

# SHADOW REPORT

FROM MONITORING WORK  
AND EFFECTS OF  
THE SECTOR WORKING  
GROUP ON ENVIRONMENT  
AND CLIMATE ACTION

*January – December 2020*







THROUGH  
DIALOGUE TO  
**EU**

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## SHADOW REPORT FROM MONITORING WORK AND EFFECTS OF THE SECTOR WORKING GROUP ON ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION JANUARY – DECEMBER 2020

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ИЗВЕШТАЈ ВО СЕНКА ОД СЛЕДЕЊЕТО НА РАБОТАТА И ЕФЕКТИТЕ НА СЕКТОРСКАТА РАБОТНА ГРУПА ЗА ЖИВОТНА СРЕДИНА И КЛИМАТСКИ АКЦИИ ЈАНУАРИ – ДЕКЕМВРИ 2020

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# TABLE OF CONTENT



FOREWORD	5
GENERAL INFORMATION	7
METHODOLOGY APPROACH	9
<b>PART 1: SECTOR POLICIES</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>PART 2: SWG FUNCTIONALITY</b>	<b>15</b>
2.1 Rules of Procedure	15
2.2 Annual plan	16
<b>PART 3: CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>PART 4: CSO CAPACITY</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART 5: EFFECTS FROM SWG WORK</b>	<b>27</b>
5.1 General information on IPA III programming (2021-2027)	27
5.1.1 Strategic response and action fiche for environment and climate action	32
<b>PART 6: GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE 12 SECTOR WORKING GROUPS</b>	<b>35</b>
6.1 Findings from monitoring sector working groups	36
6.1.1 SWG meetings	36
6.1.2 Trainings	37
FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	39
FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN TERMS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE 12 SECTOR WORKING GROUPS	40
BIBLIOGRAPHY	41



# FOREWORD

The project “CSO Dialogue – Platform for Structural Participation in EU Integrations” is committed to ensuring structural participation of the civil society that expresses the views of citizens to impact key sector-wide reforms under the EU accession process. The sector working groups (SWGs)<sup>1</sup> are perceived as exceptionally important mechanism for consultations and civil society participation, and a forum for development of national policies and design of reform processes in the country. Hence, the second edition of 12 shadow reports on performance of sector working groups in 2020 is an attempt to bring this mechanism closer to the citizens and to critically analyse their organizational setup, functionality and efficiency.

For the purpose of the second edition of 12 shadow reports on performance of sector working groups in the period January – December 2020, project researchers monitored 17 from total of 19 meetings held by these working groups. Findings from observing SWG meetings and analysing sector policies were discussed at 11 interviews conducted with IPA coordinators from line ministries responsible for relevant sector groups, and with 34 civil society representatives that participate in SWGs. Moreover, changes noted in 2020 compared to 2019 are supported by responses obtained to 312 freedom of information requests inquiring about SWG performance in the course of 2020.

The general assessment implies certain progress in SWG performance despite the extraordinary year which, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, has raised challenges for the overall society. Progress is primarily noted in respect to transparency in SWG operation, notably by means of

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<sup>1</sup> The sector working groups are a formal mechanism for consultations and cooperation among the executive authorities (ministries), civil society organizations, the donor community, and other interested parties. By the cut-off date for this report, 12 sector working groups with competences in different areas are established in the Republic of North Macedonia, in order to ensure the sector-wide approach.



greater access to published information that are of importance for SWGs. Furthermore, 2020 was marked by organization of 19 plenary sessions, compared to only 12 sessions held in 2019. However, despite the mild increase in the number of meetings, SWGs still do not meet pursuant to the frequency anticipated under the rules of procedure, which could guarantee a commitment to sector policies and reform implementation. SWGs demonstrated a satisfactory level of functionality, as stipulated in their respective rules of procedures, but these documents fall short in defining the role and position of civil society organizations within SWGs. Having in mind that the central focus of the project “CSO Dialogue – Platform for Structural Participation in EU Integrations” is put on civil society organizations and their efficient involvement in policy shaping, this report stresses the need for advancing the role played by civil society organizations in sector working groups.

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## SECTOR WORKING GROUP ON ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION

**FORMED:** 2015

**NUMBER OF SWG MEMBERS:** 83 (according to the last meeting held), institutions x 47 members, civil society organizations x 3 members, and donor community x 33 members. The sector group does not have decision on establishment and therefore the list of invitees for SWG meetings is updated according to the topics discussed and the number of members varies.

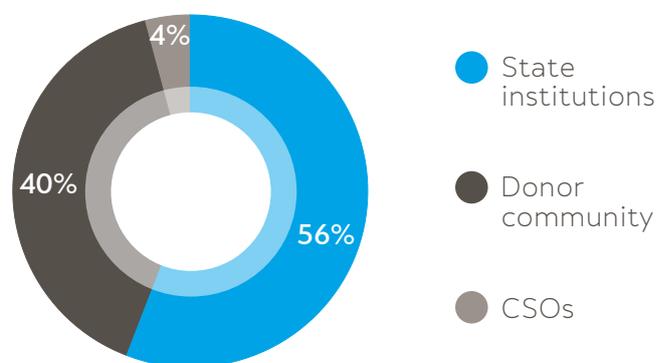
**NUMBER OF MEETINGS HELD IN 2020:**

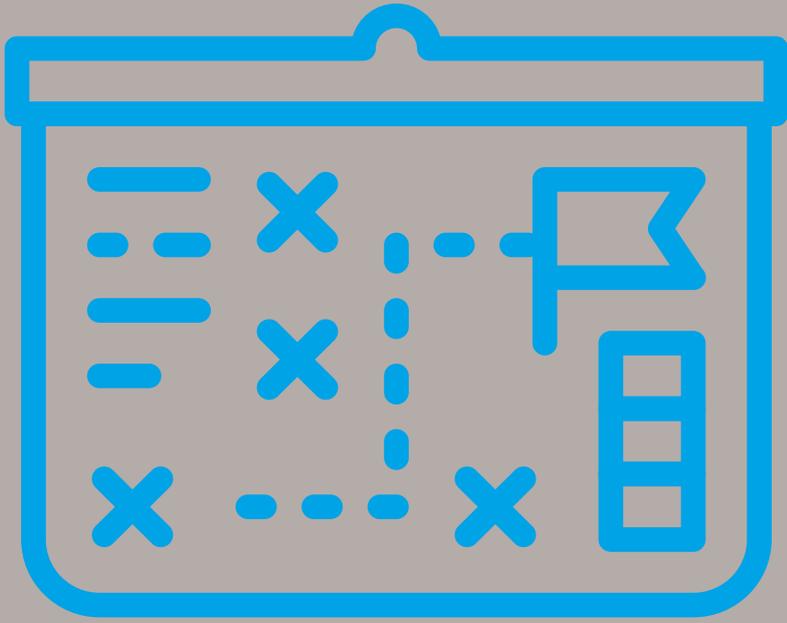
one plenary session, 17.06.2020

**SWG CHAIR:** Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning

### **CHART 1.**

**Distribution of various representatives in SWG Environment and Climate Action**





# METHODOLOGY APPROACH

For the purpose of this report, several research methods were used:

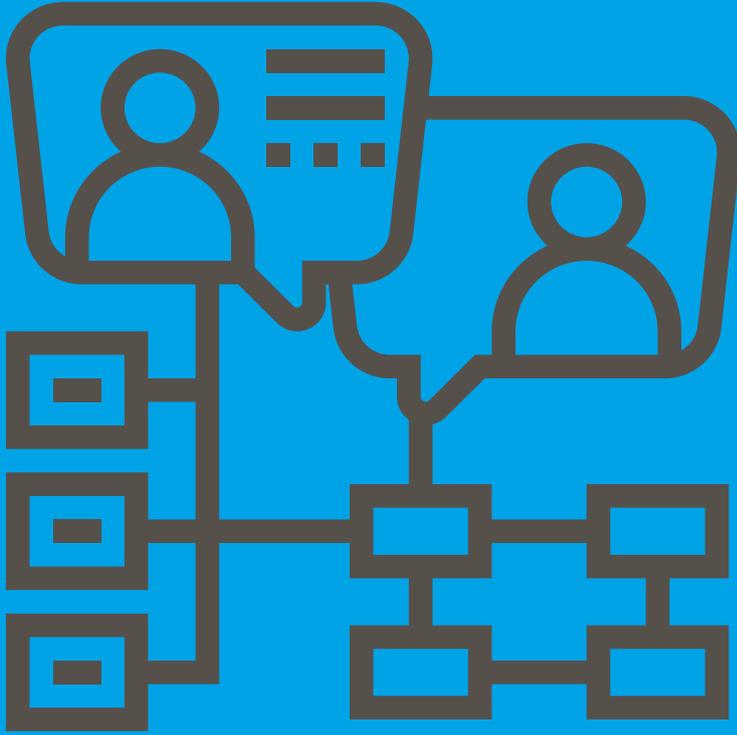
- free access to public information;
- focus group with civil society representatives that participate in this sector working group;
- interviews with coordinators from the ranks of civil servants at the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning;
- direct monitoring at SWG plenary sessions.

A total of 22 freedom of information requests were submitted to the competent ministry, for which the project team received partial responses within the relevant law-stipulated deadline. Responses were assessed as partial because some links provided therein are not functional, i.e. they do not contain information requested. As regards the focus group with civil society representatives, the project team was unable to receive feedback from civil society organizations that figure as members of this sector group with an explanation that they do not have neither capacity nor knowledge about processes taking place within the sector group. Moreover, project researchers conducted an interview<sup>2</sup> with one coordinator from the ranks of civil servants responsible for this sector working group.

According to the monitoring methodology, performance of sector working groups is assessed in respect to five segments:

- SWG functionality;
- civil society participation in SWG;
- CSO capacity for contribution and participation in SWG;
- effects from SWG work; and
- IPA.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with the coordinator from the ranks of civil servants was conducted on 18.05.2021



# PART 1

## SECTOR POLICIES

As regards sector policies, there are no significant changes compared to the 2019 report. In 2020, there were several movements in terms of environmental policies. At its 32<sup>nd</sup> sessions, the Government of RNM adopted six sets of laws in the field of waste management, intended to align national legislation with the relevant EU acquis. This session implied finalization of texts for the law on waste management, law on extended producer responsibility for management of separate waste flows, law on management of electrical and electronic equipment and electrical and electronic waste, proposed law on management of additional waste flows within the system of extended producer responsibility, law on management of packaging and package waste, and proposed law on management of batteries and accumulators and battery and accumulator waste.<sup>3</sup> In the next period, these laws will be submitted for adoption at the Parliament, but it is important to note that these were not subject of discussion within the sector working group in the course of 2020.

The Draft Report on Strategic Environmental Assessment<sup>4</sup> and National Plan for Waste Management 2020 - 2030<sup>5</sup> were adopted in this monitoring period, but the

<sup>3</sup> Press release from the 32<sup>nd</sup> session held by the Government of RNM, available at: <https://vlada.mk/node/23660>

<sup>4</sup> Draft Report on Strategic Environmental Assessment, available at: <https://bit.ly/3j6UoV4>

<sup>5</sup> National Plan for Waste Management 2020 – 2030, available at: <https://bit.ly/2UmyfHK>



sector working group did not discuss any legislative or additional strategic policies in the area of environment and climate action. Moreover, the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning proposed the Law on Declaring Part of Shar Planina as Protected Area in the Category of National Parks, with an indication that consultations for this piece of legislation started back in 2019. The status of this proposed law is still designated as open for consultations, followed by procedures for its adoption in the Parliament of the Republic of North Macedonia. In November 2020, a large number of civil society organizations profiled in the area of environmental protection reacted to the preliminary law by organizing a campaign for submission of comments directly to the line ministry. Hence, it is still unclear how comments from the civil society will be integrated in this piece of legislation.

As regards strategy documents, the end of 2020 marked the end of validity periods for two strategies that are of interest for this sector working group. They include:

- | Strategy on Environment 2014-2020;
- | Strategy on Risk Management 2018-2020.

The Strategy on Environment is a strategic document of the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning and provides guidelines for state investments and plans on environment development. After the strategy expired, at the time when this report is written (May 2021) there is a vacuum in terms of strategic approach in this regard. Moreover, the Strategy on Risk Management is equally important, primarily in anticipation of possible risks in implementation of the ministry's policies, but also in respect to the approach for collection of different information. Hence, both strategies are of significance for the sector group and should also be reconsidered by SWG members. At the time when this annual report is drafted there are no information whether new strategies are being developed and whether they will be reviewed and discussed by SWG members. Although several important strategies are valid and enforceable, such as the National Strategy on Nature Protection 2021-2027,<sup>6</sup> National Strategy on Biodiversity 2018-2023, and underway is development of law on climate and comprehensive strategy on climate action in compliance with the EU 2030 framework, the overall policy of the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning remains unclear.

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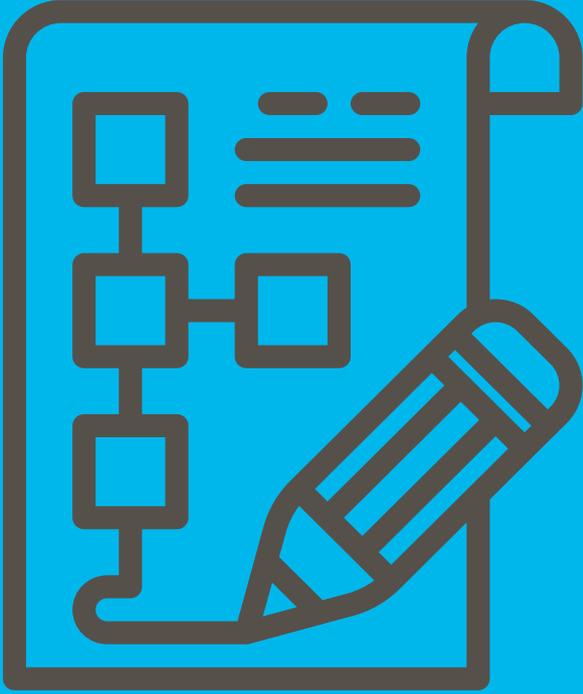
<sup>6</sup> National Strategy on Nature Protection 2021-2027, available at: <https://bit.ly/3vQe9To>

In its last Progress Report for the Republic of North Macedonia, under Chapter 27 the European Commission reflects on environment and climate change. In particular, the report notes that the country is at **some level of preparation** in this area. **Limited progress** has been achieved in the areas of nature protection, civil protection and climate change. However, implementation in all sectors is still lagging behind.<sup>7</sup>

As part of cross-sectoral cooperation between the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Labour and Social Policy during the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, both ministries implemented the project on tackling the crisis caused by the COVID-19 virus. This project was not discussed at session held by the sector working group, but it is important to be mentioned due to the fact that it was created for implementation of policy standards and is implemented during the COVID-19 crisis.



<sup>7</sup> European Commission's 2020 Progress Report for North Macedonia, available at: <https://bit.ly/3vKLiji>



# PART 2

## SWG FUNCTIONALITY

### 2.1 RULES OF PROCEDURE

In respect to SWG rules of procedure, as noted in the 2019 Report for SWG Environment and Climate Action, there is no document in place that governs operation of this sector working group.

During the interview with the competent civil servant, the project team learned about the initiative for creation of separate rules of procedure and separate decision by the environment minister that would regulate operation and members of this sector group. Moreover, the draft rules of procedure were developed in the same period and submitted to the Secretariat for European Affairs for approval. In addition, it was said that after obtaining such approval, the draft rules of procedure will be shared for consultations with all SWG members before being formally adopted by the working group.

All in all, the current setup puts under question functionality of this sector group. Lack of institutional support, procedures and competences put this sector working group in an institutional vacuum, whereby its internal competences are not fully clear. Moreover, participation of civil society representatives remains unregulated and is left to the good will of the competent min-



istry. Hence, the initiative for creation of rules of procedures and formalization of this sector working group is welcomed.

For example, lack of rules of procedure that would regulate submission of documents to SWG members prevents delivery of these documents in timely manner. Such was the case with the only session held in 2020, whereby which documents that will be discussed at SWG meeting were not delivered together with meeting invitations. The ministry recognizes this problem, indicating that oftentimes coordinators are in rush to organize SWG meetings and voluminous documents are distributed late preventing SWG members to fully review and form an opinion about them. Moreover, it is still unclear who can be member and who can be an observer in this process, i.e. there is no clear division between SWG members and possible observers/participants from non-state actors.

On this account, the initiative for adoption of separate rules of procedure which, according to civil servants competent for this sector working group, have been drafted in cooperation with current composition of the sector group and anticipate equal treatment in respect to participation and nomination of members from state and non-state actors, is welcomed. This document was already submitted to the Secretariat for European Affairs for review and is still in the stage of comments, after which the sector working group will formally adopt it.

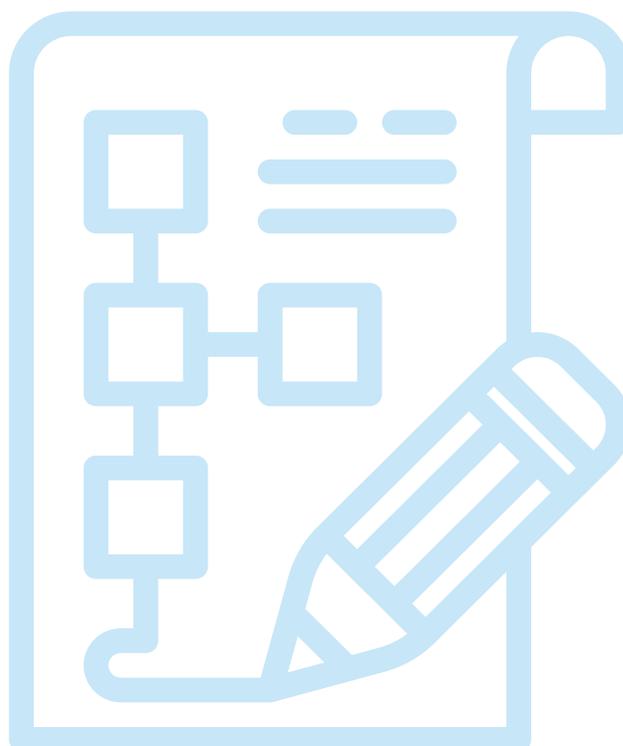
## 2.2 ANNUAL PLAN

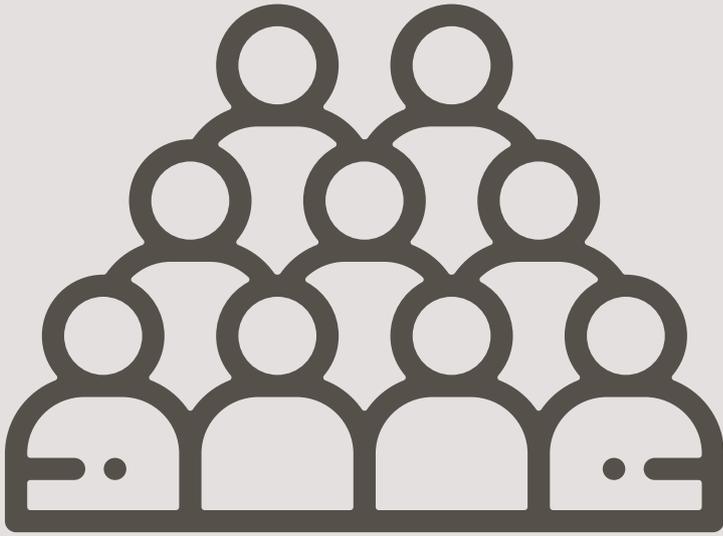
SWG Environment and Climate Action does not have an annual work plan, and it has not instituted a practice for development of such plans. Under the common practices, the sector working group usually organizes at least two meetings annually. In 2020, this sector group organized only one plenary session.

## ASSESSMENT ON SWG FUNCTIONALITY

According to the methodology for monitoring work and effects from sector working groups, **SWG functionality** is measured against 14 standards and 8 indicators that focus on creation of relevant work documents by SWGs (rules of procedure, annual plan and annual report) and their enforcement in the practice. All standards and indicators are assigned a numeric value, whereby 1 is the lowest and 3 is the highest score.

**Average score for functionality of SWG Environment and Climate Action in this monitoring period is calculated at 1.0.**





# PART 3

## CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

There is no significant difference in SWG participation on the side of civil society organizations and other types of organizations compared to the situation noted in 2019. The procedure for selection of SWG members and deputy members dates from December 2016 and three organizations still have their representatives in this sector group, as follows:

- Aleksandar Tefov, Eko Life (member);
- Kiril Ristovski, Florizon Center for Environmental Democracy (deputy member);
- Robertina Brajanovska, Macedonian Environmental Society (deputy member).

However, only FLOROZON and Macedonian Ecological Society were invited to attend the only session held by this sector working group in 2020.

While this proves participation of civil society organizations in SWG Environment and Climate Action through their representatives, the project team was unable to establish contact in order to organize focus groups with civil society participants in this sector group. This is due to the fact that during telephone calls these representatives explained they



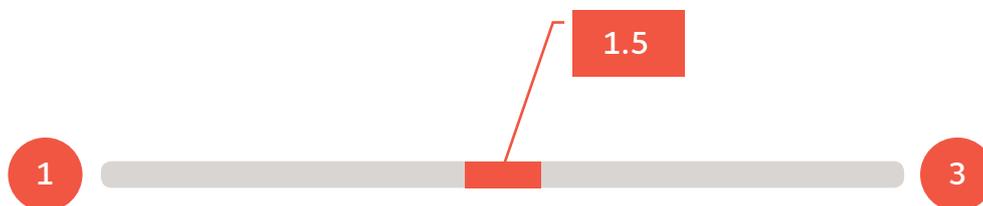
hold no expertise and are not familiar with developments within the sector group in spite of the fact that, based on documents obtained, civil society organizations do participate in its work.

According to civil servants competent for the sector working group, the sector group's lead institution has timely responded to initiatives from civil society organizations, and they believe that sufficient space is provided for their participation. To the greatest extent, comments made by civil society representatives have been integrated in relevant documents and have contributed to quality improvements. Such is the case with strategic responses for IPA III developed by the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, whereby comments from civil society organizations were added to this document.

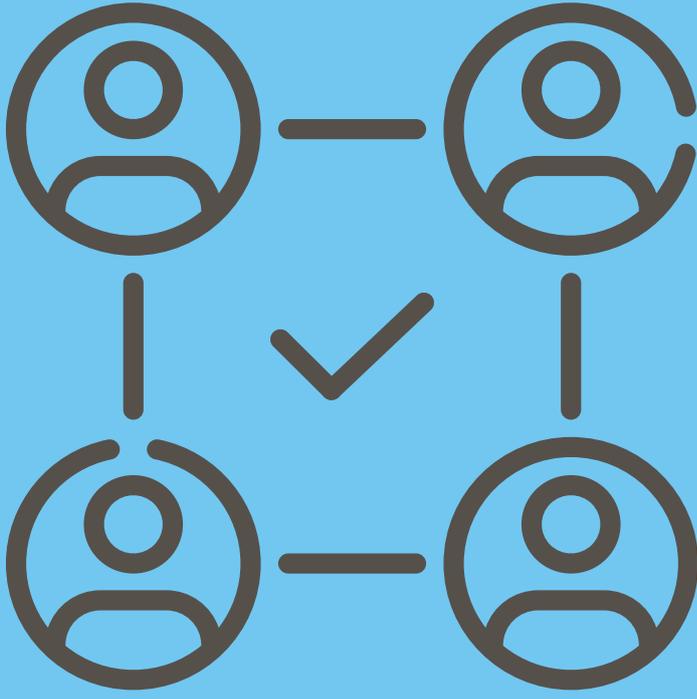
## ASSESSMENT ON CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

According to the methodology for monitoring work and effects of sector working groups, **civil society participation in SWG** is measured against 9 standards and 3 indicators that focus on the number and the status of CSOs involved in SWG work. Moreover, they cover regular and timely delivery of invitations and necessary materials for SWG meetings, as well as opportunities afforded to CSOs to join discussions before, during and after meetings. All standards and indicators are assigned a numeric value, whereby 1 is the lowest and 3 is the highest score.

Average score for civil society participation in SWG Environment and Climate Action in this monitoring period is calculated at 1.5.





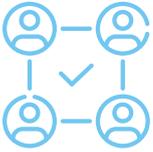


# PART 4

## CSO CAPACITY

According to civil servants competent for this sector working group, capacity of civil society organizations that participate in its work is relatively high. In their opinion, large part of the civil society profiled in this thematic area has demonstrated knowledge and has assisted in various projects within the ministry, irrespective of the fact whether it is matter of IPA-funded and other projects. Hence, the civil society in the field of environment is increasingly involved in specific implementation of projects. On the other hand, their participation in the sector working group contributes to better quality of documents developed in respect to IPA programming, for example, proposals made by civil society organizations for the ministry's strategic response mentioned earlier.

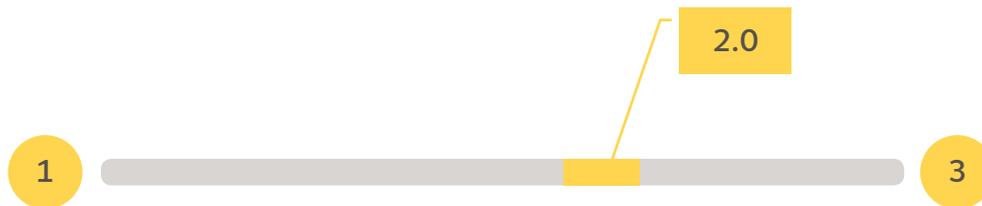
On the other hand, the project team was unable to observe the plenary session held by this sector group, primarily because invitations were not delivered to relevant researchers. Moreover, the team was unable to organize specific focus groups with civil society representatives in this sector working groups due to their lack of knowledge about processes taking place therein. Hence, it is difficult to infer a higher or lower assessment on CSO capacity in this area.

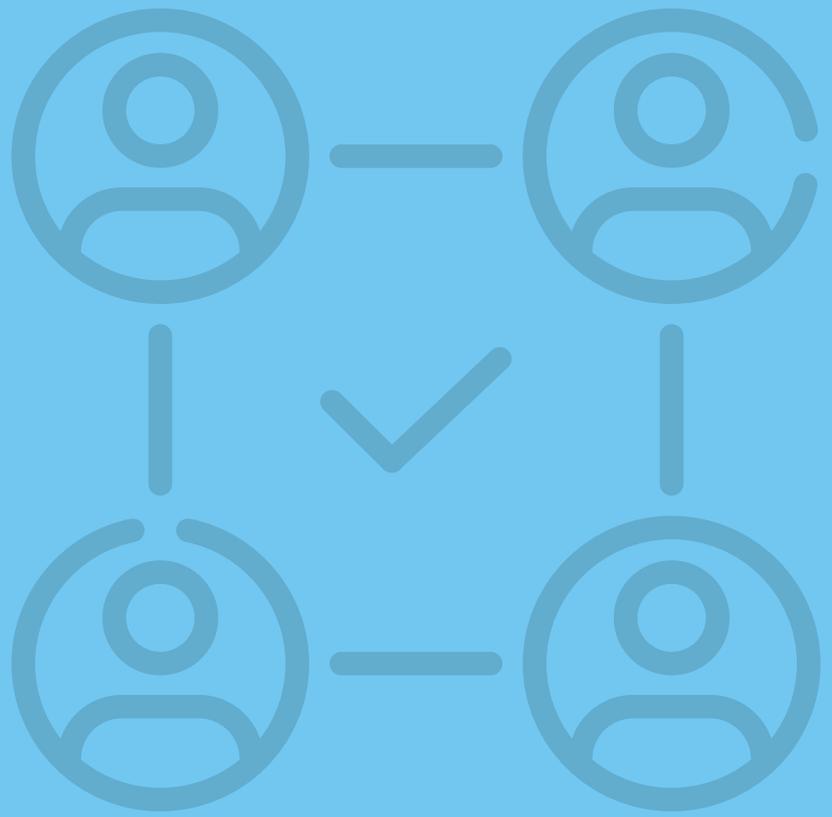


## ASSESSMENT ON CSO CAPACITY

According to the methodology for monitoring work and effects of sector working groups, **CSO capacity for contribution and participation in SWG** is measured against 5 standards and 2 indicators that focus on ability, knowledge and skills disposed by CSOs. Moreover, they concern proactivity on the part of CSOs in respect to organization of consultations and information sessions, production of analyses, research papers and policy briefs, as well as engagement in advocacy for important issues falling within SWG scope of work. All standards and indicators are assigned a numeric value, whereby 1 is the lowest and 3 is the highest score.

**Average score for CSO capacity for contribution and participation in SWG Environment and Climate Action in this monitoring period is calculated at 2.0.**







# PART 5

## EFFECTS FROM SWG WORK

At the only plenary session organized in 2020, SWG Environment and Climate Action reviewed the following documents:

- Strategic response of the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning for IPA III programming;
- Action fishes for IPA III.

In addition, the meeting agenda included reconsideration of the UN Cooperation Framework for Sustainable Development 2021-2025 that was presented by three UN Agencies.

Having in mind that there were no additional strategy documents or policies reconsidered, it could be concluded that 2020 was primarily a preparatory year for IPA programming.

### 5.1 GENERAL INFORMATION ON IPA III PROGRAMMING (2021-2027)

The Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III) concerns the programming period 2021-2027. The European Commission introduced this instrument together with the new EU multiannual financial framework. IPA programming took place throughout the entire 2020 and was initiated with development of PAF indicators,<sup>8</sup> followed by strategic responses and action fishes.

<sup>8</sup> Performance Assessment Framework (PAF)



IPA III is introduced with adoption of the Regulation on Establishing the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance and the Regulation on Implementing Rules and Principles for IPA III<sup>9</sup> by the European Union, and is coherent to other funds, programmes and instruments of the Union, primarily the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument. According to its structure, IPA III is organized into 5 windows:

1. Rule of Law, Fundamental Rights and Democracy;
2. Good Governance, Acquis Alignment, Good Neighbourly Relations and Strategic Communication;
3. Green Agenda and Sustainable Connectivity;
4. Competitiveness and Inclusive Growth;
5. Territorial and Cross-Border Cooperation.

Each window is comprised of several thematic priorities, as follows:

**TABLE 1:**  
*IPA III windows and thematic priorities*

WINDOW 1: RULE OF LAW, FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY	WINDOW 2: GOOD GOVERNANCE, ACQUIS ALIGNMENT, GOOD NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Judiciary;</li> <li>◆ Fight against corruption;</li> <li>◆ Fight against organized crime;</li> <li>◆ Migration and border management;</li> <li>◆ Fundamental rights;</li> <li>◆ Democracy;</li> <li>◆ Civil society.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Good governance;</li> <li>◆ Administrative capacity and acquis alignment;</li> <li>◆ Good neighbourly relations and reconciliation;</li> <li>◆ Strategic communication, monitoring, evaluation and audit.</li> </ul>

<sup>9</sup> Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III) COM/2018/465 final.

#### WINDOW 3: GREEN AGENDA AND SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIVITY

- ◆ Environment and climate change;
- ◆ Transport, digital economy and energy.

#### WINDOW 4: COMPETITIVENESS AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

- ◆ Education, employment, social protection and inclusion policies, and health;
- ◆ Private sector development, trade, research and innovation;
- ◆ Agriculture and rural development;
- ◆ Fisheries.

#### WINDOW 5: TERRITORIAL AND CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

This window is comprised of a separate list of thematic priorities given in Annex 2 to the IPA III Regulation.<sup>10</sup> Modalities for implementation of this component include:

- ◆ cross-border cooperation with IPA countries;
- ◆ participation in micro region strategies.

According to the IPA III Regulation, the European Commission proposes a programming framework for the period 2021-2027 that includes all priority areas eligible for funding. Based on this programming framework, each IPA III country develops its strategic responses, elaborating links between EU priorities and those under national and sector strategies, followed by development of projects in the next phase.

IPA III does not include specific financial allocations per beneficiary country. Actually, countries will have to compete for the total of 14.162 billion euros available on the basis of their capacity and project proposals. However, IPA III introduces the principle of fair share in order to ensure certain balance and proportionality in distribution of IPA III funds among beneficiary countries.

<sup>10</sup> COM/2018/465



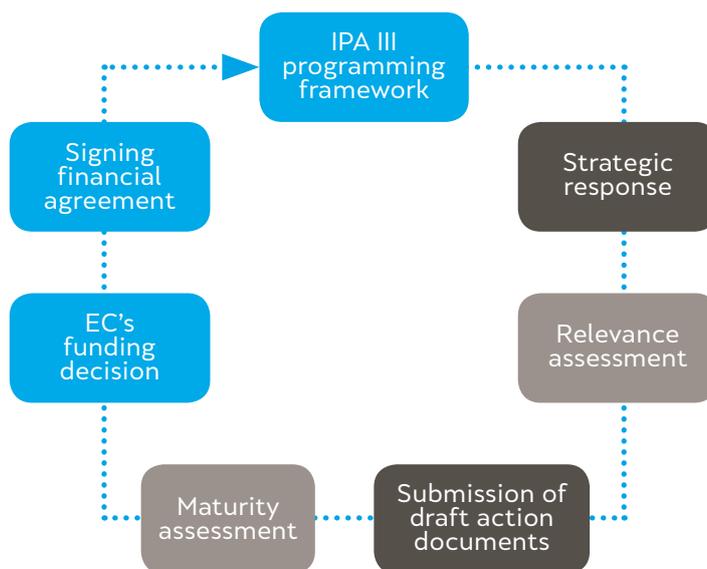
IPA III programming is pursued in two stages.

1. **Relevance assessment.** In this stage, the country develops summary action fishes with elaboration of proposed projects. The European Commission assesses these fishes in terms of their relevance.
2. **Maturity assessment.** This stage implies development of action documents, but only for projects that have passed the relevance assessment, followed by detailed elaboration. The European Commission assesses projects in terms of their maturity. After action documents are approved, the country presents the European Commission with tender documents for projects approved in both stages, followed by signing of financial agreements for individual action documents.

The process for developing strategic and action documents for the years 2021 and 2022, but also for next programming years, is anticipated to take place within the existing sector working groups (SWGs), established under the sector-wide approach from IPA II.

In the second half of 2020, under coordination from the Secretariat for European Affairs, sector working groups developed and presented the European Commission with 22 action fishes, of which 10 for the year 2021<sup>11</sup> and 12 for the year 2022.<sup>12</sup>

**CHART 2.**  
*IPA III programming cycle*



<sup>11</sup> <https://www.sep.gov.mk/data/file/Dokumenti/Akciski%20fisea/2021.zip>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.sep.gov.mk/data/file/Dokumenti/Akciski%20fisea/2022.zip>

**TABLE 2. 2021 and 2022 action fiches for IPA III**

ACTION FISHES 2021			
INDICATIVE TITLE OF THE ACTION	INDICATIVE BUDGET	CO-FINANCING RATIO	
		EU	MK
1. EU for Efficient Judiciary and Enhanced Prevention of Corruption	10 million euros	85%	15%
2. Civil Society Facility	3 million euros	/	/
3. EU for Modern Administration	10 million euros	100%	0%
4. EU for Good Governance	9 million euros	89%	11%
5. EU Integration Facility	5 million euros	100%	0%
6. EU for Environmental Standards	12 million euros	83%	17%
7. EU for Clean Air	14 million euros	86%	14%
8. EU for Prespa	23,7 million euros	76%	24%
9. Preparation of European Transport Corridors Projects	9,5 million euros	100%	0%
10. EU for Green Growth	27,5 million euros	73%	27%
ACTION FISHES 2022			
INDICATIVE TITLE OF THE ACTION	INDICATIVE BUDGET	CO-FINANCING RATIO	
		EU	MK
1. Private Sector Development <sup>13</sup>	9,2 million euros	87%	13%
2. EU in Support of the Fight against Organized Crime	5,2 million euros	88%	12%
3. EU for Improved Border Management, Migration and Asylum Policy	7,8 million euros	90%	10%
4. Civil Society Facility	3 million euros	/	/
5. EU Integration Facility	10 million euros	100%	0%
6. Union Programmes	15,4 million euros	50%	50%
7. EU for Modern Waste Water Systems	53 million euros	50%	50%
8. EU for Safe Roads	20 million euros	50%	50%

13 Sector fiche with remaining funds under Component I from IPA I for the years 2012 and 2013.



9. EU for Quality Employment and Equal Opportunities	6,6 million euros	91%	9%
10. EU for Health	5,9 million euros	85%	15%
11. EU for Trade Facilitation	8,1 million euros	72%	28%
12. EU for Development of Agriculture	6 million euros	83%	17%

### 5.1.1 Strategic response and action fiche for environment and climate action

The strategic response in the sector on environment and climate action is part of Window 3: Green Agenda and Sustainable Connectivity, thematic priority 1: Environment and climate change.

**ТАБЕЛА 3. Strategic response and action fiches for environment and climate action**

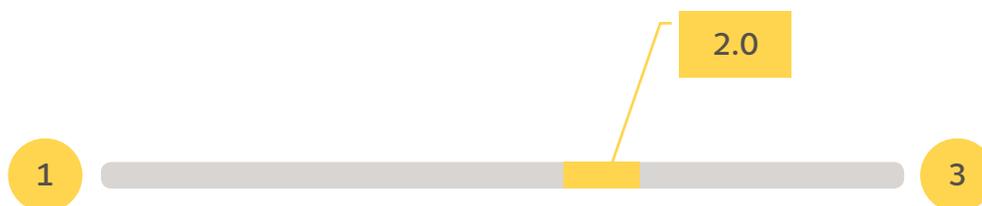
SWG	STRATEGIC RESPONSE	KEY THEMATIC PRIORITY	ACTION FICHE	ACTION FICHE OBJECTIVES
ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION	WINDOW 3: GREEN AGENDA AND SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIVITY <b>Thematic priority 1: Environment and climate change</b>	(1) Optimization of the water cycle and reduced impact of solid waste on the environment (2) Natural resources preservation, revival and management and promotion of their sustainable use (3) Reduced greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, improved resilience to climate change (4) Improved policy creation and law enforcement	(2021) <i>EU for Environment Standards</i> - 12 million euros, 83% EU financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ To transpose the EU acquis</li> <li>◆ Administrative capacity for waste management</li> <li>◆ Horizontal legislation, integrated pollution prevention and control, climate action</li> </ul>
			(2021) <i>EU for Clean Air</i> - 14 million euros, 86% EU financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ To improve air quality by ensuring efficient coordination between central and local authorities, and allocating sufficient financial resources for development and implementation of municipal energy efficiency programmes</li> <li>◆ To intensify coordination between national and local authorities</li> </ul>

WINDOW 3: GREEN AGENDA AND SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIVITY <b>Thematic priority 2: Transport, digital economy and energy</b>	(3) Energy – gradual transfer to safe and clean energy	(2021) <i>EU for Prespa</i> – 23.7 million euros, 76% EU financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ To enhance protection of natural resources, improve solid waste management, improve water quality, including natural water and depuration of waste water</li> <li>◆ To invest in modern infrastructure, together with improved management of water supply, waste waters and solid waste in the Municipality of Resen</li> <li>◆ To support sustainable development of the Prespa Lake, by encouraging environmentally-focused economic activities in the region</li> </ul>
		(2022) <i>EU for Modern Waster Water Systems</i> – 53 million euros, 50% EU financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ To implement the Directive 91/271/EEC on urban waste water treatment</li> </ul>

## ASSESSMENT ON EFFECTS FROM SWG WORK

According to the methodology for monitoring work and effects of sector working groups, **effects from SWG work** are measured against 3 standards and 8 indicators that focus on changes effectuated by SWG work though planning and monitoring, and methods for foreign aid coordination. All standards and indicators are assigned a numeric value, whereby 1 is the lowest and 3 is the higher score.

**Average score for effects from work of SWG Environment and Climate Action in this monitoring period is calculated at 2.0.**





# PART 6

## GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE 12 SECTOR WORKING GROUPS

The obligation for gender mainstreaming in work of sector working groups (SWGs) arises from the national legislation, but also from the Country Indicative Strategy Paper for the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance 2014–2020 (IPA II)<sup>14</sup>, the European Union’s Gender Action Plan (GAP II)<sup>15</sup> and the broader EU acquis. As elaborated in the previous Shadow Report, GAP II stresses the need for gender mainstreaming in programs and assistance programming,<sup>16</sup> while IPA II treats gender equality as cross-cutting issue and as separate priority area for support.<sup>17</sup>

This year was hallmarked by the public health crisis, which furthered already existing gender gaps and inequalities. The COVID-19 pandemic had negative impact on

14 European Commission, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II), Revised Indicative Strategy Paper for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2014-2020). Available at: <https://bit.ly/3hxZE2W>

15 Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through European Union (EU) External Relations 2016-2020 (GAP II). Available at: <https://bit.ly/2Quy3oo>

16 Ibid.

17 European Commission, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA II), Revised Indicative Strategy Paper for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2014-2020). Available at: <https://bit.ly/3hxZE2W>



women's participation in the labour market in RNM, whose activity rate was already low before the crisis. According to the most recent data available, 62.3% of women<sup>18</sup> in the country are economically inactive, compared to 37.7% of men.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, 77% of health sector employees in RNM are women,<sup>20</sup> which means that women - at the time of crisis - found themselves at the frontline of this struggle. Women are more represented in sectors that have been most affected by the crisis. For example, 80% of textile industry workers are women.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, under conditions of pre-existing and deepened inequalities, addressing these issues by gender mainstreaming in work of all bodies and institutions, including SWGs, gains an even greater importance.

## 6.1 FINDINGS FROM MONITORING SECTOR WORKING GROUPS

### 6.1.1 SWG meetings

In the course of 2020, SWG meetings rarely included discussion on policy impacts in terms of gender equality as a cross-cutting theme. Information and data collected by the cut-off date for this report<sup>22</sup> allow the conclusion that, as noted in the 2019 report, only two sector groups have integrated the gender perspective in their work: SWG Education, Employment and Social Policy and SWG Agriculture and Rural Development. This refers to the conclusion that SWGs have still not recognized their key role in promoting gender equality by means of gender mainstreaming in development and implementation of sector policies.

18 State Statistical Office (MAKStat Database 2019). Active population according to economic activity, gender and age. Economic inactivity of women. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3yt39Ov>

19 State Statistical Office (MAKStat Database 2019). Active population according to economic activity, gender and age. Economic inactivity of men. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3yt39Ov>

20 ILO (2020). Covid-19 and the World of Work NORTH MACEDONIA Rapid Assessment of the Employment Impacts and Policy Responses, available at: <https://bit.ly/3mGGtV7>

21 Ibid.

22 By the cut-off date for this report, information and data were collected from line ministries responsible for eight sector working groups: SWG Justice, SWG Public Administration Reform, SWG Local and Regional Development, SWG Education, Employment and Social Policy, SWG Home Affairs, SWG Transport, SWF Public Finance Management, and SWG Agriculture and Rural Development.

## 6.1.2 Trainings

Recommendations made under the 2019 Shadow Report concerned specially designed training for SWG members on gender mainstreaming that would be complementary to already existing gender equality training for administrative officers.

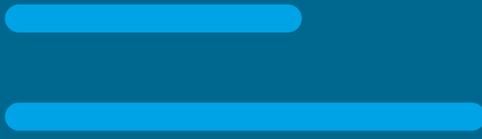
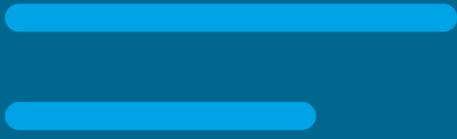
Namely, in 2017 the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP), with the support from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN WOMEN), developed an e-training course on gender equality intended to enhance knowledge of public administration employees. This training course is comprised of two modules, basic and advanced, and is administered by the Ministry of Information Society and Administration (MISA) through the E-learning Management System, which is accessible only to administrative officers.

Defeating is the fact that, in 2020, this basic module of the gender equality training was attended by only three administrative officers and nobody attended the advanced module. For comparison, in 2019 the basic module was attended by 359 and the advanced module was attended by 54 administrative officers. From its introduction to present, the gender equality training was attended by a total of 11,017 administrative officers. However, this figure pales into insignificance against the fact that, by 31.12.2020, public sector institutions employ a total of 131,183 persons.<sup>23</sup> Here it should be noted that this training course is available only to administrative officers, but not to other groups of public sector employees.<sup>24</sup>

In October 2020, under the Project for Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) and in cooperation with UN WOMEN, MLSP organized four one-day trainings on strategic planning, which featured gender mainstreaming elements. These trainings were attended by professional and management staff members and those involved in strategic planning and policy/program development at institutions, including coordinators and deputy coordinators for equal opportunities. In total, all four trainings were attended by 32 staff members from 13 line ministries and 1 state institution. In December 2020, a two-day online training was organized on gender mainstreaming in strategic planning and gender responsive budgeting, attended by 33 staff members from 14 line ministries.

<sup>23</sup> Ministry of Information Society and Administration. 2020 Report from the Register of Public Sector Employees. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2T3DTxW>

<sup>24</sup> Pursuant to Article 14 of the Law on Public Sector Employee ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 27/14, 199/14, 27/16, 35/18 and 198/18 and "Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 143/19 and 14/20), job positions of employees in public sector institutions are categorized into four groups: administrative officers, officers with public authority, service providers assistance/technical staff.



## FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**1.** Operation of SWG Environment and Climate Action is still not based on formal decision for its establishment taken by the competent ministry and does not have its own rules of procedure. Such gap in operation leaves great space for improvement of internal procedures, transparency of this sector group, but also its efficiency. Hence the need for regulation of SWG competences, method of participation for SWG members and method of operation by this working group by means of separate rules of procedure.

**2.** In 2020, this sector group worked solely on reviewing key documents intended for IPA III programming. On the other hand, the sector group could serve as additional forum to discuss next steps in respect to strategy documents relevant for this sector, but has not been convened for that purpose. Having in mind that two key strategies had expired by the end of 2020, the institutions had an opportunity to use the forum offered by this sector group to secure broad evaluation and participation in creation of next steps for development of new strategies.

**3.** The civil society only partially participates in work of this sector group. Partially because in the course of 2020 only two civil society organizations were able to attend and take part in the plenary session organized by this sector group. On the other hand, civil society organizations that were consulted and participated therein have utilized their right to make comments that were accepted by state representatives and were incorporated in the ministry's strategic response for IPA III. However, there is great space to ensure greater participation and utilization of capacity disposed by civil society organizations, which could be facilitated under the new rules of procedure, provided these aspects are acknowledged prior to the formal adoption.

## FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN TERMS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE 12 SECTOR WORKING GROUPS



**1.** Most SWGs have still not recognized the importance of gender mainstreaming as a cross-cutting theme in their work. Although some line ministries have engaged in gender analysis of particular policies or have performed gender-responsive budgeting for individual programs, oftentimes these documents are not discussed and are not taken into account at SWG meetings. Hence the need for gender mainstreaming in work of all SWGs and use of gender analyses on state-of-affairs in specific sectors as baseline for policy development, implementation and evaluation.

**2.** It is recommended for e-training on gender equality to become part of the framework of generic competences and annual training programs, thereby underscoring its mandatory implementation and ensuring greater coverage in terms of trained administrative officers. Moreover, it is equally important for training materials to be regularly, timely and continuously updated, in order to avoid the risk of outdated content. While implementation of specially designed training course on gender mainstreaming in strategic planning represents a step forward, it is still early to assess its effects. It is recommended for participants in such trainings and workshops to mandatorily include SWG members. In order to ensure that such training gains an even greater importance, it would be desirable to evaluate knowledge of training participants and to regulate organization of such trainings on regular instead of ad-hoc basis.

**3.** Given that recommendations from 2019 Shadow Report are not fully taken into consideration, valid is the recommendation for involvement of coordinators and deputy coordinators for equal opportunities in SWGs, including civil society representatives with expertise and experience in the field of gender equality, as support for gender mainstreaming in all SWGs.

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