

## ANNUAL REPORT

JANUARY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2022



January 2023

## IN BRIEF

Year 2022 is the 18<sup>th</sup> year in the operation of the Center for Civil Communications (CCC) and the final year of the implementation of the current five-year Strategic Plan (2018-2022).

The following summarized results speak for the continuous dynamic operation in 2022 as of previous years:

- » 22 researches were conducted and published;
- » 5 open databases have been created and published;
- » 275 public tenders were directly and in-depth monitored;
- » Over 20 trainings, conferences, workshops and debates were organized with over 200 participants;
- » A survey was conducted with 284 companies on their participation in public procurement;
- » Research on state institutions' personnel capacities in public procurement was conducted;
- » 9 publications (reports, analyzes and public policy documents) were published and distributed in 1,900 copies, and also made available in electronic form;
- » The reports, recommendations, research and manuals of CCC have been downloaded 112,033 times from the organization's website [www.ccc.org.mk](http://www.ccc.org.mk);
- » 1,162,490 people were reached by CCC posts on the social networks;
- » Main CCC website [www.ccc.org.mk](http://www.ccc.org.mk) has been visited 70,000 times;
- » CCC's specialized database web portal [www.opendata.mk](http://www.opendata.mk) has more than 6,000 views;
- » 478 media articles based on our activities and the results of their implementation were published in various media in the country;
- » A hundred concrete measures have been recommended and great number of them were implemented for greater transparency and reduced room for corruption in the country.

The regular monitoring of public procurement in the country that CCC has been conducting for 14 consecutive years, continued in 2022, by detecting and pointing out the weaknesses and problems in the public procurement system and by proposing measures to reduce the opportunities for abuses and the room for corruption. As a result of this activity, transparency and accountability in spending public money through tenders, as well as the legal framework in the field of public procurement, have improved to a significant extent.

The proven methodology that CCC implements in the monitoring of public procurement is the basis for implementing similar activities at the regional level, that is, within the "Balkan Tender Watch" project for monitoring public procurements in the Western Balkans countries.

Parallel to these activities at the systemic level, CCC also implements activities to assess transparency, accountability and integrity in public procurement at the institutional level. This year, these aspects were researched and analyzed in the municipalities and in the local public enterprises.

After a series of research, monitoring and analyzes of the spending of public money in the situation of increased risks of corruption in COVID-19 related procurement during 2020 and 2021, in 2022 the Center for Civil Communications started researching another significant area in public procurement, "green procurement". For the first time, monitoring of public

procurements related to environmental protection and research on the (non)application of "green" public procurements in the country and the influence of corruption risks in the process were carried out. The activity resulted in a report and document with recommendations for encouraging the implementation of green public procurement and preventing corruption in the process.

In the other main area of activity – the field of improving the capacities of journalists and the media, significant activities continued in 2022 to strengthen investigative journalism and cooperation between the media and non-governmental organizations in the realization of their joint social role. Regular assistance to journalists in their investigations of corruption and spending of public money continued.

CCC also conducted numerous researches on important phenomena, issues and areas for further use by journalists and non-governmental organizations, which are published in an open format on the web portal [www.opendata.mk](http://www.opendata.mk), which enables their further use and re-use by all interested parties.

During 2022, through a series of activities, a new five-year work strategy (2023-2027) was developed and adopted, which foresees five strategic priorities for the organization's actions, namely: anti-corruption and good governance; media; European integration; sustainable economic development and capacity building of the organization and long-term financial sustainability.

CCC activities in 2022 were carried out within the framework of seven projects, financially supported by: the European Union, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, USAID, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the World Bank and the Open Society Foundation - Macedonia, which are carried out independently or in partnership with other non-governmental organizations from the country and the Western Balkan region.

More detailed information about the projects, implementation, activities, results, achievements, donors and partners of CCC can be obtained on our website [www.ccc.org.mk](http://www.ccc.org.mk).

## ABOUT US

The Center for Civil Communications (CCC) was founded in April 2005 as a non-governmental, non-profit and non-partisan association of citizens. In its operation, the CCC focuses its work on two groups of interrelated activities: (1) monitoring public institutions and, based on that, recommending measures and advocating for implementation of policies for enhancing their work and narrowing the room for corruption and (2) enhancing the abilities of the journalists and CSO representatives, and the special role of the media and the civil society in the fight against corruption and increasing transparency, responsibility and accountability of public institutions.

In this regard, CCC has so far developed and proposed several hundred of concrete recommendations for taking measures to improve the legislation and the practice for more transparent, more accountable and more responsible central and local government authorities; it has trained over 500 journalists and CSO representatives in investigating and reporting corruption; and it has published over 200 research reports and analyzes.

CCC representatives participate regularly in workshops and expert groups for creating anti-corruption, transparency, open data and good governance strategies and actions.

CCC activities are aimed at: employed in public institutions and bodies at central and local government level, journalists, representatives of civil society organizations, businesspersons and their associations, as well as at citizens as end-users of the results of the operation of the organization.

In 2022, CCC staff numbered seven employees and several permanent external experts. Organization's managing and leadership bodies include the Assembly of the association as the supreme authority, the Managing Board and the President of the association.

VISION	MISSION	STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
CCC is a recognized social actor in the democratization of Macedonian society, better information of citizens and transparent and responsible governance.	CCC develops and enhances the communications among all societal factors for the processes of greater social significance. It monitors, analyses and improves social processes in the country and the region in the areas of anti-corruption, good governance, euro-integration, the media and economic development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Anti-corruption and good governance;</li><li>- Media;</li><li>- Euro-integration;</li><li>- Economic development and</li><li>- Building capacities of the organization and long-term financial sustainability.</li></ul>

## PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

**PUBLIC PROCUREMENT MONITORING (2008-2022), IN 2022 FINANCIALLY SUPPORTED BY THE INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FROM CIVICA MOBILITAS, A PROGRAM OF THE SWISS AGENCY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (2019-2022)**

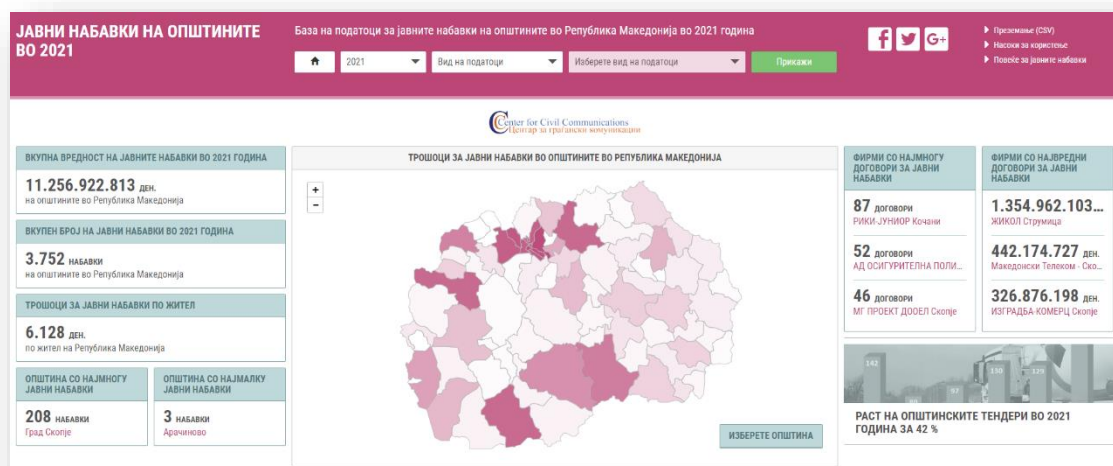
*Through direct monitoring of public procurement, basic weaknesses in the implementation of public tenders are detected and concrete measures are recommended to overcome the problems, the irrational use of public money and to narrow the room for corruption.*



During 2022:

- » 165 tenders conducted by state institutions at the national and local level were directly monitored;
- » The regular [report from the monitoring of public procurement](#) has been published with an overview of the situation, detected weaknesses and scope for abuse and corruption in public procurement;
- » Two indices of rationality have been published, no. [18](#) and no. [19](#), in which the prices at which six identical products were purchased from 63 different institutions are compared;
- » A series of specific measures that should be taken to improve the system of public procurement in the country are recommended, either for changes in the regulation or for the way of conducting public procurement;
- » An analysis of the appeal procedures in public procurement was made;
- » A survey of public opinion was conducted among companies participating in public procurement procedures to assess their experience of participating in tenders.





In addition to the activities related to the monitoring of public procurement, within the strategic support from the USAID Citizen Engagement Participation Program and the institutional support from the Civica Mobilitas Program, the following more significant activities were carried out:

- » Research was conducted and a ranking of 97 institutions (Government, line ministries and municipalities) was made by their level of **Active Transparency**, which became the main criterion for measuring the transparency of state institutions in the country so that the information from active transparency became mandatory for publication in the new Law on Free Access to Public Information, in the Government Transparency Strategy (2019-2021), as well as in the Open Government Partnership Action Plans 2018-2020 and 2021-2023.
- » The special website for a simplified presentation of the active transparency of the institutions [www.aktivnatransparentnost.mk](http://www.aktivnatransparentnost.mk) has been supplemented with the latest data from the survey for 2022.
- » A survey was conducted and a **ranking of the 30 largest public and state enterprises** was made according to the level of their transparency;
- » Four researches were conducted and published on important issues for the life and work of citizens, followed by open data bases on the web portal [www.opendata.mk](http://www.opendata.mk) as a platform on which the researches and databases created by CCC are published, in order to be more accessible and easier to understand by a wider circle of citizens;
- » Investigative journalists have been assisted during their research and reporting on corruption and the spending of public money.

## **SAFEGUARDS AGAINST CORRUPTION – A MATRA PROJECT, FINANCIALLY SUPPORTED FROM THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS (2021-2024)**

*The project includes activities to reduce corruption and abuse of public funds of local governments by increasing the transparency, accountability and integrity of local institutions and implementing the measures provided for in the National Strategy for the Prevention of Corruption and Conflict of Interest 2021-2025.*

During 2022:

- » Eight two-day anti-corruption trainings were conducted for 176 representatives of the municipalities of Bitola, Kichevo, Kumanovo, Negotino, Strumica, Tetovo, Chair and Shtip for building mechanisms to prevent corruption and to improve the implementation of public procurement;
- » A national conference on more effective protection against corruption at the local level was organized, dedicated to the importance of the fight against corruption in local self-government units, attended by 60 representatives from institutions, civil society organizations, municipalities and others, which was covered by 28 media outlets;
- » Three workshops and two trainings were organized in which 45 representatives of local CSO partners from the above mentioned eight municipalities participated;
- » Monitoring of public procurement in the targeted municipalities (8 municipalities and 24 local public enterprises) was carried out, based on a previously developed methodology for mapping corruption in public procurement;
- » The [reports](#) from the mapping of the risks of corruption in the public procurement of municipalities and public enterprises have been prepared and published;
- » Trainings were held for 20 local journalists on investigative and analytical journalism and
- » Letters with 15 documents were sent to the mayors, secretaries and integrity persons of the eight municipalities for improving the integrity system.





## **BALKAN TENDER WATCH – A PROJECT FUNDED BY EU THROUGH THE PROGRAM FOR "CONSOLIDATION OF THEMATIC REGIONAL NETWORKS OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS" (2018-2022)**

*The project increases the influence of civil society from the Western Balkans countries on anti-corruption policies and practices during the entire public procurement cycle, using European integration as a transformative agenda.*



During 2022:

- » The results of the direct and in-depth monitoring of more than 100 tenders and the [comparative report on the assessment of the state of public procurement in the Western Balkan countries](#) have been published;
- » A regional conference was organized as a forum for the presentation of research and the state of affairs in public procurement in the Western Balkan countries, discussion and exchange of opinion about the generators of corruption and ways of improving the situation;
- » A study visit to Brussels and discussion with the EU representatives and other institutions were conducted to exchange opinions, experiences and presentation of research findings, as well as future challenges in the area.

The project is implemented in partnership with the Open Society Foundation Serbia (as the lead organization), Open Society Fund Bosnia Herzegovina, Kosovo Foundation for Open Society and the Network for Affirmation of the NGO Sector - MANS, Montenegro.

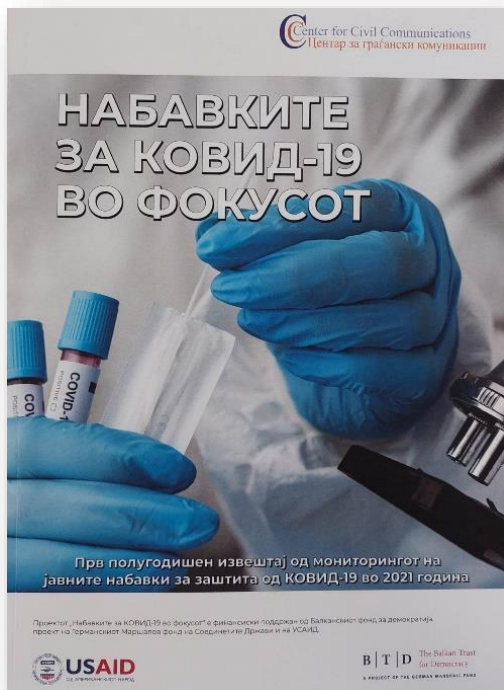
## COVID-19 PROCUREMENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT – A GRANT FUNDED PROJECT PROVIDED BY THE BALKAN FUND FOR DEMOCRACY, A PROJECT OF THE GERMAN MARSHALL FUND OF THE UNITED STATES AND USAID (2021-2022)

*The project provides an increased level of information to citizens for a better understanding of COVID-19 related procurements and the accompanied increased risks of corruption, as well as increased public pressure on public institutions to improve legislation and practice regarding the transparency, accountability and integrity of crisis related tenders, as well as the involvement of public institutions in a dialogue for the creation and implementation of a public policy to improve procurement in times of crisis.*

During 2022:

- » Two in-depth analyzes of the COVID-19 procurements carried out in 2021 (for the [first](#) and [second half](#) of the year) were developed, published and distributed, in which the risks of corruption were detected and represent a basis for the improvement of future crisis procurements in the country;
- » A [document on public procurement policies in crisis conditions](#) was developed, published and distributed;
- » A [database](#) has been created with all the COVID-19 procurements in the 2020 and 2021 crises;
- » A public debate was organized with 40 representatives of all involved and affected institutions for the presentation of research findings, pointing out problems and drawing conclusions for future procurement in crisis conditions.







## ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE THROUGH PREVENTING CORRUPTION IN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT (2022)

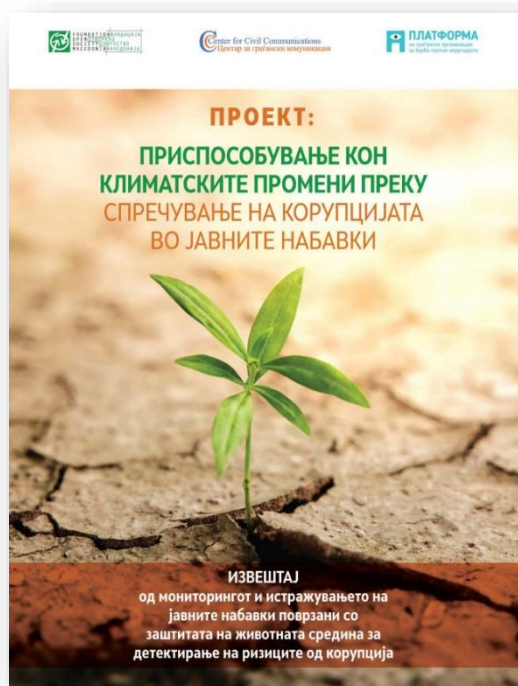
*The project aimed at introducing fair policies for the environment and a sustainable green transition by reducing corruption influences on green public procurement.*



During 2022:

- » Monitoring and research have been carried out through which the risks of corruption in public procurement related to environmental protection and possible corruption impacts on the limited application of the so-called green procurement;
- » A [monitoring and research report](#) was prepared and published, as well as a [document on public policies](#) to encourage the implementation of green public procurement and prevent corruption in the process;
- » Two public debates were organized with stakeholders, one with 16 representatives of civil society organizations in the field of environmental protection and the fight against corruption and the other with 40 representatives of all stakeholders and involved parties such as the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, the Ministry of finance, the Public Procurement Bureau, the State Audit Office and the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption;
- » Training on using and working with large databases, a session of the Assembly and an annual retreat for the members of the Platform of Civil Organizations for the Fight against Corruption have been organized.

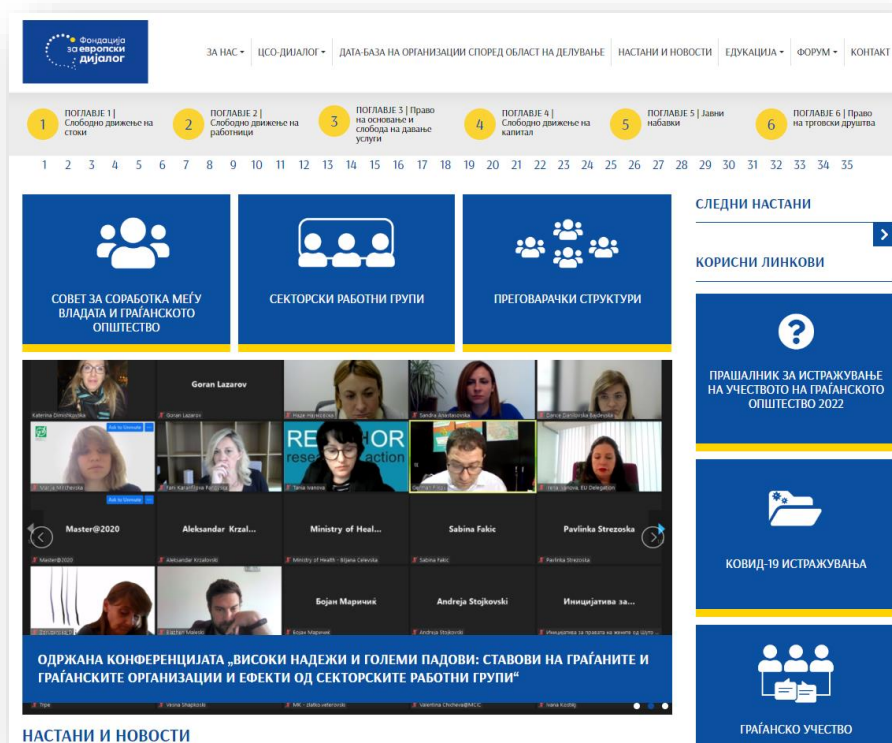
The project was implemented in partnership with 14 non-governmental organizations from the Platform of Civil Organizations to Fight Corruption, and was financially supported by the Open Society Foundation - Macedonia.





## CSO DIALOGUE – PLATFORM FOR STRUCTURAL PARTICIPATION IN EU INTEGRATION, PROJECT FUNDED BY THE EUROPEAN UNION WITHIN THE CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR SECTOR NETWORKING MECHANISM (2019-2022)

*The project enables essential and structural participation of the civil society, which expresses the views of the citizens, in order to influence the key sectoral reforms in the process of accession to the EU.*



During 2022:

- » [Shadow reports](#) have been prepared and published on the operation and effects of the operation of three sectoral working groups: on public finance management, on transport and on competitiveness and innovation, as part of a total of 11 shadow reports produced within the project by all involved partner organizations;
- » Participation and cooperation in the promotion of reports and the importance of the participation of civil society organizations in the mechanisms and processes of the country's accession to the EU.

The project is implemented in partnership with the Open Society Foundation - Macedonia (as a leading organization), Reactor - Research in Action and Eurothink - Center for European Strategies.



**SUPPORT TO THE PROCESS OF CO-CREATION OF THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR THE OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP 2021-2023 – A PROJECT FINANCED BY THE WORLD BANK'S MULTI-DONOR FUND TO SUPPORT MEMBER COUNTRIES AND LOCAL ENTITIES PARTICIPATING IN THE OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP (2020-2021)**

*The project strengthens the process of co-creation of the OGP Action Plan 2021-2023; improves the quality of co-creation engagement and dialogue; makes special efforts to reach underrepresented groups; strengthens the process for consideration and prioritization of commitments and ensures follow-up and monitoring of the adopted Action Plan through the working groups of the Network of Civil Organizations for OGP.*



During 2022:

- » CCC actively participates as a member of the Council for coordination and monitoring of the OGP process;
- » CCC actively participates in the work of the Network of civil organizations for OGP, in which 77 organizations and foundations from the country are members;
- » CCC conducted capacity-building training for the members and deputy members of the Council for coordination and monitoring of the OGP process;
- » CCC participates in regional and international meetings for exchange of information, practices and capacity building organized by the OGP international secretariat;
- » CCC actively participates in the working groups for the implementation of the commitments from the OGP Action Plan 2021-2023.

The project is implemented in partnership with the Foundation Open Society - Macedonia (as the leading organization) and the Association for Emancipation, Solidarity and Equality of Women (ESE) from Skopje.