
	How is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it provides access to new and more information, improves quality of information and improves public availability of information, i.e. facilitates the right to information.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIL PARTICIPATION because it creates or improves opportunities and conditions for public participation and influence in decision-making, and creates or improves the enabling environment for civil society.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because it creates and improves accountability rules, regulations and mechanisms for public officials.</p>			
	Additional information	<p>Implementation of this commitment does not require additional budget funds because all activities planned are part of institutions' regular operation, including the Agency for Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information (ASPI). The commitment is linked to the National Strategy for Prevention of Corruption and Conflict of Interests 2021-2025, Government of RNM's Transparency Strategy, Government of RNM's Anticorruption Plan, and recommendations put forward in the functional analysis for ASPI.</p> <p>Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements</p> <p>Measures anticipated under this commitment contribute to improved access to public information through more efficient implementation of laws and better information dissemination to citizens.</p>			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
1.2.1	Introduce obligation for all institutions - information holders, to provide information on	Share of institutions (starting from 2021) that have submitted annual reports to ASPI with information on	All information holders	January 2022	continuous



	compliance with Art.10 of the Law on Free Access to Information as part of their annual report submitted to ASPI	compliance with Article 10 (target: 50%) (In 2020, among total of 1440 information holders, 1132 institutions submitted annual reports to ASPI, accounting for 79% of all institutions)			
1.2.2	Introduce obligation for ASPI to publish summary information in its annual report on compliance with Art.10 of the Law on Free Access to Public Information based on reports received from information holders	Number of institutions for which ASPI published information in its annual reports on compliance with Article 10	ASPI	April 2022	continuous
Commitment is continuation of previous commitments					
Lead implementing institution	ASPI				
Name of the responsible person for implementation	Petar Gajdov Oliver Serafimovski				
Title/Department	Assistant Manager Advisor at the Department for Cooperation with Information Holders and Public Information				
E-mail	petar.gajdov@aspi.mk oliversefaimovski@komspl.mk				
Telephone	+389 2 3118 038				
Other actors involved	Ministries/Agencies	General Secretariat of GRNM			



	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Center for Civil Communications German Filkov, gfilkov@ccc.org.mk , +38923213513
--	---	---

1. TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, PROACTIVITY AND INCLUSION

1.3 Publish basic information on public procurements on the institutions' official websites October 2021 - August 2023

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>Basic data on public spending by means of tender procedures are available on the government's portal Electronic Public Procurement System (EPPS). Main purpose of this portal is organization of public procurements between state institutions and companies. The portal is intended for persons responsible for public procurements at institutions and companies who have received training for use of this portal. Hence, transparency of public procurement data is not a primary function of the portal, resulting in difficult access to basic data on public spending under public procurements for the general population and other stakeholders, whereby – contrary to the situation in other countries - citizens do not have fast, simple, easy and understandable insight about the manner in which public funds are spent.</p> <p>Two consecutive surveys of the Center for Civil Communications about the level of awareness among citizens in respect to public spending under public procurements, conducted among 400 respondents across the country, in 2017 and 2019, show that implementation of similar measures has increased the share of citizens who believe they have sufficient information on the manner in which public funds are spent under tender procedures has increased from 6% to 20% over the course of three years. In both surveys, high 98% of citizens responded that information they have about public spending come from the institutions' websites and from the media. Hence, institutions must publish more information on public spending on their respective websites, as the places where citizens most often look for and expect to receive such information.</p> <p>Commitments and activities implemented under the previous two OGP Action Plans served as precondition for this commitment. The first commitment concerns development of the list of information/documents as minimum standard for transparency in public procurements, followed by the Bureau of Public Procurements enabling a new functionality in EPPS that creates hyperlinks</p>
--	--



	to EPPS notices that can be used to publish such information on the institutions' websites. This allows fast, easy and simple method for institutions to hyperlink their EPPS notices on their websites, making all basic information about their public procurements available in one place. In particular, individual profiles of local administrators registered in EPPS now include "HTML" tags for "iFrame" that contain information on planned procurements, procurement notices, notifications on contracts signed, and notifications on contract performance per contracting authority. All they need to do is copy and paste "HTML" tags on their websites.
Main objective of the commitment	<p>The commitment concerns an obligation for institutions/contracting authorities stipulated under Article 9 of the Law on Public Procurements for creation of separate section (tab) on their websites designated for "public procurements" where all information and documents will be published in one place, including annual plans for public procurements, procurement notices (link to notice published on EPPS), notifications on contracts signed (link to notification published on EPPS), publication of contracts signed, and notifications on contract performance (link to notification published on EPPS).</p> <p>The purpose is for citizens to have fast, easy, simple and understandable access to information on the manner in which institutions spend public funds under public procurements (around 900 million euros annually) whereby institutions publish this information on their websites which, in turn, are the first point of information for citizens about particular institution.</p>
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>Fast, easy, simple and understandable availability of such information for citizens will increase the institutions' accountability and responsibility in public spending, while citizens will be able to understand how are their money spent and for which purpose, and will be able to influence spending of public funds for their needs.</p> <p>The fact that publication of such information is fast and utterly simplified and can be done by copying "HTML" tags from EPPS and inserting them on the institution's website will address current problems related to insufficient ICT professional staff at institutions and overburdened persons responsible for public procurements, because publication of this information does not require special expertise and is not time consuming.</p>
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it provides access to new and more information, improves quality of information available to citizens and civil society organizations, and improves access to public information, i.e. facilitates the right to information.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIL PARTICIPATION because it creates or improves opportunities and conditions for public participation and influence in decision-making, and creates or improves the enabling environment for civil society.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because it creates or improves accountability rules, regulations and mechanisms for public officials.</p>
Additional information	Implementation of this commitment does not require additional budget because EPPS' function for creation and fast and easy transfer of hyperlinks to published information on the institution's websites is already available. In the case of institutions that do not have separate tabs, this commitment would imply creation of such tabs that is not subject of additional funding. Additional budgets



		<p>fund will be needed only by institutions that do not have own websites, in respect to website design and hosting.</p> <p>Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals Link to SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.</p> <p>Measures defined under this commitment contribute to improved access to public information through more efficient enforcement of the laws and better information dissemination to citizens.</p>			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
1.3.1	Create separate section (tab) on official websites of the institutions (contracting authorities) designated for “public procurements”	<p>Share of institutions that have created separate section on their websites designated for “public procurements” (target: 50%)</p> <p>(According to MISA’s last report from the registry of public sector employees, there are 1332 active public institutions in the country)</p>	All contracting authorities	October 2021	March 2022
1.3.2	<p>Publish information and documents on the institutions’ websites (section on “public procurement”):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - annual plan for public procurements (with all amendments thereto); - procurement notices (links to notices on EPPS); - notifications on contracts signed (link to notification on EPPS); - public procurement contracts; and 	<p>Share of institutions that regularly publish basic information on their public procurements (target: 50%)</p>	All contracting authorities	April 2022	continuous



- notifications on contract performance (link to notification on EPPS).				
	Addition to ongoing commitment			
Lead implementing institution	GS of GRNM			
Name of the responsible person for implementation	Maja Petkovska Leses Neda Gacova			
Title/Department	State Advisor			
E-mail	maja.petkovska@gs.gov.mk nedagacova@gmail.com			
Telephone	3118-022			
Other actors involved	Ministries/Agencies	BPP public institutions		
	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Center for Civil Communications German Filkov, gfilkov@ccc.org.mk , +38923213513		

1. TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, PROACTIVITY AND INCLUSION



1.4 Improve access to information and number of open data published by local self-government units (LSGUs)

October 2021 - August 2022

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>Transparency and openness among LSGUs is still low. Most LSGUs in the Republic of North Macedonia do not publish all data and information that are regulated as legal obligations. Also, most municipalities do not publish data in open format. LSGUs do not have information about open datasets they dispose with. Knowledge and awareness about open data, as well as benefits therefrom, is very low among local officers, but also among citizens and local civil society organizations. Awareness about open data needs to be improved with all stakeholders in this process.</p> <p>2020 Openness Index Survey, conducted by the Metamorphosis Foundation, showed that local governments meet 40% of indicators on openness. This average score is indicative of low commitment on the part of municipalities to meet the principles of openness.</p> <p>Efforts are needed to provide easier access to information on performance of local governments, encourage inclusive approach to decision-making and publish larger number of datasets in open format.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	<p>Improved conditions and increased capacity for greater transparency and openness of local governments. At least 5 datasets published in open format for each of 30 LSGUs.</p> <p>Better understanding of the open data concept at local level by all stakeholders in the process, and increased awareness in respect to benefits from open data.</p>
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>Information on the level of openness among LSGUs will be subject of performance assessment for all local self-government units in the Republic of North Macedonia in respect to the principles of transparency, accessibility, efficiency and integrity, conducted as part of the Openness Index. This assessment will provide baseline for drafting recommendations aimed at improving transparency and openness among LSGUs.</p> <p>Trainings will be delivered for representatives of municipalities and civil society organization, in order to improve knowledge about the open data concept and promote transparency at local level.</p> <p>Facilitators will be engaged to support municipalities in their efforts to publish more information and prepare and publish datasets in open format.</p>
How is this commitment relevant for OGP values?	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it provides access to new and more information, improves quality of information and improves access to public information, i.e. facilitates the right to information.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIL PARTICIPATION because it improves opportunities and conditions for public participation and influence in decision-making, and improves the enabling environment for civil society.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because it promotes mechanisms for public accountability of officials.</p>



Additional information		<p>Activities will be implemented as part of the USAID Civic Engagement Project implemented by the Metamorphosis Foundation, in cooperation with MLSG and LSGUs.</p> <p>The commitment is related to attainment of objectives defined under the Open Data Strategy.</p> <p>Successful implementation of activities requires close cooperation with LSGUs.</p> <p>Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals</p> <p>Link to SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions</p> <p>SDG target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels</p> <p>Measures under this commitment contribute to promotion of transparency and openness at local level. The commitment will improve access to, use and application of public information and data.</p>			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
1.4.1	LSGUs participate in assessment of openness at local level, conducted as part of the Openness Index	<p>Research is conducted and 2021 report is published (yes/no)</p> <p>Research is conducted and 2022 report is published (yes/no)</p>	MLSG Metamorphosis Foundation	October 2021	August 2022
1.4.2	Improve knowledge about transparency and open data by delivering training to municipal representatives	<p>Number of trainings organized for municipal representatives (target: at least 2)</p> <p>Number of municipal representatives that participated in trainings (target: at least 20)</p>	MLSG Metamorphosis Foundation	November 2021	March 2022
1.4.3	Provide direct support to 30 LSGUs (through facilitators) to promote their transparency and openness	Number of datasets published in open format by 30 LSGUs (target: 5 datasets per municipality)	MLSG Metamorphosis Foundation	December 2021	April 2022
		<p><i>Commitment is partially connected to NAP4 commitment no. 5 -transparency at local level</i></p>			



Lead implementing institution	MLSG	
Name of the responsible person for implementation	Eli Chakar	
Title/Department	State Advisor	
E-mail	elicakar@gmail.com	
Telephone	/	
Other actors involved	Ministries/Agencies	MISA LSGUs
	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Metamorphosis Foundation for Internet and Society Mariana Jancheska, marijana@metamorphosis.org.mk

1. TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, PROACTIVITY AND INCLUSION

1.5 Ensure free access to data for civil society organizations

October 2021 - May 2022

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>According to data from the Central Register of RNM, there are 15,581 associations and foundations registered pursuant to the Law on Associations and Foundations. Based on Art.47 of the Law on Associations and Foundations and related to priority area “civil society” under the Government of RNM’s 3-6-9 Plan, the Central Register publishes the list of civil society organizations in open format (excel), available at: https://www.crm.com.mk/mk/otvoreni-podatotsi/gragjanski-organizatsii.</p> <p>At the moment, information published as part of this list concerns organization’s name, ID number and contact e-mail address.</p>
--	---



	<p>The browsing function allows individual search by entity name or identification number: https://www.crm.com.mk/mk/otvoreni-podatotsi/osnoven-profil-na-registriran-subjekt, and retrieves information such as: SIN-B, STN, full name, abbreviated name, date of establishment, legal form, legal status, address, additional information (under receivership/liquidation), primary activity, size.</p> <p>Article 47 of the Law on Associations and Foundations defines enlistment of register information in respect to: organization's full and abbreviated name, when available; organization's seat; act of establishment; date of establishment; name, surname and SIN-C and single identification number for founders; date of adoption, i.e. amendment of the statute; period for which the organization is established; goals and activities; name, surname and SIN-C of legal representative; data on organizational units (branches, offices, etc.); data on the status of public benefit organization; data on status changes; data on receivership and liquidation; comment on initiated procedure for prohibition of activity performance; termination of operation; number and date of the registration decision, decision on change of enlisted data and decision on entry deletion from relevant register according to Art. 40 (1) of the law.</p> <p>It could be concluded that, at the moment, information/documents that are not made available free of charge include: act of establishment, information on founders and authorized persons, goals and activities, status of public benefit organization.</p> <p>Participation of civil society organization in policy making is considered democratic minimum in any society. For that purpose, institutions apply different methods, including creation of separate registers, like in the example of the Secretariat for European Affairs: https://www.sep.gov.mk/post/?id=706 or the Council for Cooperation with and Development of Civil Society: https://www.nvosorabotka.gov.mk/sites/default/files/4.%D0%9Ebrazec_Register_GO_0.pdf.</p> <p>Non-state actors that also need broader consultations, communication and networking rely on registries they have created, like in the example of the platform "Dialogue to EU": (https://bit.ly/3wnsQ10) or Civica Mobilitas: https://civicamobilitas.mk/adresar/.</p> <p>Both, international and interstate organizations often engage in activities aimed at mapping organizations active in different fields, for example, UNICEF: https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/media/3541/file/MK_MappingCSOsCWD_Report_MK.pdf.</p> <p>The need for creation of separate registries (databases on associations and foundations) arises due to the lack of access to open data on civil society organizations registered in the Central Register pursuant to the Law on Associations and Foundations, which are regularly updated and which users can browse on different grounds, for different purposes. Above-mentioned registries kept outside the Central Register do not allow such insight, as they are partial and imply unnecessary funds spent for one and the same purpose.</p> <p>Moreover, the list of civil society organizations records various forms of civil association, including associations, chambers, sports clubs, fan groups, driver associations, pensioner associations, women organizations, etc. It would be impossible to assess the structure of civil society without additional information on individual entities.</p>
--	--



Main objective of the commitment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote transparency of the civil society; 2. Promote inclusiveness in policy making and monitoring processes, through possibility for thematic, geographical or other type of targeting civil society organizations; 3. Ensure adequate policy creation for civil society development, taking into account specificities of all entities registered according to the Law on Associations and Foundations; 4. Reduce administrative burdens for associations when they apply for financial support with public and private donors.
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expand open data on CSOs with those available from individual browsing under existing functions Expanding the scope of open data published by the Central Register for civil society organizations (list of civil society organizations) free of charge on the website: http://www.crm.com.mk/mk/otvoreni-podatotsi/gragjanski-organizatsii, with all data that are publicly available, free of charge, through the service “general profile of registered entity” (http://www.crm.com.mk/mk/otvoreni-podatotsi/osnoven-profil-na-registriran-subjekt). Data will be obtained from current information available in the Register of Associations and Unions, Register of Foundations and Register of Organizational Forms of Foreign Organizations (all three registers defined in the Law on Associations and Foundations) and will be updated on monthly basis. Expanding the scope of data available will enable browsing filters on different grounds, for example, according to location of seat, legal form, size, etc., i.e. per each parameter of available data, and will result in increased use value of such data. Having in mind that the Central Register is responsible for these data, they will be updated and complete. Other registries kept by state institutions and non-state actors are partial (include only information about organizations that are registered for specific purpose) and do not imply sustainable mechanisms for updating data. Such information will serve the civil society, but also donors and international organizations, in respect to consultation processes and information dissemination. Also, public availability of such information will facilitate applying for financial support (public and private) in administrative terms. 2. Provide access to dynamic reports with customizable data on civil society organizations for budget beneficiaries (central and local authorities) While the Central Register offers free access to information for state institutions, it is evident that some institutions are not informed about this possibility, and some of them do not benefit from the format in which information on civil society organizations is made available, so they decide to create and use own registries of associations and foundations, often created per thematic commitment of organizations, like the examples given above in respect to SEA and the Council for Cooperation with and Development of Civil Society. Enabling the function for creation of dynamic reports with customizable data on associations and foundations for institutions that are state budget beneficiaries



	<p>(central and local authorities) will allow direct and authorized access to such reports. Data contained in these reports will be obtained from current status in the Register of Associations and Unions, Register of Foundations and Register of Organizational Forms of Foreign Organizations (all three registers defined in the Law on Associations and Foundations) on the basis of pre-defined entry criteria (filters) such as: geographical location according to the organization's seat, organizational form, size, area of operation based on keyword in organization's goals and objectives, etc.</p> <p>Final definition of input criteria and output data will be decided in inclusive process, by working group composed of representatives from FOSM as the lead organization proposing this commitment, representatives from the Central Register, the Government's Department for Cooperation with Civil Society Organizations, and the Council for Cooperation with and Development of Civil Society. By allowing the possibility for access to updated data that could be processed according to particular interest of institutions, the latter will be able to increase the scope of organizations they communicate with, inform and include in ongoing consultation processes.</p> <p>Finally, policy making on civil society development is another end in itself. The Government has established the Council for Cooperation with and Development of Civil Society and has adopted, i.e. develops the new Strategy for Civil Society Development. However, creation of quality policies depends on availability of quality data. The current format in which data on citizens' associations are available is not usable and useful in policy making. Enabling free access to data on civil society organizations will greatly facilitate work of the Council in this regard.</p>
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it promotes transparency of the civil society, improves quality and access to public and free information by making all data available in one central location and, in addition to individual search, it also allows analytical use of data, provides conditions for relieving civil society organizations of administrative burdens when applying for funding with public and private donors.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIL PARTICIPATION because data are available to state institutions, allowing them to target civil society organizations based on thematic, geographical, typological and other aspect, in order to be included in policy creation and monitoring processes. CSOs and donors have access to integrated data in one place, which they can use for organization of consultation processes or for information dissemination to associations and foundations.</p> <p>The commitment will improve creation of civil society development policies, based on credible and reliable information from integral database.</p>
Additional information	<p>Link to the Government's Strategy for Cooperation and Development of Civil Society 2018-2020:</p> <p>The Government's Strategy for Cooperation and Development of Civil Society 2018-2020 includes MEASURE 12: Increase availability and dissemination of public data on civil society organizations enlisted in the Central Register of the Republic of Macedonia.</p> <p>This measure is accompanied by two activities:</p>



		<p>12.1. Improve the database of civil society organizations enlisted in the Central Register, by expanding publicly available information on registered civil society organizations</p> <p>12.2. Improve the legal framework for procedures on obtaining necessary information from the Central Register for the purpose of public funding to projects and programs of civil society organizations.</p> <p>Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals Link to SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.10: Ensure access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.</p> <p>Measures anticipated under this commitment contribute to improved access to public information through more efficient enforcement of the laws and better information to citizens.</p>			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
1.5.1	Publish data on civil society organizations in open format on the Central Register's portal and the government's open data portal	<p>Number of registered associations and foundations whose data is published in open format (According to data kept by the Central Register, there are 15,580 registered organizations)</p> <p>Number of open data downloads from the Central Register's portal and the government's open data portal</p>	CRRNM MISA	December 2021	December 2021
1.5.2	Regular updating of open data referred above	Frequency of open data updates (target: at least monthly)	CRRNM	December 2021	continuously
1.5.3	Establish working group to determine input criteria and output data on civil society organizations to be included in dynamic reports	Criteria and output data are defined (yes/no)	FOSM as lead institution proposing the commitment, representatives from CR, GS of GRNM, Council for	October 2021	October 2021



			Cooperation with and Development of Civil Society		
1.5.4	Provide access to dynamic reports with customizable data on CSOs for budget beneficiaries (central and local authorities)	Access is granted to dynamic reports with customizable data on CSOs (yes/no)	CRRNM	October 2021	May 2022
1.5.5	Deliver training and written instructions for budget beneficiaries (central and local authorities) on use of dynamic reports	Number of employees trained Number of employees presented with written instructions on use of dynamic reports	CRRNM	May 2022	May 2022
1.5.6	Use of dynamic reports on CSOs	Number of downloaded reports with data on CSOs	CRRNM, GS of GRNM, Council for Cooperation with and Development of Civil Society.	May 2022	continuously
			New commitment		
Lead implementing institution			CRRNM		
Name of the responsible person for implementation			Vladimir Naumovski		
Title/Department			Advisor to the Director for Information Development		
E-mail			vladimir.naumovski@crm.org.mk		
Telephone			tel. +389 2 3288 130		
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	GS of GRNM – Department for Cooperation with Civil Society Organizations Suzana Nikodijevikj Filipovska, Suzana.Nikodijevic@gs.gov.mk Maja Petkovska Leses, Maja.Petkovska@gs.gov.mk		



		Council for Cooperation with and Development of Civil Society
	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Foundation Open Society – Macedonia Danche Danilovska Bajdevska, danche.danilovska@fosm.mk Marija Mirchevska, marija.mirchevska@fosm.mk Center for Civil Communications German Filkov, gfilkov@ccc.org.mk

1. TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, PROACTIVITY AND INCLUSION

1.6 Fiscal transparency and accountability at local level and improved involvement of citizens through innovative mechanisms and tools

October 2021 - September 2023

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>Good governance at local level means improving processes for the purpose of more efficient and cost-effective delivery of public services, by ensuring full transparency and accountability, and by involving citizens in decision-making. In that, due consideration should be made for these processes to guarantee inclusion. Having in mind new trends and documents of the Council of Europe, the European Union and the United Nations, these commitments can be achieved by using innovative and new technologies that facilitate access to information and sensitize citizens.</p> <p>The need to increase transparency and accountability at local level is featured in almost all reports and strategy documents of national institutions, while progress in these aspects, inter alia, is monitored through analyses and surveys conducted annually. Public opinion polls on citizens' satisfaction with services at local level from the past four years show certain improvement in terms of assessment scores assigned to availability of municipal information (from 3.0 in 2017 to 3.1 in 2020), civil participation in decisions of local importance (from 2.3 in 2017 to 2.6 in 2020), and citizens' knowledge about the manner in which budget funds are spent in their municipality (from 2.2 in 2017 to 2.4 in 2020). However, in spite of relative progress achieved in this regard, additional efforts are still needed to improve overall transparency and accountability of local governments and to ensure greater involvement of citizens in decision-making at local level.</p>
--	--



	<p>As regards better public finance management, emphasis is put on improving transparency and accountability. The need for greater financial transparency and accountability was addressed during adoption of the Law on Financial Support to Local Self-Government Units and Beneficiary Entities Founded by Local Self-Government Units Intended to Finance Matured and Unsettled Liabilities in October 2018, in order to improve public finance management through greater financial discipline and accountability.</p> <p>In December 2020, the Government adopted a conclusion that mandates line ministries and recommends municipalities to improve active transparency, with emphasis on financial transparency, especially in respect to execution of central budget funds.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	<p>Introduce innovative mechanisms and tools to improve financial transparency and accountability of local self-government units and involvement of citizens in decision-making at local level.</p>
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>Introduction of electronic newsletter boards in municipalities as particularly accessible method for informing municipal council members and citizens in general about key financial data related to municipal performance and public services, including automatic download of quarterly reports on budget execution prepared by municipal administrations and processing data contained in more user-friendly and visible format. Data will be published in a manner that is understandable to council members who are not financial experts and in user-friendly manner for citizens. The goal is to ensure that municipal council members are able to perform their budget control function in more responsible manner and to take decisions based on information and in close cooperation and consultation with citizens, allowed by better information dissemination and understanding of the budget planning and execution process.</p> <p>Municipalities will be supported to create and put into operation innovative tools for easier access to information and to encourage involvement of citizens in decision-making related to local policy creation and services.</p> <p>The third aspect concerns establishment of single mechanism for citizen involvement in decision-making and local priority setting that would ensure adequate representation of all citizens, with emphasis on socially disadvantaged and marginalized groups.</p>
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it provides access to new and more information, improves quality of information and improves access to public information, i.e. facilitates the right to information.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION because it creates and improves opportunities and conditions for public participation and influence in decision-making and improves the enabling environment for civil society.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because it improves mechanisms for public accountability of officials.</p>



Additional information		<p>The commitment represents continuation from NAP4 and is aimed at introducing mechanisms and tools for improved financial transparency and accountability and citizen involvement in all municipalities, allowing them greater impact in respect to improved local governance.</p> <p>Under NAP4, these mechanisms and tools were introduced in 24 municipalities.</p> <p>The commitment contributes to attainment of priorities and goals defined under the Government's Program for Sustainable Local Development and Decentralization 2021-2026 and UN Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG16: Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build efficient, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels, and specifically to SDG target 16.6: Develop efficient, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels, and SDG target 16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels</p>			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
1.6.1	Introduce and put into operation electronic newsletter boards in 20 municipalities for automatic publishing of quarterly reports on municipal budget execution with data processed in understandable and user-friendly manner for citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of municipalities that have put into operation electronic newsletter boards - Citizens' satisfaction with information dissemination on municipal budget spending (average score of 2.4 in 2020) 	MLSG UNDP	January 2022	December 2023
1.6.2	Create and establish innovative tools for easier access to information and encourage citizens involvement in 20 municipalities	Number of established innovative tools (minimum 20 tools in 20 municipalities)	MLSG UNDP	January 2022	December 2023
1.6.3	Establish civil participation mechanism for decision-making and local priority setting through adequate representation, with emphasis on vulnerable and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of municipalities with established mechanisms for civil participation - Number of consultations organized with adequate representation of citizens (at least 80) 	MLSG UNDP	January 2022	December 2023



	marginalized groups, in 20 municipalities	- Number of projects accepted and implemented by local authorities on proposal by citizens through participation mechanisms (at least 20)			
		Continuation of NAP4 commitment			
Lead implementing institution		MLSG			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Eli Chakar			
Title/Department		State Advisor			
E-mail		elicakar@gmail.com			
Telephone		/			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	LSGUs		
		CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	UNDP ilmiasan.dauti@undp.org martin.nikolic@undp.org		

2. ANTICORRUPTION AND PROMOTION OF GOOD GOVERNANCE



2.1 Public procurements as open data

October 2021 - August 2023

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>Worldwide, public procurements are the typical place where corruption is found. There are many ways in which public procurements are used as instrument for various transactions that are contrary to the public interest and for the purpose of personal proceeds or trading influences.</p> <p>The National Strategy for Prevention of Corruption and Conflict of Interests identifies public procurements as significant risk factor, present in most areas of operation by public institutions.</p> <p>In its last round of monitoring efforts, the Center for Civil Communications notes that, in the first half of 2021, only 1% of public procurements were subject to administrative controls resulting in irregularities identified in every fifth procurement procedure controlled.</p> <p>CCC's monitoring reports on public procurements regularly feature remarks on low competition in public procurements. Low competition in public procurements organized in economy sectors marked by solid competition is an important indicator of corruption risks.</p> <p>Republic of North Macedonia has electronic system of public procurements that is public and allows citizens to view data on procurement notices and contracts signed.</p> <p>However, monitoring public procurements by external persons, primarily by the media and civil society organizations, is made difficult due to manual data collection. This means that external monitoring is burdened with engagement of resources and time that could be otherwise devoted to data analysis instead of data collection.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	<p>The commitment aims to improve accountability in public procurements through better opportunities for external monitoring by the media and civil society organizations.</p> <p>The commitment anticipates publication of public procurements in machine-readable format as open data on the government's portal designated for that purpose.</p>
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>Data transparency has significant impact on reducing corruption risks. Disclosing information to the interested public allows in-depth analyses and detection of corruption alerts. In essence, this means that institutions, by the effect of their transparency, enable better quality of involvement on the part of external actors, e.g. civil society, in effective monitoring, through partnership relations between the two sides.</p> <p>Analyses based on the share, scope, networking of contracting authorities and economic operators account for modern-day anticorruption tools and allow timely alerts that could be further processed by other public institutions, e.g. SCPC, in order to improve relevant policy and legal framework. Database on public procurements in open format provides conditions for development of such tools and improves the fight against corruption.</p>
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it allows new method of access to existing information that facilitates fast analyses of large data volumes.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIL PARTICIPATION because it facilitates work of civil society organizations and the media profiled in the field of public</p>



	<p>procurements and allows increased number of stakeholders to use public procurement analyses to inform citizens.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because comprehensiveness of analyses based on databases in open format enables development of new tool for early alarms on risk factors in particular public procurements and early alarms improve control and integrity of public procurements and saves funds collected from taxpayers.</p>				
Additional information	<p>Implementation of this commitment does not require additional budget funds.</p> <p>Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals Link to SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms</p> <p>Measures defined under this commitment contribute to prevention and fight against corruption and protection of the public interest by increasing accountability and responsibility of elected and appointed officials before citizens.</p>				
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
2.1.1	Develop plan on data publishing that provides the structure of datasets and select information to be published for all public procurements	Plan on data publishing is developed (yes/no)	BPP	January 2022	February 2022
2.1.2	Publish database on the open data portal	Number of posts on public procurements that meet the criteria contained defined in the plan for data publishing on the portal	BPP	March 2022	continuous
New commitment					
Lead implementing institution		BPP			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Biljana Ristevski Goran Davidovski			
Title/Department		Advisor at the Sector on Monitoring the System of Public Procurements and Management of EPPS			
E-mail		biljana.drijovska@bjn.gov.mk goran.davidovski@bjn.gov.mk			
Telephone		02/3255 716			
Other actors involved		Ministries / Agencies	MISA		



	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis" Skopje Misha Popovic, misha@idscs.org.mk Metamorphosis Foundation for Internet and Society Mariana Janceska, marijana@metamorphosis.org.mk

2. ANTICORRUPTION AND PROMOTION OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

2.2 Improve mechanism for monitoring asset declarations by elected and appointed officials

October 2021 - August 2023

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	One method to reduce and prevent illegal enrichment of elected and appointed officials and disproportionate increase of their assets as a result of abuse of public office concerns a functional mechanism on record keeping and monitoring their property status. In Macedonia, this system is relatively inefficient, primarily due to technical reasons and leave ample space for insufficient transparency in respect to publication of asset declaration submitted by officials and insufficient efficiency in respect to monitoring such assets. SCPC is limited in record keeping and monitoring property status of officials while they are still in office. At the same time, SCPC does not have full insight in the total number of officials in the Republic of North Macedonia and whether all persons required submitting asset declarations pursuant to Art. 82 of the Law on Prevention of Corruption and Conflict of Interests have complied with this obligation, because the register of appointed and elected official has still not enabled the function for which it was established. In brief, except for competent institutions, citizens are also denied opportunity to have full insight in the list of elected and appointed officials in the country, and changes to their property status during performance of their public office.
Main objective of the commitment	Establish a functional system that will streamline verification of asset and interest declarations of elected and appointed officials and will provide citizens with adequate insight in property status and interests of elected and appointed official and overview of changes thereto during their performance of public office.



How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?		Asset and interest declarations are globally recognized as transparency tool that allows citizens and institutions opportunity for greater insight in property status and interests of elected and appointed official, thus contributing to prevention of public office abuses for personal gains and pursuit of private interests. Historical tracking of assets provides the basis for control of risks related to material enrichment during performance of public office, while control over conflict of interests helps observe how the person took decisions as part of their work and whether he/she has put private before public interest. Publication of these data in clear, structured and open format will enable development of adequate tools that present such information in straightforward manner.			
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?		COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it allows access to new information, having in mind that, to present, such information were invisible or poorly presented, and facilitates fast analysis of large data volumes. COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIL PARTICIPATION because it facilitates external monitoring by civil society organizations and the media. COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because it provides improved register of elected and appointed officials, improved method of asset and interest declaration, as well as electronic data exchange that will avoid ambiguities and inaccuracies in reporting and publishing assets and interests, thereby improving accountability of elected and appointed officials during performance of their public office.			
Additional information		Implementation of this commitment requires budget funds that have been secured to meet SCPC’s needs (funds from the central budget and international assistance) Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals Link to SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms Measures anticipated under this commitment contribute to prevention and fight against corruption and protect the public interest by enhancing accountability and responsibility of elected and appointed official before citizens.			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
2.2.1	Finish development of software for the register and asset declarations	Software is designed and includes module for easy submission of asset declarations and transparency in terms of changes to property status in the course of time	SCPC	October 2021	March 2022
2.2.2	Initial phase of data collection	In the first three months from introduction of new method for submission of asset declarations, all registered persons under obligation to report	SCPC	April 2022	continuously



		assets and interests have successfully supplied relevant data			
		New commitment			
Lead implementing institution		SCPC			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Borce Stojanovski			
Title/Department		Senior Associate and Authorized Person at the Department for Monitoring Property Status and Interests			
E-mail		s.borce@dksk.org.mk			
Telephone		/			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	GS of GRNM		
		CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis" Skopje Misha Popovic, misha@idscs.org.mk		

2. ANTICORRUPTION AND PROMOTION OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

2.3 Publish files on appointment of managers/directors at public institutions by the Government of RNM

October 2021 - August 2023



<p>Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?</p>	<p>Persons appointed by the Government of RNM to manager/director positions at institutions account for the highest tier of merits in state administration. According to the legislation in effect and good governance standards, they should be characterized by high competence, expertise and management skills.</p> <p>However, for many years, actual practices differ from standards. Selection of such management staff remains informal to great extent, with appointment of acting directors/managers or appointments made under conditions of low competition, i.e. public calls with one candidate.</p> <p>Information on their selection/appointment is scarce, including their work biographies, and documents that should accompany their selection, at least formally, are not publicly available.</p> <p>This situation furthers citizens' perception that the best candidates are not selected and that party membership or coalition agreements play a key role in this process.</p> <p>In parallel to this perception, rotations/replacements of managers/directors in the aftermath of general elections, even when the same government stays in power, confirm the non-essential character of personnel solutions, i.e. low added value assigned to performance by relevant institution, making persons that hold managerial positions easily replaceable.</p> <p>This situation negatively affects development of institutions and consequently affects service delivery to citizens. First, incompetent management does not contribute to development of any institution because it does not know how to choose and manage solutions to problems faced by the institution. Second, such selection of managers/directors discourages professional staff at the institution, but also external experts, to apply on the open call and be given chance to manage public institutions.</p>
<p>Main objective of the commitment</p>	<p>The commitment is aimed at ensuring transparency of the targeted process. Its purpose is not to address the overall problem, but improve transparency that would narrow space for informal decisions on selection/appointment of managers.</p> <p>The commitment concerns publication of files on such appointments (i.e., open call, when announced; proposal made to the committee on appointments, decision taken by the government, work biography of elected or appointed managers/directors, self-evaluation matrix, cover letter and work program). Documents will be posted on the portal vlada.mk or on the open data portal. The commitment also applies to the cases where acting managers/directors are appointed, with the exception of documents that are not submitted by selected candidates, for example, work program.</p> <p>Information will be published in tabular form: open call, number of applications submitted (completed or incomplete, timely and untimely), number of selected candidates. In the cases where acting directors/managers are appointed, information will be published only in respect to person appointed.</p> <p>This will increase transparency and establish new standards on transparency as anticorruption tool.</p> <p>Increased transparency will contribute to gradual restoration of trust in this process among citizens and interested candidates.</p>



How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?		Transparency is considered to be important tool in improving governance and anticorruption. Publication of files on persons appointed by the Government of RNM as managers/directors of institutions will provide the public insights into professional competencies of selected candidates.			
How is the commitment relevant for OGP values?		<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it provides access to completely new information, improves quality of information on appointments and improves access to public information by making these data publicly, easily and free of charge available to citizens.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIL PARTICIPATION because it creates and improves opportunities for the civil society and the media to monitor appointments and inform citizens about government decisions, and to report on selection and competencies of persons appointed.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because it creates and improves accountability rules, regulations and mechanisms for public officials.</p>			
Additional information		<p>Implementation of this commitment does not require additional budget funds.</p> <p>Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals Link to SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms</p> <p>Measures defined under this commitment contribute to prevention and fight against corruption and protect the public interest by enhancing accountability and responsibility of elected and appointed officials before citizens.</p>			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
2.3.1	Develop the list of standard and additional documents to be published as part of files	<p>1. The list covers all necessary documents that should be published as part of files (yes/no)</p> <p>2. The list of information and documents to be published is adopted as government decision (yes/no)</p>	GS of GRNM	October 2021	November 2021
2.3.2	Publish files on the open data portal	1. Share of published files (calculated as ratio between 1.b and 1.a, where 1.a is the number of files on appointments and 1.b	GS of GRNM	December 2021	continuous



		is the number of published files)			
		New commitment			
Lead implementing institution		GS of GRNM			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Maja Petkovska Leses Neda Gacova			
Title/Department		State Advisor			
E-mail		maja.petkovska@gs.gov.mk nedagacova@gmail.com			
Telephone		3118-022			
Other actors involved	Ministries/Agencies	MISA			
	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis" Skopje Misha Popovic, misha@idscs.org.mk			

3. PROMOTE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES



3.1. Employment policies and services based on citizens' priorities

October 2021 - September 2023

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>Countries in Southeast and Central Europe, which include the Republic of North Macedonia, are lagging behind the Western European countries in respect to key indicators of health and wellbeing. The fact that public institutions are closed and citizens have low awareness about their fundamental rights, coupled with lack of actual partnership between civil society organizations and public institutions, limit the process for improving public services and access thereto. In addition, technology development and digitalization opportunities in the world have encouraged governments in the region, including the Government of RNM, to initiate processes for digitalization of certain services and to introduce technologies for automated data publishing. Thus far, many of these initiatives concern development of products that would contribute to enhanced transparency of institutions, but significant share of them undermine the need for involvement of citizens and do not take into account their opinions, i.e. increased volume of data made publicly available under previous initiatives and intended to contribute towards increased engagement of citizens in decision-making, have not yielded the desired results. Two specific reasons have led to such situation: complexity of data published and citizens' inability to understand them, as well as lack of two-directional communication mechanisms between those that publish data and intended user of such data.</p> <p>Lack of two-directional communication mechanisms between institutions and citizens at the Employment Service Agency and its regional offices contributes to low trust among beneficiaries of its services and low response on the part of citizens, with focus on vulnerable groups and environments.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	<p>Key and long-term objective of this commitment is to establish organized system and practice for two-directional communication between citizens and decision makers in respect to creation, implementation and evaluation of employment policies.</p>
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>Activities taken under this commitment will contribute to initiation of changes and establishment of positive practices at two levels: national and local, through cooperation between above named public institutions and civil society organizations. All activities will focus on establishment of mechanisms for involvement of citizens that are identified as target groups of active employment policies and services (unemployed people and companies).</p> <p>In particular, the commitment will be focused on: 1) monitoring and implementing active employment policies and services by civil society organizations involved in this commitment, which would later continue such cooperation and engage in continuous work on developing target policies; 2) developing platforms for consultations and transparency and work with citizens from vulnerable groups, in order to familiarize them with their rights under these policies, collect their recommendations and opinions, provide feedback to citizens' proposals, and familiarize them with possibilities for</p>



	future involvement in decision making; 3) promoting the platforms developed with the general public in order to ensure broad use thereof and involvement of citizens in creation, monitoring and evaluation of services in the relevant field; 4) improving policies/practices based on proposals received and citizens' participation, by providing feedback on the status and steps taken in respect to their proposals.
How is this commitment relevant for OGP values?	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it anticipates development and launch of tools and mechanisms for distribution of more information on budgeting and programming work by institutions that provide employment services. Also, the commitment works on improving quality and availability of existing and new information.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION because it allows development of communication and consultation tools with target groups before and during adoption and implementation of policies in the relevant field and anticipates an approach for mobilizing and motivating citizens to actively participate and use these tools.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY as it enables establishment of mechanisms that will contribute to promoted accountability of public officials.</p>
Additional information	<p>The commitment includes activities that imply establishment and use of mechanisms for civic involvement in decision-making pertaining to employment policies. Hence, all proposed solutions contribute to attainment of goals and actions defined by the Government of RNM after submission of the voluntary national review on implementation of SDGs at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2020. In particular, next step under SDG1: support for employment of vulnerable groups of citizens with measures anticipated under the National Strategy on Employment and Strategy for Formalization of Informal Economy, including operational plans for active employment programmes and measures and labour market services. Next step under SDG5: one of key priorities of the country in the next years will be continued efforts to improve employment opportunities for women and ensure their protection at work. Next step under SDG8: the government will monitor programmes and activities under relevant action plans for new jobs, improved participation in the labour market and increased labour demands and increased competitiveness. Also, it will continue to align national labour legislation with international standards and EU acquis.</p> <p>Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals Link to SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>Measures under this commitment contribute to improved planning, implementation and monitoring of public services which, in turn, will contribute to greater satisfaction among citizens with public services delivered.</p>



No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
3.1.1	Establish a coordination body comprised of seven members as follows: one representative from each civil society organization involved in this activity (5 in total, one operating at national and four operating at local level), one representative from the labour sector at the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, and one representative from the Employment Service Agency	Coordination body is established (yes/no)	ESARNM Association ESE	October 2021	October 2021
3.1.2	Develop electronic platform for information, monitoring and involvement of citizens in active employment policies and services and design mechanism for collecting, reviewing and responding to proposals made by citizens	<p>Number of published documents/reports on implementation of active employment policies and services</p> <p>Number of proposals for active employment policies and services submitted by citizens</p> <p>Number of reported inconsistencies and irregularities in active employment measures and services</p> <p>Number of positive comments/praise for active employment measures</p> <p>Number of citizens' proposals taken as baseline for advancing policies/practices (target: at least 25%)</p>	ESARNM and Association ESE	October 2021	December 2021



3.1.3	Conduct public information campaign about opportunities offered by the platform, by developing and implementing the communication strategy	% of implemented activities from the communication strategy	ESARNM and Association ESE	January 2022	June 2023
3.1.4	Establish pilot cooperation with CSOs from Tetovo, Kumanovo, Shuto Orizari and Prilep to identify non-registered unemployed citizens and citizens from vulnerable groups in order to implement activities to familiarize them with their rights arising from active employment policies and services by applying a multidisciplinary approach, and facilitate expression of citizens' opinions and proposals before competent institutions using the developed platform	<p>Number of mapped households for identification of unemployed citizens that are not registered with ESARNM (target: 250 per municipality)</p> <p>Number of organized meetings with identified households (target: 1 meeting per household)</p> <p>Number of surveyed citizens (target: 1000)</p> <p>Number of drafted plans to address problems affecting citizens (target 1)</p>	ESARNM and its regional offices in Tetovo, Kumanovo, Skopje and Prilep, and Association ESE, in cooperation with four local CSOs: Station L.E.T, Romano Chachipe, Women's Forum and Mother	October 2021	December 2021
			<i>All activities proposed under this commitment are new and complement those from NAP4.</i>		
Lead implementing institution			ESARNM		
Name of the responsible person for implementation			Bojana Simonovic , ESARNM		
Title/Department			civil servant		
E-mail			Bojana.Simonovic@av.gov.mk		
Telephone					



Other actors involved	Ministries/Agencies	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy , vladimir.krasic@mtsp.gov.mk
	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Association ESE – Darko Antikj, dantik@esem.org.mk 2. Station L.E.T. – Vesna Shapkoski, risteska.vesna@live.com 3. Romano Chachipe – Enensija Usein, romanocacipe@yahoo.com 4. Mother – Lidija Ilievska, lidija63@hotmail.com 5. Women’s Forum – Slagjana Josifovska, forumigrustetovo@gmail.com

3. PROMOTE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

3.2. Preventive healthcare policies and services based on citizens’ priorities

October 2021 - September 2023

Which public problem is addressed is by the commitment?	<p>Countries in Southeast and Central Europe, which include the Republic of North Macedonia, are lagging behind the Western European countries in respect to key indicators of health and wellbeing. The fact that public institutions are closed and citizens have low awareness about their fundamental rights, coupled with lack of actual partnership between civil society organizations and public institutions, limit the process for improving public services and access thereto. In addition, technology development and digitalization opportunities in the world have encouraged governments in the region, including the Government of RNM, to initiate processes for digitalization of certain services and to introduce technologies for automated data publishing. Thus far, many of these initiatives concern development of products that would contribute to enhanced transparency of institutions, but significant share of them undermine the need for involvement of citizens and do not take into account their opinions, i.e. increased volume of data made publicly available under previous initiatives and intended to contribute towards increased engagement of citizens in decision-making, have not yielded the desired results. Two specific reasons</p>
--	--



	<p>have led to such situation: complexity of data published and citizens' inability to understand them, as well as lack of two-directional communication mechanisms between those that publish data and intended users of such data.</p> <p>Lack of two-directional communication mechanisms between the Ministry of Health and citizens contributes to low trust among beneficiaries of its services and low response on the part of citizens, with focus on vulnerable groups and environments.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	<p>Key and long-term objective of this commitment is to establish organized system and practice for two-directional communication between citizens and decision-makers in respect to creation, implementation and evaluation of healthcare policies and services.</p>
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>Activities taken under this commitment will contribute to initiation of changes and establishment of positive practices at two levels: national and local, through cooperation between above named public institutions and civil society organizations. All activities will focus on establishment of mechanisms for involvement of citizens that are identified as beneficiaries of preventive healthcare programs, with focus on those intended for women and children.</p> <p>In particular, the commitment will be focused on: 1) establishing continuous cooperation between the Minister of Health/State Secretary responsible for planning, implementing and monitoring preventive healthcare programs and civil society organizations involved in this commitment, which would later continue such cooperation and engage in continuous work on developing target policies; 2) developing platforms for consultations and transparency and work with citizens from vulnerable groups, in order to familiarize them with their rights under these policies, collect their recommendations and opinions, and familiarize them with possibilities for future involvement in decision-making; 3) promoting the platforms developed with the general public in order to ensure broad use thereof, by direct involvement of persons responsible for public relations at the Ministry of Health/Cabinet of the Minister of Health and involvement of citizens in planning, monitoring and evaluating services in the relevant field; 4) improving policies/practices based on proposals received and citizens' participation, by providing feedback on the status and steps taken in respect to their proposals.</p>
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it anticipates development and launch of tools and mechanisms for distribution of more information on budgeting and programming work by institutions that provide healthcare services to women, mothers and children. Also, the commitment works on improving quality and availability of existing and new information</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION because it allows development of communication and consultation tools with target groups before and during adoption and implementation of policies in the relevant field and anticipates an approach for mobilizing and motivating citizens to active participate and use these tools.</p>



	COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY as it enables establishment of mechanisms that will contribute to promoted accountability of public officials.				
Additional information	<p>The commitment includes activities that imply establishment and use of mechanisms for civic involvement in decision-making pertaining to healthcare policies. Hence, all proposed solutions contribute to attainment of goals and actions defined by the Government of RNM after submission of the voluntary national review on implementation of SDGs at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2020. In particular, next step under SDG3: Ministry of Health will continue implementation of initiatives and activities from strategic documents and action plans and will start activities for development of the new National Strategy on Health by 2030. This strategy will provide direction for health system reforms at all levels.</p> <p>Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals Link to SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>Measures under this commitment contribute to improved planning, implementation and monitoring of public services which, in turn, will contribute to greater satisfaction among citizens with public services delivered.</p>				
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
3.2.1	Establish a coordination body comprised of nine members: one representative from each civil society organization involved in this activity (5 in total, of which 1 from national organization and 4 from local organizations) and four representatives from the Ministry of Health, one responsible for preventive healthcare, one responsible for strategic planning, one representative from the Minister's Cabinet and one representative responsible for financial matters	Coordination body is established (yes/no)	MoH, Association ESE, in cooperation with 4 local CSOs: Station L.E.T. Romano Chachipe, Women's Forum and Mother	January 2022	January 2023



3.2.2	Develop and launch electronic platform for information dissemination, monitoring and involvement of citizens in preventive healthcare programs and design mechanism for collecting, reviewing and providing feedback on proposals made by citizens	<p>Number of published documents/reports on implementation of healthcare programs</p> <p>Number of proposals for healthcare programs submitted made by citizens</p> <p>Number of inconsistencies and irregularities in implementation of preventive healthcare programs reported</p> <p>Number of positive comments/praise for healthcare programs</p> <p>Number of citizens' proposals taken as baseline to advance policies/practices (target: at least 25%)</p>	MOH, e-Health Administration and Association ESE, in cooperation with 4 local CSOs: Station L.E.T., Romano Chachipe, Women's Forum and Mother	February 2022	December 2022
3.2.3	Conduct public information campaign on opportunities offered by the platform, by developing and implementing the communication strategy	% of implemented activities from the communication strategy	MoH, Public Relations / Minister's Cabinet and Association ESE, in cooperation with 4 local CSOs: Station L.E.T., Romano Chachipe, Women's Forum and Mother	January 2023	June 2023
3.2.4	Establish pilot cooperation with CSOs from Tetovo, Kumanovo, Shuto Orizari and Prilep to identify women and children from	Number of mapped households for identification of women and children	MoH, regional PHI from Tetovo, Kumanovo, Skopje and	February 2022	June 2023



	vulnerable groups in order to familiarize them with their rights arising from prevention healthcare programs ⁴	from vulnerable groups (target: 250 per municipality) Number of meetings organized with identified households (target: 1 meeting per household) Number of surveyed citizens (target: 1000) Number of plans drafted to address problems affecting citizens (target 1)	Prilep, and Association ESE, in cooperation with 4 local CSOs: Station L.E.T. Romano Chachipe, Women's Forum and Mother		
			<i>All activities proposed under this commitment are new and complementary to activities under NAP4.</i>		
Lead implementing institution			MoH		
Name of the responsible person for implementation			Biljana Babushkovska, M.Sci		
Title/Department			Head of Internal Audit Department		
E-mail			biljana.babushkovska@zdravstvo.gov.mk		
Telephone			/		
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	healthcare facilities		

⁴ Program for Active Health Protection of Mothers and Children, Program for Early Detection of Malignant Diseases, Program for Systematic Examinations, Program for Exemption from Payment of Contribution Fees, Public Health Program that include services intended for vulnerable groups, with application of the multidisciplinary approach, such as facilitating expression of opinions and proposals by women and mothers before competent institutions using the platform developed. The pilot project will concern only programs intended for preventive healthcare of women, mothers and children.



	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	<p>1. Association ESE – Darko Antikj, dantik@esem.org.mk</p> <p>2. Station L.E.T. – Vesna Shapkoski, risteska.vesna@live.com</p> <p>3. Romano Chachipe – Enensija Usein, romanocacipe@yahoo.com</p> <p>4. Mother – Lidija Ilievska, lidija63@hotmail.com</p> <p>5. Women’s Forum – Slagjana Josifoska, forumiguastetovo@gmail.com</p>

3. PROMOTE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

3.3 Education policies and services based on citizens’ priorities

October 2021 - September 2023

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>Countries in Southeast and Central Europe, which include the Republic of North Macedonia, are lagging behind the Western European countries in respect to key indicators of health and wellbeing. The fact that public institutions are closed and citizens have low awareness about their fundamental rights, coupled with lack of actual partnership between civil society organizations and public institutions, limit the process for improving public services and access thereto. In addition, technology development and digitalization opportunities in the world have encouraged governments in the region, including the Government of RNM, to initiate processes for digitalization of certain services and to introduce technologies for automated data publishing. Thus far, many of these initiatives concern development of products that would contribute to enhanced transparency of institutions, but significant share of them undermine the need for involvement of citizens and do not take into account their pinions, i.e. increased volume of data made publicly available under previous initiatives and intended to contribute towards increased involvement of citizens in decision-making, have not yielded the desired results. Two specific reasons have led to this situation: complexity of data published and citizens’ inability to understand them, as well as lack of two-directional communication</p>
--	--



	<p>mechanisms between those that publish data and intended users of such data.</p> <p>Lack of two-directional communication mechanisms between the Ministry of Education and secondary schools with citizens contributes to low trust among beneficiaries of services provided by these institutions and low response on the part of citizens, with focus on vulnerable groups and environments.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	Key and long-term objective of this commitment is to establish organized system and practice for two-directional communication between citizens and decision makers in planning and implementing education policies.
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>Activities taken under this commitment will contribute to initiation of changes and establishment of positive practices at two levels: national and local, through cooperation between above named public institutions and civil society organizations. All activities will focus on establishment of mechanisms for involvement of teachers and students from secondary schools.</p> <p>In particular, the commitment will be focused on: 1) establishing continuous cooperation between the institution and teachers/students and civil society organizations involved in this commitment, monitoring and implementing education programs, which would later continue cooperation and engage in continuous work on developing target policies; 2) developing platforms for consultations and transparency and work with citizens from vulnerable groups, in order to familiarize them with their rights under these policies, collect their recommendations and opinions, and familiarize them with possibilities for future involvement in decision-making; 3) promoting the platforms developed with the general public in order to ensure broad use thereof; 4) improving policies/ practice based on proposals received and citizens' participation, by providing feedback on the status and steps taken in respect to their proposals.</p>
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it anticipates development and launch of tools and mechanisms for distribution of more information about budgeting and programming work of institutions that provide education services. Also, the commitment works on improving quality and availability of existing and new information.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION, i.e. it allows development of communication and consultation tools with target groups before and during adoption and implementation of policies in the relevant field and anticipates an approach for mobilizing and motivating teachers and students to actively participate and use these tools.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY as it enables establishment of mechanisms that will contribute to promoted accountability of public officials.</p>
Additional information	<p>The commitment includes activities that imply establishment and use of mechanisms for involvement of teachers/students in decision-making pertaining to education policies. Hence, all proposed solutions contribute to attainment of goals and actions defined by the Government of RNM after submission of the voluntary national review on implementation of SDGs at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2020.</p>



		<p>In particular, next step under SDG4: improve quality and access to secondary education programs, with focus on vulnerable groups, and improve teacher career development.</p> <p>Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals Link to SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>Measures under this commitment contribute to improved planning, implementation and monitoring of public services which, in turn, will contribute to greater satisfaction among citizens with public services delivered.</p>			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
3.3.1	Improve capacity and opportunities for students, teachers, schools and the Ministry of Education and Science for joint development of accountable, accessible, effective and efficient secondary education	<p>Number of stakeholders involved in capacity-building for accountable, accessible, effective and efficient secondary education</p> <p>Number of organized trainings</p> <p>Number of training participants according to following categories (teachers/ students)</p>	MES, Integrity Action and Association ESE, in cooperation with FOSM and other CSOs with relevant experience in this field	October 2021	September 2023
3.3.2	Define priority areas for students, parents and teachers	<p>Number of education service standards developed</p> <p>Implementation rate (%) under the plan for capital investments</p> <p>Number of identified issues that were subject to monitoring</p>	MES, (Integrity Action) and Association ESE, in cooperation with FOSM and other CSOs with relevant experience in this field	October 2021	September 2023



3.3.3	Establish monitoring tools	Number of participants in monitoring efforts according to following categories (students, parents, teachers) Number of people who used the technology tool	MES, (Integrity Action) and Association ESE, in cooperation with FOSM and other CSOs with relevant experience in this field	October 2021	September 2023
3.3.4	Take activities to address identified problems	Number of meetings held Number of identified solutions Number of meetings held with local and national institutions to discuss identified problems and solutions thereto Number of information shared on implementation of solutions to problems	MES, (Integrity Action) and Association ESE, in cooperation with FOSM and other CSOs with relevant experience in this field	October 2021	September 2023
3.3.5	Improve transparency by publishing data and information on the institutions' websites (national institutions, municipalities and schools)	Share of published information from total prepared Share of municipalities that have published at least 2/3 of information	LSGUs and LEIs, SEI, BDE, Metamorphosis	October 2021	September 2023
3.3.6	Establish mechanism for mandatory publication of quality open educational resources on the official educational platforms	Number of resources published by institutions (BDE) from the campaign's start	MES, BDE, FOSM and Metamorphosis	October 2021	September 2023
			<i>All activities proposed under this commitment are new and complementary to activities under NAP4.</i>		



Lead implementing institution		Ministry of Education and Science
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Dusan Tomshikj, MES
Title/Department		civil servant
E-mail		dusan.tomsik@mon.gov.mk
Telephone		/
Other actors involved	Ministries/Agencies	Secondary schools, Bureau for Development of Education and State Education Inspectorate, andrijana.tomovska@gmail.com marijaisovska@bro.gov.mk
	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	1. Open Society Foundation Macedonia - Natasha Angeleska , natasa.angjeleska@fosm.mk and Suzana Pecakovska , suzana.pecakovska@fosm.mk . 2. Metamorphosis – Quendresa Sulejmani , gendresa@metamorphosis.org.mk 3. Integrity Action, Jasmina Haynes, jasmina.haynes@integrityaction.org

3. PROMOTE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

3.4 Local policies and services based on citizens' priorities

October 2021 - September 2023

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	Countries in Southeast and Central Europe, which include the Republic of North Macedonia, are lagging behind the Western European countries in respect to key indicators of health and wellbeing. The fact that public institutions are closed and citizens have low awareness about their fundamental rights, as well as lack of actual partnership between civil society organizations and public institutions, limit the process for improving public
--	--



	<p>services and access thereto. In addition, technology development and digitalization opportunities in the world have encouraged governments in the region, including the Government of RNM, to initiate processes for digitalization of certain services and to introduce technologies for automated data publishing. Thus far, many of these initiatives concern development of products that would contribute to enhanced transparency of institutions, but significant share of them undermine the need for involvement of citizens and do not take into account their opinions, i.e. increased volume of data made publicly available under previous initiatives and intended to contribute towards increased engagement of citizens in the decision-making, have not yielded the desired results. Two specific factors have led to such situation: complexity of data published and citizens' inability to understand them, as well as lack of two-directional communication mechanisms between those that publish data and intended users of such data.</p> <p>Lack of two-directional communication mechanisms between local governments and citizens contributes to low trust among users of local services and low response on the part of citizens, with focus on vulnerable groups and environments, in decision-making at local level.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	Key and long-term objective of this commitment is to establish organized system and practice for two-directional communication between citizens and decision-makers in planning, implementation and evaluation of local public services.
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>Activities under this commitment will contribute to initiation of changes and establishment of positive practices at local level, through cooperation between above named institutions and local civil society organizations. All activities will focus on establishment of mechanisms for involvement of citizens as users of services provided by local governments across the country.</p> <p>In particular, the commitment will be focused on: 1) establishing continuous cooperation between minister/director/state secretary responsible for planning, monitoring and delivery of local public services and civil society organizations involved in this commitment, which would later continue cooperation and engage in continuous work on development of relevant policies and services; 2) developing platforms for consultations and transparency and work with citizens from vulnerable groups, in order to familiarize them with their rights under these policies, collect their recommendations and opinions, and familiarize them with possibilities for future involvement in decision-making; 3) promoting the platforms developed with the general public in order to ensure broad use thereof ; 4) improving policies/services/practiced based on proposals received and participation of citizens, by providing feedback on the status and steps taken in respect to their proposals.</p>
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it anticipates development and launch of tools and mechanisms for distribution of more information on budgeting and programming work of institutions that provide local public services. Also, the commitment works on improving quality and availability of existing and new information.



	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION because it allows development of communication and consultation tools with target groups before and during adoption and implementation of policies in the relevant field and anticipates an approach for mobilizing and motivating citizens to actively participate and use these tools.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because it enables establishment of mechanisms that will contribute to promoted accountability of public officials.</p>				
Additional information	<p>The commitment includes activities that imply establishment and use of mechanisms for civic involvement in decision-making pertaining to local public services. Hence, all solutions proposed contribute to attainment of goals and actions defined by the Government of RNM after submission of the voluntary national review on implementation of SDGs at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2020. In particular, next step under SDG2: government will focus on measures to improve the structure of agricultural land as precondition for development and competitiveness of this sector, improve living and working conditions in rural areas and provide access to knowledge and investment in human capital through reformed services for expansion and education of farmers. Next step under SDG5: one of key priorities of the country in the next years will be continued effort to improve employment opportunities for women and ensure their protection at work.</p> <p>Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals Link to SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>Measures under this commitment contribute to improved planning, implementation and monitoring of public services which, in turn, will contribute to increased satisfaction among citizens with public services delivered.</p>				
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
3.4.1	Establish uniform mechanism applicable to all municipalities for consultations and communication in order to allow citizens' input in creation of local services and allocation of local budget funds for implementation of such services, with focus on citizens from rural and marginalized areas	<p>Uniformed mechanism for information dissemination is established (yes/no)</p> <p>Number of information published</p> <p>Unified mechanism for civic participation is established (yes/no)</p>	MLSG and Rural Coalition	October 2021	September 2023



		Number of citizens involved Uniformed mechanism for feedback to citizens based on their suggestions is established (yes/no) Number of citizens who provided feedback			
			<i>This commitment ensures sustainability of commitment 5.3 under NAP4.</i>		
Lead implementing institution			MLSG		
Name of the responsible person for implementation			Eli Chakar, MLSG		
Title/Department			civil servant		
E-mail			elicakar@gmail.com		
Telephone					
Other actors involved	Ministries/Agencies		/		
	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups		1. Rural Coalition - Liljana Jonoski, liljana.jonoski@gmail.com		



--	--	--

3. PROMOTE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES	
3.5. Available e-services in rural areas	
October 2021 - June 2023	
Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>Lack of information about the National Portal for Electronic Services (uslugi.gov.mk) (the portal) and all data available thereon; lack of adequate digital literacy among local population for use of e-services provided by the portal; lack of trust in institutions and in electronic communications.</p> <p>First IPARD programme was marked by absorption rate of only 16% and reasons could be sought in voluminous documents required and referrals from one to another office which, in the case of farmers, implies spending of already scarce time and funds.</p> <p>Excessive burden put on institutions is best demonstrated by several examples: throughout the application period for subsidies or during the open call, MAFWE regional offices were swarmed with farmers, several people per one employee, with employees failing to enter and review all information and documents needed, resulting in erroneous entries in the electronic system and oftentimes rejection of applications for subsidies; large rows and crowds in front of desks were common feature even during the coronavirus crisis, which would not have happened if everybody had the opportunity to obtain permits for movement during curfew via the electronic system and would not have led to situations in which civil servants from MAFWE regional officers submit applications on behalf of farmers, resulting in new rows and crowds for obtaining such permits in hardcopy, ultimately forcing MAFWE to take decision on validity of permits throughout the entire period in which curfews were imposed.</p> <p>Delays in service provision and poor quality of services received: for example, to obtain letter of confirmation from the municipality that particular investment is in line with LED strategy and does not pollute the environment, a person had to visit the municipality 10 times in a row and eventually receive letter with erroneous information, which oftentimes implies additional costs for farmers and rejection of their investment applications. There are plenty of such examples in the Pelagonija Region, more precisely in Krivogashtani. Entering incorrect data by civil servants often results in loss of financial support, e.g., subsidies, etc., especially when errors concern data on land parcels and crops, usually when these are entered electronically for the purpose of applying for subsidies. Such mistakes are usually due to lack of knowledge. When this is combined with the fact that civil</p>



	<p>servants have to enter such data for 90,000 farmers, who usually submit applications 10 days before submission deadline. Sometimes municipalities enter incorrect data about persons or agricultural holdings, and the vicious circle continues. Farmers are excessively dependent on civil servants at local institutions in the application process. Moreover, residents from rural areas have to spend more time and resources compared to those living in urban areas, etc. Farmers and rural population are taken as target group to elaborate the problem, although services introduced by this commitment will not be used only by farmers, but by local population in general, as evidenced in the latest field research conducted by the Rural Coalition (anecdotal statements or views are included) available at https://rural.mk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%B7%D0%B0-%D0%B4%D0%B8%D0%B3%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B0%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%B7%D0%B0%D1%86%D0%B8%D1%98%D0%B0-1.pdf.</p> <p>There are more than 170,000 registered family agricultural holdings in the country. All of them are in need of services covered by this commitment multiple times throughout the year, such as: applying for subsidies, applying on IPARD open calls and applying for the rural development program, and they all require submission of employment records (M1/M2), certificate on taxes paid, letter of certification from the municipality on investment's compliance with LED, certificates on non-initiated receivership or bankruptcy procedure, certificate on legal status, certificate demonstrating there are no prohibitions in place for activity or profession performance, etc. In particular, most of above enlisted documents, i.e. public services, are required in the application process for subsidies, application process for financial support under the Rural Development Program which provides investments for modernization of agricultural holdings and promotion of rural development, which concern funding that exceeds 200 million euros per year. These documents are also required in the application process for IPARD programme, which is very important because it directly affects the absorption rate of IPARD funds.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	<p>The commitment's main objective is to bring closer to citizens in rural areas services provided the national electronic portal and to increase their trust and security to engage in electronic communications with institutions.</p> <p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased information among citizens in local communities about the portal (uslugi.gov.mk); Increased knowledge and skills among rural population to use e-services available on the portal (uslugi.gov.mk)
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>Increasing availability and use of e-services in rural areas does not only contribute to addressing the public problem, but it also contributes to promotion of digitalization processes in the society,</p>



		without leaving any citizen behind. Moreover, increased use of e-services, increased trust in institutions and in the state, in general, also improves quality of life in the community. Implementation of this commitment will accelerate digitalization of services provided by municipalities and will increase capacity and knowledge among local population, by introducing separate curriculum for promoting digitalization knowledge and skills, and ultimately contributes to implementation of the digital agenda and strategic commitments defined at national level.			
	How is the commitment relevant for OGP values?	COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it provides access to new and more information, and improves availability of public information.			
	Additional information	<p>The commitment is in line with and contributes to attainment of priorities and goals defined in several strategic documents, such as: the Government of RNM's Transparency Strategy 2019-2021</p> <p>Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals Link to SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.</p> <p>Measures under this commitment contribute to promotion of knowledge and skills among citizens for provision of electronic public services in fast and efficient manner.</p>			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
3.5.1	Campaign to promote services which citizens can obtain electronically instead of directly at office desks (activity will be included in regular advisory activities of NEA and information will be distributed to farmers by MAFWE regional offices and AFSARD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of information on available e-services on the portal (uslugi.gov.mk) in rural areas - Number of e-services obtained from the portal (uslugi.gov.mk) on annual basis 	MISA, Rural Coalition NEA, MAFWE regional offices, AFSARD	October 2021	June 2023
3.5.2	Establish local network of mobile facilitators to promote and mediate access to the portal (uslugi.gov.mk)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of mobile facilitators for e-services in municipalities 	Rural Coalition, MISA	October 2021	June 2023



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of e-services obtained from the portal uslugi.gov.mk 			
3.5.3	Develop analysis and inventory of services in the sector of agriculture, forestry and water economy, with priority-setting for services and data entries, and integration and verification of identified services in the catalogue of services (pursuant to the Law on Electronic Management and Electronic Services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of new services integrated in the catalogue by MAFWE - Number of information published on services provided by MAFWE on the portal uslugi.gov.mk - Number of new e-services available on the portal uslugi.gov.mk - Number of digitized services in the sector of agriculture and rural development (target: 10) 	MISA, MAFWE, Rural Coalition, standing sub-sectoral groups and other socio-economic partners of MAFWE	October 2021	June 2023
3.5.4	Develop education curriculum on basic digital skills intended for rural and marginalized areas (basic computer literacy: zoom, internet, etc.) and organization of trainings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of trainings organized in rural areas per year - Number of trained citizens in rural and 	Rural Coalition, MISA and MAFWE	October 2021	June 2023



		marginalized areas - Number of training material downloads			
		New commitment			
Lead implementing institution		MISA			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Rosalinda Stojova Nadica Josifovski			
Title/Department		Head of Sector State Advisor			
E-mail		rozalinda.stojova@mioa.gov.mk nadica.josifovski@mioa.gov.mk			
Telephone		/			
Other actors involved	Ministries/Agencies	MAFWE, Aleksandar Musalevski , a.musalevski@mzsv.gov.mk MAFWE, Femi Isen , femi.isen@mzsv.gov.mk			
	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Rural Coalition, Liljana Jonoski, liljana.jonoski@gmail.com			

3. PROMOTE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

3.6 Better access to guaranteed forms of protection for victims of human trafficking

October 2021 – June 2023



Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>116 human trafficking victims have been identified in the period 2005-2019. Starting from 2014, the number of identified victims is small, primarily due to absence of active identification on the part of competent institutions. Experience often shows that identification of victims underperforms in the labyrinths of state institutions with competences in this regard. In 2019, a case was noted in which a minor girl, voluntarily and with support from friend, had decided to report to competent institutions that she is victim of human trafficking. However, later it was established that the girl had already established contact with the particular competent institution, but the latter had failed to recognize her case as human trafficking.</p> <p>There is a general impression that content and format of data presented in annual reports on human trafficking do not correspond to the need to determine progress made by the state in this field. Additionally, there are no analytical overviews on state-of-affairs presented in such reports, as well as evaluation of progress attained under individual goals defined, in order to measure progress in the future. This has given rise to the negative impression about progress made by the state with international bodies and citizens, but on the other hand, difficulties in decision-making and implementation of changes in line with international standards.</p> <p>Ministry of Justice implements the programme for payment of redress to child victims of human trafficking in cases where damages cannot be claimed from human trafficking offenders.</p> <p>After leaving the shelters, victims often face unemployment and housing problems, although the programme for reintegration of human trafficking victims enlists employment, housing, continued education, etc. as key elements of their reintegration process. The country does not have special programs and measures in place for integration of victims in work processes for the purpose of economic empowerment. Victims of human trafficking do not benefit from active employment measures provided by the state through the Employment Service Agency, because ESA does not have a special system that will guarantee protection of their personal data and the victim status.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	<p>The commitment's main objective is to strengthen the fight against human trafficking in the Republic of North Macedonia and to provide effective protection of victims.</p> <p>Specific results expected from this commitment include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of identified human trafficking victims and services provided to them; • Enhanced transparency and accountability of institutions that work on human trafficking; • Increased information and access to healthcare services, employment and justice for victims of human trafficking.
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>The commitment will contribute to addressing the public problem by establishing effective measures by institutions aimed at better access to services and better information for victims of human trafficking. Solutions will be designed under several activities implemented in partnership with civil society organizations. In particular, measures include establishment of mobile teams for field work and will contribute to improved identification and protection of human trafficking victims. Functional database will be</p>



	<p>established and efforts will be made to revise and improve the system for data collection, enabling public data that will allow monitoring of progress made by the state in respect to suppression of human trafficking and protection of victims.</p> <p>In addition, the commitment will contribute to increased capacity of medical staff to recognize and take action in cases of human trafficking. Victims of human trafficking and the public will be informed about REP centres and their availability for service provision.</p> <p>Measures will also contribute to better information for victims and their legal representatives in respect to the right to redress for children and adult victims of human trafficking. Programs and measures will be created for victims to be included in work processes aimed at their economic empowerment.</p>
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY</p> <p>The commitment directly contributes to greater transparency and accountability on the part of institutions working on human trafficking, especially in the context of UN Sustainable Development Goals.</p> <p>Proposed solutions are aimed at ensuring access to new and more information for the public and for victims of human trafficking in respect to available justice and legal protection services.</p> <p>Specific measures anticipate provision of and access to quality information primarily for victims, but also for advocates and the general public in RNM.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIL PARTICIPATION</p> <p>Proposed solutions will enable improved cooperation between CSOs and institutions by sharing information and taking action in human trafficking cases on the part of the Ministry of Interior, CSOs and other competent institutions. Victims will be actively involved in upgrading measures and policies proposed. In particular, they will be involved in campaign activities, awareness raising and development of specific programs for human trafficking victims.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY</p> <p>Some measures anticipate greater accountability on the part of institutions in respect to data availability on human trafficking. A system will be created to make data publicly available in order to facilitate monitoring of progress made by the state in suppression of human trafficking and protection of victims.</p>
Additional information	<p>Efforts made under this commitment are directly related to and in line with the new Strategy on Combating Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration and Action Plan 2021-2025. Moreover, they are in compliance with RNM's Action Plan for Implementation of the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence 2018-2023.</p> <p>Link to Global Sustainable Development Goals Link to SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions</p>



		<p>SDG target 16.3: Promote the rule of law at national and international level and ensure equal access to justice for all.</p> <p>Measures anticipated under this commitment will improve measures/actions taken by institutions in respect to record keeping and will ensure better access to services and better dissemination of information to human trafficking victims.</p>			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
3.6.1	Establish mobility teams for field work in Ohrid and Struga, and in Shtip and neighbouring towns	Number of mobile teams established	MLSP, National Commission	October 2021	December 2021
3.6.2	Systematic collection of data on human trafficking through available tool for monitoring and evaluation of state-of-affairs in respect to human trafficking in RNM and regular publication of such data	<p>- Number of adequate indicators selected for monitoring and data collection</p> <p>Functional software for data collection designed and put into use (yes/no)</p> <p>-Number of published analyses on state-of-affairs in respect to human trafficking in RNM</p>	National Commission and CSOs - Open Gate	October 2021	June 2023 (ongoing)
3.6.3	Establish database on initiated procedures and identified cases of online exploitation of children and regular publication of such data. Reports with sensitive data (internal reports) will be used to manage cases. Data will also be published as part of public reports developed in general format and in compliance with the Law on Personal Data Protection, and protect identity and	<p>-Functional database is established (yes/no)</p> <p>-Number of internal/public reports published</p>	Mol, CSOs - Open Gate	October 2021	June 2022



	privacy of victims in compliance with the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Individuals with Regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (ETS No. 108).				
3.6.4	Exercise of the right to redress for child victims of human trafficking by adopting and publishing: - Program for Payment of Redress to Child Victims in compliance with the Law on Child Justice and - Information on implementation of the program	- Implementation rate under the Program for Payment of Redress to Child Victims of Human Trafficking - Number of public informative announcements on the right to redress and access to the relevant program on MoJ's websites and social networks	MoJ, CSOs - Open Gate	October 2021	July 2022
3.5.5	Awareness raising and information dissemination to the public and human trafficking victims about exercise of rights anticipated under the Law on Payment of Monetary Redress to Crime Victims (this activity will start after adoption of the law)	Number of public announcements on social networks and the web platform on the right to redress and access to the commission on redress Materials on the right to monetary redress and legal procedure printed and distributed	MoJ	October 2022	June 2023
3.6.6	Delivery of regular training for medical staff to enhance their knowledge about emerging forms of human trafficking, existing system for reporting, assistance and support, in	-Number of trainings delivered (target: 2 per year) -Number of training participants	MoH, CSOs - Open Gate	October 2021	June 2023 (ongoing)



	order to identify, report and provide adequate referrals for human trafficking victims				
3.6.7	Information campaigns to encourage women and girls to seek help and support in case of sexual violence, by introducing the public to work and services of REP centres.	-Number of campaigns organized (target: 1 per year) -Number of media reports	MoH, CSOs - Open Gate	October 2021	June 2023 (ongoing)
	Establish minimum standards on healthcare services for human trafficking victims	- Comparative analysis developed (yes/no) - Study visit organized (yes/no) - Standards developed (yes/no) -Number of meetings held for development of standards	MoH, National Referral Mechanism (NRM), CSOs - Open Gate	October 2021	June 2023 (ongoing)
3.6.8	Establish programs on qualification and retraining for adults and children who are potential and/or real victims of human trafficking in order to prepare them for employment, enhance their resilience and reintegration	Number of participants in programs for qualification and retraining for potential and/or real victims	MLSP, municipalities /local commissions for combating human trafficking, CSOs - Open Gate	October 2021	June 2023 (ongoing)
		New commitment			
Lead implementing institution		MLSP Mol			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		E. Grozdanova Susana Novakovska			
Title/Department		civil servant			



	National Referral Mechanism for Human Trafficking Victims	
E-mail	EGrozdanova@mtsp.gov.mk Susana_Novakoska@moi.gov.mk	
Telephone	/	
Other actors involved	Ministries/Agencies	MoJ, TKikerekova@mjustice.gov.mk MoH, biljana.babushkovska@zdravstvo.gov.mk municipalities/local commissions for combating human trafficking
	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Open Gate, Marija Todorovska, mtodorovska@lastrada.org.mk Maja Varoshlija, mvaroslija@lastrada.org.mk

3. PROMOTE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

3.7 Improve protection mechanisms for victims of harassment in the workplace (mobbing)

October 2021 - June 2023

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	RNM lacks statistics on the number of mobbing victims. Based on ILO's research, more than 4% of workers are subject to psychological violence, 2% to sexual harassment and 8% to intimidation and harassment. Taking into account these statistics, it could be assessed that around 111,936 of the total number of employees in RNM are victims of mobbing. From 2013, when the Law on Protection against Harassment in the Workplace was adopted, there have been only two initiated and successfully resolved cases, and one case is pending. According to data from the toll-free line for reporting harassment in the workplace, 65 calls for assistance and support were recorded over a period of two months in 2020, with more than half of them being made by women. This situation is due to insufficient information among workers about this phenomenon, including available protection mechanisms. Mediators in mobbing cases appointed at employers are insufficiently educated about their place and role within the system for protection of
--	--



	workers. Moreover the country has not fully adopted international treaties and mechanisms on this subject matter, i.e. it has not ratified ILO Convention 190 and Recommendation 206, and has failed to organize consultations with all stakeholders for development of legal solutions to this phenomenon.
Main objective of the commitment	The commitment's main objective is to improve the already established mechanism for protection against harassment in the workplace.
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	Implementation of this commitment will enable information dissemination to employees about their rights to protection against mobbing arising from the Law on Labour Relations and education for selected independent persons appointed as mediators in procedures for resolution of mobbing cases, which have not been covered in systematic manner thus far, ratification of the International Labour Organization's Convention 190 and Recommendation 206, establishment of electronic and public system for reporting and monitoring status and implementation of all proceedings initiated in mobbing cases, and establishment of working group comprised of practitioners to initiate amendments to the Law on Protection against Harassment in the Workplace.
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it provides access to new and more information, improves quality of information and access to public information, i.e. facilitates the right to information. COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIL PARTICIPATION because it creates opportunities and conditions for public participation and influence in decision-making, and increases opportunities for civil society involvement. COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because it enables establishment of mechanisms that will contribute to promotion of accountability of public officials.
Additional information	The commitment implies activities that will contribute to attainment of goals and actions defined by the Government of RNM after submission of the voluntary national review on implementation of SDGs at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2020. In particular, next step under SDG1 : support for employment of vulnerable groups of people with measures anticipated under the National Strategy on Employment and Strategy for Formalization of Informal Economy, including operational plans for active employment programmes and measures and labour market services. Next step under SDG2 : the government will focus on measures to improve the structure of agricultural lands as precondition for development and competitiveness in this sector, improve living and working conditions in rural areas and provide access to knowledge and investment in human capital through reformed services for expansion and education of farmers. Next step under SDG5 : one of key priorities of the country in the next years will be continued efforts to improve employment opportunities for women and ensure their protection at work. Next step under SDG8 : the government will monitor programmes and activities under relevant action plans for new jobs, improved participation in the labour market and increased labour demands increased competitiveness. Also, it will continue to align national labour legislation with international standards and EU acquis. Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals



	Link to SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels.				
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
	Inform employees about their rights to protection against harassment in the workplace arising from the Law on Labour Relations				
3.7.1	Inform employees from public and private sectors about their rights to protection against harassment in the workplace arising from the Law on Labour Relations	Guideline is developed (yes/no)	SLI and Trade Union of Women's Organizations within the Alliance of Independent Trade Unions of Macedonia	October 2021	September 2023
		Number of employers to which the guideline is distributed			
3.7.2	Education for selected independent persons from public and private sectors as mediators in proceedings for resolution of mobbing cases	Promotion plan is developed (yes/no)	SLI and Trade Union of Women's Organizations within the Alliance of Independent Trade Unions of Macedonia	October 2021	September 2023
		Number of persons outreached with the promotion plan			
3.7.2	Education for selected independent persons from public and private sectors as mediators in proceedings for resolution of mobbing cases	Number of workshops organized Number of workshop participants Percentile increase in the number of reported cases of harassment in the workplace	SLI and Trade Union of Women's Organizations within the Alliance of Independent Trade Unions of Macedonia	October 2021	September 2023
3.7.3	Organize consultations with all stakeholders to finalize the Draft Law on Protection against Harassment in the Workplace	Number of stakeholders involved Share of stakeholders that	MLSP, MFA and Trade Union of Women's Organizations within the	October 2021	September 2023



		have submitted proposals and comments to the draft law (target: 50%) Share of proposals and comments that are integrated in the draft law (target: at least 50% of proposals received) Ratification of ILO Convention 190 and Recommendation 206 (yes/no)	Alliance of Independent Trade Unions of Macedonia		
		New commitment			
Lead implementing institution		State Labour Inspectorate			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Lence Kocavska			
Title/Department		civil servant			
E-mail		LKocavska@mtsp.gov.mk			
Telephone		/			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	1. MLSP, Svetlana Cvetkovka, scvetkovska@mtsp.gov.mk 2. MFA, Amon Bajramovski, Amon.Bajramovski@mfa.gov.mk		
		CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Union of Women's Organizations within the Alliance of Independent Trade Unions in Macedonia Divna Zmejkovska divna.zmejkovska@yahoo.com		



--	--	--

3 PROMOTE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES	
3.8. Provide access to therapy and health services for people who use drugs after having served their imprisonment sentence	
October 2021 – September 2023	
Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>Persons who use drugs have difficult access to exercise of the right to treatment after having served their imprisonment sentence, because they are released without personal identification documents and health insurance, which are preconditions for these people to continue with their methadone substitution therapy. Based on the survey conducted by HOPS about legal problems and needs of persons who use drugs in the Republic of North Macedonia, 58% of them are released from prison without valid identification documents. From 2012, HOPS has registered around 63 cases of persons who use drugs that have served their imprisonment sentence and cannot continue their substitution therapy due to lack of identification documents and health insurance. This results in deterioration of their health because they experience abstinence crises during the period in which they do not receive therapy. Moreover, having in mind that addiction diseases are complex conditions and even the smallest stress could worsen this condition, there is an increased risk for relapse, which leads to overdose and fatal outcomes. In spite of the fact that the Law on Execution of Sanctions clearly stipulates that, during the entire period of serving imprisonment sentences, inmates should be prepared for their release from the institution, this problems still exists in the practice.</p> <p><u>Inequitable access to healthcare services and treatment</u> for persons who use drugs. Based on the survey conducted by HOPS about legal problems and needs of intravenous drug users and sex workers in the Republic of North Macedonia, 57% of persons who use drugs reported at least one problem related to healthcare rights, 38% of them have experienced discrimination by medical staff (use of additional protection, examination in special premises that are not adjusted for medical practice, waiting to receive adequate medical treatment until the end of working hours, insults, etc.), 21% reported being denied treatment for serious health problems (surgeries, dressing wounds, hospital admission, etc.), 25% experienced difficulties in respect to registration with primary physicians due to discrimination.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	The commitment's main objective is to ensure equal treatment and facilitated access to healthcare rights for persons who use drugs through integration of uninsured persons in the health insurance program, increased interdepartmental cooperation between daily centres for prevention and treatment of drug abuse and addiction, the Directorate for Execution of



	<p>Sanctions, the Health Insurance Fund and the Ministry of Interior, sensitisation of medical staff when treating persons who use drugs through training, acknowledgement of non-governmental organizations as service providers under the Law on Health Protection, timely issuance and renewal of personal identification documents and adoption of streamlined procedure for issuance of ID cards to persons who do not have such documents.</p> <p>Expected results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Timely issuance and renewal of ID cards for persons who use drugs during the period when they serve their imprisonment sentence and after release from the institution. - Equal treatment and non-discrimination by medical staff towards persons who use drugs. - Facilitated access to healthcare rights for persons who use drugs. - Established interdepartmental cooperation between daily centres for prevention and treatment of drug abuse and addiction, the Directorate for Execution of Sanctions, the Health Insurance Fund of the Republic of North Macedonia and the Ministry of Interior.
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>Establishment of interdepartmental cooperation between daily centres for prevention and treatment of drug abuse and addiction, the Directorate for Execution of Sanctions, the Health Insurance Fund of the Republic of North Macedonia and the Ministry of Interior will allow persons who use drugs and especially those serving imprisonment sentence to obtain and renew their personal identification and health insurance documents in the period when they are serving their sentence and after being released from the institution. Timely issuance of personal identification documents and health insurance to persons who use drugs will facilitate their access to the right to treatment against addiction.</p> <p>Introduction of training for medical staff for treatment of persons who use drugs will increase their sensitivity for this community. Moreover, training for sensitisation of medical staff (specialists, nurses, laboratory technicians, registered general practitioners, medical doctors, etc.) aims to introduce participants to stigma, discrimination and problems faced by people who use drugs when using healthcare services, with special focus on women who, in addition to discrimination in the society, also face discrimination in their communities. Also, training aims to sensitise medical staff in order to refrain from complicating access to healthcare services for people who use drugs, especially because they are in great need thereof. Training content will be additionally developed in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, but based on HOPS experiences in delivery of such training, and will cover topics such as: harm reduction; types of drugs, effects and consequences from drug use; human rights, stigma and discrimination; and other topics to be agreed based on medical staff's needs. Training will be delivered by trained persons engaged by HOPS. The ministry's role would imply support for organization and delivery of trainings.</p> <p>People who use drugs will have equal treatment and access to healthcare rights as any other citizens.</p>



<p>How is the commitment relevant to OGP value?</p>	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it provides access to new and more information, improves quality of information and access to public, i.e. facilitates the right to information, by ensuring record keeping on training delivered for sensitisation of medical staff on treatment of persons who use drugs, and records on the number of trained staff for work with these persons.</p> <p>Adoption of the program for streamlined procedure for issuance of personal identification documents and implementation thereof will enable record keeping on the number of persons who use drugs that have been issued personal identification documents.</p> <p>Involvement of non-insured people who use drugs in the health insurance program will allow insight into the number of these people that have joined the program and have been provided healthcare services.</p> <p>Memorandum of cooperation signed between competent institutions will contribute to increased number of inmates who use drugs and records on the number of persons who continued treatment with substitution therapy after having served their imprisonment sentence. At the same time, such records will show established interdepartmental cooperation between competent institutions that contributes to resolution of this problem.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIL PARTICIPATION because it creates opportunities and conditions for citizens' participation and influence in decision-making, and increases opportunities for civil society involvement. Stigma and discrimination they have been facing for many years resulted in distrust among persons who use drugs in the system and consequently in reduced motivation to report and solve problems they face and improve their position in the society. From these reasons, involvement of the civil society in this commitment is of great importance. At the same time, involvement of the civil society will contribute to direct participation of people from this community in creation of policies and practices.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because it enables establishment of mechanisms that will contribute to greater accountability of public officials. Training for and sensitisation of medical staff will contribute to equal access and treatment for all people, including persons who use drugs, as well as possibility for detection of irregularities in their work.</p> <p>At the same time, (non)delivery of obligations arising from the memorandum of cooperation signed between competent institutions, as well as the number of inmates who use drugs that have continued treatment with substitution therapy after being released from prison will provide a clear picture about the level of commitment among competent institutions to addressing this problem, which has been perpetuated for many years, as well as insight into irregularities in their operation and opportunity to demand elimination of such irregularities.</p>
---	---



Additional information		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021 Program for HIV Protection of the Population in the Republic of North Macedonia • 2021 Program for Health Protection of Persons with Addiction Diseases in the Republic of North Macedonia • National Strategy on Drugs of the Republic of Macedonia 2014 – 2020 • Local Strategy on Drugs of the City of Skopje (prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and resocialization, harm reduction and city security 2015 - 2020) • National Strategy on Equality and Non-Discrimination 2016 – 2020 • Program for Persons without Health Insurance • National Strategy for Development of the Penitentiary System 2015 – 2019 <p>Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels SDG target 16.3: Promote the rule of law at national and international level and ensure equal access to justice for all SDG3: Good Health and Wellbeing SDG target 3.8: Achieve universal healthcare, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential healthcare services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.</p> <p>Measures anticipated under this commitment will promote equal treatment and easier access to healthcare rights for persons who use drugs and increased interdepartmental cooperation.</p>			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
3.8.1	1.1 Increase scope of information among medical staff in order to provide appropriate treatment and services for persons who use drugs through training	<p>1.1.1. Number of trained medical staff to work with people who use drugs</p> <p>1.1.2. Share of medical staff with enhanced knowledge through training</p> <p>1.1.3. Share of medical staff that reported use of knowledge acquired in daily work</p>	MoH, HOPS	October 2021	October 2023



		1.1.4. Number of newly employed medical staff with adequate education			
3.8.2	2.1. Establish procedure and practice for cooperation between institutions involved in this activity and civil society organizations to identify problems faced by persons who use drugs and create adequate solutions to address them (first task is to establish the program on streamlined procedure for issuance of personal identification documents for people who use drugs that do not have valid or have no identification documents during the period when they are serving their imprisonment sentence)	<p>2.1.1. Program on streamlined procedure for issuance of personal identification document is adopted (yes/no)</p> <p>2.1.2. Number of persons who use drugs that have been issued valid ID cards while serving their imprisonment sentence</p> <p>2.1.3. Number of persons who use drugs that have been issued their first ID cards while serving their imprisonment sentence</p>	Mol, MoJ (DES) and HOPS	October 2021	January 2022



3.8.3	3.1. Establish open, transparent and public system for interdepartmental cooperation between daily centres for prevention and treatment of drug abuse and addiction, the Directorate for Execution of Sanctions, the Health Insurance Fund of the Republic of North Macedonia, the Ministry of Interior and civil society organizations	3.1.1. Number inmates who use drugs that have continued treatment with substitution therapy after being released from prison	MoH, MoJ (DES), HIFRNM, MoI and HOPS	October 2021	September 2023
		New commitment			
Lead implementing institution		Ministry of Health			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Biljana Babushkovska, M.Sci			
Title/Department		Head of the Department on Internal Control			
E-mail		biljana.babushkovska@zdravstvo.gov.mk			
Telephone		/			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	1. MoJ (DES), BiljanaZefik@mjustice.gov.mk 2. HIFRNM 3. MoI, Susana Novakoska@moi.gov.mk 4. MoH, biljana.babushkovska@zdravstvo.gov.mk		
		CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	1. HOPS – Healthy Options Project Skopje hajdis@hops.org.mk , mgligoroska@yahoo.com and advokat.spirovska@gmail.com		



4. ACCESS TO JUSTICE

4.1 Promote protection of sex workers and persons who use drugs

October 2021 –August 2023

Which public problem is
addressed by the commitment?

Primary purpose of the police in any democratic society is to respect and protect fundamental human rights and freedoms of all citizens, non-discrimination, and respect and protection of human dignity. Nevertheless, in many cases, actions of the police amount to violation of rights of persons who use drugs and sex workers. Persons who use drugs often report cases in which they have been illegally searched by policemen, have been maltreated at police stations, have been exposed to torture (forced to plead guilty of having committed certain act for policemen to be able to initiate proceedings against them), inhumane and/or degrading treatment, have not been informed of their rights at police stations, excessive force had been used on them by the police, resulting in infliction of bodily injuries. In addition to being exposed to police torture, persons who use drugs are also subject of torture in prisons. On the other hand, sex workers often report that police do not take action upon their reports on violence and that they suffer different forms of violence at the hands of the police. Another serious problem concerns the fact that neither the police nor the public prosecution services conduct thorough investigations into cases reported by sex workers, especially in regard to femicide of sex workers.

- Discrimination, unequal treatment and human rights violation of persons who use drugs and sex workers by the police.

According to the research survey conducted by HOPS about legal problems and needs of persons who use drugs and sex workers on the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia, 85% of persons who use drugs and 62% of sex workers have reported at least one problem with the police:

- 69% of persons who use drugs and 49% of sex workers have faced unlawful search, profiling and the like by the police;
- 65% of persons who use drugs and 41% of sex workers have faced physical or psychological maltreatment by policemen (insults, degradation, battering, etc.);
- 37% of persons who use drugs and 20% of sex workers have been victims of wrongdoings related to abuse of official position and duty by the police (abuse of personal data, blackmail, etc.);
- 47% of persons who use drugs and 27% of sex workers have faced ungrounded apprehension, custody or arrest;
- 33% of persons who use drugs and 28% of sex workers have faced rejection by the police to record or to initiate investigation into reported act/problem;

- The police do not act upon criminal reports made by persons who drugs and sex workers.

According to the research survey conducted among sex workers for the purpose of amending legal regulations on sex work in Macedonia, only 1.3% of sex workers responded that they expect or have received assistance from the police, which is due to failure to take action by the police, discriminatory treatment and abuse of official duty.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Torture and degrading treatment of persons who use drugs and sex workers in prisons. <p>According to the research survey conducted by HOPS about legal problems faced by persons who use drugs and sex workers on the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia, 92% of persons who use drugs and 60% of sex workers have faced at least one problem when they were serving their imprisonment sentence.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	<p>The commitment's main objective is sensitisation of policemen and prison staff in treatment of persons who use drugs and sex workers through training.</p> <p>Expected results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The police takes action in cases reported by persons who use drugs and sex workers; Equal treatment by the police and prison staff of persons who use drugs and sex workers; Increased trust in the police among persons who use drugs and sex workers;
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>Introduction of training for policemen and prison staff on work with persons who use drugs and sex workers will increase sensitivity of the police and prison staff in dealing with these two communities. Persons who use drugs and sex workers will enjoy equal treatment, increasing their confidence in the police and resulting in higher number of reported cases.</p> <p>Introduction of mandatory audio and video recordings at police premises during interviews will contribute to more efficient resolution and elimination of torture, inhumane and degrading treatment of persons who use drugs and sex workers.</p> <p>Use of audio and video recording technology is regulated under Article 93-a of the Police Law, which stipulates that the police, when taking action within their authorizations, shall use audio and video recording technology in order to ensure recorded materials on the matter in which policemen have taken relevant actions.</p> <p>Use of audio and video recording technology is regulated under other laws and such technology is already used at courts and public prosecution offices.</p> <p>In addition to existing legislation, the Law on Prevention and Protection of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence will enter into effect in May 2021 and stipulates measures for protection of victims from revictimization that define an obligation for competent institutions to use audio and video recording technology when taking statements from victims at police stations and public prosecution offices.</p>
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it allows access to new and more information, by ensuring records on training delivered for sensitization of policemen and prison staff and records on trained staff to work with persons who use drugs and sex workers. Mandatory audio and video recordings at police premises during interviews improve the quality of information that persons who use drugs and sex workers whose rights had been violated by the police (discrimination, violation of rights and torture, inhumane and degrading treatment) can use as evidence in human rights violation proceedings. Audio and video recordings will not be available to the public, but will serve as protection against additional victimization and revictimization.</p>



		<p>They will ensure easier monitoring and insight into whether and to what extent competent institutions comply with this commitment. Records on delivered training and trained staff will allow easier monitoring of work performed by institutions and competent ministries. Moreover, access to such information will allow the public insight into whether and to what extent competent institutions comply with this commitment.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION because persons who use drugs and sex workers, due to the stigma they have been facing for many years, had lost their trust in the system and express lower motivation to report and resolve problems they are facing and to improve their position in the society. On this account, civil society participation in this commitment is of great importance, as it increases motivation for reporting and ensures full support in respect to counselling services.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because introduction of mandatory audio and video recording at police stations during interviews will contribute to more efficient resolution of human right violation cases by policemen, and will provide a clear image about whether and how persons who use drugs and sex workers are informed about their rights during police custody, which policemen are obliged to provide. Audio and video recordings will not be publicly available, but will serve as protection against additional victimization and revictimization, i.e. will serve as evidence in proceedings on human rights violation by the police (discrimination, torture, inhumane and degrading treatment).</p> <p>Training delivered and sensitized staff will contribute to equitable access and treatment of all people, including persons who use drugs and sex workers, and possibility to observe irregularities in their work.</p> <p>All these will contribute to creation and improvement of accountability rules, regulations and mechanisms for public officials.</p>			
Additional information		<p>Linked to the Training Rulebook of the Ministry of Interior, National Strategy on Equality and Non-Discrimination 2016-2020, and National Strategy for Development of the Penitentiary System 2015-2019.</p> <p>Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international level and ensure equal access to justice for all</p> <p>All measures under this commitment will contribute to suppression of discrimination, unequal treatment and human rights violations of persons who use drugs and sex workers by the police.</p>			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
4.1.1	Increase the scope of information among policemen for dealing with persons who use drugs and sex workers	1.1. Number of trained policemen 1.2. Share of policemen who have increased their knowledge through training	Mol	October 2021	August 2023



	by organizing sensitisation trainings	1.3. Share of policemen that have reported application of knowledge acquired in daily work			
4.1.2	Increase the scope of information among prison staff for dealing with persons who use drugs and sex workers by organizing sensitisation trainings	2.1. Number of trained prison staff 2.2. Share of training participants who have increased their knowledge 2.3. Share of training participants that have reported application of knowledge acquired in daily work 2.4. Number of newly employed staff with adequate knowledge	MoJ (DES)	October 2021	August 2023
4.1.3	Access to information for attorneys and defendants that would allow them to more easily prove human rights violations through mandatory audio and video recordings during interviews at police stations in all towns on the territory of RNM, primarily in Skopje, Gostivar, Strumica, Ohrid and Gevgelija	3.1. Number of police stations equipped with audio and video equipment (target: at least 5)	Mol	October 2021	August 2023
			New commitment		
Lead implementing institution			Mol		
Name of the responsible person for implementation			Susana Novakovska		
Title/Department			Police Advisor at Mol's Unit for Public Relations and Strategy Issues		
E-mail			susana_novakoska@moi.gov.mk		
Telephone			/		
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	DES		



	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	HOPS – Healthy Options Project Skopje Hajdi Shterjova Simonovikj hajdis@hops.org.mk Margarita Gliguroska mgligoroska@yahoo.com Milka Spirovska advokat.spirovska@gmail.com

4. ACCESS TO JUSTICE	
4.2 Promote access to justice for socially disadvantaged and citizens at social risk October 2021 – August 2023	
Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>Exercise of guaranteed minimum allowance as social protection right or transformation of conditional social allowance into guaranteed minimum allowance requires the applicants (i.e. social beneficiaries) to demonstrate inability for self-sustenance on all grounds. In practice, it means that applicants/beneficiaries need to motion lawsuits for sustenance against members of their family/household. Filing lawsuit means initiation of court proceedings, but this category of citizens lack knowledge about such processes, and initiation thereof is expensive for socially disadvantaged categories of citizens (overall procedure costs around 2,000 MKD, which is a high amount for individuals or households without income, whereby they need to apply for free legal aid, but would have to repay funds obtained on this ground if they lose the lawsuit), disrupts already fragile relations between the applicant and his/her relatives under obligation for life sustenance. Nevertheless, this procedure can be initiated by social work centres, in the name and on behalf of applicants, when the applicant is elderly, exhausted, incapable, disabled person and child, which is rarely done in the practice.</p> <p>On the other hand, there are many citizens that benefit from guaranteed minimum allowance and funds received on that ground are blocked by enforcement agents due to unpaid debts. The Law on Enforcement exempts beneficiaries of guaranteed minimum allowance, humanitarian aid, social</p>



	<p>allowance, etc., from enforcement of arrears payment in order to ensure minimum income for family sustenance. In essence, high number of social allowance beneficiaries does not know they are exempted from such enforcement. Even if they are exempted by enforcement agents by submitting certificate letter from the social work centre, social beneficiaries would have to pay bank charges in the amount of 1,400 MKD to have their bank account unblocked.</p> <p>Given that social allowance beneficiaries have lower education, and are unlearned clients, they accept blocking of their bank accounts and withdrawal of funds without any objection. This is detrimental for them personally and for their families, forcing them into begging, rummaging waste bins, and even engagement in criminal activities like illegal timbering, theft, and the like.</p> <p>In 2018, MLSP and the Chamber of Enforcement Agents signed memorandum on prohibition to block social numbers, but that has not visibly changed the situation in the field and there are still many omissions in the practice. Social numbers are not visible to enforcement agents, local self-governments and banks. Hence, until they “prove” that funds paid to their account fall under the category of social allowance, beneficiaries thereof are sometimes left without any funds for up to 6 months. This situation discourages many of them to apply for active employment measures implemented by ESARNM due to fear that enforcement agents would collect debts on these funds.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	<p>This commitment’s main objective is to provide access to the procedure for exercise of social protection rights for socially disadvantaged categories of citizens without having to initiate expensive procedure which, in the long run, will affect restoration of their trust in the social protection system.</p> <p>Following the example whereby SWCs collect data on property status of household/family members could create a practice for data collection needed to establish material status of family members from the applicant’s household that are obliged to ensure his/her livelihood. This would be the easiest way to determine and assess whether family members have sufficient income throughout the year to afford sustenance of the applicant. Moreover, it will strengthen data collection in ex-officio capacity, on the basis of which SWCs will be able to assess whether applicants/potential applicants can secure their livelihood from family members before they are referred to initiate sustenance lawsuits, i.e. they will be protected from having to engage expensive and long procedures.</p> <p>Expects results include: enhanced capacity of SWCs in assessment of material, financial and property status of social beneficiaries/applicants by using the mechanism for data collection in ex-officio capacity; developed internal guidelines for data collection and appraisal thereof; developed guidelines for initiation of procedures in the interest of vulnerable population that depends on exercise of social welfare rights.</p> <p>At the same time, the commitment will prevent blocking of social numbers held by social allowance beneficiaries. The final result is that social numbers will be protected against enforcement orders. Such protection will ensure final categorization of bank accounts that can or cannot be blocked.</p>



<p>How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem? ?</p>	<p>The commitment takes into account principles applied in general administrative procedures, such as: the principle of proportionality; the principle of cost-effectiveness and efficiency of procedures; the principle of citizen-centred services in exercise of client rights and interests; the principle of establishing material truth for all facts and circumstances that of crucial importance for proper establishment of factual situation by collecting, analysing and processing information and data in ex-officio capacity; the principle of active assistance to clients in exercise and protection of their rights in the most effective and easiest manner, whereby the client's lack of knowledge should not be detrimental to their legal rights and interests. Proper and accurate establishment of the client's status will serve the purpose of preventing delays in processes and conscious engagement in long court proceedings. Attainment of this goal requires implementation of several activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of internal guidelines for exercise of the legal possibility under Art. 269, paragraph 1 of the Law on Social Protection related to gathering data on material, financial and property status of family/household members. The guidelines could include practical information on facts that need to be established, as well as method for proper application of facts when taking decisions on social allowance applications. Implementation of this activity requires organization of meetings to determine the structure, framework and content of the guidelines in practical terms. It is of great importance for the guidelines to be discussed within SWCs, because their needs should be reflected as well. The guidelines should be developed by MLSP, the Bureau of Social Work, and in consultation with external connoisseurs of the subject matter (CSOs, professors, etc.), when needed. 2. Enhanced capacity of SWCs to enforce legal provisions under Art. 298 of the Law on Social Protection. SWC needs should be assessed, especially in respect to enforcement of legal provisions for initiation of lawsuits in the name of and on behalf of elderly, exhausted, incapacitated, disabled people and children. The best and most adequate method for that is to organize 3 to 5 one-day workshops/counselling with legal professionals from SWCs across the country. Workshops should focus on identifying practical problems and needs of SWCs in respect to enforcement of this legal possibility in the practice, and methods to overcome obstacles that prevent them to provide full protection to clients. Also, workshops/counselling should be organized and implemented by MLSP, in consultation with the Bureau of Social Work, and with external connoisseurs of the subject matter (CSOs, etc.), when needed. 3. Development of manual based on outputs from activity no.2 with templates for initial submissions and other instructions about the course of court proceedings that would be beneficial for SWCs. This activity, in addition to being implemented on the basis of activity no.2, should be performed by MLSP and properly communicated with legal empowerment practitioners and CSOs. <p>As already elaborated, at the moment, beneficiaries of guaranteed minimum allowance are facing serious challenges in exercise of this right guaranteed by the constitution.</p>
--	---



	<p>Implementation of this commitment will primarily restore the rule of law, but also the citizens' trust in institutions. This commitment requires implementation of several activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amending the Law on Enforcement and replacing the memorandum of understanding between MLSP and the Chamber of Enforcement Agents with a legal act of higher effect to ensure that social numbers are exempted from blocking bank accounts; - Designing software solution for bank accounts of social allowance beneficiaries to be linked to their social number in order to prevent blocking of funds disbursed by social protection institutions. MLSP should develop software that will protect the social number through data on social allowance beneficiaries disposed by MLSP, while the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Information Society and Administration should be consulted in the process. In the case of humanitarian aid, the same should be registered and assigned an adequate social number. The social number must be different from the beneficiary's bank account number and used only for social protection purposes. Similar experiences were noted in respect to the second and third package of government relief measures for the COVID-19 pandemic and the above-named ministries could use them for this purpose as well.
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it provides access to new and more information, but also improves quality of information by addressing the problem of blocked bank accounts by disseminating quality and timely information to enforcement agents, banks and local self-governments on the status of social welfare transactions, which will result in avoidance of unnecessary problems for all stakeholders. It improves access to information for the public and promotes the right to information by making SWCs more transparent, open and approachable for cooperation by the fact that they will make additional efforts for proper information to these categories of citizens and exercise of their rights. All stakeholders exercise their right to information, and access to information is enhanced, ultimately resulting in more efficient and effective laws. It provides precise rules of procedures for the institutions pursuant to single law, which guarantees security for competent institutions, but also for beneficiaries of social welfare rights. More precisely, it eliminates bias in interpretation of laws that allows for variable practices in the field.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION because it creates or improves possibilities for public participation and impact on decisions, notably by engaging in consultations with the non-governmental sector in respect to implementation of activities. It creates or improves the enabling environment for civil society thorough activities which, in addition to addressing a major and widespread problem among vulnerable and socially disadvantaged categories of citizens, also improves communication between civil society representatives that work with this category of citizens and MLSP as institution of great importance for this population group. Implementation of the commitment will result in the government listening to the voice of citizens and active engagement of citizens for improving the laws that would serve their needs. The commitment will be accompanied by database comprised of persons who have had their rights violated and will include</p>



		production of video testimonies, including recommendations for adequate solutions. COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because it creates or improves accountability rules, regulations and mechanism for public officials.			
Additional information		<p>Linked to UN Sustainable Development Goals SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.3: Promote the rule of law at national and international levels and provide equal access to justice for all.</p> <p>Measures defined under this commitment will promote and streamline the procedure for exercise of social welfare rights by socially disadvantaged citizens, without initiation of expensive court proceedings, and will restore trust in the social protection system.</p>			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
4.2.1	Develop internal guidelines on enforcement of the legal possibility under Art. 269, paragraph 1 of the Law on Social Protection concerning data collection on material, financial and property status of household/family members	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of meetings held to determine structure, framework and content of internal guidelines (target: 3 to 5 meetings) 2. Internal guidelines are shared/circulated with SWCs (yes/no) 	MLSP, CSOs	January 2022	June 2022
4.2.2	Enhance capacity of SWCs for enforcement of the legal possibility under Art. 298 of the Law on Social Protection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of SWC staff that attended workshops/ counselling for identification of practical problems 2. Number of problems identified 3. Number of possible solutions to problems 	MLSP, CSOs	January 2022	April 2022
4.2.3	Develop manual based on activity no.2 with templates for initial submissions and other instructions about the course of court proceedings that are of interest for SWCs and	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of participants in the process for determining the manual's structure and content 	MLSP, CSOs	March/April 2022	December 2022



	circulate the manual to SWCs				
4.2.4	Database on violated rights that imply blocked social number created by CSOs	1. Number of cases covered in the database and concerning violated rights that imply blocked social number	CSOs and social allowance beneficiaries	October 2021	December 2021
4.2.5	Produce videos with persons who had their accounts blocked with testimonies on violated rights, demanding accountability and offering solutions	1. Number of videos produced	CSOs	October 2021	December 2021
4.2.6	Create software solution for bank accounts of social allowance beneficiaries that are linked to social numbers, preventing blocking of funds disbursed to such accounts by institutions	1. Software solution designed (yes/no)	MoF, MLSP, KIBS	January 2022	continuous
New commitment					
Lead implementing institution		MLSP			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Mabera Kamberi Sofija Spasovska Aleksandra Nedeva Elka Todorova Tatjana Popovska Zira Mehmeti Svetlana Cvetkovska Elena Grozdanova Kadrije Mustafa Ljubica Panova			
Title/Department		civil servants			
E-mail		MKamberi@mtsp.gov.mk sspasovska@mtsp.gov.mk aleksandra.nedeva@mtsp.gov.mk etodorova@mtsp.gov.mk			



	tatjana.popovska@mtsp.gov.mk zmemeti@mtsp.gov.mk SCvetkovska@mtsp.gov.mk EGrozdanova@mtsp.gov.mk kadrije.mustafa@mtsp.gov.mk ljubica.panova@mtsp.gov.mk	
Telephone	/	
Other actors involved	Ministries/Agencies	<p>MoF Goran Mojanoski goran.mojanoski@finance.gov.mk</p>
	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	<p>Macedonian Young Lawyers Association Elena Georgievska egeorgievska@myla.org.mk KHAM Delchevo Zoran Bikovski z_bikovski@yahoo.com KIBS</p>

4. ACCESS TO JUSTICE

4.3 Access to justice for women who suffered domestic violence

October 2021 – August 2022

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>Lack of transparency and accountability among competent institutions involved in the system on protection against gender-based violence against women and domestic violence, which contributes to ineffective protection of women who suffered domestic violence for longer period of time.</p> <p>Absence of separate and adequate record keeping on gender-based violence against women and domestic violence is a systemic problem that prevents monitoring of actual state-of-affairs, detection of trends and adequate planning of laws and policies for prevention and protection of women who suffered domestic violence. This prevents identification of specific problems faced by women who suffered domestic violence in respect to access to justice, resulting in adoption and implementation of laws and policies that do not ensure effective protection against domestic violence.</p>
--	---



	<p>While domestic violence is regulated by law adopted in 2004 and competent institutions are legally obliged to keep separate records on domestic violence cases, in the practice there are no separate records and public information about the state-of-affairs on domestic violence.</p> <p>Chapter IV, Art.28 of the Law on Prevention and Protection from Violence against Women and Domestic Violence stipulates an obligation for establishment of separate records on gender-based violence against women and domestic violence by relevant ministries, institutions and LSGUs. Moreover, the law anticipates an obligation for MLSP to stipulate the form and content for the template on data collection among competent institutions, in agreement with the Minister of Interior, Minister of Justice and Minister of Health. In spite of these legal obligations, the practice shows absence of adequate system for data collection and regular publication of data by above-named institutions.</p> <p>Courts and public prosecution offices do not keep separate records on civil and criminal cases related to gender-based violence against women and domestic violence within the existing system (ACMIS) and do not engage in regular publication of data and actions taken by judges. Different practices are in place for record keeping at courts in respect to civil proceedings for issuance of temporary protection measures. Under ACMIS, assignment of domestic violence cases to particular judge does not allow the same to be informed about other court proceedings led for the same case (which is necessary for adoption of adequate verdict). At the same time, there is no possibility for browsing court verdicts in domestic violence cases on the judicial portal (sud.mk). The new law⁵ does not anticipate an obligation for courts and prosecution offices to keep separate records on gender-based violence against women and domestic violence that could be facilitated by previously designed template developed and approved by the Ministry of Justice.</p> <p>Mol does not publish data on domestic violence cases registered as criminal acts, complaints and misdemeanours. It is important to note that, 10 years ago, Mol had positive practice for publishing quarterly data on domestic violence at the level of sectors for internal affairs. Moreover, there is no register of domestic violence perpetrators that would inform expert staff at institutions competent to take action in cases of gender-based violence against women and domestic violence.</p> <p>SWCs do not have adequate system for data collection and publication. MLSP website provides only information on cases reported in the months of May and June 2020, but these are rather general and do not allow more detailed overview of state-of-affairs in respect to domestic violence in the state and actions taken by SWCs to protect women who suffered domestic violence. Moreover, the last reports on performance of social work centres published by the Bureau of Social Work concern the year 2015. Even the Bureau has established that SWCs do not keep adequate records on domestic violence cases, i.e. there is discrepancy in data obtained from LIRIKUS database and data collected by questionnaires distributed to SWCs.</p>
--	---

⁵ Articles 29 and 30 of the Law on Prevention and Protection from Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Official Gazette no. 08-524 /1 from 27.01.2021)



	<p>In addition, the public does not have access to information on issued and enforced temporary measures for protection against domestic violence, which serves as prevention mechanism that directly affects decreased rate of domestic violence in the society.</p> <p>On the account of these problems, it is necessary to improve transparency and accountability of competent institutions by establishing adequate system for data collection, data exchange among experts and regular dissemination of public information on state-of-affairs and trends related to gender-based violence against women and domestic violence.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	<p>The commitment's main objective is to establish separate records on domestic violence cases by competent ministries and institutions involved in the protection system.</p> <p>In addition to improving transparency and accountability of institutions, this commitment will also contribute to better access to justice for women who suffered domestic violence, having in mind that continuous collection of unified data would allow establishment of specific legal needs of victims, i.e. would serve as baseline for future planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, laws and practices.</p> <p>In that, it is important to note that proposals to improve the system of data collection and publication on domestic violence are developed on the basis of relevant experiences of women who suffered domestic violence, as well experiences of practitioners from competent institutions.</p> <p>Below is the elaboration of activities and expected results.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ACNIS system at courts is enhanced with introduction of separate records on domestic violence case with desegregated data on victims of domestic violence for the purpose of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regular publication of data on the number and type of cases, data on victims per region (urban/rural), ethnic community; • inform judges about different court verdicts related to the same case of domestic violence that have been or are still led before competent court (e.g., judge acting in civil proceedings for issuance of temporary protection measures should receive information about parallel initiation of criminal proceedings in the same case); • assign all civil proceedings related to domestic violence to same judge, for example, proceedings for divorce of marriage, custody rights over children and issuance of temporary protection measures; • regular publication of criminal and civil verdicts on domestic violence protection and introduction of browsing function per key word "domestic violence"; • regular publication of publicly available data on the number and type of motions for exemption from payment of court fees and taxes, number and type of approved motions, amount of court fees and taxes exempted; 2. Increased openness of the court by appointment of on-duty judge (and stenographer) for issuance of temporary protection measures during weekends and holidays.



	<p>3. Promoted system for data collection on domestic violence at SWCs and the police, with desegregated statistics on victims and regular publication of publicly available information on domestic violence.</p> <p>4. Mol should review and improve existing templates (criminal offences, misdemeanours and complaints) in order to collect more detailed data on domestic violence related to: number of criminal offences, misdemeanours and complaints; basic information on victims (place of residence urban/rural; education background; employment status; ethnic community); basic information on domestic violence perpetrators, in order to introduce separate records and publish data on trends in respect to motions for criminal charges related to “bodily injury” from Article 130, paragraph 2 of the Criminal Code that have been withdrawn and re-submitted. Also, introduce separate record keeping and publish data on the number of urgent protection measures taken by the police and related to “removal of violent perpetrators from the home and issuance of restraining orders”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduce a register of domestic violence perpetrators in order to inform experts from institutions who take actions in domestic violence cases; • quarterly publication of data by SWCs on domestic violence cases with desegregated data on victims, number and type of measures per region (urban/rural) and ethnic community; • SWCs to introduce separate records on cases that require issuance of temporary protection measures and to regularly publish data on the number of such cases, number of motions made to the court and issued temporary measures, to issue documents confirming that temporary measures are in place for victims to be able to submit motions before the court on their own. <p>5. Electronic system is established for data collection and exchange between SWCs, courts, the police and health institutions, in respect to issued, revoked, altered or motioned temporary protection measures against domestic violence.</p>
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	Establishment of separate records on domestic violence cases at all competent institutions will directly contribute to increased transparency and accountability of institutions. The established system for data collection will enable regular monitoring of state-of-affairs, adequate management of victim’s needs and evidence-based planning of state policies and laws.
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it allows access to new and more information, improves quality of information, improves access to public information, i.e. facilitates the right to information.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIL PARTICIPATION because it improves possibilities and conditions for public participation and impact in decision-making, creates or improves the enabling environment for civil society.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because it creates or improves accountability rules, regulations and mechanisms for public officials.</p>



Additional information		<p>Required/secured budget for implementation of the commitment It is important to note that implementation of the proposed commitment does not require budget funds. Namely, upgrades to the existing system for data collection at SWCs (activities 1, 3 and 4) require initiation of internal processes at competent ministries, i.e. definition of templates and their use in the practice. Implementation of activity 2, i.e. appointment of on-duty judge to take action in domestic violence cases during weekends and public holidays is already established practice at number of basic courts and the same should be replicated by other courts. Link to other governmental programs, national development plan or other sector/local plans Commitment is fully aligned with national strategies and programs that govern gender equality at international and regional level. It is also aligned with the action plan for implementation of the ratified Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention).</p> <p>Link to UN Sustainable Development Goals SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.3: Promote the rule of law at national and international level and ensure equal access to justice for all</p> <p>Link to the Anticorruption Strategy, UN Sustainable Development Goals, etc. Keeping separate records and regular publication of data on domestic violence directly contributes to implementation of SDG target 16.3: Promote the rule of law and equal access to justice for all. In particular, implementation of this sustainable development goal in the state necessitates regular data on the situation in respect to vulnerable categories of citizens, including women who suffered domestic violence. Such data should serve as baseline for development of national plan for implementation of SDG16.3., i.e. plan for promotion of access to justice for vulnerable groups of citizens. In the last years, Association ESE and Coalition Margins, with the support from the Foundation Open Society – Macedonia (FOSM), have worked on accelerating the process for implementation of SDG 16.3 by the government. In that regard, advocacy efforts are aimed at establishment of data collection system about the situation in respect to vulnerable groups of citizens.</p>			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
4.3.1	Organize work meetings to complement the court rules of procedures by MoJ	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of additions to the court rules of procedures 2. Number of additions to ACMIS 	MoJ	October 2021	December 2021



4.3.2	Separate records and quarterly publication of data on domestic violence court cases	1. Number of criminal and civil cases 2. Number and type of court verdicts	MoJ/Basic Courts	June 2022	August 2023
4.3.3	Appointment of on-duty judges at all basic courts	1. Number of on-duty judges appointed	Basic Courts	October 2021	December 2022
4.3.4	Establishment of working group and organization of work meetings to review and amend relevant templates (criminal offences, misdemeanours and complaints) used for data collection by the police	1. Number of revised templates for data collection on domestic violence used by the police	MoI (Sector for Analytics)	October 2021	March 2022
4.3.5	Separate records and data publication on motions for criminal offence – bodily injuries (Art.130, para.2 of the Criminal Code) submitted and withdrawn; Separate records and publication of data on protection measure “removal of perpetrator from the home and restraining order” issued and enforced	1. Number of criminal offences, misdemeanours and complaints 2. Number of motions for criminal offence – bodily injury (Art.130, para.2 of the Criminal Code) published 3. Number of issued and enforced urgent protection measures “removal of perpetrator from the home and restraining orders”	MoI (Sector for Analytics)	June 2022	August 2023



4.3.6	Organization of work meetings and coordination with MoI, MoJ and MoH for development of data collection template and quarterly reporting on domestic violence by SWCs, including detailed information about the number of cases where temporary protection measures were needed, motioned, altered, revoked or extended	1. Number of work meeting held for development of template 2. Number of stakeholders involved in the process for development of data collection template	MLSP (Bureau of Social Work)	October 2021	March 2022
4.3.7	Separate records and quarterly reporting on the number of domestic violence cases, and detailed information on number of motions for issuance, alteration or revoking of temporary protection measures	1. Number of domestic violence cases reported 2. Number of cases that included issuance, alteration or revoking of temporary protection measures	MLSP, SWCs (Bureau of Social Work)	October 2021	August 2023
4.3.8	Adoption of guidelines on mandatory regular publication of data on domestic violence by the police and SWCs	1. Number of meetings held and guidelines on regular reporting on domestic violence cases adopted 2. Number of experts involved in the process for adoption of guidelines	MoI (Sector for Analytics) MLSP (Bureau of Social Work)	March 2022	May 2022
4.3.9	Creation of electronic system for data collection and exchange among SWCs, courts, the police and health institutions in respect to temporary protection measures	1. Number of tests 2. Number of technical changes and additions 3. Number of cases in which temporary protection measures were	MLSP, MoI, MoJ	March 2022	August 2022



	against domestic violence	issued, altered or revoked			
		New commitment			
Lead implementing institution		MoJ – Sector on Judiciary (courts and prosecution offices) MLSP (Social Work Centres, Bureau of Social Work) Moi (Sector for Analytics, Police)			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Slavica Zheraikj Mabera Kamberi Sofija Spasovska Lidija Sterjov Aleksandra Nedeva Elka Todorova Tatjana Popovska Zira Memeti Svetlana Cvetkovska Elena Grozdanova Kadrije Mustafa Ljubica Panova Susana Novakovska			
Title/Department		civil servants			
E-mail		MKamberi@mtsp.gov.mk sspasovska@mtsp.gov.mk lidijasterjov@mtsp.gov.mk ; lsterjov@mtsp.gov.mk aleksandra.nedeva@mtsp.gov.mk etodorova@mtsp.gov.mk tatjana.popovska@mtsp.gov.mk zmemeti@mtsp.gov.mk SCvetkovska@mtsp.gov.mk EGrozdanova@mtsp.gov.mk kadrije.mustafa@mtsp.gov.mk ljubica.panova@mtsp.gov.mk susana_novakoska@moi.gov.mk			
Telephone		/			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	MISA		



	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women – ESE Jasminka Frishchikj jasminkafriscik@esem.org.mk Stojan Mishev stojanmisev@esem.org.mk

4. ACCESS TO JUSTICE

4.4 Legal empowerment of citizens through available information and open institutions

October 2021 – August 2023

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>The new Law on Free Legal Aid (LFLA), whose implementation started in October 2019, has significantly improved access to justice for citizens. However, the law showcased certain weaknesses in the practice and needs to be amended in order to ensure efficient enforcement. One problem concerns forensic services that should be provided by the Bureau of Judicial Forensic. The problem identified concerns the Bureau's inability to secure forensic expert in most common areas of legal problems for which citizens need free legal aid, including geodesy experts and DNA analysis (molecular biology). The second problem is related to (non)approval of applications for secondary legal aid in the case of victims of violent criminal offence in criminal proceedings. This is prompted by contradictory nature of transitional and final provisions under LFLA and limiting mechanisms under the Law on Criminal Proceedings (LCP). The third problem concerns the need for legal empowerment and legal education services under the human rights based approach.</p> <p>There are two dilemmas in respect to legal regulation of forensic expertise under the system of free legal aid. First, the Strategy on Justice System Reform 2017-2022 anticipates an activity for termination of the Bureau. This brings under question Art.13 (6) of LFLA. Second, the method, procedure and deadlines for provision of forensic findings and opinions by relevant body or forensic expert are not regulated in sufficient details. There is no back-up plan in case the Bureau is terminated. On the other hand, underway is development of Draft Law on Forensics, which keeps provisions related to operation of the Bureau. The uncertainty is identified in respect to current</p>
--	--



	<p>regulations for coverage of forensic costs or addressing the lack of forensic experts in areas of legal problems faced by the vulnerable population.</p> <p>In terms of access to justice for victims of violent criminal offences, LFLA is contradictory as one provision explicitly stipulates that defence and court representation in criminal proceedings shall be secured pursuant to LCP (Art.38 of LFLA), while another provision still leaves in effect stipulations from the old law that anticipate legal aid in all court proceedings, in order to ensure protection for victims of criminal offences and victims of human trafficking (Art.49 of the new LFLA in relation to Art.8 of the old LFLA). Nevertheless, even if legal representation for victims of criminal offences is provided pursuant LCP, i.e. working version of the new LCP shows intent to find adequate solution, this does not eliminate the problem related to restricted mechanisms available to victims under LCP. Possibility for free legal aid is referred only in Art.53 (3) in correlation to Art.55 (1) (1) of LCP. This formulation is very rigid and stipulates that victims shall be entitled to legal counsellor on the burden of budget funds, i.e. free-of-charge meeting with counsellor or proxy prior to depositing his/her statement (provided they participate in proceedings as damaged party), i.e. statement or property tenure motion, provided they have suffered serious psycho-physical damages caused by the criminal offence and only if they are victim of criminal offence with threatened sanction of imprisonment sentence <u>in duration of at least 4 years</u> (low threshold for threatened sanction for this crime). Such formulation does not cover full representation during criminal proceedings, but reduces it to counselling during deposition of first statement. Leaving the victim of violent crime alone, without adequate representation during the court process just because LCP or LFLA does not allow such mechanism is contrary to all international standards and principles related to legal aid and legal services for victims.</p> <p>In addition to free legal aid as formally acknowledged form, there are also informal services that are most accessible to marginalized citizens because they are provided by civil society organizations, and by trained individuals from their communities..</p> <p>Cooperation among different actors that work on legal empowerment and access to justice at local level remains very low. There is lack of specific joint action and mutual support, on the account of which implementation on the ground, which ultimately reflects access to justice, is left to the will of different entities without specific sustainable solutions in place.</p> <p>MoJ regional offices are not very visible and recognizable among citizens in physical terms. In many locations, due to cost-effectiveness, MoJ regional offices are accommodated at buildings with other institutions, are inadequately marked or not marked at all. Physical inaccessibility could mean difficult access to justice, dependence from other persons and discouragement to exercise the right to free legal aid. Persons with impaired sight and hearing are also non-informed about their right to free legal aid because there are no informational materials adjusted to their needs. MoJ's website does not allow insight in the names of attorneys next in line to act upon application for free legal aid. Moreover, the website is not adjusted to persons with dyslexia and does not provide sufficient information in languages spoken by minority communities. There are no references where</p>
--	--



	<p>and how citizens can lodge complaints about performance by authorised providers of free legal aid.</p> <p>According to the last research on legal needs of citizens from 2015, every second citizen in RNM is facing some legal problem. Worrying is the fact that citizens do not recognize their legal problems and qualify as legal problems only those that would end up before the court.</p> <p>It is evident that citizens in RNM need services and legal empowerment, but special attention should be paid to vulnerable groups which, due to their vulnerability, are in much more disadvantaged position and have limited access to justice.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	<p>Main objective: legal empowerment and access to justice for all citizens according to their legal needs and problems.</p> <p>Based on previously achieved milestones under NAP4 commitment, this new commitment ensures sustainability for access to justice and legal empowerment (taking into consideration recommendations from OGP Independent Reporting Mechanism to include the National Strategy on Legal Empowerment) by achieving several outcomes, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of the National Strategy on Legal Empowerment; - Increased visibility and physical accessibility of MoJ regional offices; - Adoption of legal amendments aimed at more efficient exercise of access to justice and related to forensic expertise and access to legal aid for victims of violent crimes; - Establishment of cooperation between the Bureau of Judicial Forensic and forensic experts from all areas, and regulated procedure for provision of forensic findings and opinions; - Informed representatives from MoJ, the Bureau, Bar Association and other institutions providing forensic expertise in areas that affect access to justice for population of poor property status; - Publicly available information on forensic experts and providers of formal and informal legal services; - Merging data hosted on the websites https://pravnapomos.mk/ and https://www.pravnozajakni.mk/; - Mapping formal and informal providers of legal aid; - Creating and maintaining the publicly available registry of formal and informal legal aid providers; - Merging data disposed by CSOs and MoJ; - Establishment of interoperable and comprehensive database with information from all legal aid and legal service providers in order to assess the current state-of-affairs and find practical and reliable solutions; - Available services and information for persons with disabilities.
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>The commitment concerns several interventions that will contribute to more efficient access to justice for all citizens. First, LFLA needs to be amended in order to provide basis for efficient access to forensic services in all areas for citizens and to guarantee efficient protection of victims of violent crimes. At the same time, in order to ensure forensic services pursuant to LFLA for legal issues that qualify for free legal aid, the Bureau of Judicial Forensic will sign contracts with forensic experts, followed by activities that will guarantee</p>



	<p>involvement of all parties in the process. In order to provide efficient protection for victims of violent crimes, the gap in access to free legal aid in criminal proceedings for these victims necessitates relevant crime offences currently threatened with imprisonment sentence in smaller duration to be stipulated as crimes threatened with imprisonment sanction in duration of at least 4 years.</p> <p>Next is creation of the National Strategy on Legal Empowerment. The strategy will be created under transparent process with involvement of all relevant actors. The national strategy will be multi-sectoral and will include all stakeholder institutions and CSOs that work on provision of services, legal aid and legal empowerment. Moreover, it will anticipate specific activities, budget and timeline for legal empowerment of all citizens at national and local level.</p> <p>Comprehensive and sustainable approach is needed in order to merge activities of local institutions and CSOs into joint actions aimed at promoting access to justice for all.</p> <p>At the time of COVID-19 pandemic, efforts will be made to contribute to greater visibility, transparency and accessibility of formal and informal legal aid providers. Increased visibility and physical accessibility of MoJ regional offices will mean better availability of their services for citizens.</p> <p>Adjustment of relevant materials will result in timely information and empowerment of persons with disabilities.</p> <p>Accessibility of registries of legal aid providers will contribute to information and guidance of citizens where to address their legal needs according to the nature of their legal problem.</p> <p>The registry of forensic experts will contribute to greater openness of data and citizens' right to choose.</p>
<p>How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?</p>	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it provides access to new, more comprehensive and timely information related to exercise of the right to free legal aid and informal legal aid modalities and legal empowerment of citizens.</p> <p>It improves quality of information made available to citizens at national and local level, in exercise of their right to access to justice. It improves public availability of information and facilitates the right to information in respect to exercise of the right to access to justice by providing legal aid for citizens, especially for the most marginalized groups.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION because it creates and improves possibilities and conditions for public participation and impact in decision-making, thereby ensuring creation of activities that directly emerge from and are tailored to citizens' needs, and active participation of citizens. It creates or improves the enabling environment for civil society by involving civil society organizations and citizens as active factors in development and promotion of access to justice, which will be formed into a complementary cycle of activities based on the needs of those for which they are intended.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because it creates or improves accountability rules, regulations and mechanisms for</p>



		public officials by creating and publishing publicly available information on implemented solutions on the basis of which all citizens, including the most marginalized groups, will be able to find adequate solution to their daily legal problems and hold the authorities accountable.			
Additional information		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required/secured budget by MoJ to implement part of the commitment. Linked to the Law on Free Legal Aid, Strategy on Justice System Reform 2017-2022 Linked to UN Sustainable Development Goal 16.3. <p>RNM is indicated as model country committed to promote access to justice, including the priority area “access to justice” under OGP National Action Plan 2018-2020.</p> <p>Monitoring implementation of SDG 16.3 in the state necessitates regular data collection and record keeping on the status of vulnerable groups of citizens. These data should serve as baseline for development of national plan for implementation of SDG 16.3., i.e. plan for promotion of access to justice for vulnerable groups of citizens. Based on the analysis of previously collected data per defined indicator to monitor implementation of SDG 16.3 at national and local level, the plan for implementation of SDG 16.3. will be developed in the next period.</p> <p>In addition, one of the most frequent legal problems for which citizens need free legal aid concerns geodesy studies. MYLA, with support from FOSM, developed policy brief on forensic expertise and free legal aid titled “Does the new Law on Free Legal Aid from 2019 facilitates access to free-of-charge forensic expertise to persons that were approved secondary legal aid?”. This policy document contains more information on the problem issue, but also recommendations and proposals to address the problem.</p>			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
4.4.1	Amend the Law on Free Legal Aid in respect to provisions under articles 13, 38, and 49	1. LFLA amended with adequate provisions (yes/no)	MoJ, CoE, CSOs (that proposed this commitment and organizations authorised for provision of free legal aid)	October 2021	May 2022
4.4.2	Cooperation agreements between the Bureau of Judicial Forensic and other external forensic experts in the field of	1. Number of cooperation agreements signed with forensic experts	BJF	June 2022	October 2022



	geodesy and molecular biology				
4.4.3	Informative sessions on the need for forensic expertise in areas that concern access to justice for the population of poor property status with MoJ, BJF, Bar Association, other institutions that provide forensic expertise	1. Number of participants on informative sessions/workshops	MoJ, BJF, MYLA	October 2021	March 2022
4.4.4	Development of internal guides (or alternatively: memorandum between MoJ and BJF) on actions to be taken in case of needed forensic expertise as part of approved secondary legal aid	1. Number of meetings held for development of internal guides 2. Number of people involved in development of internal guides	MoJ, BJF	March 2022	June 2022
4.4.5	Analysis with short-term recommendations (for urgent resolution of the forensic issue and furtherance of cases that are currently backlogged on that account) and long-term recommendations (legislative changes that would address the forensic issue in the long run)	1. Number of short-term recommendations developed 2. Number of short-term recommendations accepted 3. Number of long-term recommendations developed	MoJ, CoE	October 2021	December 2021



4.4.6	Development and maintenance of comprehensive publicly available registry of forensic experts in areas of interest for free legal aid	1. Number of forensic experts enlisted in the registry	MoJ, BJF	January 2022	May 2023
4.4.7	Ensure physical access and visibility of LFLA	1. Number of MoJ regional offices that have secured physical accessibility for persons with disabilities and impaired sight	MoJ, MoJ regional offices	October 2021	June 2023
4.4.8	Adjustment of MoJ official website (or https://pravnapomos.mk/) for unhindered information dissemination in relation to LFLA (visibility and accessibility of information on LFLA for persons with dyslexia, persons with visual and auditory impairments, and for members of ethnic communities)	1. Number of categories of persons for which MoJ website is adjusted	MoJ, MoJ regional offices, CoE	October 2021	September 2022
4.4.9	Merging data from websites https://pravnapomos.mk/ and https://www.pravnozajakni.mk/	1. Number of coordination meetings held between MoJ, CoE and FOSM 2. Time needed to merge data from websites	MoJ, FOSM, CoE	October 2021	May 2023
4.4.10	Mapping formal and informal legal aid providers	1. Number of formal and informal legal aid providers mapped	MoJ and CSOs members of the informal network "Legal Empowerme	January 2022	June 2022



			nt” (FOSM and 16 CSOs)		
4.4.11	Creation and maintenance of publicly available registry with MoJ on formal and informal legal aid providers	1. Number of formal/informal legal aid providers available on the platform	MoJ, FOSM	July 2022	May 2023
4.4.12	Merging data disposed by CSOs and MoJ	1. Time needed for merging data, i.e. data migration from CSOs to MoJ database	MoJ, FOSM and CoE	October 2021	February 2022
4.4.13	Interoperability of existing database that allows access to justice	1. Number of service providers covered by the database (associations, MoJ regional offices, legal clinics, and community members providing such services)	MoJ and CoE	January 2022	June 2023
4.4.14	Development of National Plan (Strategy) on Legal Empowerment	1. Number of stakeholders involved in developing the National Plan (Strategy) on Legal Empowerment 2. Number of meetings/workshops held for development of the national plan 3. Number of activities covered by the national plan	MoJ, MoJ regional offices, informal network “Legal Empowerment”	January 2022	June 2023
		New commitment taking into consideration recommendations from IRM			



Lead implementing institution	Ministry of Justice	
Name of the responsible person for implementation	Vesna Cekova Zurija Memedova	
Title/Department	Head of Department	
E-mail	vesnacekova@mjustice.gov.mk ZurijaMemedova@mjustice.gov.mk	
Telephone	/	
Other actors involved	Ministries/Agencies	Bureau of Judicial Forensic
	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Macedonian Young Lawyers Association Elena Georgievska egeorgievska@myla.org.mk Izbor – Strumica Boris Gudev borisgudev@gmail.com EHO Shtip Blagica Kirov blagicakirov@yahoo.com Station LET Prilep Vesna Shapkoski risteska.vesna@live.com Council of Europe Irena Cuculoska Jakimovska Irena.CUCULOSKA-JAKIMOVSKA@coe.int Kristina Doda Kristina.DODA@coe.int ; Anamarija Nikolovska anamarija.nikolovska@coe.int Foundation Open Society – Macedonia Ivona Stalevska ivona.stalevska@fosm.mk Hristina Vasilevska Dimchevska hristina.vasilevska@fosm.mk



5. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION

5.1. Reduce climate change impact and protect the environment from agriculture activities

October 2021 –March 2023

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of available information in rural areas; - Lack of developed awareness on climate change consequences; - Global instead of local approach to this topic; - Lack of education among rural population to recognize climate change impact and contribute to addressing this problem; - Non-involvement of citizens in decision-making related to climate action, etc.; - Reduced local food production and income from this activity; - Polluted air and threatened health of the population; - Contribution to negative effects from climate change; - Traditional ways of taking action and non-enforcement of adopted legal measures and norms; - Farmers manage 50% of the land in RNM, use 60 to 80% of freshwaters in the state for their stables, hen farms, sheepfolds, or simply for farms with large number of animals, use thousands tons of strong or less strong toxic materials in the form of pesticides, fertilizers and other agro-chemicals. - According to research on structure of agriculture holdings made by the State Statistical Office in 2016, the individual sector engages only 5.2% of people with any kind of agriculture education, while the number of highly educated staff in the field of agriculture accounts for only 0.8%. - As regards information of citizens, among 473 respondents from 48 municipalities in RNM covered under the research conducted by MESP, predominant is the attitude that addressing climate change is not an individual responsibility but responsibility of the government, industry and companies and citizens lack knowledge and sufficient information how to help in addressing climate change.
Main objective of the commitment	<p>Main objective of the commitments is to reduce environment pollution and negative effects from climate change through increased education and information for rural population.</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased uptake of good agriculture practices as precondition for environmental protection from agriculture activities; • Increased knowledge with 50% of family agriculture holdings on applicable rules for good agriculture practices and penal provisions for non-enforcement; • Established system for regular information on climate change and negative effects thereof.
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>Above described milestones will directly contribute to addressing the public problem related to environment pollution and increased effects of climate change because it is a matter of more than 170,000 family agricultural holdings that perform agriculture activities without due care for environmental pollution. Enhanced awareness, education and greater</p>



	information will contribute to change of habits among rural population and accordingly to reduced pollution and environmental protection.				
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because it allows access to new and more information, improves quality of information and improves availability of public information. COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION because it improves possibilities and conditions for public participation and impact in decision-making and improves the enabling environment for civil society. COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because it improves accountability rules, regulations and mechanisms for public officials.				
Additional information	<p>The commitment is in line with and contributes to attainment of priorities and goals anticipated under several strategy documents, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- National Strategy on Agriculture and Rural Development 2021-2027 where one strategic goal concerns reduced effects from climate change on agriculture production;- UN Sustainable Development Goals, i.e. SDG13 that directly concerns climate action;- MESP National Action Plan on Climate, Communication Strategy on Climate Change, etc. <p>Link to SDG target 13.3: Improve education, awareness raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning</p> <p>Measures under this commitment for public awareness, education and information for citizen will contribute to change of habits among rural population and accordingly to reduced pollution and environmental protection.</p>				
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
5.1.1	Increase scope of information among rural population in respect to negative effects of climate change and environment pollution	Number of informative materials developed Number of educative workshops held in rural areas Number of informed agriculture producers	MESP	October 2021	March 2023
5.1.2	Increase scope of information among rural population and education on the rulebook on good agriculture practices and	Number of visited agricultural holdings Number of distributed informative materials	MESP (NEA, AFSARD), RC	October 2021	December 2021



	changes in respect to sanctions for non-enforcement	Number of issued sanctions for non-enforcement			
5.1.3	Expanding the list of special minimum conditions for good agricultural practices and environmental protection to be met by agricultural producers by application of good agriculture practices and developing new rulebook on good agriculture practices	Number of defined new criteria under the rulebook on good agriculture practices Number of changed minimum conditions established under the rulebook Number of agricultural holdings informed about changes and new rulebook	MESP	January 2022	March 2023
		New commitment			
Lead implementing institution		MAFWE			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Aleksandar Musalevski			
Title/Department		Head of Sector			
E-mail		a.musalevski@mzsv.gov.mk			
Telephone					
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	MESP		
		CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Rural Coalition, liljana.jonoski@gmail.com		



--	--	--

5. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION

5.2. Access to information on air pollution levels

October 2021 – September 2023

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>A total of 18 fixed and 1 mobile metering stations are part of the state monitoring system for quality of ambient air and are located in different towns across the state. Of these, 5 stations are in Skopje, 2 in Bitola, and 1 in Kumanovo, Miladinovci, Kochani, Veles, Strumica, Kavadarci, Gevgelija, Kichevo, Lazaropole, Gostivar and Tetovo. The mobile monitoring station is operational from 2017 and is located in municipalities not covered by fixed monitoring stations for a period of one year. Thus far, it was placed in Municipality of Butel, Skopje, and is currently located in Municipality of Gjorche Petrov, Skopje. Other small towns in the country do not have fixed metering stations, and monitoring air quality in these locations is envisaged by rotation of the mobile station.⁶ The state monitoring network for quality of ambient air meets the criteria for minimum number of metering locations in a given zone and agglomeration, as stipulated in the national legislation and EU Air Quality Directives. In recent years, the state monitoring network has faced problems in respect to continuous operation of metering instruments, especially due to old equipment. For long period of time, the instrument used for monitoring PM10 concentration was not functional at the metering station in Lisiche, while problems with this and instruments for monitoring concentration of other particles (CO, NO2, O3, PM2.5 and SO2) are also observed in other metering stations across Skopje.⁷ In Bitola, metering concentration of PM2.5 particles started in 2017 and was performed with only one metering station (Bitola 2), but from October 2020 concentration of these particles is also measured by second metering station (Bitola 1). In Kumanovo, PM2.5 concentration is measured from 2017.⁸ In that respect, for example, instruments for PM10 particles in metering station Bitola 1 have not produced data for 187 days in 2019, 26 days in 2018, 79 days in 2016 and 19 days in 2015, while PM10 instruments in metering station Bitola 2 have not produced data for 192 days in 2019, 56 days in 2018, 66 days in 2017, 6 days 2016 and 56 days in 2015. At the same time, instruments for measuring concentration of PM2.5 particles in metering station Bitola 2, installed in 2017, have not</p>
--	--

⁶ Source: website "Air Quality in the Republic of North Macedonia", Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, available at <https://air.moepp.gov.mk/>

⁷ Source: monthly reports from the State Automated Air Quality Monitoring System, published on: https://air.moepp.gov.mk/?page_id=290

⁸ Ibid



	<p>produced data for 192 days in 2019 and 56 days in 2018.⁹ However, MESP actively works on renewal and additions to the state automated monitoring system for quality of ambience air by securing funds from the state budget and different donor projects. In the last years, there is evident improvement in functionality of the monitoring system and it is expected for the same to be completely renewed by the end of 2022. In order to properly plan activities for reducing air pollution in the state, reliable and comprehensive network for monitoring concentration of particles needs to be in place. Comprehensive and reliable data from the monitoring network are needed for creation of strategy documents in this area (plans, strategies, etc.) and for monitoring their implementation, i.e. whether and under what dynamics anticipated goals are attained (are goals defined in respect to reduced concentration of polluters being attained, is dynamics of attainment on satisfactory level and the like). Attainment of this goal requires regular and timely maintenance and servicing of already installed metering stations within the state monitoring network. From 2012, data from the state automated monitoring system for air quality are published in real time on the air quality portal (https://air.moepp.gov.mk). They are regularly reported at national level and to the European Environment Agency.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	<p>General objective: provide comprehensive and reliable information on air pollution levels in RNM</p> <p>Specific objective 1: Increase the number of metering stations in the state</p> <p>Specific objective 2: Regular maintenance and servicing of metering instruments that are part of metering stations within the state monitoring network</p> <p>Specific objective 3: Develop mobile application to present data from the state automated monitoring system for quality of ambience air</p> <p>Outputs: implementation of activities will contribute to increased scope of the state monitoring system by increasing the number of metering stations in towns currently not covered by this network. Regular maintenance and servicing of existing and new metering instrument will allow the state to create solid database necessary for development of efficient policies for reduction of air pollution and for monitoring attainment of goals defined under strategy documents. By securing a set of reserve metering instruments that would be put into operation at times when existing instruments are being serviced will ensure there are no losses in metering data. Development of the mobile application will ensure information for citizens on air quality in streamlined and acceptable manner.</p>
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>Installation of new metering stations for air quality in Prilep, Ohrid and Shtip as part of the state monitoring network will increase the number of metering stations, i.e. the scope of air quality data which, in the long term, will contribute to better policy planning at central and local level. Installation of air quality metering station in Berovo will contribute to better monitoring of transborder pollution. Installation of additional metering station will contribute to better planning of local air quality policies. Accordingly, this will allow better assessment of measures to be taken, as well as selection of measures and policies to effectively address this problem.</p>

⁹ Ibid



	<p>Regular maintenance and servicing of instruments in the state automated monitoring system will allow efficient monitoring and attainment of monitoring goals defined under the Law on Quality of Ambience Air. Securing a set of reserve metering instruments will contribute to effective maintenance of all metering stations, i.e. the state network that will be able to efficiently monitor air quality, ultimately resulting in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ possibility for calculation of mean daily concentration of pollutants and information to citizens; ➤ timely implementation of short-term measures to improve air quality at local level in the case of exceeded alarm thresholds; ➤ planning central and local policies for reduction of air pollution; ➤ monitoring implementation of measures anticipated under central and local policies. <p>Development of the mobile application will allow information for citizens on air quality in streamlined, i.e. modern manner that is acceptable for all mobile phone users.</p>
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY because installation of new metering instruments in the state monitoring network will secure more information for state institutions, but also for citizens and civil society organizations. Installation of metering stations in towns that are not covered will ensure greater coverage of the state monitoring network, contributing to comprehensive presentation of state-of-affairs in respect to air pollution. Regular maintenance of installed metering stations and installation of metering stations in towns not covered within the national network will improve quality and reliability of air pollution information in the state. Increasing the total number and regular maintenance of metering stations in the state, whose metering data will be showed on already established MESP website on air quality, will allow the public and state institution comprehensive and reliable information on actual state-of-affairs.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION because its implementation will ensure more information for citizens and civil society organizations, contributing to their proposals and participation in policy making related to air pollution based on evidence and accurate information. Implementation of the commitment will allow civil society organizations to monitor implementation of measures to reduce air pollution, as well as state strategy documents.</p> <p>COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY because provision of reliable information on the level of air pollution will allow citizens and civil society organizations to regularly monitor attainment of goals defined under strategy documents in this area and to react in the public, contributing to accountable state institutions that timely react to address challenges and work towards efficient attainment of monitoring goals and state obligations arising from legal regulations and the Aarhus Convention.</p>
Additional information	<p>Link to SDG 13: Climate Action SDG target 13.3: Improve education, awareness raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.</p>



		Measures defined under this commitment, i.e. awareness raising, education and information for citizens, will contribute to change of habits among rural population and to reduced pollution and environmental protection.			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
5.2.1	Instal 4 new air quality metering stations within the state monitoring network (Prilep, Shtip, Ohrid and Berovo) in order to complement the scope of information on air pollution level in these four town published on the air quality portal (Air Quality Portal (moepp.gov.mk)) and to provide more information for citizens in order to ensure timely reaction for implementation of adequate solutions	<p>Number of newly installed air quality metering stations within the state monitoring network</p> <p>Number of information published on the air quality portal</p>	MESP	October 2021	December 2022
5.2.2	Repair instruments for PM10 particles and install new instruments for PM2.5 at metering stations where these are out of operation in order to avoid interruption in provision of public information about air pollution levels in their towns	<p>Number of newly installed instruments for PM2.5 particles</p> <p>% of the state territory covered with data on PM10 and PM2.5</p>	MESP	October 2021	June 2022
5.2.3	Regular maintenance of all air quality metering stations within the state monitoring network in order to avoid interruption in provision of public information on air pollution level in their towns	<p>Number of instruments changed</p> <p>Number of repairs made</p> <p>Number of instruments with annual coverage of 90%</p>	MESP	October 2021	December 2023



		(target: all instruments in 19 metering stations)			
5.2.4	Provide a set of reserve metering instruments in order to avoid interruption in provision of information for the public about air pollution level in their towns	Number of secured sets of reserve instruments	MESP	October 2021	June 2022
5.2.5	Develop a mobile application that will allow access to air pollution data on mobile phones and continuous notifications to citizens	Number of citizens using the application	MESP	October 2021	June 2022
New commitment					
Lead implementing institution		MESP			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Svetlana Gjorgjieva			
Title/Department		Head of Sector Macedonian Environment Information Centre			
E-mail		S.Gjorgjeva@moepp.gov.mk			
Telephone		075 266 053			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	MISA		
		CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Macedonian Young Lawyers Association btrpevski@myla.org.mk		



Based on success achieved under the initiative's previous expansion to include the Assembly of RNM, in addition to commitments related to Open Parliament this cycle also includes commitments for Open Judiciary. Hence, in order to respect independence of work performed by legislative and judicial branches of government in RNM, Macedonian iteration of the Open Government Partnership was adjusted to reflect this inclusion and accommodate the broader meaning of government as governing authorities. Consequently, all future communication and implementation of this initiative will reflect the local formulation which is back-translated as **PARTNERSHIP FOR OPEN GOVERNMENT**.

The Appendix below provides an overview on development of action plans for Open Parliament and Open Judiciary, as well as summary overview of commitments and milestones defined for them.

Coordination, implementation and monitoring of actions plans for Open Parliament and Open Judiciary will be performed by the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia and the Supreme Court of the Republic of North Macedonia, respectively, with regular information provided to the Ministry of Information Society and Administration and the web-portal designated for OGP (www.ovp.gov.mk).



APPENDIX

OPEN PARLIAMENT

OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP NATIONAL ACTION PLAN 2021-2023 (NAP5) - OPEN PARLIAMENT

In line with its strategic goals related to functional parliamentary democracy, open parliament, parliamentary diplomacy, secure parliament and modern and efficient parliamentary services, and based on recommendations provided by OGP Independent Reporting Mechanism, the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia joined the Open Government Partnership initiative in 2018. Having in mind the Assembly's independence as separate branch of government in the Republic of North Macedonia, work on developing commitments related to Open Parliament was performed in parallel with new commitments for Open Government under the Fifth OGP National Action Plan for the period 2021-2023.

The Open Parliament Action Plan was developed under broad and participatory process that included organization of hybrid events, workshops, OGP e-conference (as part of the Global Legislative Openness Week #GLOW2020, co-organized by the Open Parliament Network (OPeN), webinars and online consultations for draft versions of the action plan.¹⁰

Based on consultations organized, working group on openness of the legislative government adopted OGP Action Plan for Open Parliament 2021-2023 on 7 June 2021.

[Summary overview of Open Parliament commitments](#)

¹⁰ Seven (7) civil society organizations submitted comments and contributions, those being: Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis" Skopje, National Democratic Institute, FOSM, Association of Public Servants in North Macedonia, EKOZVON, Rural Coalition, and OGP Regional Director for Europe.



1. PARLIAMENT FOR THE CITIZENS WITH OPEN RESPONSE AND OPEN RECOVERY FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

- Design an open data portal to facilitate access to information for citizens
- Platform for suggestions and initiatives from citizens to the legislative government and registry of civil society organizations
- Digital security through digital signatures for MPs and the parliament services tary institute

2. IMPROVE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

- Design new website for the Assembly for better information to citizens
- Fully functional parliamentary TV channel
- Develop software for public monitoring of the legislative process
- Open e-archive software for browsing by the public
- Procurement of cameras with accompanying equipment for online streaming of parliamentary sessions

3. CIVIL PARTICIPATION/OPEN PARLIAMENT

- Develop news reports and familiarize the public in order to promote the contact offices with citizens
- Implement activities to promote the Open Government Partnership
- Procurement of speech-to-text software

The Open Parliament Action Plan will be coordinated, implemented and monitored by the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia, with regular reports to the Ministry of Information Society and Administration and posting information on the web-portal designated for OGP (www.ovp.gov.mk).

1. PARLIAMENT FOR THE CITIZENS WITH OPEN RESPONSE AND OPEN RECOVERY FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC	
1.1 Design an open data portal to facilitate access to information for citizens July 2021 – July 2022	
Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	The Assembly of RNM recognizes that open data can contribute to transparency, openness and public participation in work performed by the legislative government. For that purpose, the Assembly will design software tool for datasets.
Main objective of the commitment	Systemic online access to datasets disposed by the legislative government to facilitate better access and browsing by the public.



How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?		The software tool will provide: -opening of datasets in computer-readable formats; -production of datasets from everyday operation and chronological information; -publication of metadata on datasets; -increased engagement of end-users by re-use of open data.			
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?		➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY <u>YES/NO</u> ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIL PARTICIPATION <u>YES/NO</u> ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY <u>YES/NO</u>			
Additional information		/			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
1.1.1	Anticipate procedure under 2021 plan for public procurements and secure funds from donation	Technical specifications and tender documents are developed Procurement notice is announced	Assembly and PSP	May 2021	June 2021
1.1.2	Implement the software solution	Economic operators is selected and procurement contract is performed	Assembly and economic operator	June 2021	November 2021
1.1.3	Upload datasets in the system	Number of datasets created Quantity of information processed in adequate format and uploaded in the system	Assembly	December 2021	June 2022
		<i>New commitment under OGP NAP 2021-2023</i>			
Lead implementing institution		ASSEMBLY of RNM with support from the Parliamentary Support Programme (PSP)			



Name of the responsible person for implementation	Cvetanka Ivanova, Secretary General of the Assembly Zlatko Atanasov, State Advisor and OGP Coordinator at the Assembly	
Title/Department	Sectors within the parliament services	
E-mail	parl.inst@sobranie.mk	
Telephone	/	
Other actors involved	Ministries/Agencies	/
	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Partners involved in PSP are NDI, CMC and IDSCS
1. PARLIAMENT FOR THE CITIZENS WITH OPEN RESPONSE AND OPEN RECOVERY FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC		
1.2 Platform for suggestions and initiatives from citizens to the legislative government and registry of civil society organizations July 2021 –2022		
Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	The Assembly of RNM hosts an official website for information dissemination to the public. This link allows citizens an opportunity for direct communication with the Parliament Speaker: https://www.sobranie.mk/kontaktiraj-so-pretседателот.nspj In addition, citizens can also use another link on the Assembly's official website to directly communicate with MPs: https://www.sobranie.mk/prashaj-go-pratenikot.nspj	



	This commitment is envisaged to provide systemic improvement in terms of contacts with MPs for citizens and CSOs to propose ideas. The second part, i.e. the registry of civil society organizations, will address the problem related to inviting CSOs to participate in legislative processes without political influence in selection and equitable information for all CSOs enlisted in the registry about parliamentary events, laws and other activities they can participate in.				
Main objective of the commitment	The main objective is to provide systemic online access for citizens to submit ideas to their elected representatives and to ensure systemic access for CSOs to the legislative process.				
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>The activity related to development of web-platform for suggestions and initiatives includes an upgrade to existing (above described) opportunities for contact and communication with MPs, promotion of these opportunities in the public, administration of solutions for collecting suggestions, submissions and record keeping.</p> <p>The commitment concerns development of civil participation tool in the legislative process.</p> <p>As regards the registry of civil society organizations, the idea is to define the process for overview and selection of CSOs for participation in working bodies, public and oversight hearings.</p>				
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY <u>YES/NO</u></p> <p>➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIL PARTICIPATION <u>YES/NO</u></p> <p>➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY <u>YES/NO</u></p>				
Additional information	<p>Funds in the amount of 2,000,000 MKD for software upgrade are allocated in the assembly's budget.</p> <p>Projected value of 840,000 MKD for the registry of civil society organization is secured as donation from PSP.</p>				
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
1.2.1	Financial implementation of the commitment	<p>Funds are allocated in the budget circulatory letter</p> <p>2022 budget is adopted</p> <p>2022 plan for public procurements is adopted with procurement procedure included</p>	Assembly	June 2021	December 2022



1.2.2	Administrative implementation of the commitment	Procurement notices are announced Contract with economic operator is performed	Assembly and economic operator	May 2022	September 2022
1.2.3	Participation of citizens and civil society organizations in the legislative process	Number of initiatives submitted through the system Number of initiatives reconsidered by MPs Number and type of civil society organizations that participated in working bodies, oversight and public hearings	Assembly and CSOs	December 2022	December 2023
<i>New commitment under OGP NAP 2021-2023</i>					
Lead implementing institution		ASSEMBLY of RNM with support from the Parliamentary Support Programme			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Cvetanka Ivanova, Secretary General of the Assembly Zlatko Atanasov, State Advisor and OGP Coordinator for Parliament			
Title/Department		Sectors within the parliament services			
E-mail		parl.inst@sobranie.mk			
Telephone		/			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	/		
		CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	PSP partners involved are NDI, CMC and IDSCS List of organizations consulted for Open Parliament Action Plan		



1. PARLIAMENT FOR THE CITIZENS WITH OPEN RESPONSE AND OPEN RECOVERY FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC					
1.3 Digital security through electronic signatures for MPs and parliament services July 2021 – December 2022					
Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	The coronavirus pandemic imposed the need for work from distance. In addition to necessary ICT equipment, this type of work, but especially procedural matters regulated under the Assembly’s Rules of Procedure, brought about the need for digital certification. This is regulated under the Law on Electronic Documents, Electronic Signature and Trust Services, and in addition to procurement of digital certificates, it also requires software adjustments and other preconditions to be regulated by law, together with training for target groups.				
Main objective of the commitment	The activity is proposed for the purpose of contributing to digitalization of particular work aspects at the Assembly that necessitate physical attendance for document authorization/signing. Instead, the proposed activity opens the possibility for use of digital signatures.				
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	The commitment concerns provision and use of digital tokens for electronic signatures by MPs and parliament services. In case of inability for physical attendance at plenary and working committee sessions, MPs will be able to perform procedural activities from distance.				
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY <u>YES/NO</u> ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION <u>YES/NO</u> ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY <u>YES/NO</u>				
Additional information	Activity will be implemented with due consideration of and pending adequate amendments to the Assembly’s Rules of Procedure in respect to the possibility for MPs to use digital tokens for electronic signature. Projected value of 1,800,000 MKD are secured from donation.				
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date



1.3.1	Amend the Assembly's Rules of Procedure in respect to the possibility for MPs to use digital tokens for electronic signature	A matter of political consensus among political parties	Assembly	July 2021	December 2023
1.3.2	Financial and administrative implementation of the commitment	Procurement notice is announced	Assembly	July 2021	December 2023
1.3.3	Facilitate and provide continuity in use of digital signatures	Installation and training	Assembly	July 2021	December 2023
		New commitment under OGP NAP 2021-2023			
Lead implementing institution		ASSEMBLY of RNM with support from the Parliamentary Support Programme			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Cvetanka Ivanova, Secretary General of the Assembly Zlatko Atanasov, State Advisor and OGP Coordinator at the Assembly			
Title/Department		Sectors within the parliament services			
E-mail		parl.inst@sobranie.mk			
Telephone		/			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	/		
		CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	PSP partners are NDI, CMC and ICSCS List of CSOs consulted for the Open Parliament Action Plan		



--	--	--

2. IMPROVE INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

2.1 Design new website for the Assembly for better information to citizens

July 2021 – December 2022

Which public problem is addressed with the commitment?	The Assembly of RNM hosts own website with data intended for proactive information to the public. Based on analyses conducted and in line with technology developments, the Assembly believes that its website needs to be upgraded to facilitate easier browsing of information, better organization of data and better offer of information to citizens. Parliamentary Support Programme has planned and budgeted an activity for design of new website.				
Main objective of the commitment	The activity is proposed for the purpose of contributing to reorganization of data, method for uploading and timely entry of data, and document browsing system.				
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	The commitment concerns development of new website for the Assembly.				
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY <u>YES/NO</u> ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION <u>YES/NO</u> ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY <u>YES/NO</u> 				
Additional information	Projected value of 5,082,219 MKD are secured from the Swiss Confederation				
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
2.1.1	Financial and administrative implementation of the commitment	Funds are secured from PSP and procurement notice is announced	Assembly	April 2021	December 2021



2.1.2	Operational implementation of the commitment	Performance of contract signed for website upgrade	Assembly	July 2021	March 2022
2.1.3	Functional website	Number of website visits Number of downloaded information and documents	Assembly	March 2022	December 2023
		<i>Ongoing commitment transferred from OGP NAP 2019-2021</i>			
Lead implementing institution		ASSEMBLY of RNM with support from the Parliamentary Support Programme			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Cvetanka Ivanova, Secretary General of the Assembly Zlatko Atanasov, State Advisor and OGP Coordinator at the Assembly			
Title/Department		Sectors within the parliament services			
E-mail		parl.inst@sobranie.mk			
Telephone		/			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	/		
		CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	PSP partners are NDI, CMC and IDSCS		



2. IMPROVED INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

2.2 Fully functional parliamentary TV channel

January 2021 – December 2023

Which public problem is addressed with the commitment?	The Assembly of RNM has own broadcasting channel used for proactive information about ongoing processes with live streaming or pre-recorded content. Operation of the parliamentary channel is institutionally organized through the Council for Parliamentary Channel. The Assembly considers this channel as resource for better information to the public about its activities and performance, and for increased viewership.				
Main objective of the commitment	The activity is proposed for the purpose of increasing viewership of the parliamentary TV channel through reform of the media outlet, i.e. redesign of contents offered in relation to its work and definition of programming scheme with modern equipment and trained operators.				
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	The commitment is proposed to reform the parliamentary TV channel.				
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY YES/NO ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION YES/NO ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY YES/NO 				
Additional information	Projected value of 15,529,000 MKD are secured from the Swiss Confederation				
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
2.2.1	Financial and administrative implementation of the commitment	<p>Funds are secured</p> <p>Public procurement is organized</p> <p>Contract is signed with economic operator</p>	Assembly MRT (public service broadcaster)	June 2021	December 2022



2.2.2	Provision of administrative capacity	Open call for engagement of 7 parliamentary officers	Assembly	September 2021	December 2022
		Ongoing commitment from OGP NAP 2019-2021			
Lead implementing institution		ASSEMBLY of RNM with support from the Parliamentary Support Programme			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Cvetanka Ivanova, Secretary General of the Assembly Zlatko Atanasov, State Advisor and OGP Coordinator at the Parliament			
Title/Department		Sectors within the parliament services			
E-mail		parl.inst@sobranie.mk			
Telephone		/			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	/		
		CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	PSP partners involved are NDI, CMC and IDSCS		

2. IMPROVED INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

2.3 Develop software for public monitoring of the legislative process

July 2021 – December 2022



Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	The course of legislative procedures can be followed on the Assembly's website. At the moment, this website does not allow browsing per document (proposed law), but rather by working body, and necessitates several steps and browsing experience to locate information needed.				
Main objective of the commitment	The activity is proposed for the purpose of allowing the public to follow, in real time, actual stage of proposed legislation and procedure deadlines from the day when the proposal was submitted to the day when the law proclamation is signed.				
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	This solution will allow direct presentation of stages in the legislative procedure, submission of proposed legislation, first and second reading, plenary sessions, and deadline for submission of amendments and parliamentary hearings, to adoption of the proposed law. It provides proactive publication of more information and accurate overview when amendments can be submitted.				
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY YES/NO</p> <p>➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION YES/NO</p> <p>➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY YES/<u>NO</u></p>				
Additional information	/				
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
2.3.1	Financial and administrative implementation of the commitment	Funds are secured under 2022 budget and public procurement procedure is planned or alternatively covered as module for upgrade to existing public procurement for e-services	Assembly and economic operator	July 2021	December 2022
2.3.2	Ensure continuity of website use and maintenance	<p>Number of proposed laws visible in this manner</p> <p>Number of website visits for insight into legislation</p>	Assembly	November 2022	December 2023



	<i>New commitment under OGP NAP 2021-2023</i>	
Lead implementing institution	ASSEMBLY of RNM	
Name of the responsible person for implementation	Cvetanka Ivanova, Secretary General of the Assembly Zlatko Atanasov, State Advisor and OGP Coordinator at the Assembly	
Title/Department	Sectors within the parliament services	
E-mail	parl.inst@sobranie.mk	
Telephone	/	
Other actors involved	Ministries/Agencies	/
	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	PSP partners involved are NDI, CMC and IDSCS
2. IMPROVED INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE		
2.4 Open e-archive software for browsing by the public		
July 2021 – December 2022		



Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>In 2016, the Assembly's parliamentary institute has created a software solution for e-archive. This solution provides electronic access to data from the legislative archive (any document that enters adequate procedure and is adopted in plenary session). The database covers all documents created per agenda item. Data are codified starting from 1986 and cover more than 1.2 million pages of documents.</p> <p>Thus far, database was used via intranet on request from parliamentary services and MPs.</p>				
Main objective of the commitment	The activity is proposed for the purpose of making database available to the public for citizens to be able to use documents from the e-archive.				
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	This solution provides electronic access to data from the legislative archive (all documents that entered adequate procedure and were adopted in plenary session). The database covers all documents created per agenda item.				
How is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	<p>➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY YES/NO</p> <p>➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION YES/NO</p> <p>➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY YES/<u>NO</u></p>				
Additional information	/				
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
2.4.1	Financial and administrative implementation of the commitment	Funds are secured under the budget and public procurement is organized	Assembly	May 2022	July 2022



2.4.2	Provision of continuity in website use and maintenance	Number of system users from the public and number of downloaded documents and number of entered and indexed documents of the Assembly for mandates that are not in the system	Assembly	July 2022	December 2023
		New commitment under OGP NAP 2021-2023			
Lead implementing institution		Assembly of RNM			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Cvetanka Ivanova, Secretary General of the Assembly Zlatko Atanasov, State Advisor and OGP Coordinator at the Assembly			
Title/Department		Sectors within the parliament services			
E-mail		parl.inst@sobranie.mk			
Telephone		/			
Other actors involved			/		
		Ministries/Agencies	[enlist/propose institutions which you believe are important for commitment implementation]		
		CSOs, public sector, multilateral and working groups	PSP partners involved are NDI, CMC and IDSCS		
2. IMPROVED INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE					
2.5 Procurement of cameras with accompanying equipment for online streaming of parliamentary sessions					
July 2021 – December 2022					
Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?		The Assembly's website broadcasts the parliamentary TV channel. Meeting halls at the Assembly are not equipped for online streaming of sessions held by working bodies for the public to be able to follow them in real time, instead of viewing recordings on the parliamentary channel.			
Main objective of the commitment		The activity is proposed for the purpose of providing greater public access to work performed by the Assembly. In addition to the parliamentary channel, access is also provided through online streaming.			



How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?		It increases public access to work performed by the Assembly. In addition to the parliamentary channel, access is provided through online streaming.			
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?		<p>➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY YES/NO</p> <p>➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION YES/NO</p> <p>➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY YES/NO</p>			
Additional information		Projected value of 3,000,000 MKD are secured from donation.			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
2.5.1	Financial and administrative implementation of the commitment	Public procurement procedure for cameras and accompanying equipment for online streaming of parliamentary sessions is implemented	Assembly	September 2022	December 2022
		<i>New commitment under OGP NAP 2021-2023</i>			
Lead implementing institution		ASSEMBLY of RNM with support from the Parliamentary Support Programme			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Cvetanka Ivanova, Secretary General of the Assembly Zlatko Atanasov, State Advisor and OGP Coordinator at the Assembly			
Title/Department		Sectors within the parliament services			
E-mail		parl.inst@sobranie.mk			
Telephone		/			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	/		



	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	PSP partners are NDI, CMC and IDSCS
3. PARTICIPATION OF CITIZENS/OPEN PARLIAMENT		
3.1 Produce news reports and familiarize the public in order to promote the contact offices with citizens September 2021 – December 2023		
Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	The Assembly of RNM is continuously creating conditions for operation of these offices, together with local self-government units, and underway are activities to put into operation a software solution for connecting all offices and monitoring their activities. All communications of citizens with MPs are important, and this institutional form of communication must have adequate support.	
Main objective of the commitment	The activity is proposed for the purpose of ensuring greater openness and familiarizing citizens with operation of MP contact offices with citizens.	
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	Greater openness and familiarization of citizens with operation of MP offices for contact with citizens.	
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY YES/NO ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION YES/NO ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY YES/ <u>NO</u>	



Additional information		/			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
3.1.1	Financial and administrative implementation of the commitment	Funds are secured under 2022 budget and public procurement is organized	Assembly	February 2022	March 2022
3.1.2	Administrative implementation of the commitment	Contract for video recording and editing promotional news reports is performed	Assembly, offices for contact with citizens, economic operator	March 2022	June 2022
3.1.3	Greater visibility of offices for contact with citizens and more public information about their role	Number of broadcasts on the parliamentary channel, number of views on social media, and number of visits to offices	Assembly, offices for contact with citizens	June 2022	December 2023
		New commitment under OGP NAP 2021-2023			
Lead implementing institution		ASSEMBLY of RNM and the parliamentary institute			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Cvetanka Ivanova, Secretary General of the Assembly Zlatko Atanasov, State Advisor and OGP Coordinator at the Assembly			
Title/Department		Sectors within the parliament services			
E-mail		parl.inst@sobranie.mk			
Telephone		/			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	/		



	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	PSP partners involved are NDI, CMC and IDSCS
3. PARTICIPATION OF CITIZENS/OPEN PARLIAMENT		
3.2 Implement activities to promote the Open Government Partnership July 2021 – December 2022		
Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	Republic of North Macedonia is member of the Open Government Partnership since 2011. The Assembly, as separate branch of government, joined this global initiative in 2017 with separate action plan on commitments and activities. Having in mind planning and dynamics of commitments and activities for OGP NAP 2021-2023, the Assembly believes that adequate activities for promotion of OGP implementation and monitoring mechanisms for different stakeholders are needed.	
Main objective of the commitment	The activity is proposed for the purpose of promoting OGP implementation and monitoring mechanisms for different stakeholders.	
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem??	More events and information for the public and stakeholders for better understanding of this process and greater effect from implementation of commitments.	
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY YES/NO ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION YES/NO ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY YES/NO 	



Additional information		Funds for this commitment are secured from donation.			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity institution	Start date	End date
3.2.1	Implementation of operational activities for promotion of OGP and the Assembly’s commitments	OGP hybrid conference	Assembly and NDI	July 2021	July 2023
		OGP workshop for the parliamentary institute	Assembly and NDI	July 2021	July 2023
		Development of contents to be used on social networks	Assembly and NDI	July 2021	July 2023
		Online streaming of OGP-related events	Assembly and NDI	July 2021	July 2023
		Open data event for the Assembly and civil society organizations	Assembly and NDI	July 2021	July 2023
		Analysis of trends related to OGP and parliaments	Assembly and NDI	July 2021	July 2023
		New commitment under OGP NAP 2021-2023			
Lead implementing institution		ASSEMBLY of RNM with support from the Parliamentary Support Programme			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Cvetanka Ivanova, Secretary General of the Assembly Zlatko Atanasov, State Advisor and OGP Coordinator at the Assembly			
Title/Department		Sectors within the parliament services			
E-mail		parl.inst@sobranie.mk			



Telephone	/		
Other actors involved	Ministries/Agencies	/	
	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	PSP partners involved are NDI, CMC and IDSCS	
3. PARTICIPATION OF CITIZENS/OPEN PARLIAMENT			
3.3 Procurement of voice-to-speech software July 2021 – December 2022			
Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	Speech recognition should be applied in automated transcription of parliamentary and committee sessions, both in Macedonian and Albanian language. Additional possibilities concern provision of subtitles for online streaming of sessions. Speech synthesis could ensure transformation of legal texts into audio files for inclusion of persons with impaired sight.		
Main objective of the commitment	The activity is proposed for the purpose of automating transcription of plenary and committee sessions.		
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	The software will ensure transformation of legal texts into audio files, thereby making materials accessible for persons with impaired sight.		
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TRANSPARENCY YES/NO ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR CIVIC PARTICIPATION YES/NO ➤ COMMITMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY YES/NO		



Additional information		Projected value of 2,000,000 MKD will be secured either as donation or under the parliament's 2022 budget			
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date
3.3.1	Financial, administrative and operational implementation of the commitment	Public procurement is organized, contract is signed and software is installed	Assembly	January 2022	December 022
New commitment under OGP NAP 2021-2023					
Lead implementing institution		ASSEMBLY of RNM with support from the Parliamentary Support Programme			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		Cvetanka Ivanova, Secretary General of the Assembly Zlatko Atanasov, State Advisor and OGP Coordinator at the Assembly			
Title/Department		Sectors within the parliament institute			
E-mail		parl.inst@sobranie.mk			
Telephone		/			
Other actor involved		Ministries/Agencies	/		
		CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	PSP partners involved are NDI, CMC and IDSCS		



--	--	--



OPEN JUDICIARY

OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP NATIONAL ACTION PLAN 2021-2023 (NAP5) - OPEN JUDICIARY

Based on the government's experience and benefits from successful implementation of four action plans (2012, 2014, 2016 and 2018), the fact that the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia joined and implemented its first Open Parliament Action Plan under the Open Government Partnership 2018-2020, and proactivity of the judicial branch of government and the civil society, the fifth OGP National Action Plan (2021-2023) includes a separate section on the judiciary, with specific commitments aimed to improve transparency and openness of the courts and to restore the public's trust in judicial institutions.

The first Open Judiciary Action Plan was developed under broad discussions and three (3) round tables organized among court presidents, judges and representatives from judicial services at all courts in RNM, representatives from the Judicial Council, Ministry of Justice, Academy of Judges and Public Prosecutors, civil society representatives (monitoring organizations) and other experts in this field. Consultations organized in the period January-March 2020 included participation of OGP National Coordinator, i.e. the Ministry of Information Society and Administration, as the lead institution for this activity. Ideas and needs of institutions and the civil society involved in the co-creation process, which included active participation of 51 representatives from the public and non-governmental sector, were translated into commitments and 21 milestones under two priority areas.

Summary overview of Open Judiciary commitments

ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND DATA

- Improve the electronic judicial portal of RNM (www.sud.mk)
- Improve the courts' public relations
- Improve quality and availability of data and information on the Judicial Council's performance

PERFORMANCE

- Enhance oversight role of the Judicial Council in respect to transparency of the courts
- Improve/unify structure of court reports and quality of data
- Improve electronic system for inception and continuous training of judges



Supreme Court of the Republic of North Macedonia will be responsible for coordination, implementation and monitoring of OGP Action Plan, with regular information to the Ministry of Information Society and Administration and OGP web-portal (www.ovp.gov.mk).

1. ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND DATA

1.1 Improve the electronic judicial portal of RNM (www.sud.mk) (1 October 2021 – 31 December 2022)

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	Introduction of the electronic judicial portal of RNM (www.sud.mk) in 2017 was expected to contribute to greater transparency of the courts, but there are still major differences in respect to quality and scope of data made available by different courts. Information hosted on individual court websites are not unified, regularly published and updated, and not all data is published in open format. For example, court reports and work biographies of judges are not unified and not all of them are available on court websites, while in some cases information provided therein are unclear. Inconsistency and selective publication of data raise doubts about information being concealed from the public and directly affects citizens' trust in the judiciary as the third branch of government. Moreover, the courts are not proactive in sharing information on asset declarations of judges, whereby sections hosting work biographies of judges do not provide hyperlinks to SCPS's website where asset declarations of all judges are published. Not all courts have published data related to free access to public information (person responsible for free access to information, e-mail/telephone), and there is no regular practice in place for publication of information that have been requested under the instrument for free access to information. Openness is necessary for improving public trust in the courts and the overall justice system, and for facilitating public understanding on who and how is justice delivered by the courts. In that, openness is one of key components of the court process's legitimacy and reason contributing to the public's low trust in performance and decisions taken by the courts. The judicial portal is not adjusted for use by persons with impaired sight.
Main objective of the commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide standardized and unified information and data about the courts and their jurisprudence, and to increase scope of judiciary data published in open format; To expand scope of data made available in open format and hosted on the portal; To increase scope and to improve quality of data and information published;
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	Increased scope, improved quality and regular updating of data published on the judicial portal will lead to introduction of new practices in the Macedonian judiciary that requires transparent and accountable, but primarily, visible performance of the courts for citizens in RNM.



How is this commitment relevant to OGP values?		The commitment ensures access to more information, improves quality of data and improves availability of public information, and is therefore relevant for transparency.			
Additional information		<p>Link to SDG16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions</p> <p>SDG target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels</p> <p>SDG target 16.10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements</p> <p>This commitment will contribute to improved accountability of all actors in the judiciary, by improving and increasing the scope and quality of data published on the judicial portal.</p>			
No.	Milestone (enlist activities that will contribute to commitment implementation)	Indicators (enlist measurable indicators/benchmarks for monitoring and verification of milestone achievements)	Activity holder (government institution, CSOs or other)	Start date	End date
1.1.1	Define the catalogue of open data and standardize quality and scope of information according to previous practices for publication of information on the judicial portal, FOI requests and already available analyses on transparency and openness of the judiciary	Reduced number of requests for information submitted to the courts in RNM	Supreme Court of RNM, Center for Legal Research and Analyses	October 2021	March 2022
1.1.2	Develop compliance assessments for all courts in respect to defined catalogue of open data and standardized quality and scope of information	Reduced number of requests for information submitted to the courts in RNM	Supreme Court of RNM, Center for Legal Research and Analyses	March 2022	May 2022



1.1.3	Implement necessary improvements and publish open data and information of standardized quality, based on individual assessments made for all courts	Web-portal with standardized information and data for the public	Supreme Court of RNM, Center for Legal Analyses	January 2022	May 2022
1.1.4	Improve and adjust contents on the judicial portal for use by persons with impaired sight, by providing audio versions of principles legal opinions and sentences delivered by the Supreme Court of RNM	Integrated text-to-speech tool on the Supreme Court's website	Supreme Court of RNM, Center for Legal Research and Analyses	May 2022	December 2022
		New commitment			
Lead implementing institution		Supreme Court of RNM			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
Title/Department		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
E-mail		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
Telephone		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	All courts in RNM, Judicial Council of RNM		



	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Association of Judges, Association of Judicial Administration, Center for Legal Research and Analyses, Inkluziva
--	---	--

1. ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND DATA	
1.2. Improve the courts' public relations (1 October 2021 - 31 March 2022)	
Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	Institutional framework and practice related to transparency and openness of the courts is marked by numerous problems and challenges. In particular, the courts lack resources and knowledge to comply with relevant norms stipulated under the Court's Rules of Procedure in relation to public relations. Moreover, the courts do not strive to engage in regular and direct communication with the public by means of press conferences, interviews, electronic media, etc. Link between the courts and the media needs to be renewed in order to restore the public's trust in the judiciary and judicial institutions.
Main objective of the commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To improve active communication with the public and transparency of the courts; To establish comprehensive framework that will guide the courts in their communications with the public and the media; To develop the Strategy on Judiciary Openness; To establish and enhance cooperation with the judicial media council;
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	Implementation of this commitment will establish long-term directions in respect to improving the judiciary's transparency and openness through established methodology on public communications.
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	The commitment provides access to more information, improves quality of data and improves access to public information, which makes it important for transparency that ultimately aims at bringing the courts' work closer to citizens by providing timely information.



Additional information		<p>Link to SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions</p> <p>SDG target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels</p> <p>SDG target 16.10: Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements</p> <p>This commitment will contribute to increased openness of the courts in the Republic of North Macedonia through regular dissemination of information to the media and the public.</p>			
No.	Milestone (enlist activities that will contribute to commitment implementation)	Indicators (enlist measurable indicators/benchmarks for monitoring and verification of milestone achievements)	Activity holder (government institution, CSOs or other)	Start date	End date
1.2.1	Develop methodology and/or guidelines for the courts in respect to communication with the public and methods for information dissemination to the public in order to cover various topics such as: development of annual reports, development of annual plans, and format in which these will be published	Methodology and other regulations (guidelines, rulebook) for the courts in RNM related to their communication with the public are adopted	Supreme Court of RNM	October 2021	March 2022
1.2.2	Implement consultation meetings with the media and other entities as direct users of the methodology	Methodology and other regulations (guidelines, rulebook) for the courts in RNM related to their communication with the public are adopted	Supreme Court of RNM	October 2021	March 2022



1.2.3	Develop and adopt new comprehensive manual/ guidelines/ rulebook on the judiciary's media relations	Methodology and other regulations (guide, rulebook) for the courts in RNM related to communication with the public are adopted	Supreme Court of RNM	October 2021	March 2022
1.2.4	Develop the Strategy on Judiciary Openness as five-year document, accompanied with action plan and provide systematised overview of all efforts aimed at increasing transparency and overall openness of the judiciary	Strategy on Judiciary's Openness is adopted by the Judicial Council of RNM	Judicial Council of RNM	January 2022	October 2022
New commitment					
Lead implementing institution		Enlist the institution you recognize as potentially competent for implementation of this commitment			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
Title/Department		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
E-mail		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
Telephone		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	All courts in RNM		
		CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Association of Judges, Judicial Media Council, Center for Legal Research and Analyses		



--	--	--

1. ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND DATA

1.3. Improve quality and availability of data and information on the Judicial Council's performance (1 September 2021 – 31 December 2022)

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>The Judicial Council of RNM plays two-fold role in respect to the judiciary's transparency. On one hand, it has an active role, i.e. monitors transparency and openness of the judiciary. On the other hand, it appears as passive subject that should comply with legal obligations in order to demonstrate transparency.</p> <p>Law on the Judicial Council in RNM stipulates obligations for the Judicial Council in respect to mandatory publication of information on its website in relation to: appointment of council members (art. 14 and art. 25); reviewing quarterly and annual judiciary performance reports (art. 36, par. 1, item 14); minutes from council sessions (art. 39); decisions taken in repeated court proceedings (art. 72, par. 5); council's annual reports.</p> <p>According to some recent analyses, the Judicial Council of RNM has received poor assessments, i.e. it has been established that the Judicial Council does not have good communication channels with citizens and the media. There is no guide on how citizens can motion appeals or complaints on the council's website and there is no guide for the media. Obligations of the Judicial Court arising from complaints lodged by citizens are regulated under the Law on the Judicial Council of RNM. However, the council's website does not host any information on submission or responses to complaints made by citizens in RNM.</p> <p>The principle of transparency is also assessed as poor, given that, with exception of good assessments in respect to available information on the council's organizational structure, it has been established that there are no public procurement policies and information is not shared on completed public procurements.</p> <p>The Judicial Council is defined as information holder pursuant to the Law on Free Access to Public Information. This means that the council is obliged to comply with obligations arising from that law.</p>
Main objective of the commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase availability and quality of information disposed by the Judicial Council, and to facilitate citizens' access in respect to lodging complaints before the council;



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To standardize quality and scope of data that should be mandatorily published by the courts;• To establish standards and methods for publication of data on the Judicial Council’s website;• To facilitate access in respect to lodging appeals and complaints by citizens through the Judicial Council’s website;• To improve functionality of the Judicial Council’s website;				
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	The comments will directly impact access to information and accountability of institutions, but also public participation in work of the courts, by establishing standards and procedures for publication of data and by designing tools for submission of complaints by citizens in RNM.				
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	The commitment ensures improved legal framework and accountability mechanisms, which makes it important in respect to the judiciary’s public accountability.				
Additional information	<p>Link to SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions’</p> <p>SDG target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels</p> <p>This commitment will contribute to increased openness of the Judicial Council of RNM through improved quality and availability of data and information on its performance.</p>				
No.	Milestone (enlist activities that will contribute to commitment implementation)	Indicators (enlist measurable indicators/ benchmarks for monitoring and verification of achievements)	Activity holder (government institution, CSOs or other)	Start date	End date
1.3.1	Define data catalogue according to previous practices, history of information requests, and consultations held		Judicial Council of RNM	September 2021	February 2022
1.3.2	Create operational procedures and define process maps for publication of data on the Judicial Council’s website	Reduced number of requests for information received by the Judicial Council	Judicial Council of RNM	September 2021	February 2022



1.3.3	Develop guide and establish tool for lodging complaints and appeals by citizens through the Judicial Council's website	Increased number of complaints submitted by citizens through the Judicial Council's website and reduced number of rejected complaints submitted by citizens	Judicial Council of RNM	January 2022	December 2022
1.3.4	Implement necessary software improvements to the Judicial Council's website	New website space with more information for the media and methods for submission of complaints to the Judicial Council	Judicial Council of RNM	January 2022	December 2022
New commitment					
Lead implementing institution		Judicial Council of RNM			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
Title/Department		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
E-mail		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
Telephone		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	All courts in RNM		

2. PERFORMANCE

2.1. Enhance oversight role of the Judicial Council in respect to transparency of the courts (1 September 2021 – 1 July 2022)

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	<p>Art, 92, par.1, item 5 of the Law on the Judicial Council is novelty in the Macedonian legal framework, whereby the Judicial Council assesses whether court presidents care for their public relations. The Judicial Council should perform this by insight into court websites, i.e. checking press releases, decisions, analyses and reports published. Moreover, the Judicial Council should assess whether court presidents ensure proper processing of information requests.</p> <p>By the end of 2019, the Judicial Council adopted new Rules of Procedures for the Judicial Council of the Republic of North Macedonia, but has still not started activities in respect to monitoring court websites. For the Judicial Court to monitor these websites, i.e. to assess work of court presidents, specific process rules needs to be established (designated employee or organizational unit within the Judicial Council that will be tasked with performing insight into court websites, how will that employee/organizational unit report findings to the Judicial Council, how will</p>
--	---



	Judicial Council Members assess whether presidents of specific courts have acted pursuant to the law, etc.)				
Main objective of the commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To strengthen the Judicial Council's active role in monitoring compliance with the principle of transparency on the part of court presidents in respect to public relations; To draft new internal organization and job systematization acts pursuant to the Rules of Procedure for the Judicial Council of RNM; 				
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	The commitment anticipates activities aimed at increasing transparency of courts by introducing the system for monitoring performance of court presidents through court websites.				
How is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	The commitment provides access to greater scope of information and improves availability of information for the public, whereby the commitment is relevant for transparency.				
Additional information	<p>Link to SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels</p> <p>This commitment is important for improving public accountability of the Judicial Council of RNM by improving the rules and mechanisms that will ensure accountability of Judicial Council Members and employees in performing their active role related to ensuring transparency of the courts.</p>				
No.	Milestone (enlist activities that will contribute to commitment implementation)	Indicators (enlist measurable indicators/ benchmarks for monitoring and verification of achievements)	Activity holder (government institution, CSOs or other)	Start date	End date
2.1.1	Develop methodology for assessment of court presidents in respect to public relations and transparency	Methodology and other regulations (rulebook, procedures) for assessment of court presidents by the Judicial Council are adopted	Judicial Council of RNM	September 2021	March 2022



2.1.2	Quantitative definition of ranking points for the criterion on public relations and transparency	Methodology and other regulations (rulebook, procedures) for assessment of court websites by the Judicial Council are adopted	Judicial Council of RNM	September 2021	March 2022
2.1.3	Development of standard operational procedures and definition of process maps for monitoring court websites, i.e. for assessment of court presidents in respect to public relations	Methodology and other regulations (rulebook, procedures) for assessment of court websites by the Judicial Council are adopted	Judicial Council of RNM	September 2021	June 2022
New commitment					
Lead implementing institution		Judicial Council of RNM			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
Title/Department		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
E-mail address		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
Telephone		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	All courts in RNM		

2. PERFORMANCE

2.2. Improve/unify the structure of court reports and quality of data (1 September 2021 – 31 December 2022)

Which public problem is addressed with the commitment?	The Strategy on Justice System Reform (2017-2022) establishes that the form of annual work reports for the courts, the Judicial Council and the Supreme Court are not unified, which creates problems in respect to clarity and understanding of
--	--



	<p>report content, especially in respect to statistics, due to unsynchronized data. Most courts keep statistics on the number of received, resolved and pending cases that greatly differ from statistics on court performance kept by the Judicial Council. Hence, there is a need for unification and standardization of all reports (monthly and annual) developed by courts and judicial institutions. Although the deadline for addressing this situation indicated in the Strategy's Action Plan was January 2018, identical findings are featured in independent analyses conducted in 2020.</p>				
Main objective of the commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To unify court reports and ensure they provide quantitative and qualitative information on court performance; To develop and adopt methodology for unified annual report templates, and to develop adequate template for court reports accompanied by detailed guidelines for completion; 				
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	<p>Introduction of the methodology on unified templates for presentation of information and data in the public will primarily ensure synchronization of data disposed by judicial institutions. Previous practices for collection and systematisation of different statistics related to the courts in RNM will be replaced with unified approach and template for data collection and publication.</p>				
Why is this commitment relevant for OGP values?	<p>The commitment provides uniformity of court data presented in the public, whereby the commitment is important for improved transparency and openness.</p>				
Additional information	<p>Link to SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels</p> <p>This commitment is important to improve public accountability of courts in the Republic of North Macedonia by improving and unifying the structure of court reports and quality of data contained therein, whereby the public will be provided complete qualitative and quantitative information on court performance.</p>				
No.	Milestone (enlist activities that will contribute to commitment implementation)	Indicators (enlist measurable indicators/ benchmarks for monitoring and verification of achievements)	Activity holder (government institution, CSOs or other)	Start date	End date
2.2.1	Develop and adopt methodology for unified templates of annual reports	Methodology and other regulations (rulebooks, manual, form) for unified templates of annual reports by the courts in RNM are adopted	Supreme Court of RNM	January 2022	June 2022



2.2.2	Develop the form for court reports	Methodology and other regulations (rulebook, manual, form) for unified templates of annual reports by the courts in RNM are adopted	Supreme Court of RNM	January 2022	June 2022
2.2.3	Manual for completing court report	Methodology and other regulations (rulebook, manual, template) for unified templates of annual reports by the courts in RNM are adopted	Supreme Court of RNM	September 2022	December 2022
		New commitment			
Lead implementing institution		Supreme Court of RNM			
Name of the responsible person for implementation		[to be completed by competent authorities at a later stage]			
Title/Department		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
E-mail		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
Telephone		[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]			
Other actors involved		Ministries/Agencies	Judicial Council of RNM, all courts in RNM		
		CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Association of Judges, Center for Legal Research and Analyses		



2. PERFORMANCE

2.3. Improve electronic system for inception and continuous training of judges (1 September 2021 – 30 June 2022)

Which public problem is addressed by the commitment?	New website of the Academy of Judges and Public Prosecutors was launched in September 2019, but there is still space and need for modernisation of AJPP's work by providing a modern platform for e-learning intended for academy candidates and appointed judges and public prosecutors, especially in terms of hosting webinars and continuous learning based on sophisticated browsing of documents available in the modern e-library and e-archive. Upgrades to the academy's e-library and e-archive are needed in order to provide adequate materials for continuous education of (future) judges and public prosecutors.				
Main objective of the commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure easier access to content for inception and continuous learning by judges; To ensure easier access to materials for professional advancement of judges through the online platform for inception and continuous training of judges (e-learning), modern e-library and e-archive; To contribute towards better quality and equity justice for all through systematization and regular publication of conclusions adopted by the Courts of Appeals and principled opinions and views of the Supreme Court on unification of court jurisprudence; 				
How will the commitment contribute to addressing the public problem?	The commitment for modernization of the system of inception and continuous training for judges and public prosecutors will ensure full availability of such training for participants under conditions when distance learning is only possibility for enhancing professional capacity of judges and public prosecutors.				
How is the commitment relevant to OGP values?	The commitment anticipates publication and availability of curricula and materials used for inception and continuous training of judges and public prosecutors, including conclusions from meetings of all four Courts of Appeal and the Supreme Court of RNM, which demonstrates commitment to improving transparency in operation of AJPP and the courts in RNM and increases the quality of justice delivered by the courts.				
Additional information	<p>Link to SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions SDG target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels</p> <p>This commitment is important for improved quality of court decisions in the Republic of North Macedonia by advancing the electronic system for inception and continuous training of judges and public prosecutors at the Academy of Judges and Public Prosecutors, which is made available to all judges in RNM.</p>				
No.	Milestone	Indicators	Activity holder	Start date	End date



	(enlist activities that will contribute to commitment implementation)	(enlist measurable indicators/ benchmarks for monitoring and verification of achievements)	(government institution, CSOs or other)		
2.3.1	Develop online platform for inception and continuous training of judges (e-learning) and development of electronic educational materials and access to online databases	Number of trainings held through AJPP's e-learning platform	Academy of Judges and Public Prosecutors	September 2021	March 2022
2.3.2	Systematization and regular publication on AJPP's website of conclusions adopted by the Courts of Appeal and principles opinions and views of the Supreme Court for unification of court jurisprudence	Number of published conclusions, legal opinions and views on AJPP's website	Academy of Judges and Public Prosecutors	October 2021	June 2023
2.3.3	Enhance capacity of judges to use e-learning platform for continuous learning	Number of judges and public prosecutors that attended training on AJPP's e-learning platform	Academy of Judges and Public Prosecutors	January 2022	December 2022
2.3.4	Publication of statistical reports on activities of judges in the e-learning platform for continuous learning	Number of published reports	Academy of Judges and Public Prosecutors	January 2023	June 2023
2.3.5	Establish modern e-library and e-archive	Number of e-books made available in AJPP's e-library	Academy of Judges and Public Prosecutors	September 2021	June 2023
		New commitment			



Lead implementing institution	Academy of Judges and Public Prosecutors	
Name of the responsible person for implementation	[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]	
Title/Department	[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]	
E-mail	[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]	
Telephone	[to be completed by competent institutions at a later stage]	
Other actors involved	Ministries/Agencies	Judicial Council of RNM, all courts in RNM
	CSOs, private sector, multilateral and working groups	Association of Judges, Center for Legal Research and Analyses