



2012–2017

STRATEGY FOR COOPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT WITH THE CIVIL SOCIETY



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„The Government of the Republic of Macedonia firmly believes that openness and citizen engagement play a major role in fostering accountability, promoting innovation and growth and improving performance (...).

Over the past few years, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia has undertaken a large number of reforms aimed at improving good governance, accelerating economic growth and empowering citizens. In this respect, let me just single out a few achievements (...) The adoption of the Strategy for Cooperation of the Government with the Civil Society.“¹

1. Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia on the occasion of the Republic of Macedonia joining the «Open Government Partnership Initiative», September 2011.

I. INTRODUCTION

In 2007, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia adopted the first Strategy for Cooperation of the Government with the Civil Society and the Action Plan 2007-2011. There, the Government emphasized the importance of the civil society in general, thereby setting the ground for its cooperation with CSOs and took a systematic approach in strengthening the basic conditions for a faster and more efficient development of this sector. The Strategy refers to the cooperation with associations and foundations, as part of the wider civil society sector, with the aim of ensuring inclusive process and engagement of the civil society in policy making processes. In the period following the adoption of the Strategy, a number of activities were undertaken, each with the aim of implementing the goals and measures and strengthening the sector. Following the example of that Strategy, a number of other strategies and documents were adopted, through which institutions on both a national and local level expressed their commitments to develop certain areas important for the work of the civil society and to include CSOs in inter-sectorial initiatives².

With the adoption of the Strategy as an institutional mechanism for cooperation between the Government and civil society, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia has begun to follow both European and world-wide trends in this area. In 2007, the Government joined the first wave of countries in Europe that adopted similar documents, following the examples of Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia and Great Britain. Since then, many countries from Central and Eastern Europe, as well as from the Balkans have initiated the adoption of strategic documents that would establish the basis for cooperation and would guarantee the involvement of citizens and civil society organisations in the social processes.

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia continually appreciates the contribution of the civil society and its important role in: the development of the society, fostering the pluralism, tolerance and development of democracy. To that end, the Government adopts **the Strategy for Cooperation of the Government with the Civil Society 2012-2017**. Bearing in mind the results accomplished up until the present day, at the same time it develops a framework for future activities that would enable further strengthening and development of the cooperation with the civil society.

2 For example, Strategy for Development and Promotion of Volunteerism of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia (2010), Strategy of the City of Skopje for Cooperation with CSOs (2007).

Adoption of the Strategy is in compliance with the National Strategy for Integration of the Republic of Macedonia in the European Union³. In the National Strategy, the Government has highlighted the level of cooperation and partnership between the Government and civil society, as an important factor in the overall reform processes in the country. At the same time, it has expressed the Government's efforts to develop the sector and strengthen the mutual trust. Furthermore, in the National Programme for Adoption of EU Acquis - revision 2011, the Government committed itself to support participation of civil society in decision-making processes and in providing social services, to work on further development of the civil society, particularly in rural areas, as well as to implement the new Strategy for Cooperation with CSOs.

In the National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis of the European Union - revised 2012, the Government stressed that *"participation of the civil society in the decision making processes will continually be supported through the implementation of the Strategy for Cooperation with the Civil Society"*.

The Strategy also incorporates principles contained in the Lisbon Agreement⁴ and in other documents of the European Union and Council of Europe, which refer to CSOs and participation of citizens in democratic processes.⁵

3 2004, www.sobranie.mk/WBStorage/Files/Nacionalna_strategija%2006.09.04.PDF

4 See Articles 10 and 11. Signed in 2007, enforced in 2009.

5 Resolution of the European Parliament on Perspectives for Development of Social Dialogue according to the Lisbon Agreement, P6_TA (2009)0007, 13 January 2009; European Commission: White Paper for European Governance, COM(2011) 428, 24 July 2011; European Commission Communication, Europe 2020 Strategy for prudent, sustainable and inclusive development in the next decade, COM(2010)2020, 2010; European Council, Recommendation (2001) 19 to the Committee of Ministers of the Member Countries for Participation of Citizens in the Local Public Life, 6 December 2011 and others.

II. COOPERATION – PROGRESS TO DATE

EXISTING INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND PRACTICES

The *Initiative for Establishment of the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs*,⁶ which was adopted by the Government in November 2004, explicitly expresses its commitment to build relations and cooperation with the civil society on the basis of mutual trust. With this initiative, the Republic of Macedonia was among the first countries in the region that established a separate unit, whose function is to build and develop the cooperation with civil society.

In the function of the aforementioned commitments in the Initiative, the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs operates in the Sector for Policy Analysis and Coordination in the General Secretariat of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia. One of the key roles of the Unit is to act as a contact point for exchange of information and cooperation, to coordinate the activities for cooperation and to notify and propose measures for improving the cooperation.

The Unit participated in the adoption of the Strategy 2007 and regularly prepared annual reports to the Government on its implementation. The Unit organizes meetings with CSOs, focus groups for discussions upon certain reports, programmes and plans, and also participates at events organized by the civil society sector. As of 2007 to the present day, numerous training sessions and study visits have been organised aimed at strengthening the capacities of employees in the Unit.

With the adoption of the Law on Associations and Foundations and the Codes on Good Practices for Financing and for Participating in Policy Making Processes, the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs has been given the mandate to perform important functions aimed at efficient implementation of these documents. *The Code on Good Practices for Financial Support to Associations of Citizens and Foundations from the Budget of the Republic of Macedonia* obligates the Unit to publish public calls for financing activities from the Budget of the Republic of Macedonia and to inform the Government on an annual basis about the utilisation of allocated funds and the accomplished results from supported organisations' activities.

⁶ Initiative for Establishment of the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs in the Republic of Macedonia, November 2004

In compliance with the *Code on Good Practices for Participation of the Civil Society in Policy Making Processes* the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs publishes on its web site proposals from organisations, provides feedback information upon received proposals, prepares reports on consultations upon obtained opinions from state administration bodies, publishes calls for contribution to the Annual Work Programme of the Government, monitors the implementation of the Code and submits biannual reports on the implementation and recommendations for improvement thereof. The Unit has also started publishing information on consultations in cooperation with competent bodies, pursuant to the information obtained from these bodies, which was positively assessed by non-governmental organizations.

The Unit for Cooperation with NGOs has established an *internal (functional) network of civil servants in the ministries who are in charge of the cooperation with the civil society* and also adopted recommendations for cooperation of the Unit with the responsible civil servants nominated by the ministries for cooperation with the civil society. For better coordination, the Unit periodically organizes meetings with the nominated civil servants from the ministries and regularly communicates with them and shares information on how to achieve greater success with the implementation of the Strategy.

All ministries have nominated contact persons for cooperation with CSOs who are connected in the inter-institutional network coordinated by the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs. Cooperation between ministries and CSOs takes place in the following forms:

- ▶ consultations prior to adoption of policies and laws;
- ▶ inclusion of representatives from the civil society in working groups, working bodies and alike established by the ministry;
- ▶ development and implementation of joint projects financed by the ministries, co-financed by organizations or financed by other donors;
- ▶ direct financing of organizations' activities;
- ▶ giving authorisations to organisations for undertaking certain activities;
- ▶ informative events;
- ▶ involvement of organisations in regional and international initiatives.

The Unit has its own web site www.nvosorabotka.gov.mk that serves as a central site for information and coordination. On the web site, one can

find information about the conditions in the civil society, cooperation with other bodies, calls and advertisements of interest for the sector, activities of actors etc. This web site also contributes for enlarging the consultation processes with associations and foundations during the drafting of laws and policy making processes.

OVERVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY 2007-2011

The first Strategy for Cooperation of the Government with CSOs was adopted in January 2007, along with the Action Plan that elaborated upon the specific measures and activities for implementation of Strategy's goals. The General Secretariat - Unit for Cooperation with NGOs played the main role in coordinating and monitoring the Strategy implementation and reported to the Government about the progress of its activities. The line ministries and other state administration bodies, by area of their activity, were in charge of the implementation of certain measures and activities.

Implementation of the Strategy 2007-2011 was monitored through reports prepared every two months by the ministries and through annual reports prepared by the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.⁷ In December 2010, a Summary Report was prepared on the Implementation of the Strategy, as well as a Report on the Mechanism of Coordination of State Administration Bodies in Charge of Implementation of the Strategy.⁸

The Strategy 2007 had seven goals, for which concrete measures and activities were envisaged in the Action Plan adopted along with the Strategy: (1) improving the legal framework; (2) participation of civil society in policy making processes; (3) establishing inter-institutional cooperation; (4) establishing inter-sectorial cooperation; (5) involving the civil society in EU integration process; (6) creating a more favourable environment for financial sustainability of the civil society; and (7) permanent development of the civil society.

⁷ Reports are available on the web site www.nvosorabotka.gov.mk

⁸ Progress Report on Implementation of the Strategy for Cooperation of the Government with the Civil Society (2007-2011) for the period January 2007 - December 2010, Emina Nuredinoska, 2010 and Establishment of Efficient Coordinative Mechanism with other Government Institutions Relevant for Implementation of the Strategy for Cooperation of the Government with the Civil Society, Nikica Kusenikova, 2010. Reports were prepared under the project "Technical Assistance to the General Secretariat - Sector for Policy Analysis and Coordination" supported and managed by the Delegation of the European Union in Skopje.

The aforementioned documents for implementation of measures from the Strategy highlighted the following *general conclusions* regarding the manner of implementation of the document:

- ▶ The Strategy is generally being implemented successfully, with different levels of realisation of activities;
- ▶ Certain state administration bodies harmonise their programmes with the measures from the Strategy;
- ▶ Improvement of the legal framework and several laws adopted in a participative manner are the key achievements;
- ▶ Possibilities for enhancing the participation in policy making processes and the need for improved development of the civil society in rural areas;
- ▶ Possibility for improving the implementation of measures the aim of which is to improve the financial sustainability of the civil society;

The most *specific results* accomplished to date are the following:

- ▶ The Law on Associations and Foundations in 2010 and the pertinent secondary legislation for its enforcement have been adopted. The Law represents a basic document that regulates the right to association and operation of CSOs. The Law is harmonised with the European Convention on Human Rights and aims at improving the financial standing of organisations;
- ▶ Changes have been introduced in the legal system so as to ensure availability of draft laws on web sites of ministries that prepare these draft laws and on the web site of the Unique National Electronic Register of Regulations (UNERR);
- ▶ Persons in charge of the cooperation with CSOs in line ministries and development of a system for exchange of information and consultations have been appointed;
- ▶ CSOs have been included in inter-sectorial consultative bodies and implementation of joint projects, such as the EU and the Republic of Macedonia Civil Society Joint Consultative Committee and the National Coordinative Body for Corporate Social Responsibility;
- ▶ Representatives of CSOs have been included in working bodies established with the aim of monitoring the operational programmes of IPA and consulting with CSOs concerning the project portfolios;
- ▶ The Code on Good Practices for Financial Support to Associations of Citizens and Foundations was adopted in 2007;
- ▶ The Code on Good Practices for Participation of Civil Society in the Policy Making Processes was adopted in 2011;

- ▶ The Law on Volunteerism in 2007 and the Strategy for Promotion and Development of Volunteerism were adopted in 2010.

Areas and measures that need to be *particularly developed* in the future, inter alia, are the following:

- ▶ Proactive involvement of CSOs in decision-making processes and European integration, especially in the development and harmonisation of national development plans, operational programmes and other strategic documents;
- ▶ Improvement of the financial sustainability of CSOs, particularly through realisation of measures from the Strategy envisaged in this area (budget financing, financing from lottery proceeds, philanthropy);
- ▶ Increasing the involvement of CSOs in implementation of activities of state administration bodies in compliance with their scope of work and participation in policy and decision making processes.
- ▶ Transferring public authorisation to CSOs and development of public-private partnerships as an opportunity for improving and strengthening cooperation.

According to the experience to date concerning the implementation of the Strategy and the measures thereof, the following *general recommendations* have been emphasized:

- ▶ Realisation of measures that have a subsequent impact on the realisation of other measures in the Strategy (e.g. strengthening the capacities of civil servants, introduction of measures for publication of laws on web sites);
- ▶ Strengthening the role and capacities of the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs;
- ▶ Improving the mechanism for communication and coordination among civil servants in charge of implementation of the Strategy and exchange of information and consultations related with the existing activities, as well as coordination during the planning processes;
- ▶ Providing budgets for the implementation of the Strategy and other programme activities of the Unit;
- ▶ Establishment of a consultative body for improving cooperation, dialogue and fostering the development of the civil society in the Republic of Macedonia.

III. STATUS OF THE CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

The roots of the civil society in Macedonia are to be found in the period of national revival (the end of nineteenth century, the beginning of the twentieth century). Nevertheless, the upsurge of this sector began after the independence of the country in 1991, and especially after the adoption of the first Law on Associations of Citizens and Foundations in 1998, which allowed organisations to register themselves as independent entities for performing different kinds of activities.

Literature and cultural societies established at the end of nineteenth century and at the beginning of the twentieth century, together with charitable associations operating before the Second World War and numerous sectorial social organisations (since 1945) represent the beginning of cultural, sports and professional organisations. During that period, social organisations were functioning, as well as associations and other societies, such as the Macedonian Red Cross, Women's Organisation, Trade Union, Chamber of Commerce and other interest groups. During the transition period, a large number of CSOs were established with the aim of responding to the then current social needs, whereas during the 1990s, their number significantly increased and their role became particularly important for the development of the society, making connections with initiatives in other countries and humanitarian activities in crises.⁹

In the last several years, the number of organisations has significantly increased - in the Republic of Macedonia there were 11,457 associations and foundations registered by 2010. Pursuant to the new Law on Associations and Foundations adopted in 2010, organisations were to re-register themselves; thus the number of re-registered organisations by March 2012 reached 3,732.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SECTOR

During the course of the last year, several analyses of the civil society's status were prepared with the aim of defining the priorities of various donors' programmes in the function of further development of the sector¹⁰.

⁹ For more information, see: Long Way to Greater Civil Engagement - Analytical Report, CIVICUS: Index of the Civil Society in the Republic of Macedonia, prepared by the Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation (2011)

¹⁰ For the development of this part, the following directly quoted analyses have been used: Progress Report for the Western Balkan Countries, the section on Macedonia), European Commission 2011, European Commission, Long Journey to Greater Citizen Engagement - Analytical Report, CIVICUS: Index of the Civil Society in the Republic of Macedonia, prepared by the Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation (2011); Index for Sustainability of Non-Governmental Organisations in Central and Eastern Europe, USAID

These analyses have been taken into consideration during the drafting of this Strategy. Several general and specific conclusions about the status of this sector could be drawn from these reports and analyses.

In general, according to the analysis of *CIVICUS Index of the Civil Society in the Republic of Macedonia* of 2011, the civil society in Macedonia is “moderately developed”. According to measurements of this analysis, it means that the level of institutionalisation and practicing of values is well developed. Organisations should particularly promote non-violence and greater tolerance and should strive for transparency and internal democracy. The USAID’s Index has also shown that organisations are stronger and have better developed internal structure and internal organisation, due to good managerial practices and principles.

On the other hand, over the past several years, the sustainability of the sector has become an even greater challenge since it is still very weak in terms of the capacities of organisations and in terms of the external factors that have an impact on it (legal framework for financing, contribution by the local community, impact of other sectors etc.) Therefore, the influence of the civil society on social problems and policies is moderate or average, whereas the citizen engagement in organisations’ activities is at a low level.

According to data obtained from the Office for Financial Intelligence for 11,350 organisations, it can be concluded that the budgets of CSOs (associations and foundations) are quite small. Most of them (85%) make do with an annual budget of 100,000 denars (see Table 1), and only 5 organisations have budgets that exceed 100,000,000 denars.¹¹ This is an important indicator that needs to be taken into account when planning policies and laws that have an impact on the operation and development of the sector.

(2011); Conclusions from the 5th meeting of the EU and Republic of Macedonia Civil Society Joint Consultative Committee, held on 18th October, 2011; Social Responsibility of Citizens, MCIC 2009; Tax Environment of Civil Society Organisations in the Republic of Macedonia, MCIC 2011, Transparency and Participation of Public in Law Drafting Processes: Comparative Review and Assessment of Situation in Macedonia, OSCE, MCIC, ECNL, 2010

¹¹ Presentation: “Supervision over Entities and Methods of Its Performance” by Petar Ristovski, (3rd March, 2011), Office for Financial Intelligence

Annual Budget (in denars)	Number of CSOs
0 – 100.000	9.636
100.001 – 500.000	672
500.001 – 1.000.000	325
1.000.001 – 5.000.000	488
5.000.001 – 10.000.000	106
10.000.001 – 50.000.000	107
50.000.001 – 100.000.000	11
Over 100.000.000	5
Total number of associations and foundations	11.350

Table 1: Annual budget according to presented annual income in annual financial reports

Furthermore, there is a general perception that there are significant differences between organisations operating in towns and those operating in rural areas. Organisations operating in larger towns are more developed and more active in the processes on a national level, whereas those operating in smaller towns have neither the capacities nor sustainability to contribute significantly to the development of the society. Therefore, there is a need to stimulate the development of organisations in smaller towns and rural areas. According to analyses conducted in this sector, most of the civil society organisations operate at a local level, but on the other hand, only a small number of organisations have a larger impact and presence in the social processes and have good practices for internal management.

CSOs actively support the process for EU integration of the country. Most often, their activities are connected with the promotion and celebration of important events related to the history and general values of the European Union. Organisations actively follow the processes of accession to the EU, decentralisation, transparency and judiciary reforms and regularly contribute with constructive recommendations to the development and improvement of the processes. Some of the organisations conduct trainings for capacity building of both the administration and CSOs about IPA and European Union, in general, as well as raising awareness about the integration process and monitoring the progress for accession of the Republic of Macedonia in the European Union.

Organisations do not work sufficiently on developing their own policies for communication with the public and do not adequately use the media for

promotion of their activities. On the other hand, the media and journalists do not show particular interest in understanding and promoting the role and achievements of the civil society. In order to enhance the capacities of CSOs in this area, a range of activities are undertaken, and more frequent reporting is present in the media about sectorial initiatives.

According to researches¹², the following specific characteristics and *internal strengths* have been identified:

- ▶ The civil society is most active in the area of human rights, equality, development of decentralisation and support for implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement.
- ▶ Civil society continually works on raising the awareness of citizens and on providing services for meeting social needs.
- ▶ CSOs communicate and cooperate among themselves better than before. They create platforms in the areas where they act and organise themselves in ad-hoc groups in order to have greater influence on social processes and events.
- ▶ CSOs connect with groups and communities they represent better than before and try to represent their interests.
- ▶ Corruption in the civil society is at a very low level.
- ▶ Organisations further develop transparency in their work by publishing information and reports on their web sites.

The same researches emphasize the following *weaknesses* of the sector:

- ▶ Insufficient financial sustainability.
- ▶ Insufficient development of internal strategies for development and management.
- ▶ Insufficient activities in regard to stimulating social responsibility of citizens, that is, the engagement of citizens and cooperation with other entities.
- ▶ Human resources is another weakness of the civil society, due to the insufficient number of professionals employed on a full-time basis.
- ▶ Civil society organisations lack the relevant capacity (expertise and financial resources) for active involvement in the law drafting processes.

12 Particularly Civicus and USAID's index

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

External environment consists of the legal framework that fosters the development and sustainability of the sector, factors for participation and influence of the sector in the policy making and law drafting processes, active involvement of citizens in sectors' activities, support from the national and local community, dialogue and cooperation with other entities in society and inclusion of the sector in initiatives for improving the economic situation and social development. Concerning these areas and activities performed by civil society organisations, the following conclusions have been made:

1) Legal Framework for Establishment and Operation of Organisations

The basic legal framework for establishment and operation of organisations has been improved with the adoption of the *Law on Associations and Foundations* in 2010.¹³ The aim of the Law is to establish grounds for further development and sustainability of organisations and harmonise the Macedonia legal system with the regulations and good practices of the European Union. The Law represents an important aspect because of the following:

- ▶ it extended the freedom for joining of juveniles, foreigners and legal entities;
- ▶ it contains provisions that provide better guidelines for internal management;
- ▶ it allows for direct performance of profitable activities, which represents an important source of financing for organisations;
- ▶ it has introduced the status of organisations of public interest, which is a precondition for the introduction of tax incentives.

The status of organisations of public interest is awarded by the Government upon proposal by the Commission for Organisations of Public Interest, consisting of three representatives from ministries and CSOs. Upon the adoption of the Law, the Ministry of Justice adopted all regulations necessary for the implementation of this Law. In September 2011, the *Law on Amending the Law on Associations and Foundations*¹⁴ was adopted. It

¹³ Official Gazette of RM no.52/2010

¹⁴ Official Gazette of RM no.135/2011. Introduction of the principle "Silence Means Approval" is one of the reasons for amending the Law, as well as, its harmonisation with the Law on General Administrative Procedure and the Law on Establishment of State Commis-

changed the procedure for registration of organisations in case the Central Registry fails to make a decision within the defined deadline.

Operation of CSOs is conditioned by other laws, as well. *Law on Accounting of Non-Profitable Organisations*¹⁵ regulates the financial operation of organisations. The Law introduces easier financial treatment for smaller CSOs, however, at the moment there is a proposal in place for it to be amended.¹⁶ The *Law on Lobbying*¹⁷ is also very important as it addresses organisations' efforts to have influence on the law drafting processes. There is only one registered lobbyist on the register, which shows the need for making an assessment of the Law and its implementation, with the aim of actually improving it.

*Law on Preventing Money Laundering and Other Criminal Proceeds and Financing Terrorism*¹⁸ is the latest law that equalise associations and foundations with financial institutions and stipulates certain obligations for organisations (e.g. development of programmes and procedures for preventing money laundering and terrorism, as well as the establishment of a separate unit in charge of these matters, in cases where there are fifty or more employees). During 2011, a number of meetings with CSOs were being held aimed at informing them about the Law. During the discussions, interest was expressed for there to be a more detailed explanation of the impact of this Law on the operation of organisations.

2) Sustainability of the Sector

Overall, the general conclusion is that the sustainability of CSOs is very weak given that they are predominantly financed by foreign donors, whereas the financing from domestic sources is less prevalent. In addition to foreign donors, other dominant sources of financing arrive in the form

sion for Making Decisions in Administrative Procedures and Labour Related Procedures of Second Instance.

15 Published in the Official Gazette of RM no.24/2003. See also: Decision of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Macedonia U.no.20/2005 and Law on Amending and Supplementing the Law on Accounting of Non-Profitable Organisations, Official Gazette of RM no. 17/2011

16 In November 2011, the Ministry of Finance published proposed amendments to the Law, which are to expand the circle of organisations that should submit annual accounts. See: Plan for Implementation of Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA), Draft Law on Amending and Supplementing the Law on Accounting of Non-Profitable Organisations, November 2011, Ministry of Finance, (SFS_03_25112011) <http://ener.gov.mk>

17 Official Gazette of RM no.106/2008. Decision of the Constitutional Court U.no.232/2008 of 13.01.2010, Law on Amending the Law on Lobbying, Official Gazette of RM no.135/2011.

18 Official Gazette of RM no.4/2008 and amendments to the Law published in Official Gazette of RM no. 57/2010, and no. 35/2011.

the grants from the Government, membership fees and activities that generate profit. Financing through donations from individuals and the business sector is at the lowest level.

Until the adoption of the Law on Associations and Foundations in 2010, organisations were able to perform profitable activities only by way of establishing business entities. With the adoption of this Law, the Government has created conditions for direct self-financing, which is particularly important for their sustainability, as it allows organisations to develop their own portfolios and be innovative in implementing their activities, and to have at the same time access to an independent source of income. Interest rates from reserve funds represent another source of income, however, organisations in Macedonia do not use these options which are available to them.

The Law on Associations and Foundations stipulates that CSOs are subject to tax and customs incentives pursuant to the law. Tax incentives applicable to CSOs are defined in the Law on Profit Tax, Law on Personal Income Tax, Law on Value Added Tax and the Law on Donations and Sponsorships in Public Activities and others. CSOs are non-profitable and may not allocate the acquired profit, however, they are part of the wider definition of entities that are tax payers, pursuant to the Law on Profit Tax. By introducing the status of organisations of public interest, the Law on Associations and Foundations has introduced a provision which stipulates that organisations with this status may obtain higher tax and customs incentives. Consequently, the next step would be to determine the areas where such incentives may be prescribed and to generally define the tax incentives that would stimulate the organisations' development.

To that end, one of the measures foresees an amendment to the *Law on Donations and Sponsorships in Public Activities*¹⁹, with the aim of stimulating greater financial support from citizens and business sectors, which are being prepared by the Ministry of Justice. The Law on Donations and Sponsorships in Public Activities was adopted in April 2006, and its implementation began in 2007.²⁰ For the first time in Macedonia, the Law introduced tax incentives for citizens and companies for donations and sponsorships in areas of public interest and to associations, foundations, and a wider range of recipients (until then, tax incentives were given only for donations to the Red Cross and state institutions). Upon the adoption of the Law, the pertinent secondary legislation was adopted, whereas in 2011, the procedure for definition of public interest was

19 Official Gazette of RM no.47/2006 and amendments to the Law published in Official Gazette of RM no. 86/08 and 51/2011.

20 Official Gazette of RM no. 47/06

amended.²¹ According to researches, two-thirds of citizens in the Republic of Macedonia think that tax incentives are an important stimulation for making donations, but to date, only a small number of individual persons that use these incentives have been registered. Business entities also have a positive opinion about these tax incentives: 71% think that they are very important and an additional 18% think that they are important.²²

As concerns the *state financing*, there has been a better legal framework for transparent distribution and responsible utilisation of funds after the adoption of the *Code on Good Practices for Financial Assistance to Associations of Citizens and Foundations from the Budget of the Republic of Macedonia*. Over the past six years, the Government has been allocating funds from the Budget for financing “non-governmental organisations”. The funds are predominantly utilised for implementing project activities. Ministries also award grants directly to organisations in areas of their cooperation.

The Government also awards funds pursuant to the Law on Lottery Games.²³ To that end, every year a decision is taken for allocation of lottery proceeds. Lottery proceeds are utilised for financing national organisations of disabled persons, their associations and unions, associations of citizens for fighting against domestic violence, the Macedonian Red Cross and for financing sports. Lottery games are an important source of support for CSOs in EU member countries, and they foster the development of the entire sector and not only of a small number of organisations.²⁴ According to the European practices and domestic needs, the possibility for utilisation of these proceeds by a larger number of CSOs in Macedonia should be analysed reviewed/analysed.

In the past several years, there have been several initiatives aimed at strengthening the support of the Government to organisations, through the transparent award of funds in practice, expanding the circle of users of lottery proceeds, determining the exact amount of funds that should be allocated to associations and foundations and supporting the institutional development of organisations.

21 Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Donations and Sponsorships in Public Activities, Official Gazette of RM no.51/11

22 “Law on Donations and Sponsorships in Public Activities - Implementation and Main Challenges”, Nikica Kusinikova in cooperation with the European Centre for Non-Profit-able Law (ECNL), May/June 2010.

23 Official Gazette of RM no. 24/11 and Amendments to the Law published in the Official Gazette of RM no.51/2011 and 148/2011.

24 See: Lottery Proceeds as a Tool for Support of Good Causes and Civil Society Organisations - A Fate or a Planned Concept?, Katerina Hadji-Miceva Evans, 2011

As already mentioned, activities of CSOs are mainly supported by *foreign donors*, and less by domestic sources. This is a challenge for the financial sustainability of the sector as the number and scope of foreign donations constantly decreases. Most frequently, organisations receive support from the European Union, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. However, there are also other organisations and programmes that financially support the development of the sector and its participation in social processes (e.g. Organisation for Security and Economic Development - OSCE²⁵, Embassy of the United States). CSOs utilise funds from regional donors, as well (e.g. Balkan Fund for Democracy, European Fund for the Balkans and others).

²⁵The OSCE Mission in Skopje continually supports the development of institutions and civil society through financing projects and activities of CSOs in various areas, especially in the areas of rule of law, good governance and police reforms. The Sector for Rule of Law supports activities for improving the legislation processes, particularly the participation and consultations with the public and civil society. Over the past few years, the OSCE Mission cooperated with the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs, as well as with a number of CSOs in improving the environment for operation of the sector.

BRIEF OVERVIEW OF ASSISTANCE FROM FOREIGN DONORS

The support of the European Union²⁶ to organisations directly in Macedonia dates from 1992 through various programmes. In 2007, financing through the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) commenced. Organisations have access to other funds as well, such as the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. Also, on the level of the European Union, alone or along with state administration bodies, they submit proposals for joint projects.²⁷ The goal of projects financed under the IPA is to develop the democratic society and civil society; therefore organisations' activities are financed directly. IPA programmes are also directed towards technical assistance for strengthening the cooperation between the Government and civil society, especially through building and strengthening the institutional structures for cooperation, dialogue and financing, as well as, capacity development of state administration bodies and CSOs in these areas. The instrument "*Structure for Support to the Civil Society*"²⁸ represents another important tool for development and dialogue among organisations (Civil Society Facility) established under IPA. Its aim is to support local and national initiatives and capacity building of organisations, to organise programmes for visiting institutions of the European Union and to assist the partnership activities between organisations in the beneficiary countries and the EU.

USAID²⁹ has been supporting the development of the civil society since 1993 through continuous financing of projects and activities of CSOs in many areas. The Office for Democracy and Local Government supports activities for improving the legal framework for operation of the sector and for adoption of laws in this area. By 2010, it had financed activities for institutional development of the sector, local partnerships, development of skills for representation and support to various initiatives, development of philanthropy, volunteerism work and alike. In 2011, USAID announced the four-year tender for direct assistance to CSOs in the areas of civic

26 http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia/projects/overview/index_en.htm

27 For example, in May 2010, the Ministry of Economy signed a Grant Agreement with the European Commission for the project: "Assistance for Realisation of the National Agenda for Corporate Social Responsibility in the Republic of Macedonia". Partners to the Ministry of Economy from the civil society are the following: "Macedonian Enterprise Development Foundation" and Association "Connect", which are responsible for implementation of two components of the Project. <http://www.oop.mk.projekt.html>

28 http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia/eu_the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia/civil_society_dialogue/index_en.htm

29 http://macedonia.usaid.gov/Documents/USAID%20Aniversary%20Brochure_web.pdf

activism, participation on national and local levels, lobbying and cooperation among organisations.

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, represented by its Office for Cooperation in Macedonia - SDC has started the *Programme for Support to the Civil Society CIVICA Mobilitas*, whose aim is to strengthen the capacity of CSOs and their sustainability. The programme supports activities of CSOs in the following areas: monitoring the work of local government bodies, especially the provision of public services, monitoring the financial, budgetary and accounting practices in public finances, promotion and support to the corporate social responsibility of the private sector and encouraging inter-ethnic dialogue in all spheres of society.³⁰

3) *Participation in the Policy Making Processes, Adoption of Laws and European Integration*

A tendency for greater involvement of CSOs in the *policy making processes and adoption of laws* has been noticed over the past several years. There are several documents that provide the basis for involvement of the public in the processes of adoption of laws. In this context, the adoption of the *Code of Good Practices for Participation of the Civil Society in Policy Making Processes* could be mentioned as a significant accomplishment.³¹ The Code aims at improving the cooperation between the Government and CSOs through structural and regular communication in the processes of adoption and implementation of policies and laws, and improving the quality of these processes by using expertise from the civil society. To that end, the Code prescribes standards that need to be applied in these processes.

Furthermore, the commitment of the Government to act in compliance with the *Methodology for Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA)* is particularly important as it contributes to the transparency of the law drafting processes. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to start applying this mechanism in a prompt and harmonised manner by state administration bodies and to improve the quality of its implementation in the practice. The Government also adopted several guidelines and manuals with the aim of improving the law drafting processes, such as *Guidelines for Operation*

³⁰ The Programme is being implemented by the Centre for Institutional Development (CIRa), www.civicamobilitas.org.mk

³¹ Official Gazette of RM no.99/2011.

of Ministries for Involving All Stakeholders in the Law Drafting Procedure³² etc.³³

With the amendments to the Rulebook for Operation of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia in February 2008, the *Unique National Electronic Register of Regulations (EHEP)* has been introduced. It offers a consolidated review of existing and draft laws, which provides for transparency and inclusion.³⁴ State administration bodies are obligated to publish all draft laws on their web sites and on UNERR, thus giving an opportunity to all stakeholders to submit their comments upon the proposals and ask questions about the texts.

In the past several years, state administration bodies, particularly the ministries, included CSOs in their *working bodies*, on various occasions and situations. Representatives from the civil society were involved in the working group established with the aim of development of the new Law on Associations and Foundations, the Law on Free of Charge Legal Assistance; amendments and supplements to the Electoral Code, amendments and supplements to the Law on Free Access to Information of Public Character, the Law and the Strategy on Volunteerism.³⁵

The Government recognizes that the implementation of legal guarantees for participation has its own challenges in practice. On one hand, analyses show that there are no harmonised practices among state administration bodies for inclusion of organisations in policy making and law drafting processes. On the other hand, civil society organisations do not always possess sufficient capacity for active involvement in the law drafting processes, often lacking expertise in and on specific issues. Adoption of documents represents one step towards improving the practice, and the Government is dedicated to promote these guarantees and to build the capacities of state administration bodies, in order to make them respect and implement these guarantees.³⁶

32 Official Gazette of RM no.150/2011.

33 E.g. (1) Code for Consultations with the Public during Law Drafting Processes, (2) Guidelines for Stakeholders - Good Consultations Lead to Good Regulations, (3) Participation of All Stakeholders in the Legislative Process - Guidelines for the Public Administration. www.vicpremier-ekonomija.gov.mk/?q=node/275

34 UNERR (<http://ener.gov.mk/>) is an electronic system which in addition to current regulations, it also contains draft laws of line ministries in a draft phase. This allows all stakeholders to submit their comments and proposals electronically, directly to the competent institutions.

35 The process of adoption of the Law on Volunteerism has been promoted as an example of democratic adoption of laws and policies on a world level. See: Laws and Practices that Affect Volunteers Since 2001, United National Programme "Volunteers 2009" and Drafting and Implementing Volunteerism Laws and Policies, United Nations Programme "Volunteers 2011".

36 In order to improve this situation, several strategic documents have been adopted, such

In order to increase participation of citizens and CSOs in adoption of government decisions, the Government created the web portal *E-Democracy*, a tool that would also assist in strengthening the democratic processes in the country.³⁷

Civil society more actively *participates in the processes of European integration*. Also, there are other examples of greater involvement of CSOs in policy making processes and monitoring the European pre-accession funds. There have been evident examples for participation of organisations in the preparation of programmes for IPA funds since 2008 to present. The Secretariat for European Affairs has also established a regular practice for organising informative meetings with CSOs. Also, meetings are organised for reviewing the National Programme for Adoption of the EU Acquis. Another important fact is that organisations are more and more involved in committees for monitoring operational programmes. Representatives from the civil society participate in activities of the Sectorial Committee which is the body in charge of monitoring the implementation of the Operational Programme for Regional Development and in the Sectorial Committee for monitoring the Operational Programme for Human Resource Development.

Representatives from the civil society also participate in the EU and Republic of Macedonia Civil Society Joint Consultative Committee and the Economic and Social Committee of the European Union. The Joint Consultative Committee is a working body for civil society of candidate countries for membership in the EU and the European Economic and Social Committee. The aim of this Committee is to monitor the relations between the European Union and the Republic of Macedonia from the civil society's point of view and to promote contacts and open discussions among representatives from the civil society of both parties upon issues of common interest.

4) Involvement in Regional and International Processes

The Government is open for cooperation with CSOs in formulating and implementing the goals of foreign policy. Currently, there are 42 active regional initiatives in the countries of South-East Europe, and it is important that the Republic of Macedonia is a member in 39 of them.³⁸ Almost two-thirds of CSOs are members of at least one regional (Balkan) or international network.

as the Strategy for Reform of the Public Administration in the Republic of Macedonia (2010-2015) and Action Plan.

37 National Strategy for e-Government 2010-2012, Ministry of Information Society and Administration.

38 Information obtained from the Secretariat for European Affairs in the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, 2011.

The Government makes efforts to encourage organisations in get involved in regional initiatives. For example, the Republic of Macedonia joined the regional initiative (Slovenia, Croatia, and Montenegro) for the establishment of an electronic database of NGOs *www.ngo-portal.eu* aimed at improving the mobility and networking of CSOs by finding partners and cooperating with similar organisations in the countries from the region.

CSOs cooperate with the Government in International initiatives. CSOs also prepare *shadow reports* for international agreements whose implementation is monitored by the international community and attend events where state reports are presented at an international level. Organisations establish contacts with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs when it is necessary to appoint members in international committees that operate in the same areas as organisations and the Ministry includes them in initiatives at international level. The considerable involvement of civil society in activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is related with the reports on the status of human rights for the needs of international organisations. Over the course of 2008 and 2009, relevant organisations were being consulted during the development of the *National Report of the Republic of Macedonia on the Situation of Human Rights*, presented at the 5th Session of the working group for Universal Periodical Review (UPR) under the Human Rights Council. Also, during 2011, CSOs participated in the development of the Mid-Term Report on the Progress of Implementation of UPR's Recommendations.

In September 2011, the Government joined the Open Partnership Initiative that promotes the openness of governments in several areas, such as the fiscal transparency, access to information, reporting revenues and property of high officials, as well as participation of the sector in the social life. Participation of civil society organisations in such initiatives will deepen the cooperation and provide for their more substantial involvement in international initiatives.

5) Economic and Social Development and Cohesion

CSOs contribute to the social and economic growth by employing individuals in the sector, undertaking activities for satisfying the community's needs, including marginalised persons in the sector and fighting against poverty.

Relative to the previous years, a decline in the capacity of CSOs to professionally engage and employ personnel has been registered. Their financial situation may be the reason for this. According to the research of CIVICUS, in 2009, there were 2,079 employees in 10,700 associations and foundations, which represented 0.4% of the total number of employed

persons in Macedonia. This is one more reason to invest in strengthening the capacity of CSOs.

On the other hand, there are more and more initiatives among organisations to develop models of *social entrepreneurship* and there are some fine examples of such models.³⁹ With the adoption of the Law on Associations and Foundations, organisations are able to perform economic activities directly or by establishing trade companies. This is important for strengthening their role in the development of entrepreneurship and to that end, it is important to stimulate this by offering favourable tax treatment. On the other hand, organisations despite being more active in this area, still have insufficient knowledge with regard to all the available possibilities that might help them to develop still further.⁴⁰

CSOs are more active in *providing services*, especially in the social areas, as well as in the areas of health and education. Since 2004, associations entered in the register administered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy may perform activities in the area of social welfare, under conditions and in the manner and procedure stipulated by the Law on Social Welfare. Inclusion of associations and other CSOs in this area has also been foreseen in the National Programme for Development of Social Welfare 2011-2021.⁴¹ In the Register of Associations of Citizens that Act in the Area of Social Welfare, administered by this Ministry, there are 53 registered associations. CSOs are active in the spheres of employment and social solidarity, equal opportunities, domestic violence, support to persons with special needs, marginalised groups, child protection and alike.

Nevertheless, the role of CSOs in this area is still insufficiently sustainable; activities are not diversified and refer only to a limited number of users.

Development of the *cooperation between the Government, business sector and civil society* is crucially important both for the sustainability of the civil society and for achieving economic development and social cohesion. Therefore, the business sector should actively participate and contribute to the development of the society through socially responsible practices, which imply not only partnership with the Government, but also with civil society organisations. On the other hand, the civil society begins to be

39 Case studies for social enterprises and other forms of businesses with social cause: www.socialenterprise.org.mk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=54&Itemid=64&lang=mk

40 See: Drafting and Implementing the Social Enterprise Concept in Macedonia: Study on the potential for further promotion of social enterprises as innovative business model with social cause in the Macedonian economy, Centre for Institutional Development and EUCLID, 2011

41 Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, 2010

recognized by the business sector as a relevant partner and representative of citizens' interests. There are organisations that give direct support to business entities for development of their philanthropy and social responsibility. Some business entities implement joint projects with CSOs.⁴²

As previously mentioned the business sector supports the work of CSOs directly through donations or through its own foundations, established with the aim of supporting certain spheres in the society. Since the introduction of tax incentives with the Law on Donations and Sponsorships at the beginning of 2007, donations and sponsorships in public activities have been continually increasing.⁴³

	Legal Entities - Donors	Change compared to 2007 (%)	Donated amount (denars)	Change compared to 2007 (%)
2007	115	0	20 000 651	0
2009	209	+ 82	144 823 958	+ 624
2010, first quarter ⁷	94	+ 227	59 000 329	+ 1080

Table 2: Number of organisations and volume of donations

Despite this, there are still certain areas in the Law that need improvement so as to stimulate even more the donation by business entities and individuals. In this context, there is a need for improving the administrative procedure and harmonising it with the Law on Associations and Foundations and enhancing the tax incentives⁴⁴. The process of improving the text of the Law is underway.

CSOs are included in the implementation of the *National Agenda for Corporate Social Responsibility in the Republic of Macedonia for 2008-2012*.⁴⁵ Measures of this Strategy aim at enhancing the dialogue between the business sector and civil society, capacity development of CSOs for dialogue with the business sector for the purpose of its involvement in

⁴² E.g. EVN Macedonia and four non-profitable organisations: Centre for Energy Efficiency of Macedonia (MACEF), Youth Council Ohrid, Harvest of Knowledge from Prilep and Planetum from Strumica implement the project School Service "Let us use the electricity reasonably", www.kids.evn.com.mk

⁴³ Testimony of the Director of Public Revenue Office, Mr. Goran Trajkovski, at the Assembly's oversight hearing on the topic "Implementation of the Law on Donations and Sponsorships in Public Activities".

⁴⁴ For more information, see Analysis of Implementation of the Law on Donations and Sponsorships in Public Activities, Association Connect in cooperation with the European Centre for Non-Profitable Law (ECNL), December 2011

⁴⁵ Ministry of Economy, 2008.

their operations, supporting the inclusion of corporate social responsibility principles in the visions and missions of business entities. Civil society participates in the Coordinative Body for Corporate Social Responsibility, which among other things, every year presents CSR awards to companies. Establishment of the National Coordinative Body is a result of the Global Agreement of the Organisation of the United Nations and serves as an example for institutional support to the corporate social responsibility in the entire region.

6) Civic Activism

Researches show that a small number of citizens are active in the civil society, in general. Approximately 15% of the citizens *work as volunteers* in various activities and initiatives, and only 10% volunteer in CSOs, despite the stimulating legal and fiscal framework for volunteerism. Citizens have no continuity in volunteer activities: they volunteer 10 hours per year, in total, for various unrelated purposes / activities. Therefore, it is necessary to continue raising the awareness of citizens, especially of the young population about the opportunities and benefits that the civil society can offer, in order to motivate them to more actively participate in this sector and about the importance of monitoring and participating in the policy making and law drafting processes.

Although the recruitment of volunteers does not represent a massive and widely spread activity, it is still practiced. CSOs have developed their own initiatives based on their programme needs and priorities, such as: establishment of international and local volunteer centres, services for exchange of volunteers such as the European Volunteer Service, organisation of local volunteer actions, strengthening the capacities, development of manuals and guidelines, organisation of promotional events, volunteer camps and alike.

Bearing in mind the status of volunteerism and Government commitment to regulate this issue, the *Law on Volunteerism*⁴⁶ was adopted in 2007, promoted as one of the best laws in this area in Europe and even further afield. Upon the adoption of the Law, for the purpose of easier understanding of its contents, a *Guidebook for Implementation of the Law on Volunteerism*⁴⁷ was published. The guidebook explains in detail the

46 Law on Volunteerism, Official Gazette of RM no.85/2007, Law on Amending and Supplementing the Law on Volunteerism, Official Gazette of RM no. 161/2008.

47 Aleksovska Mirjanka, Guidebook for Implementation of the Law on Volunteerism, published by the European Centre for Non-Profitable Law (ECNL), 2008 <http://ecn1.org/index.php?part=13publications&pubid=8>

contents of the Law and provides answers to the most frequently asked questions during that period.

In 2010, the *Strategy of the Government for Promotion and Development of Volunteerism (2010-2015)* was adopted, the aim of which was to provide for continual development, promotion and strengthening the volunteerism in Macedonia. It foresees the establishment of a National Council for Volunteerism, which has in fact recently started with its operation.

IV. VALUES AND PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATION

The Strategy will continue to apply, affirm and promote the values and principles used as the basis for the cooperation to present and will upgrade them substantially with the aim of deepening cooperation.

❖ *MUTUAL TRUST*

The roles of the Government and civil society are complementary in the development and implementation of policies and activities. Their common goals will be most effectively accomplished if they are defined and implemented based on the mutual trust concerning the goal to be achieved and the method of doing it. The Government strives to establish relations with the civil society without prejudice and with full understanding of the positive role that each of them could play in achieving common goals. The content of this principle is defined by two components: liability and public interest.

❖ *PARTNERSHIP*

Successful cooperation between the Government and civil society means partnership relations and allocation of tasks to the end of more efficient realisation of citizens' interests. The principle of partnership means cooperation on equal grounds among all entities for the purpose of establishing dialogue and respect for different opinions when defining and implementing the common goals. The Government and civil society will act complementary under their relevant areas - whenever the Government needs assistance, the civil society may offer its own capacity and expertise and vice versa.

❖ *INDEPENDENCE*

The civil society is free and independent in defining its goals, making decisions and planning its own activities. The Government respects the specific characteristics of this sector, particularly its independence in presenting the citizens' interest, in implementing activities financially supported by the Government and in their participation in the policy making processes.

❖ *PLURALISM*

Strengthening the democratic society depends on the respect of the principle of pluralism, the freedom to express different opinions and attitudes and taking them into consideration in the development of plans and policies. The Government recognizes and respects the existence of different goals, values and interests among citizens, which are expressed through various activities and efforts of civil society organisations. Government enables

involvement and cooperation with all organisations based on the principle of non-discrimination, with a special focus on recognizing the interests of marginalised groups.

❖ *PARTICIPATION*

The Government supports the involvement of the civil society in policy making, so as to integrate the interest and proposals of citizens in the processes of making decisions and implementation. Civil society, with its own capacities and resources contributes to the adoption of more quality solutions, for the benefit of the community. It represents the various values and interests of citizens. Through this sector, citizens receive information and express their opinions about measures proposed by the Government. The Government is open for dialogue with the public in order to improve the quality of proposed policies and to strengthen the legitimacy of the Government policy. Also, the Government will provide for active involvement of civil society organisations with equal responsibilities and the right to make decisions in bodies that create policies for implementation of the cooperation and development of the civil society, as well as in other bodies that would define the agenda for development of the society and European integration.

❖ *TRANSPARENCY (PUBLICITY)*

Activities undertaken by the Government and civil society concerning the programmes and plans necessary for development of common goals will be open and shared between the two stakeholders and with the public. The Government will place special emphasis on this principle, particularly in regard to the access to information, participation in creation of public policies and legislation and allocation of funds.

❖ *RESPONSIBILITY*

The Government and civil society are mutually responsible before the public and citizens about the implementation of their joint activities. This principle is expressed through the efforts of the Government and civil society to take into consideration expressed opinions of citizens when defining the priorities and drafting and implementation of policies. The Government and civil society are obligated to follow the principle of joint and several liabilities also in the case of allocation and utilisation of Government funds.

❖ *EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND NON-DISCRIMINATION*

The Government aims to respect the equal opportunities and non-discrimination of all people in realisation of their primary rights and freedoms and their benefits from political, economic and social processes and mechanisms. The civil society by the very nature of its activities, articulates the needs and interests of different target groups, especially marginalised ones: the poor, women, Roma, persons with special needs and alike. Social cohesion, as a priority area and strategic goal of this Strategy can only be achieved if the principles of equality, equal opportunities and non-discrimination are respected.

V. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK OF THE STRATEGY

When defining the goals and priority areas of this Strategy, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia addressed the accomplished results of the cooperation to date, the extent to which the efforts and measures from the previous document were fulfilled, priority areas for cooperation and needs to further strengthen the role of the civil society as the main representative of citizens' interests and partner in satisfying the society's needs.

AIMS OF THE STRATEGY 2012-2017

The primary aim of the Strategy is to promote, support and improve the partnership relations between the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and the civil society (associations and foundations) through measures for strengthening the mutual cooperation.

The Government hopes that this Strategy will contribute to the overall future economic and social growth of Macedonian society, membership in the European Union and meeting the citizens' and community's needs for a better quality life and a better future.

The strategy aims to provide a more favourable environment for further development of the civil society and to create conditions for the civil society to be recognised as one of the key players as in any contemporary democratic society, and consequently as one the key partners of the Government in fostering the development of the society. The developed and sustainable sector may contribute more to the processes for economic growth, policy making and law drafting processes, processes for European integration and development of the democracy and meeting the community's needs.

The goal of the Strategy is to foster civic activism and participation of citizens in social processes.

The Government, through this Strategy, will strive to strengthen the existing mechanisms of cooperation. Also, the Government will make one step more by creating new institutional mechanisms and measures aimed at stimulating the cooperation in areas where there are possibilities for its further enhancement.

ENTITIES OF THE STRATEGY

The Strategy develops measures and objectives for cooperation of the Government, state administration bodies and CSOs. The Strategy is an obliging document for the Government and state administration bodies. Through its measures, the Strategy continues to foster the cooperation between state administration bodies and CSOs by creating direct liability of these bodies concerning the implementation of measures and areas under their jurisdiction and competence.

CSOs are partners to the Government and state administration bodies in implementing the Strategy's measures. The Government recognizes that civil society is a wide concept and encompasses various forms of 'membership', including associations, foundations, political parties, religious communities and groups, trade unions, economic chambers and other forms of association of persons and organisations. This Strategy follows the approach of the Strategy for Cooperation of the Government with the Civil Society 2007-2011 and refers only to associations and foundations registered pursuant to the Law on Associations and Foundations. Nevertheless, this does not exclude the possibility for joining the activities by other entities from the civil society for developing direct cooperation with state administration bodies, associations and foundations.

At the same time, the Government is aware of the importance of sustaining and fostering cooperation to date and of being sure to include CSOs in initiatives and programmes along with the business sector. Therefore, some of the measures from this Strategy refer to a wider inter-sectorial partnership.

The Government welcomes the cooperation between local government units and CSOs to date, and through this Strategy it aims to set up a positive example for further development of partnerships on all levels.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES BY PRIORITY

Based on the analysis of the situation in the Republic of Macedonia, the needs of the Government and civil society and comparative experiences, the Strategy has set forth the following priority areas for its activities during the period 2012-2017.

1. Developed and sustainable civil society.
2. Active participation in defining policies, legislation and European integration.
3. Economic and Social Development and Cohesion.
4. Strengthened civic activism and support from the community.
5. Strengthened institutional framework and practices of cooperation.

Priority area 1: Developed and sustainable civil society

ENABLING LEGAL FRAMEWORK

By adopting the Law on Associations and Foundations in 2010, the legal framework has been harmonised according to the European standards and the groundwork for the development of measures that will foster the sustainability of the sector have been set in place. More precisely, the Law allows the organisation to directly perform profitable activities and acquire the status of organisations of public interest. The Government will undertake measures to ensure enforcement of legal provisions pertaining to economic activities and amend the tax laws in order to provide maximum utilisation of the acquired profit.

The Government is aware that the status of organisations of public interest is important for the development of the sector, for the inter-sectorial cooperation and for its sustainability. The Commission for Organisations of Public Interest has been established and its internal documents are underway. Pursuant to the provisions of the Law on Associations and Foundations, the Government will introduce relevant tax benefits. In this area, there is a possibility of making a connection with the benefits under the Law on Donations and Sponsorship in Public Activities, exemptions from payment of personal income tax, certain VAT incentives and alike. Also, it will provide a clear review and information about registered organisations with this status.

The operation of CSOs is conditioned by other laws and regulations, as well. Therefore, RIA needs to be made in order to see how these regulations

support or impede their operation and to give recommendations for their improvement. In this context, analysis of implementation of the Law on Accounting of Non-Profitable Organisations will be conducted, with the aim of identifying the needs for improving the financial operation and thus making it relevant to the needs and nature of CSOs. At the same time, the Strategy will tend to contribute to improve the monitoring of the financial standing of organisations and to foster the professionalism and accountability of organisations.

Based on the reports on the status of civil society organisations, this sector is considered to be the least corrupted. Therefore, there are no considerable risks for possible misuses in the function of money laundering and financing terrorism.⁴⁸ On the other hand, the legal framework obligates organisations to enforce certain measures in this area. However, pursuant to international standards and recommendations, obligations and penalties for organisations in regard to money laundering and financing terrorism should be proportional to the size of the organisation and relevant to the possible risks. Taking into consideration the expressed concerns about the manner in which this law could create impediments to organisations, the Government will assess its enforcement and impact and in compliance with international standards and domestic needs, will prepare recommendations for its improvement.

In general, with the aim of ensuring more efficient, consistent and harmonised implementation of legal solutions, state administration bodies shall stimulate and support the continual organisation of working meetings for CSOs and civil servants in charge of implementation of legal provisions.

SUSTAINABILITY OF THE SECTOR

The Government is aware that after foreign donors have left the country, organisations will have to use and rely more on the domestic sources of financing. Based on European trends, the possibility to define funds that would support the institutional development of organisations will be analysed, and not only the activities related to concrete projects. In order to enhance the process of award of funds and responsible utilisation thereof, possibilities for improvement of the Code on Good Practices for Financial Support to Associations of Citizens and Foundations will be analysed. Also, the possibilities for adoption of a legally binding document will be reviewed.

⁴⁸ Long Way to Greater Civil Engagement - Analytical Report, CIVICUS: Index of the Civil Society in the Republic of Macedonia, prepared by the Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation (2011)

The Government recognises that organisations have a need for strengthening their institutional capacities in the light of performing more quality activities. Following the regional and European trends, the Government will make efforts to conduct the necessary analyses of the domestic conditions and European practices in the area of organisational establishment of competent bodies for the allocation of funds for institutional support to the sector.

The Government is aware that lottery proceeds in EU member countries represent a significant source of support to activities of CSOs. With the aim approximating Macedonian legislation to the European and regional good practices, the Government will review the possibilities of expanding the circle of organisations that could have access to these proceeds.

Furthermore, the Government will review the possibilities for utilisation of lottery proceeds or other state sources for co-financing projects of CSOs that have been financed by IPA funds or funds of the European Union or regional programmes. This will help organisations to raise funds from European funds and implement activities of public interest.

When defining the policies and measures, the Government will take into special consideration the needs of organisations in rural areas, in order to provide easier access for them to such funds. In this respect, the Government will also foster activities that include volunteers and that are intended for marginalised groups.

With these measures, the Government will ensure a permanent source of financing and guarantees that the funds will be awarded according to the prescribed rules, implementation of the Code on Good Practices for Financial Support to Associations of Citizens and Foundations by the ministries in a harmonised manner and supplementing the support to organisations. It will also ensure that all organisations are informed about this type of support and that there is a basis for internal and external evaluation and improvements.

Goals:

- ▶ Improving the legal framework for CSOs and its harmonised implementation;
- ▶ Improving the conditions for using the profit acquired from performing activities;
- ▶ Supporting the development of CSOs through tax incentives;
- ▶ Contribution to the development of CSOs through direct financing and support;
- ▶ Improving the process for the awarding of funds and responsible utilisation thereof by civil society organisations.

Measures:

1. Monitoring the implementation of the Law on Associations and Foundations, particularly the implementation of provisions pertaining to profitable activities, needs analysis for improving the provisions or the implementation and activities upon the recommendations;
2. Preparation of a manual for CSOs and state administration bodies for utilisation of funds from profitable activities and their monitoring;
3. Adoption of an internal act of the Commission for Organisations of Public Interest; monitoring the awarding of the status and the effect from the operation of organisations of public interest; capacity building of the Commission's members;
4. Establishment and publishing of an electronic database about the operation of organisations of public interest (*in connection to the measure for the general electronic database*);
5. Analysis of the Law on Accounting of Non-Profitable Organisations, regulations, forms and recommendations, and activities upon recommendations
6. Analysis of implementation of the Law on Preventing Money Laundering and Other Criminal Proceeds and Financing Terrorism and its impact on the operation of civil society organisations;
7. Amendments to the Law on Profit Tax; Law on VAT and Law on Personal Income Tax;
8. Analysis of the Law on Lottery Games in the light of reflecting the European practices and domestic needs;
9. Analysis of needs and possibilities for improving the organisational establishment of competent bodies for institutional support to CSOs and for co-financing CSOs' projects;
10. Adoption of a legally binding act (regulation) for the allocation of funds for CSOs;
11. Inclusion of topics on financing of CSOs in the training programmes for civil servants; prepared manuals and models of financing according to the current legislation;
12. Enhancing the coordination and financing of CSOs by state administration bodies;

Responsible bodies: General Secretariat - Unit for Cooperation with NGOs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Finance, Office for Financial Intelligence, Secretariat for European Affairs and other relevant line ministries.

Timeline: Implementation of activities will commence in 2012, where the activities of the First Action Plan will be implemented more intensively. Activities that will follow will be implemented according to the Second Action Plan.

Priority area 2: Participation in the policy making and law drafting processes, and European integration

In a number of strategic documents and commitments, the Government has highlighted the importance for regular and promptly involvement of citizens and CSOs in policy making and law drafting processes.

Consequently, several measures were being implemented with the aim of establishing the grounds for harmonised involvement of stakeholders. Nevertheless, more efforts are needed to make this a regular and timely practice in all bodies, as well as to integrate opinions of all stakeholders in the documents. The Government will undertake measures to ensure regular consultations and inclusion of organisations by state administration bodies, pursuant to the prescribed procedures and deadlines. Thus, it will contribute to improving the practices of consultations, effective consultations and continual involvement of organisations in the processes. During the analyses for inclusion of CSOs in decision making processes, the Government will also review the implementation of the Law on Lobbying and the manner in which it influences the operation of CSOs, with the aim of improving the practices, if necessary. The final result will be the adoption of laws of greater quality and clarity that would respond to the needs of the citizens and community, supported by analysis and expertise.

In this area, the Government will make efforts to link the implementation of the Strategy with the measures from the National Strategy for Youth of the Republic of Macedonia, particularly with the measures for active participation of young people in public life and decision making processes on both a national and local level.

The Government aims to maximise the utilisation of ICT technology during the communication with the civil society. Under the process for regulatory impact assessment (RIA), the portals of e-democracy and UNERR will ensure timely and transparent information and on-line consultations with all stakeholders. In order to inform CSOs about their representatives in the groups and in order to better coordinate their opinions, the Government will establish a database of involved representatives from associations and foundations and publish it on the web site of the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.

The Government recognises the important role of CSOs as citizens' representatives and partners in policy making processes related to European integration. The Government aims to expand the cooperation to present and develop partnerships in all phases of the European integration. The Government will actively involve civil society organisations in these processes, where in addition to the regular meetings over the course of the

year, they will also be involved in working bodies the develop NPAA. Also, civil society organisations will be included in the processes of opening of individual chapters of the acquis upon the commencement of negotiations. Thus, the civil society organisations will also support these processes and state administration bodies with their expert knowledge, proposals and suggestions.

The Government will cooperate with the sector in defining the national development programmes related to the European Union, programming the utilisation of funds for pre-accession assistance (and other funds after accession to the European Union) and their monitoring. After the Government has begun with the implementation of the development assistance programmes, pursuant to the objectives of the National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis of the European Union - revised 2012, it will then develop partnerships with organisations in defining the institutional strategic and legal framework for the development assistance and their implementation.

The Government will also continue to cooperate with CSOs in international initiatives and processes. The Government will include the organisations in the Open Government Partnership Initiative, as well as in preparation of reports, selection of persons for participation in committees and other activities in the area of foreign policy.

As a result of these measures, the defined policies and laws will correspond to the community's needs and efforts for integration to the European Union. Organisations will be regularly involved in the processes of planning, programming, and monitoring of implementation. Reports on implementation of ratified international agreements will be comprehensive and enriched with data and analysis from CSOs.

Goals:

- ▶ Improving the conditions for participation in policy making and all drafting processes;
- ▶ Enhancing the process of information and consultations with the civil society by promoting ICT technologies in the processes;
- ▶ Strengthening the partnership in European integration processes;
- ▶ Cooperation in drafting reports submitted to contracting bodies upon ratified international conventions and participation in initiatives to which the Republic of Macedonia has acceded.

Measures:

1. Monitoring the Code on Good Practices for Participation of the Civil Society in the Policy Making Process;

2. Needs analysis for adoption of a legal solution regarding the procedure of drafting laws and consultations with stakeholders and activities upon recommendations;
3. Inclusion of topics for participation in policy making and law drafting processes democracy in the training programmes for civil servants;
4. Establishment of models for inclusion and selection of CSOs in working groups;
5. Monitoring the consultations and involvement of civil society organisations; appointment of a contact person in each ministry who will be in charge of conducting the consultations;
6. Raising awareness about the possibilities offered by the portal for e-Democracy among CSOs fostering its utilisation;
7. Promoting opportunities for inclusion of CSOs through informative meetings, web sites and media;
8. Creating and publishing an electronic database for participation of civil society organisations involved in consultative processes with various ministries (*relation with the measure for general electronic database*);
9. Improving the implementation of the Law on Lobbying.
10. Active participation and consultation of CSOs during the preparation of NPAA (by topic) and negotiating positions for EU membership; involvement of CSOs representatives in the working bodies for preparation of negotiating positions and negotiations with the EU;
11. Analysis of the inclusion to date and recommendations for enhancing the cooperation in defining the national development programmes for the EU, implementation of recommendations;
12. Analysis of inclusion in programmes to date concerning the utilisation of funds for pre-accession assistance (and utilisation of other EU funds after the accession) and their monitoring and recommendations for improvement;
13. Defining a partnership programme in developing the institutional, strategic and legal framework for development assistance and its implementation and mechanisms for cooperation in this area;
14. Consultations and cooperation of state administration bodies with CSOs for overall preparation of reports of the Republic of Macedonia concerning the implementation of ratified agreements and continual implementation of obligations of the Republic of Macedonia.
15. Inclusion of CSOs in the preparation and implementation of the Action Plan based on the principles of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) Initiative.

Responsible bodies: Secretariat for European Affairs, General Secretariat - Unit for Cooperation with NGOs, Ministry of Information Society and Administration, Ministry of Justice, Foreign Affairs, line ministries.

Timeline: Implementation of activities will commence in 2012, where the activities from the First Action Plan will be implemented more intensively. Upon defining the measures to be put in place, they will be continually implemented and monitored. The measures concerning the definition of a programme for partnership development and implementation of the development assistance will be implemented according to the Second Action Plan.

Priority area 3: Economic Development and Social Cohesion

The Government undertakes special measures for fostering the social economy and social entrepreneurship in order to improve the economic and social status of citizens. Non-profitable entrepreneurship in the European Union and in the Republic of Macedonia has occurred in several forms and is being implemented by various entities, among which are various associations and foundations. The main objective of this type of entrepreneurship is to make associations and foundations focus the acquired profit in accomplishing their mission and satisfying the citizens' needs, without any distribution of the profit. CSOs in the European Union hold sufficient power so as to reduce levels of poverty and unemployment, and to include marginalised groups and contribute to the local development. Bearing in mind this important role of CSOs in the social and economic development, measures should be undertaken for strengthening the organisations (financially and internally) and opportunities should be created for their greater contribution to the community. CSOs in Macedonia are not financially sustainable in the long-term; therefore they are unable to employ more persons on a full-time basis. They predominantly conduct their activities with the assistance of volunteers and part-time employees. On the other hand, the possibility to directly perform profitable activities is a very important step forward. The Government will include organisations' needs in general programmes for entrepreneurship development and foster the creation of business models that integrate economic and social interests and enable the formation of a favourable framework for the development of social entrepreneurship in civil society.

CSOs in Macedonia, especially associations, are particularly active in providing services in the social sphere, education, health and other sectors. In order to strengthen these functions and support organisations in generating funds for these activities, the Government will undertake

measures to include foundations in these processes, enable favourable tax frameworks and promote models and good practices in these areas.

The relationship Government / business sector / civil society is particularly important in conditions of development of the society and the need for additional resources and expertise for resolving a given community's problems. In EU countries, the business sector plays a more active role and contributes more to satisfying a community's needs. It also cooperates with civil society in providing services and implementing projects in public activities. To that end, the Government will undertake measures to enhance the development of partnership between CSOs, business sector and institutions. The Government will stimulate the business sector to actively participate and contribute to the development of the society, by developing socially responsible practices in partnership with CSOs. The Government aims to propose amendments to the Law on Donations and Sponsorships in Public Activities and will take into consideration CSOs' needs in implementing the National Agenda for Corporate Social Responsibility.

As a result of these measures, CSOs will be encouraged to contribute more to the community and actively cooperate with state bodies. The civil society will be actively involved in the creation of dialogue for public-private partnerships aimed at achieving sustainable economic growth and social cohesion. Also, socially responsible practices will be developed for balanced growth and social cohesion which involve partnerships with the civil society. Bearing in mind that there are good examples of cooperation with local communities in these areas, measures that will be proposed can also be taken into consideration on a local level as well.

Goals:

- ▶ Development of social economy;
- ▶ Increasing the scope of participation of CSOs in providing services to the community;
- ▶ Stimulating the support and contributions by citizens and the business sector;
- ▶ Development of partnerships among the public sector, CSOs and business sector for achieving economic and social development.

Measures:

1. Raising the awareness of CSOs about social entrepreneurship;
2. Adoption of the Law on Social Entrepreneurship;
3. Creation of an enabling legal environment for social entrepreneurship;

4. Analysis of implementation of the legal framework for social services and recommendations for its improvement;
5. Promotion of good models of cooperation in providing services to the units of the local government;
6. Development of models of cooperation in the area of education, health, culture etc.;
7. Connection with measures from the National Agenda for Corporate Social Responsibility;
8. Amendments to the Law on Donations and Sponsorships in Public Activities; following the effects of the Law and measures for its improvement;
9. Involvement of COSs in debates about the role of the civil society in the development of public-private partnerships;
10. Promotion of models for three-partite partnerships (Government, business and civil sector) in the light of economic development and social cohesion.

Responsible bodies: Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Local Self-Government, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Culture, General Secretariat - Unit for Cooperation with NGOs, National Coordinative Body for Corporate Social Responsibility.

Timeline: Implementation of activities will commence in 2012, where the activities from the First Action Plan will be implemented more intensively. Upon defining the measures, they will be continually implemented and monitored. Amendments to the Law on Donations and Sponsorships in Public Activities are underway. Some of the activities will be implemented pursuant to the timeline for measures in the National Agenda for Corporate Social Responsibility. The adoption of the Law on Social Entrepreneurship will take place during the period 2014-2016.

Priority area 4: Civic Activism and Support from the Community

The objective of civic education is to contribute to the development of communities that take care of others, to strengthen the civil society and democracy, expressed through participation and civic engagement. Researches show that involvement of citizens in associations and foundations fosters their civic responsibility and stimulates civic activism. On the other hand, learning civic skills at school is complementary with civic activism which implies that curricula including civic education are particularly important for educating responsible youth. The Government will support initiatives for improving civic education, measures for informal education and engagement of the youth.

With the adoption of the Law and the Strategy for Promotion and Development of Volunteerism, the Government has set the groundwork and framework in place for stimulating citizens to become actively involved in social processes through activities of public and private entities. Volunteerism is particularly important in areas where unemployment is high, where young people are less engaged in social processes and where the older generation is less active, but can contribute a great deal due to its experience. The Government will make efforts to stimulate the development of volunteerism, particularly by implementing the measures contained in the Strategy for Promotion and Development of Volunteerism.

The Government will take concrete measures that will contribute to improving the education for younger and older generations about civil society and stimulating their more active participation. As a result of these measures, citizens will have a better understanding of democratic processes, civil rights and obligations, possibilities for participation and active contribution by active involvement in social processes.

Aims

- ▶ Raising the awareness among youth and their more active involvement in civil society;
- ▶ Fostering the inclusion of citizens in the civil society and social processes;

Measures

1. Cooperation with representatives from the civil society in implementing the various subjects and activities in schools related to democracy and civil society topics.
2. Relation with measure from the Strategy for Promotion and Development of Volunteerism;
3. Stimulating volunteer activities of adult persons;

Responsible institutions: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Local Self-Government, Ministry of Justice, and other line ministries, General Secretariat - Unit for Cooperation with NGOs, Agency for Youth and Sports.

Timeline: Implementation of measures will commence in 2012 and will be monitored on a continual basis. Implementation of the first measure will be in compliance with the measures from the Strategy for Promotion and Development of Volunteerism

Priority area 5: Strengthened Institutional Framework and Practices of Cooperation

The Unit for Cooperation with NGOs in the General Secretariat is the central point for exchange of information and cooperation of the Government with the civil society, which coordinates activities for cooperation, provides information and proposes measures for improving cooperation. With the aim of strengthening the role of the Unit, the Government will adopt measures for reducing the administrative impediments that hinder the continual and flexible communication with the civil society. . Through these measures, the Government will begin to follow new trends in the region and the European Union, which recognise the importance of such units and enhance their influence on the development of policies concerning CSOs. In order to ensure more active operation of the Unit, the Government will adopt special means for the implementation of the activities, pursuant to annual operational plans of the Unit.

The web site of the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs in the General Secretariat www.nvosorabotka.gov.mk will be improved, updated with new information and will contain a central database. The database will contain information about users of financial assistance from the Budget of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia and separate state administration bodies, about organisations of public interest, participation of organisations in working bodies and participation in policy making processes.

The Government will undertake measures to improve the communication mechanism in the network of nominated civil servants for cooperation with CSOs in the line ministries, better define the mechanisms for coordination of the network, define clear criteria for selection/nomination of the civil servants in charge of cooperation with CSOs in each ministry and ensure their continual and long-term participation.

The Government recognises the need for more active involvement of the civil society in policy making processes and cooperation in the course of implementing and monitoring the joint initiatives. More active steps should be undertaken for establishing a consultative body for dialogue, which would consist of representatives from the Government, state administration bodies and CSOs, which will serve as additional mechanisms for institutional cooperation. Such mechanisms exist in several countries in Europe, including Croatia, Montenegro, Slovakia and Czech Republic amongst others. Establishment of this body will be made in cooperation and consultation with CSOs.

The aim of measures proposed in this Strategy on an institutional level is to encourage the cooperation with organisations that operate in rural areas, directly or through the local government units (e.g. by establishing a network for sharing good practices and examples).

As a result of these measures, CSOs will more actively participate in defining the priorities, follow the implementation of the Strategy and give proposals for improvement of the framework. The improved coordination among state administration bodies and updated web site www.nvosorabotka.gov.mk will contribute in simplifying the access and insight in the status of the sector in terms of available resources and its activities. This will help in developing measures related to new, improved policies and laws that will subsequently support the civil society and cooperation with the Government.

Cooperation on a national level, involvement of organisations from towns throughout Macedonia and rural areas also depend on the quality partnership developed at a local level. To that end, the Government and the General Secretariat - Unit for Cooperation with NGOs in cooperation with the line ministries will undertake measures for promoting the models of cooperation and inclusion from national to local level. The Government will strive to stimulate the units of the local self-government to continue their good practices of cooperation and development of local CSOs and adoption of similar mechanisms of cooperation, support and involvement of CSOs in the implementation of their activities.

Aims:

- ▶ Strengthened institutional framework and practices of cooperation; strengthening the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs in the General Secretariat and contributing to the continual and open debate regarding the need for development of the civil society;
- ▶ Contributing to a better exchange of information, consultations and active partnership;
- ▶ Strengthening the communication mechanism in the network of responsible civil servants for cooperation with CSOs;
- ▶ Contributing to networking of CSOs on a regional level;
- ▶ Contributing to strengthening the partnerships between units of the local self-government and CSOs.

Measures:

1. Capacity building and developing activities of the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs in the General Secretariat according to the determined responsibilities;
2. Analysing the possibility for raising the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs in the General Secretariat on the level of Sector;
3. Improving the web site www.nvosorabotka.gov.mk by adding more information and a greater number of databases;
4. Introduction of criteria and mandate for appointment of responsible civil servants for cooperation with CSOs from the ministries and their deputies (network members); Publication of the list of members and their deputies;
5. Capacity building of the network members;
6. Preparatory activities for establishment of a consultative body for improving the cooperation, dialogue and fostering the development of the civil society, consisting of representatives of the Government, state administration bodies and CSOs (2012-2014). Establishment of a consultative body and adoption of all documents necessary for proper operation of the consultative body for dialogue between the Government and the civil society (2015-2017);
7. Development of an electronic overview of the status, features and capacities of the civil society;
8. Participation of the Republic of Macedonia in the regional initiative (Slovenia, Croatia and Montenegro) for creation of a regional electronic database of non-governmental organisations (www.ngo-portal.eu);
9. Creation of communication networks and support systems for sharing the positive examples of mutual cooperation with the units of the local self-government.

Responsible Body: General Secretariat - Unit for Cooperation with NGOs, line ministries, Ministry of Local Self-Government and Agency for Youth and Sports.

Timeline: Implementation of measures has already commenced and will be continually monitored. Preparatory activities for the establishment of the consultative body will be included in the First Action Plan, whereas its constitution will happen during Second Action Plan.

VI. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

TIMELINE

The objectives of the Strategy will be realised across a six-year period, from 2012 until the end of 2017. Implementation of the specific measures of the Strategy will be ensured by adoption of the Action Plan by the Government, which foresees detailed activities for the period 2012-2014. Activities for the period 2015-2017 will be developed upon the assessment of implementation of the activities during the first three years.

ENTITIES RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

The key entities that will strive to fulfil the principles, goals and measures stated in this strategic document will be the Government, ministries and other bodies of the state administration. Certain state institutions will be responsible for providing support during the implementation of certain objectives (e.g. public institutions, education institutions).

The General Secretariat - Unit for Cooperation with NGOs will be in charge of coordinating the implementation and preparation of action plans and notifying the Government about the progress of implementation.

LINKING THE STRATEGY WITH OTHER STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS AND COMMITMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT

In the course of the preparation of this Strategy, the Government has taken into consideration the existing strategies, the aim of which is to improve the cooperation with the civil society and support the development of certain areas in which it operates. The Government will coordinate the implementation of measures of this Strategy with measures of other strategies and other documents of state administration bodies. It is therefore worth mentioning the following strategies and programmes, and their action plans:

The main goal of the *Strategy for Promotion and Development of Volunteerism (2010-2015)* is to ensure permanent development, promotion and strengthening the volunteerism in the Republic of Macedonia. With this Strategy, the Government aims to realise the following strategic objectives: (1) promote volunteerism to the wider public; (2) encourage the culture of volunteerism within the educational system; (3) increase the level of volunteerism in the civil society; (4) establish a system of institutional support to the volunteerism. In the light of achieving institutional support to the volunteerism, the Strategy envisages the establishment of a National Council for Development of Volunteerism. It also envisages implementation of the following measures: monitoring the implementation of legal solutions and planned activities and their evaluation; providing financial support to projects and programmes for fostering the development of volunteerism; capacity building of state institutions for working with volunteers and creating opportunities for volunteerism among the youth.

The Strategy for Reform of the Public Administration (2010-2015) aims at upgrading and improving the legal and administrative framework, applying the concepts and standards of the EU and improving the general administrative capacity, as well as the administrative capacity in various sectors. Measures related to the concept of e-Government and improvement of the openness and transparency of the public administration through improved access to information of public character and raising the level of participation of CSOs in the decision making process are among the key objectives that are relevant for the cooperation with the civil society.

The National Strategy for e-Government (2011-2012) defines the main strategic objectives and the action plan for increased use of information and communication technology for more efficient public administration. In order to increase participation of citizens and CSOs in adoption of government decisions, the Strategy envisages creation of the web portal e-Democracy, a tool that it is hoped would strengthen the democratic processes in the country.

The National Agenda for Corporate Social Responsibility in the Republic of Macedonia for 2008-2012 contains measures that would enhance the dialogue between the public, business and civil sector, development of capacities of CSOs for dialogue with the business sector aimed at involving the business sector in their work, encouraging the implementation of principles of corporate social responsibility in the visions and missions of business entities.

*The National Youth Strategy of the Republic of Macedonia (2006-2016)*⁴⁹ highlights that the “development and strengthening of the civil society, voluntary and social associations represent a necessary step for promotion of responsible citizenship and a guarantee of democracy.” *The Action Plan for Implementation of the National Youth Strategy for 2009* tends to ensure systematic, focused and comprehensive action of actors in the youth sphere in Macedonia, in the light of resolving the youth problems and meeting the needs defined within the Basic Study of Youth Trends in the country and the National Youth Strategy. The national Action Plan covers eight priority areas: education, self-employment of young people and support prior the employment, quality of life, health and prevention, culture, information of young people, local youth activities and youth participation. The Strategy particularly aims to promote the active participation of youth in public life and decision making processes on both a national and local level.

The Republic of Macedonia joined the *Open Government Partnership Initiative* that promotes the openness of governments in several areas, such as fiscal transparency, access to information, reporting revenues and property by top officials, as well as participation of the sector in social life. The Government will develop the Action Plan for this Initiative, taking into consideration the objectives and measures of the Strategy for Cooperation of the Government with the Civil Society.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

For the purposes of implementation of this Strategy’s measures, the Government and state administration bodies will plan funds in the Budget of the Republic of Macedonia, in the part pertaining to the budgets of the Government and state administration bodies. State administration bodies will integrate the measures in their strategic plans and allocate funds for their implementation.

The consultative body for enhancing cooperation and dialogue, and fostering the development of the civil society will consist of members of the Government, state administration bodies and CSOs, who will not receive any compensation for their membership. The General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs will be responsible for the organisation of meetings and for the entire administrative and technical support necessary for its operation.

49 Adopted in 2006.

Also, the Government will conduct the measures in cooperation with CSOs and along with them; it will join to certain existing initiatives and projects or future ones (e.g. making analysis, organisation of events). Cooperation with donors is an important mechanism for co-financing and implementing complementary activities, especially in the light of capacity building of CSOs for networking, constructive contribution in consultative processes, provision of services, dialogue and communication with other sectors and alike. The coordination with donors will provide for accomplishing more efficient and long-term sustainable results.

VII. FRAMEWORK FOR MONITORING AND REVISION

With the aim of ensuring continual and harmonised monitoring of the Strategy, the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs will develop a *Plan for Monitoring and Evaluation of Implementation of the Strategy*. The Plan for Monitoring and Evaluation will contain a methodology for monitoring the evaluation of implementation. The plan will include the following measures:

- ▶ An Annual Report to the Government about the performed activities and accomplished objectives in regard to implementation of the Strategy by the General Secretariat, which will summarise the reports submitted by state administration bodies.
- ▶ Annual reports on the implementation of the Strategy's measures by state administration submitted to the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs and preparation of a form regarding the format and contents of annual reports for implementation of Strategy's measures;
- ▶ Annual plans. At the end of each year, in December, state administration in charge of implementation of the Strategy's measures will submit to the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs the activities they plan to implement in the course of the following year, as a result of the Strategy's action plans, with concrete deadlines and entities which they plan to cooperate with;
- ▶ Methodology for revision of the Strategy: The methodology will also include an adjustment of action plans and proposals for priority measures pursuant to recommendations from the implementation and needs;
- ▶ Methodology and deadline for development of the Second Action Plan (2015-2017);
- ▶ Methods of consultations with CSOs in the processes of assessment of implementation of the Strategy.

The evaluation of the implementation of the Strategy will be made annually through the network of civil servants responsible for cooperation with NGOs, in consultation with CSOs representatives. Evaluation results will contain analysis of the implementation to that date, information about the accomplished goals and recommendations for amending and adjusting the Action Plans. The Secretariat for European Affairs will be actively involved in monitoring the implementation of the Strategy, in the part concerning the activities for European integration.

Reports and plans will be available on the web site of state administration bodies and on the web site of the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.

In some European countries, the implementation of strategic documents is conducted by establishing a special mechanism for cooperation with

the civil society, in the form of the so-called councils for development of the civil society or other types of permanent working bodies, in which representatives of state administration bodies and CSO bodies are included.⁵⁰ In this context, the Government will also establish an inter-sectorial consultative body that will undertake the monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy among its other tasks, and at the same time it will ensure direct participation of CSOs in the evaluation of implementation of the Strategy.

50 For example, in Latvia, a council was established for implementation of the memorandum of cooperation; in Estonia, a joint committee for monitoring the Estonian concept for development of the sector; in Croatia, in addition to the council for development, a special committee for monitoring the implementation of the Strategy was established; in England, a commission for implementation of the cooperation agreement; in France, a national council for implementation of the charter for cooperation, and in Montenegro, a council for monitoring the Strategy. For more information, see *European Practices on Implementation of Policy Documents and Liaison Offices that Support Civil Society Development*, Katerina Hadji-Miceva Evans, 2009.

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**ACTION PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE STRATEGY FOR COOPERATION
OF THE GOVERNMENT WITH THE
CIVIL SOCIETY**

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE
<i>Priority area 1: Developed and sustainable civil society</i>						
Enhancing the legal framework for CSOs and its harmonised implementation.	CSOs act on the basis of an enabling and stimulating legal framework.	The implementation of the Law on Associations and Foundations is monitored.	Establishment of a working group for designing a system of monitoring and evaluation.	Inter-sectorial group is established and a system of monitoring and evaluation is designed. Information on implementation of the Law is sent by the ministries and other institutions to the Ministry of Justice at least once a year. Two annual reports on the implementation of the law are prepared. At least two events are organised and proposals are prepared for implementation of the recommendations. A report with recommendations and plan of activities are developed in cooperation with state administration bodies and CSOs. A number of submitted opinions to competent institutions. A number of resolved inconsistencies.	Ministry of Justice.	Latter half of 2012 - 2014.

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE
	The status of organisations of public interest (OPI) is being functionally implemented.	Capacity building of the Commission for OPI and establishment of internal mechanisms.	Drafting of internal acts of the Commission for OPI. Needs analysis for capacity building of the Commission. Organisation of trainings and other activities for members of the OPI Commission.	Adopted Rules of Procedure for operation of the Commission for OPI and its internal acts. At least two training sessions organised for the members of the Commission during the first year of their work. Applications for acquiring OPI status submitted by CSOs are well supported and professionally explained.	General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.	2012-2014
			Preparation of annual reports. Designing and publishing an electronic database for organizations of public interest (<i>in conjunction with the measure for integrated electronic database</i>). Updating information in the database.	A system for monitoring and evaluation that allows for review of information concerning the effect from the implementation of the OPI status is established. Annual report on the operation of the Commission for OPIS based on the system for monitoring and evaluation is prepared and published on the website of the General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.	General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.	2013-2014

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE
				<p>The database is posted on the website of the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs. It includes all organisations that have acquired the OPI status.</p> <p>The Unit for Cooperation with NGOs updates the information in the database on a monthly basis.</p>		
	Financial operations of CSOs is improved.	The legal framework for financial operation of CSOs is relevant to the needs and features of the sector.	<p>Analysis regarding the implementation of the Law on Accounting for Non-Profitable Organisations and the relevant secondary legislation.</p> <p>Establishment of a working group for drafting amendments to the Law or the relevant by-laws.</p>	<p>Analysis containing recommendations for enhancing the law and the relevant by-laws is completed.</p> <p>Amendments to the Law are drafted by the inter-sectorial working group.</p> <p>Amendments are adopted in the Law and/or by-laws pursuant to the recommendations.</p>	Ministry of Finance, Public Revenue Office.	2012-2014

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE
	Legal framework for money laundering and financing terrorism is relevant to the features of the sector.	Improvement of the Law against Money Laundering and Other Criminal Proceeds and Financing Terrorism in compliance with the conditions on national level and international regulations.	Development of a comparative and national analysis of the existing Law against Money Laundering and Criminal Proceeds and Financing Terrorism and its implementation.	Analysis containing recommendations for improving the law and the relevant by-laws is completed.	Ministry of Finance. Directorate for Financial Intelligence.	2012-2014
			Establishment of a working group for drafting amendments to the law or the relevant by-laws.	Draft amendments to the law are prepared by the inter-sectorial working group. Amendments to the law and/or by-laws are adopted according to the recommendations.		
Supporting the development of CSOs by acquiring profit and tax benefits.	CSOs use the profit acquired from performing activities.	Informing the CSOs and providing guidelines for them about the mechanisms for acquiring profit.	Establishment of inter-sectorial working group for drafting the Guidelines. Development of Guidelines.	The Guidelines is prepared and distributed to CSOs. CSOs report increased profit from performing activities.	Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Finance.	2012-2014

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE
	Associations and foundations manage and utilise reserve funds.	Improving the legal framework for utilisation of reserve funds.	Need analysis for amending the relevant laws so as to ensure establishment of reserve funds. Organisation of informative events and discussions upon recommendations.	Analysis containing recommendations for enhancing the possibilities for utilisation of reserve funds is completed. At least two events are organized and proposals are prepared for implementation of recommendations.	Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Finance.	2012-2014
	The legal framework for taxation of the acquired profit is improved.	Including tax benefits in the Law on Profit Tax for CSOs.	Establishment of a working group for drafting amendments to the Law on Profit Tax.	Draft amendments are prepared by the inter-sectorial working group. The adopted amendments to the Law foresee tax benefits for CSOs. Increased number of CSOs utilise and report on the acquired profit.	Ministry of Finance.	2012-2014
	OPI are entitled to additional tax benefits.	Including tax benefits in the Law on Personal Income Tax and Law on VAT.	Establishment of a working group for drafting amendments to the VAT Law and Personal Income Tax Law.	Draft amendments to the laws are prepared by the inter-sectorial working group. Adopted amendments to the laws are relevant to the needs.	Ministry of Finance.	2013-2015

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE
Contribution to the development of CSOs through direct financial assistance.	Lottery proceeds are distributed in compliance with the European practices and domestic needs.	Legal framework for providing financing from the lottery proceeds is in compliance with the European regulatory practices and relevant to the needs of all CSOs.	Conducting domestic and comparative analysis of needs and possibilities for distribution of lottery proceeds for supporting the CSOs and development of recommendations.	Analysis containing recommendations for improving the distribution of funds under the Law on Lottery Games and Chances and the relevant by-laws is developed.	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.	2013
	Lottery proceeds are distributed in compliance with the European practices and domestic needs. CSOs are supported from an institutional and organisational point of view for conducting their activities.			Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. Ministry of Finance. General Secretariat – unit for Cooperation with NGOs. Secretariat for European Affairs.		2014-2015
	CSOs are supported from an institutional and organisational point of view for conducting their activities.	Strengthening the institutional support for CSOs and for co-financing projects of organisations.	Analysis of the European practices for institutional support to CSOs. Establishment of a working group for drafting a model for institutional support.	Analysis concerning the possible models for institutional support on the basis of the European practices and the situation on a national level is prepared. Defined recommendations for applicable models for institutional support and co-financing of CSOs.		2015-2017

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE
				<p>The first draft model is prepared by the inter-sectorial working group.</p> <p>A model for institutional support and co-financing is established.</p> <p>A number of CSOs that utilise funds for institutional support.</p> <p>A number of organisations that receive support from the Budget of the Republic of Macedonia for project co-financing.</p>		
<p>The award of funds to CSOs from the Budget and their utilisation is improved</p>	<p>The legal framework and practice of award of funds are improved.</p> <p>The legal framework and practice of allocation of funds budget are enhanced.</p> <p>The legal framework and practice of allocation of funds from the budget are enhanced.</p>	<p>Adoption of a legally binding act (regulation) for allocation of Budget funds for CSOs.</p>	<p>Establishment of a working group for designing a system of rules and procedures for the allocation of Budget funds for CSOs and amendments to the Law on Associations and Foundations.</p>	<p>The Law on Associations and Foundations is amended by introducing legal grounds for adoption of a legally binding act (regulation) for allocation of funds for CSOs from the Budget.</p> <p>The legally binding act (regulation) is drafted by the inter-sectorial working group.</p> <p>The legally binding act is adopted and the system is applied in practice.</p>	<p>Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Finance, General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.</p>	2012-2014

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE
		Inclusion of topics about the system of financing of COS in the training programmes for civil servants.	Organisation of training sessions for financing CSOs.	At least two training sessions for responsible persons in state administration bodies are organised during the first year of implementation of the system. Funds are allocated and utilised according to the established system of rules and procedures.	Ministry of Information Society and Administration. Ministry of Finance. General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.	2012-2014
		Adoption of a regulation for award of funds to CSOs and monitoring the utilisation thereof pursuant to the acts.	Preparation of Guidelines for Financing CSOs. Organisation of consultative events and discussions with CSOs.	At least two consultative events are organised according to the draft guidelines and models. Prepared Guidelines for award and monitoring the utilisation of funds by CSOs and distributed to state administration bodies and CSOs. Ministries award the funds to CSOs and monitor the utilisation thereof pursuant to the guidelines.	General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs and Ministry of Finance.	2012-2014

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITIES	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE
		<p>Ensuring availability of information about all organisations that received funds from the Budget of the Republic of Macedonia and the status of their projects.</p> <p><i>(in conjunction with the measure for an integrated electronic database).</i></p>	<p>Creation and publication of a database of CSOs which received funds from the Budget of the Republic of Macedonia.</p> <p>Updating information in the database</p>	<p>The database is posted on the website of the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.</p> <p>The database offers the possibility to search by category of supported CSOs, which received funds from the Budget of the Republic of Macedonia, and by type of financed projects.</p> <p>Annual report on the award and utilisation of funds is prepared and published on the website of the General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.</p> <p>The Unit for Cooperation with NGOs updates the information in the database on a monthly basis.</p>	<p>General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.</p> <p>All line ministries.</p>	2012-2014

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
<i>Priority area 2: Participation in the policy making and law drafting process and in the EU integration process</i>						
Enhancing the conditions for participation of CSOs in policy and decision making processes.	CSOs are included in all policy making and law drafting process in accordance with the prescribed rules and procedures and their opinions are integrated in the documents.	Monitoring the implementation of the Code on Good Practices for participation of the civil society in policy making process.	Assessment of the implementation of the Code of Good Practices.	Information on the implementation of the Code on Good Practices based on the established system or information sent at least once a year by the state administration bodies to the General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.	General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.	2012-2014
The practice of inclusion of CSOs in policy making and law drafting processes is improved and state administration bodies consistently implement the rules.	Defining the needs and possibilities for normative and legal regulation of the procedures for drafting laws and consultations with the stakeholders.			Annual reports on the implementation of the Code on Good Practices are prepared. Assessment of the implementation of the Code on Good Practices is developed and published.		

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
		<p>Assessment of the current legal framework and practices with recommendations for normative and legal regulation.</p> <p>Organisation of consultative meetings with the aim of analysing the status, determination of needs and improvement of the legislation for civic participation.</p>	<p>Assessment with recommendations is developed and published.</p> <p>At least two events are organised and proposals are prepared for implementation of recommendations.</p> <p>Determined recommendations about the type of normative and legal solutions.</p> <p>Implementation of recommendations for improvement of regulations.</p>	<p>At least two events are organised and proposals for implementation of recommendations are prepared.</p> <p>Report with recommendations and plans of actions are developed in cooperation with state administration bodies and CSOs.</p> <p>General Secretariat.</p> <p>Ministry of Information Society and Administration.</p>	2013-2014	

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
	Including topics such as participation in the policy making and law drafting processes in the civil servants training programmes.	Development of new training programmes for civil servants. Organisation of trainings.	Adopted and applied new training programmes for civil servants. At least two training sessions are organised on these topics. Increased number of cases of inclusion and consultation of CSOs.	Ministry of Information Society and Administration.	2012-2014	
	Increased coordination and inclusion of CSOs in working groups for policy making and law drafting processes.	Appointing a contact person in each ministry who will be responsible for consultations. Designing models of procedures and criteria for inclusion of CSOs in working groups. Designing forms for inclusion of CSOs in working groups.	At least two consultative meetings are organised and proposals for inclusion of CSOs in working groups. Models and forms for inclusion are developed and used in all law drafting processes.	General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs, line ministries.	2013-2016	

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
			<p>Number of included organisations in the working groups</p> <p>Reports contain enhanced evaluation for inclusion of CSOs in these processes.</p>			
<p>Enhancing the process of information and consultations with the civil society by promotion of ICT Technology.</p> <p>Ministries conduct the consultations with CSOs and the organisation of consultations is better coordinated.</p>	<p>Availability of information about included organisations in policy making and law drafting processes.</p> <p>Raising the awareness of CSOs about the possibilities offered by the portal e-Democracy and fostering the use thereof.</p>	<p>Designing and publishing an electronic database about participation of CSOs in consultative processes with various ministries.</p> <p>Updating information in the database.</p>	<p>The database is posted on the website of the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs. It contains information about organisations that are included in working groups.</p> <p>The Unit for Cooperation with NGOs updates the information in the database on a monthly basis.</p>	<p>General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs, Ministry of Information Society and Administration.</p> <p>Line ministries.</p> <p>Ministry of Information Society and Administration.</p>	<p>2013-2014</p> <p>2012 and onward</p>	

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
		<p>Designing a template and developing a method of submission of initiatives and opinions directly on the website of Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.</p> <p>Organising educational events about the portal e-Democracy for CSOs.</p>	<p>Prepared form and software programme for submission of initiatives and opinions directly on the websites of Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.</p> <p>Organisation of at least two educational events.</p> <p>Increased number of CSOs users of the portal e-Democracy.</p>			
<p>Strengthening the partnership in defining the policies related to European integration.</p> <p>Definition of policies and measures relevant to communities' needs and EU integration process.</p>	Implementation of the Law on Lobbying is relevant to the needs and practices.	<p>Analysis of implementation of the Law on Lobbying.</p>	<p>Analysis containing key recommendations for improvement of the implementation of the law is completed.</p>	Ministry of Justice.	2013	

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
	CSOs are actively consulted during the preparation of NPAA and negotiating positions for EU membership.	Publishing a call for inclusion of CSOs in working groups for NPAA.	<p>Calls for inclusion of CSOs in thematic groups on NPAA are published at least once a year.</p> <p>The number of included representatives of CSOs in thematic groups is increased.</p> <p>At least two consultations with the civil society are organised during the preparation of NPAA.</p> <p>Increased number of consultations with the civil society during the preparation of negotiating positions for EU membership.</p>	<p>Secretariat for European Affairs.</p> <p>Line ministries.</p>	2013-2014	

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
Strengthening the partnerships in defining the national development programmes for EU. Government and CSOs actively cooperate and jointly define the priorities and development programmes for EU.	Inclusion of CSOs in defining the national development programmes for EU.	Analysis of the inclusion of CSOs in defining the national development programmes for EU. Organisation of consultative events for preparation of recommendations and proposals for implementation of recommendations.	Analysis which gives a clear overview of the current status of including of CSOs, including recommendations is prepared. Analysis which contains concrete recommendations for enhancing the inclusion of CSOs is prepared. At least two events per year are organised and proposals are prepared for implementation of recommendations. The analysis and proposals are published on the website of SEA and Unit for Cooperation with NGOs and distributed to CSOs.	Secretariat for European Affairs.	2012-2014	
			Commencement of initial activities for implementation of recommendations according to proposals.			

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
Strengthening the partnership in the programming related to the utilisation of funds for pre-accession assistance (and upon the accession to the EU, utilisation of other funds) and their monitoring. The Government and CSOs actively cooperate in the processes of planning, programming and monitoring the implementation.	Inclusion of CSOs in the processes of planning, programming and monitoring the implementation.	Analysis of inclusion of CSOs to present in the programming of pre-accession funds. Organisation of consultative events for preparation of proposals for implementation of recommendations.	Analysis of the inclusion of CSOs in the programming of pre-accession funds, along with concrete recommendations for improvement is prepared. At least two events are organised and proposals are prepared for implementation of recommendations. The analysis and proposals are published on the website of SEA and distributed to CSOs.	Secretariat for European Affairs. Line ministries.	2012-2014	
			Date of commencement of initial activities for implementation of recommendations upon proposals.			

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
Development of partnerships with CSOs in defining the priorities for development assistance and its implementation. Established institutional framework for partnership with the civil society.	Defined programme for partnership in developing the institutional, strategic and legal framework for development assistance.	Designing a programme for partnership which includes mechanisms of cooperation.	Designed programme for partnership by the inter-sectorial working group. Adopted and implemented programme for partnership with the civil society. The initial activities of the programme are being implemented.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs.	2012-2013	

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
Enhancing the cooperation in the preparation of reports upon ratified international agreements and inclusion in initiatives to which the Republic of Macedonia has acceded. Reports on implementation of ratified international agreements are comprehensive and enriched with data from the civil society.	Continual cooperation between state administration bodies and CSOs during the preparation of reports.	Organisation of meetings for coordination with CSOs during the implementation and/or preparation of reports on international agreements.	A number of meetings are held during the preparation of concrete reports. A number of reports prepared in coordination with CSOs.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ministry of Justice.	2012-2014	
	CSOs are involved in preparation and implementation of the Action Plan pursuant to the principles of the <i>Open Government Partnership Initiative</i> .	Organisation of consultative meetings with CSOs during the preparation and implementation of the Action Plan.	A number of meetings are organised with CSOs. Number of activities/projects for implementation the Action Plan.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ministry of Information Society and Administration.	Latter half of 2012.	

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
<i>Priority area 3: Economic development and social cohesion</i>						
Supporting the development of social economy.	An enabling legal framework and environment for development of social entrepreneurship and increased participation of CSOs in the processes are created.	Raising the awareness of the civil society about social entrepreneurship.	Organisation of educational events and raising the awareness of the CSOs about the social entrepreneurship	Increased number of initiatives by CSOs in the area of social entrepreneurship.	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. Ministry of Economy.	2014
		Adoption of a Law on Social Entrepreneurship.	Analysis of the legal framework in relation to social entrepreneurship. Establishment of a working group for drafting a Law on Social Entrepreneurship.	Analysis of the legal framework and recommendations for improvement of social entrepreneurship are prepared. The Law on Social Entrepreneurship is drafted by the inter-sectorial working group. At least two consultative meetings are held with CSOs. The Law on Social Entrepreneurship is adopted and it contains the recommendations from the analysis and consultations.	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.	2014-2016

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
Increasing the inclusion of CSOs in providing services for satisfying the community's needs.	CSOs contribute to satisfying the community's needs and actively cooperate with state administration bodies and local government units.	The legal framework for social services is improved and corresponds to the current needs of the sector.	Analysis of the existing legal framework for social services.	Analysis is prepared, including the recommendations for improving the legal framework and proposals for further actions.	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.	2012-2014
			Undertaking activities based on the recommendations from relevant research.	Initial activities stemming from the recommendations are implemented. The number of CSOs that provide social services in cooperation with state administration bodies is increased.	All ministries.	2013
		Raising the awareness about the possibilities and pointing out good examples of cooperation in providing services under the jurisdiction of the units of the local self-government.	Organisation of educational events/meetings with the units of the local self-government units with the aim of promoting the good practices for cooperation with CSOs in provision of services. Organisation of meetings by the local self-government units with CSOs to present the communities' needs.	At least two events are organised per year. Covered at least twenty local self-government units Established partnerships with CSOs in ten local government units with the aim of entrusting them with the provision of public services under their jurisdiction. At least three meetings per year are held between the local self-government units and CSOs.	Ministry of Local Self-Government. Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.	2012-2014

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
		Models of cooperation in the area of education, health, culture etc. that stimulate the development of CSOs.	Establishment of a working group which will design models for cooperation in the area of education, health, culture etc. Publication and distribution of models of cooperation.	Developed models for cooperation by the inter-sectorial working group. Models for cooperation are published on the websites of state administration bodies and distributed to the ministries, local self-government units and CSOs.	Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture.	2013-2014
Stimulating the support and contributions by the citizens and business sector.	Citizens and business sector donate more and support the CSOs' activities.	Improvement of the Law on Donations and Sponsorship in Public Activities in order to correspond to the current needs.	A working group is established and a procedure is initiated for amendments to the Law on Donations and Sponsorship in Public Activities.	Prepared amendments to the Law by the inter-sectorial working group. Adopted amendments to the Law on Donations and Sponsorship in Public Activities and relevant by-laws.	Ministry of Justice.	2012-2013
		The implementation of the new Law is monitored.	Preparation of reports on the implementation of the Law on Donations and Sponsorship in Public Activities which contain information about the given donations and benefits. Publication of reports on the web sites.	Annual report about the number, features of donations and recipients, and the benefits is prepared. The number of donations from the business sector is increased.	Ministry of Justice,	2013 – 2015

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
Development of partnerships between the public sector, CSOs and the business sector for accomplishing economic and social development.	The civil society is included in the dialogue and initiatives for creation of public-private partnerships with the aim of accomplishing sustainable economic growth and social cohesion.	Connection with measures from the National Agenda for CSR.	Activities for connecting the measures from the National Agenda for CSR.	Type of activities/projects implemented as part of the National Agenda for CSR. Reports on implementation of the National Agenda for CSR contain positive practices for inclusion.	Ministry of Economy. National Coordination Body for CSR.	2012 and onward Latter half of 2012-2014
	Developed socially responsible practices for balanced growth and social cohesion which include partnership with the civil society.	Inclusion of CSOs in debates about the role of the civil society in the development of public-private partnership.	Organisation of debates and discussions about the role of the civil society in the development of public-private partnerships.	At least two debates and discussions are organised annually. Recommendations for improvement of the public-private partnerships, which include the recommendations of CSOs are prepared.		
		Promotion of models of tripartite partnerships (public, business and civil sector) in the light of the economic development and social cohesion.	Defining models for tripartite partnerships for economic development and social cohesion. Publication of models on the web sites, organisation of meetings with CSOs.	Models are defined and published. At least two meetings with CSOs and state administration bodies. Established at least two partnerships during the first year that contribute to economic development and social cohesion.		

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE OF IMPLEMENTATION
<i>Priority area 4: Civic activism and support by the community</i>						
Raising the awareness of young people and their participation in the civil society.	Young people are actively involved and contribute in society.	Cooperation with representatives from the civil society in teaching school subjects and performing activities in the schools related to the topics of democracy and civil society.	Inclusion of CSOs in the realisation of school subjects related to topics about democracy and civil society by transferring the experiences.	A number and type of activities implemented by schools in cooperation with CSOs.	Ministry of Education and Science.	2012 and onward
Stimulating the active involvement of citizens in the civil society and social processes.	Citizens raise initiatives and participate in initiatives for satisfying the communities' needs.	Relation with measures from the Strategy for Promotion and Development of Volunteerism. Stimulating civic activism through joint actions and events.	Activities for promotion of volunteerism (pursuant to the Strategy for Promotion and Development of Volunteerism). Support to CSOs that promote activities for massive involvement of citizens. Preparation of a report on civic engagement and volunteerism.	The number of citizens who volunteer in CSOs increases. Organised campaign for promotion of the positive values of the volunteerism. At least two activities that promote massive involvement of citizens are supported on an annual basis. Prepared and published annual report.	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, all state administration bodies.	2012 and onward 2013 and onward

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE OF IMPLEMENTATION
		Encouraging volunteer activities among the older members of the population.	Organisation of promotional activities for enhancing the volunteerism among elder population.	At least two implemented activities on annual level for promotion of volunteerism among the older population. Increased number of older people who are active in the communities and volunteer in associations/foundations and institutions.		

ATMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
<i>Priority area 5: Strengthened institutional framework and practices of cooperation</i>						
Strengthening the role of the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.	Responsibilities and obligations of the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs correspond to the scope of work according to the acts (defined responsibilities according to the Law on Associations and Foundations and alike).	Enhancing the capacities and activities of the Unit according to the defined responsibilities.	<p>Organisation of training sessions and other capacity building activities for the Unit's employees to enable smooth performance of their duties (administration of the OPI Commission, award of funds and alike).</p>	<p>Number of organised training sessions.</p> <p>Number of included employees from the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.</p> <p>Number and quality of prepared documents for supporting the work of the OPI Commission.</p> <p>At least four coordination meetings and joint events with CSOs per year.</p>	General Secretariat.	2012 and onward
		Analysing the possibilities for raising the Unit on the level of Sector.	<p>Comparative analysis of the organisational position of the Unit, responsibilities and tasks of similar institutions in the countries from the region, along with recommendations.</p> <p>Organisation of consultative events upon recommendations.</p>	<p>Prepared analysis along with the recommendations about the model of organisational structure.</p> <p>At least two consultative events are organised and proposals are prepared for implementation of recommendations.</p> <p>Prepared and adopted proposed model for the organisational position and activity of the Unit.</p>		2012 and onward 2012-2014

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
Strengthening the mechanism of communication of the network of civil servants responsible for cooperation with the civil society.	A functional mechanism is established for mutual coordination and exchange of information (network of civil servants responsible for cooperation with the CSOs).	Improving the existing mechanism and introduction of criteria and mandate for election of members from the network of civil servants responsible for cooperation with CSOs.	Development of draft procedures, criteria and scope of work of the network of civil servants responsible for cooperation with the civil society.	Established new procedures for operation of the network. The network of civil servants has regular meetings and exchange information according to their scope of work or at least four times per year. Adopted new procedures and criteria for election of members of the network of civil servants responsible for cooperation with the civil society.	General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs, in cooperation with the ministries.	2012
		Capacity building of members of the network of civil servants responsible for cooperation with CSOs.	Organisation of various capacity building activities for the network of civil servants responsible for cooperation with the CSOs. Development of a programme and organisation of training for trainers for the network members about issues relating to the legal framework and operation of CSOs.	Number of organised training sessions for capacity building. Number of civil servants included in the training sessions and other activities. At least four meetings and coordination events of network members are organised per year.	General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs. Ministry of Information Society and Administration.	2012 and onward

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
			Preparation of a template about the format and contents of the annual report for implementation of Strategy's measures by state administration bodies and the cooperation in general.	At least one meeting of network members with CSOs is organised per year. A number of organised trainings for trainers and type of topics. A number of training sessions and type of topics conducted by the trained members. Reports on the implementation of the Strategy by state administration bodies are standardised and published on the website of the Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.		
		Publishing and updating the list of members of the network – civil servants responsible for cooperation with NGOs and their deputies.	Making a list of members and their deputies in the network of civil servants responsible for cooperation with CSOs.	Once a year, a list of members and their deputies in the network of civil servants responsible for cooperation with the civil society is prepared and published. It is updated every three months.	General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.	2012-2014

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
Contribution in the light of continual and open debate for the needs related to the development of the civil society.	Institutional cooperation is strengthened and participation of CSOs in defining the priorities for cooperation and development is increased.	CSOs actively participate in defining the priorities, giving proposals for enhancing the environment and in monitoring the implementation of the Strategy through the established consultative body consisting of representatives of the Government, state administration bodies and CSOs.	<p>Establishment of a working group.</p> <p>Making analysis of the structure, mandate and scope of work of the consultative body.</p> <p>Organisation of coordinative meetings within state administration bodies regarding the structure, mandate and scope of work of the consultative body.</p> <p>Organisation of consultative activities for establishment of a consultative body for cooperation and dialogue.</p> <p>Preparation of foundation acts, criteria and procedure for election of members and other acts for establishment of the consultative body.</p>	<p>Number of coordinative meetings among state administration bodies about the structure, mandate and scope of work of the consultative body.</p> <p>Number of coordinative meetings with CSOs about the proposed structure, mandate and scope of work of the consultative body.</p> <p>All documents required for establishment of the consultative body for dialogue between the Government and CSOs are adopted.</p>	General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.	2012-2014

ATMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
Strengthening the networking of CSOs on a regional level.	CSOs find partners and cooperate with similar organisations from the countries of the region.	Inclusion of the Republic of Macedonia in the regional initiative (Slovenia, Croatia and Montenegro) for establishment of a regional electronic database of NGOs (www.ngo-portal.eu).	Drafting the Rules of Procedure for operation of the consultative body. Preparation of activity reports of the consultative body.	The consultative body is established in compliance with the analysis, recommendations and foundation acts. The Rules of Procedure of the consultative body is adopted. Prepared and published annual activity reports of the consultative body.	Agency for Youth and Sports. General Secretariat - Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.	2015-2017
			Designing and publishing a regional electronic database of CSOs.	The database of national CSOs is part of the regional database. Number of national CSOs which are part of the regional database. Number of established regional partnerships. Number of users of the database.		

AIMS	RESULTS	MEASURES	ACTIVITY	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE BODY	DEADLINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION
Strengthening the partnerships between the local self-government units and CSOs.	Local self-government units include CSOs in the local policy making processes and implementation of joint activities.	Establishing a system of communications and practice for exchange of experiences about the cooperation between state administration bodies and local self-government units and among local government units themselves.	<p>Organisation of coordination meetings and training sessions for preparation of local documents and inclusion of CSOs in local processes.</p> <p>Organisation of discussions about local priorities.</p> <p>Creation and publication of a database containing information from researches and materials on national and local level with the aim of making sharing of materials and resources easier.</p>	<p>Held at least three joint meetings for sharing the experiences between state administration bodies and local self-government units.</p> <p>Held at least three meetings among local self-government units</p> <p>Number and type of joint initiatives implemented on local level</p> <p>Number of adopted local documents and other mechanisms of cooperation</p> <p>The database is updated at least once a year.</p>	<p>Ministry of Local Self-Government.</p> <p>Ministry of Information Society and Administration</p> <p>General Secretariat – Unit for Cooperation with NGOs.</p>	Latter half of 2012 and onward



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