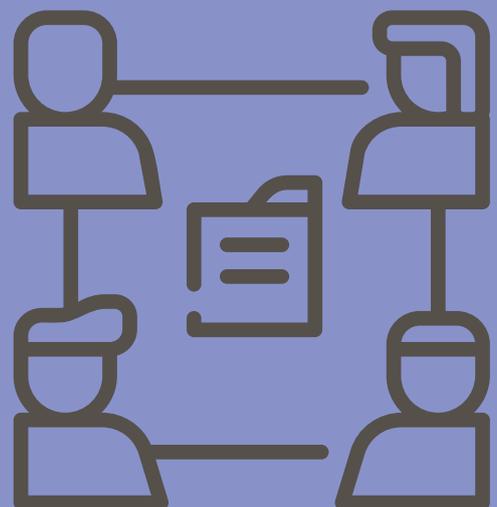


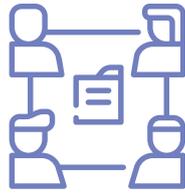
# SHADOW REPORT

FROM MONITORING WORK  
AND EFFECTS OF  
THE SECTOR WORKING  
GROUP FOR HOME AFFAIRS

*January – December 2020*







THROUGH  
DIALOGUE TO  
**EU**

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This project is funded  
by the European Union



**REACTOR**  
research in action



## SHADOW REPORT FROM MONITORING WORK AND EFFECTS OF THE SECTOR WORKING GROUP ON HOME AFFAIRS JANUARY – DECEMBER 2020

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ИЗВЕШТАЈ ВО СЕНКА ОД СЛЕДЕЊЕТО НА РАБОТАТА И ЕФЕКТИТЕ  
НА СЕКТОРСКАТА РАБОТНА ГРУПА ЗА ВНАТРЕШНИ РАБОТИ  
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# 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

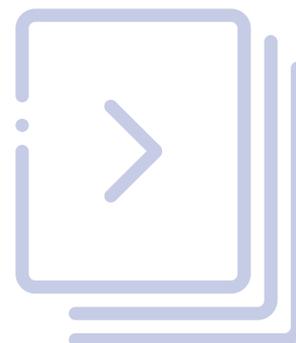
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1 The sector working groups are a formal mechanism for consultations and cooperation among the executive authorities (ministries), civil society organizations, the donor community, and other interested parties. By the cut-off date for this report, 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 HOME AFFAIRS

**FORMED:** 2015

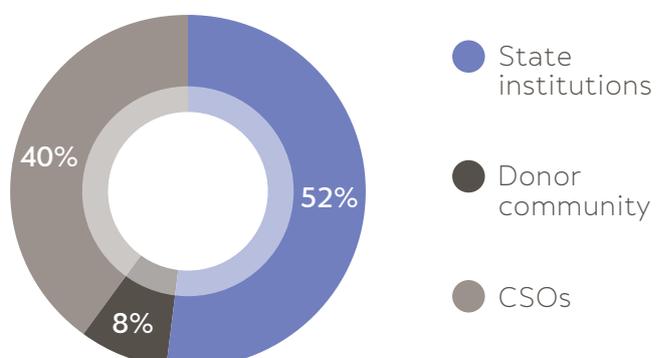
**NUMBER OF SWG MEMBERS:** 50, institutions x 26 members, civil society organizations x 4 members, and donor community x 20 members

**NUMBER OF MEETINGS HELD IN 2020:** two plenary sessions, 29.06.2020 and 18.12.2020

**SWG CHAIR:** Minister of Interior

### **CHART 1.**

**Distribution of various representatives in SWG Home Affairs**





# METHODOLOGY APPROACH

For the purpose of this report, the project team combined several research methods for data collection, processing and analysis. Research work was comprised of desk analysis and field/online survey.

The desk research component included in-depth analysis of documents, laws and strategies that are of significance for this sector working group (*for more information see **BIBLIOGRAPHY***). Moreover, the project team submitted **22 freedom of information requests** to the Ministry of Interior as the institution competent for operation of this sector group. However, responses were disclosed to only 14 information inquiries.

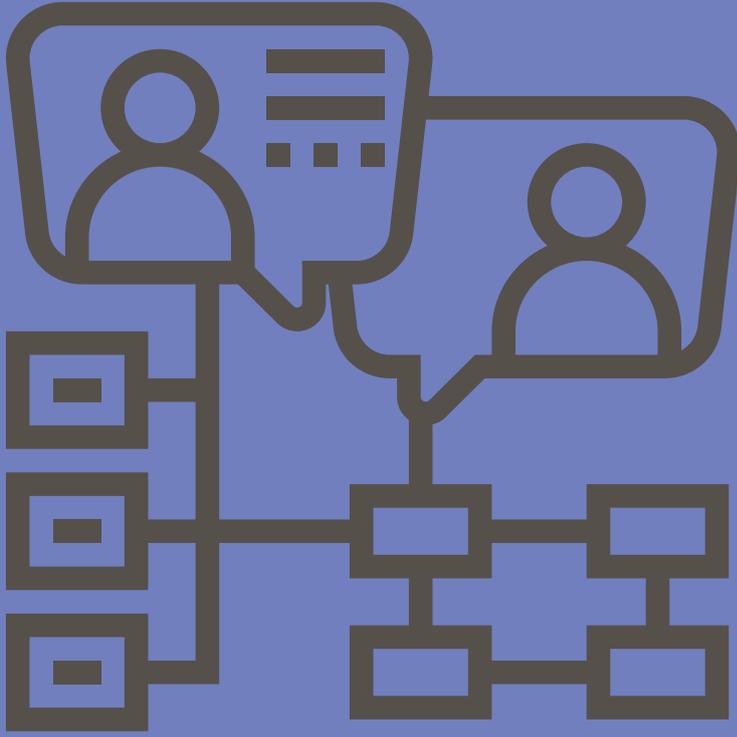
As regards field/online survey, the project team **interviewed<sup>2</sup>** the coordinator of civil servants from the Ministry of Interior, and organized two **interviews<sup>3</sup>** with representatives from civil society organizations that participate in this sector working group.

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 Ministry of Interior was conducted on 20.05.2021

<sup>3</sup> Interviews were conducted with representative from the European Policy Institute (12.05.2021) and representative from the Foundation Open Society – Macedonia (18.05.2021)



# PART 1

## SECTOR POLICIES

In 2020, three strategies and one piece of legislation were adopted in the sector on home affairs. Clean copy of the Law on Home Affairs was published in January 2020. Strategy documents that were adopted include the Strategy on Human Resource Management 2020-2022, Strategy on Community Engagement and Communication 2020-2022 and Strategy for Development of Mol's Training Centre 2020-2022. Strategies that are still in effect and are relevant for this sector include: National Strategy on Fight against Terrorism 2018-2022, National Strategy on Prevention of Violent Extremism 2018-2022, National Strategy on Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons 2017-2021. Validity of several strategies expired in 2020. They include: National Strategy on Fight against Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration 2017-2020, National Strategy on Fight against Drugs 2014-2020, National Strategy on Fight against Money laundering and Terrorism Financing 2017-2020, Strategy on Fight against Cybercrime 2018-2020, and Strategy on Development of the Police 2016-2020.

2020 was marked by work on new strategies that should be adopted in 2021 and concern integrated border management and fight against organized crime.

In addition, the sector worked on drafting two relevant legal solutions, whose publication was postponed for March 2021.

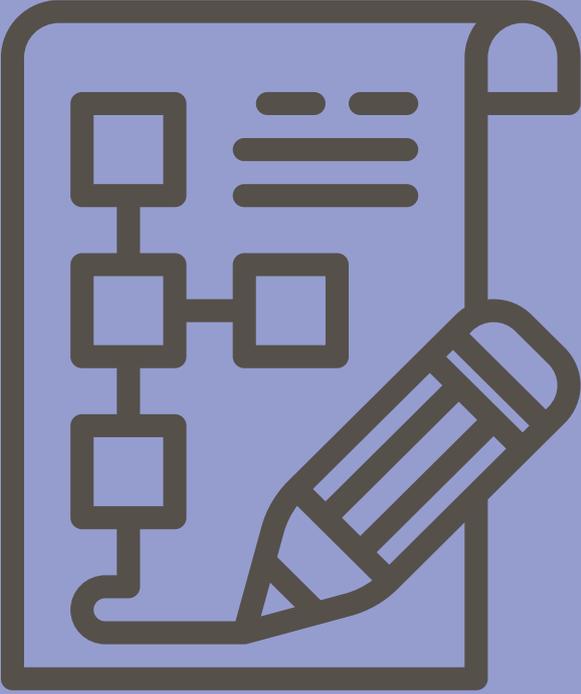


The proposed Law on Amending the Law on Home Affairs revises the previous legislation according to recommendations for Mol from the GRECO's Fifth Round Compliance Report on the Republic of North Macedonia "Preventing Corruption and Promoting Integrity in Central Government (Top Executive Functions) and law Enforcement Agencies", including obligations for Mol under the National Strategy and Action Plan on Prevention of Corruption and Conflict of Interests (2020-2024) adopted by the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption.

The proposed Law on Amending the Law on the Police implies revisions in line with recommendations for Mol from the GRECO's Fifth Round Compliance Report on the Republic of North Macedonia "Preventing Corruption and Promoting Integrity in Central Government (Top Executive Functions) and law Enforcement Agencies".

The sector working group, financed under IPA II, worked on developing action documents for fight against crime and terrorism, as well as migration and integrated border management. Among these, the action document for migration aims to strengthen capacity for border management, with special focus on fight against human smuggling and trafficking.





# PART 2

## SWG FUNCTIONALITY

### 2.1 RULES OF PROCEDURE

This sector group operates on the basis of rules of procedure and decision on its establishment. The sector group's chair is the Minister of Interior. SWG members are representatives from institutions whose competences overlap with the sector-wide approach in this area, donor community and the civil society.

According to the response disclosed by MoI to the freedom of information request submitted, SWG Home Affairs is not competent to develop key work documents such as annual plans and annual reports, as these belong to competences entrusted to the Secretariat for European Affairs. Having in mind the fact that IPA III programming is pursued through the system of direct management, overall coordination of programming activities falls under competences of SEA and IPA Project "Support for Management of EU Funds", which at the moment is implemented at SEA. Moreover, SEA is competent for development of Performance Assessment Framework Indicators and strategic responses.



According to formulations from the rules of procedure, SWG members receive invitations; minutes are compiled from SWG meetings in standardized format and are later distributed to SWG participants who are able to comment them, before their formal adoption from SEA. The representatives of the civil society organisations point out that they've received the invitations in due time (8 days before the meetings take place). Unlike the general draft rules of procedure, according to the SWG, the deadline for submission of invitations is 5 days before the meetings take place.

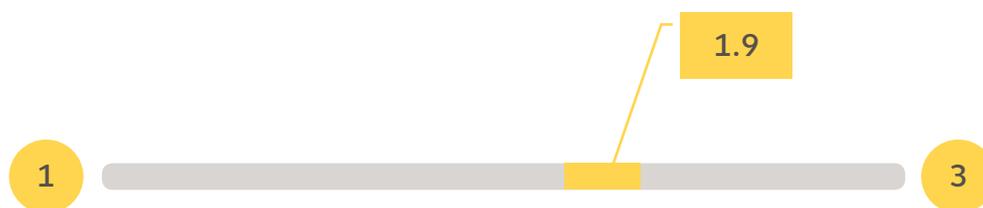
## 2.2 ANNUAL PLAN

SWG Home Affairs doesn't have an annual work plan. Responses obtained from MoI underline the fact that development of such plans falls under competences assigned to SEA.

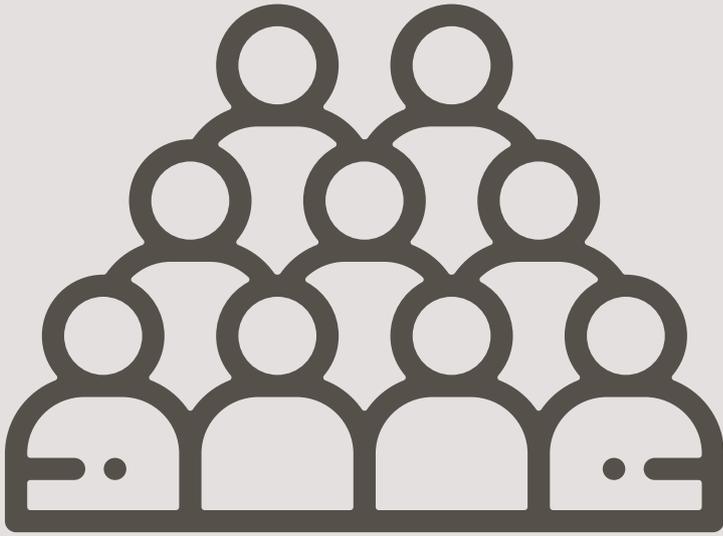
## ASSESSMENT ON SWG FUNCTIONALITY

According to the methodology for monitoring work and effects of 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 Home Affairs in this monitoring period is calculated at 1.9.**







# PART 3

## CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

As indicated above, a total of four civil society organizations participate in work of this sector group:

- Foundation Open Society – Macedonia (FOSM);
- European Policy Institute (EPI);
- Eurothink – Center for European Strategies; and
- Association for Development Initiatives – ZENITH.

In 2020, this sector group held two plenary and five technical meetings, but civil society organizations were invited to attend only one plenary session. The project team interviewed two from four civil society representatives. Moreover, an interview was conducted with the head of IPA sector at Mol, who provided own reflection on participation of civil society organizations.

At SWG meetings, all members, including civil society representatives, were allowed to share their opinions and actively join discussions, but had limited opportunity to make proposals about topics that will be discussed.

## ASSESSMENT ON CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

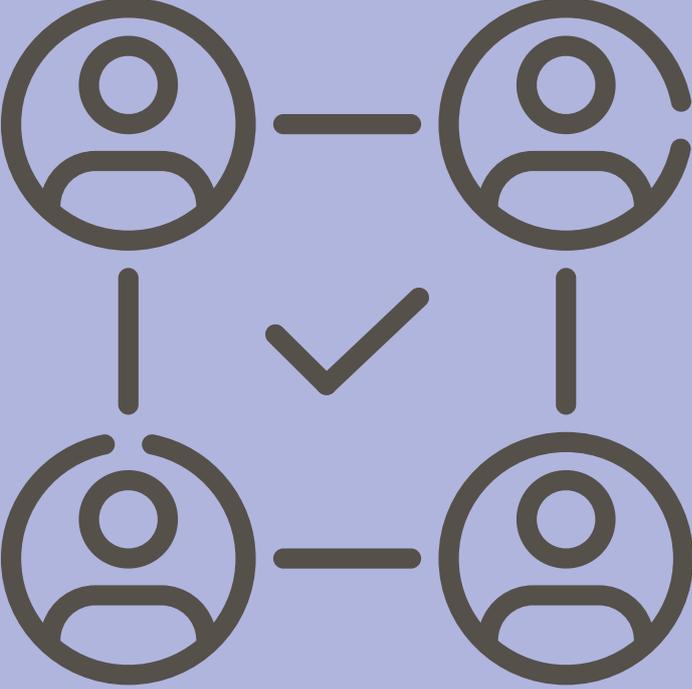


According to the methodology for monitoring work and effects of sector working groups, **civil society participation in SWG** is measured against 9 standards and 3 indicators that focus on the number and the status of CSOs involved in SWG work. Moreover, they cover regular and timely delivery of invitations 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 Home Affairs in this monitoring period is calculated at 2.0.







# PART 4

## CSO CAPACITY

Capacity of the four civil society organizations that participate in work of this sector group is variable. Based on browsing ZENITH's website, it could be observed that this organization did not demonstrate any particular activity in terms of drafting policy brief or reports in the course of 2020. Unlike this civil society organization, more activities relevant for this sector can be noted with the other three CSOs. FOSM, as the coordinator of this project, is the most engaged organization in terms of communication with other members of this sector group, informing the public, and communication with other CSOs that show interest for performance in this sector. In addition to having published the previous set of reports on SWG performance, in the course of 2020 FOSM implemented the project "Enhanced Integrity Systems to Combat Corruption at Local Level", which included trainings for representatives from local authorities, and published the inventory titled "Blind Justice: Towards State Capture in North Macedonia – Judiciary, Public Prosecution and Police", among other activities. On the other hand, in 2020 Eurothink worked on the research study that covers relations between corruption and extremism (published in 2021), has organized training for journalists on issues related to EU integration,



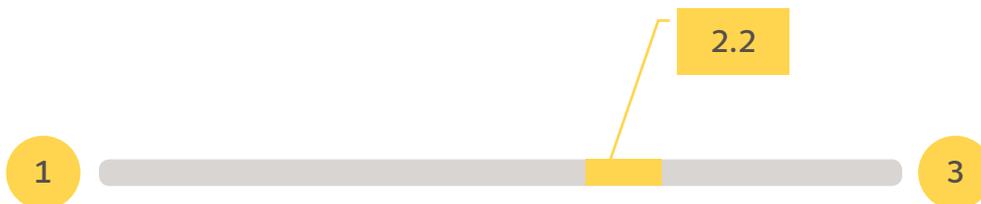
and has published the public policy study “More than (de) Politicisation: The Role of Security-Intelligence Services in (de)Capturing the State”. EPI, in addition to comprehensive work in the field of EU integrations, in 2020 published the Shadow Report on Chapter 23 for the period April 2019 – March 2020, and the analysis of the pandemic’s impact on human rights in North Macedonia.

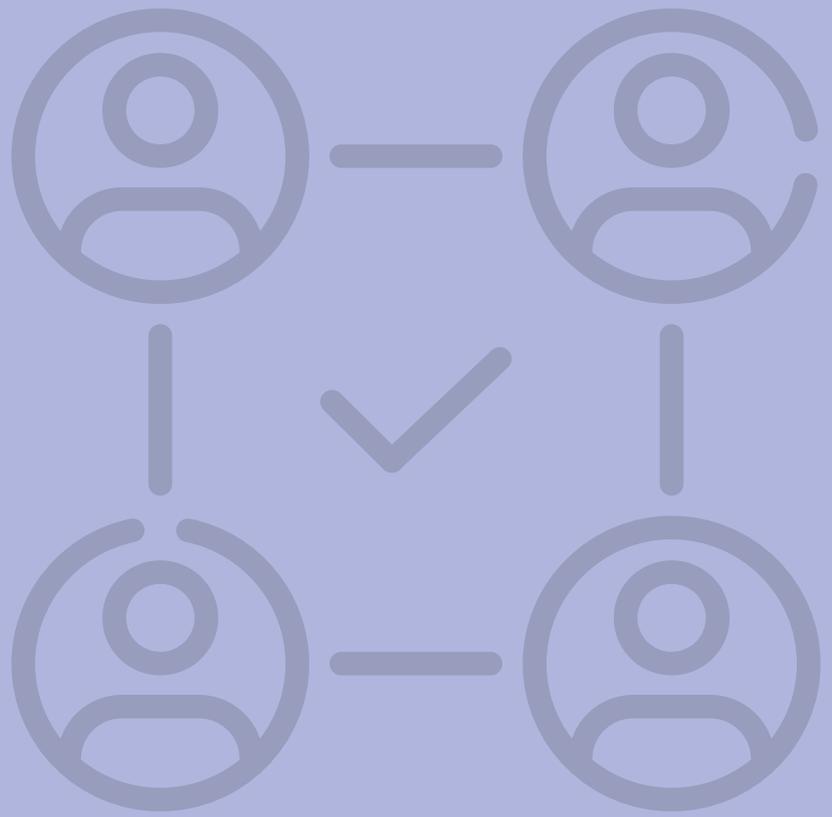
The IPA coordinator at Mol indicated the highest assessment for CSOs, having in mind their investment and enthusiasm, although it was noted that they lack technical knowledge which is difficult to be achieved by actors outside the institutions.

## 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, publication 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 Home Affairs in this monitoring period is calculated at 2.2.**







# PART 5

## EFFECTS FROM SWG WORK

According to interviewed representatives from Mol, everybody was caught off guard by the pandemic and therefore performance of this sector group in 2020 failed short of what is expected. In particular, SWG Home Affairs organized only two plenary sessions, but no explanation was offered for failure to invite civil society representatives to participate in one of these two sessions. Both plenary sessions were held online.

According to information provided by Mol, this sector group held two plenary sessions, on 29.06.2020 and 18.12.2020, both of which were organized as online events and coordinated by the Secretariat for European Affairs and the IPA Project “Support for Management of EU Funds”, which at the moment is implemented at SEA. Both sessions were focused on discussing strategic responses for IPA III, thematic priorities 3 and 4, as well as key indicators and targets for defined priorities, objectives and activities financed with IPA III assistance.

## 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>4</sup> followed by strategic responses and action fiches.

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>5</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:

<sup>4</sup> Performance Assessment Framework (PAF)

<sup>5</sup> Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA III) COM/2018/465 final.

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

<p><b>WINDOW 1:</b> RULE OF LAW, FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY</p>	<p><b>WINDOW 2: GOOD GOVERNANCE, ACQUIS ALIGNMENT, GOOD NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION</b></p>
<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>
<p><b>WINDOW 3:</b> GREEN AGENDA AND SUSTAINABLE CONNECTIVITY</p>	<p><b>WINDOW 4:</b> COMPETITIVENESS AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Environment and climate change;</li> <li>◆ Transport, digital economy and energy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Education, employment, social protection and inclusion policies, and health;</li> <li>◆ Private sector development, trade, research and innovation;</li> <li>◆ Agriculture and rural development;</li> <li>◆ Fisheries.</li> </ul>
<p><b>WINDOW 5: TERRITORIAL AND CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION</b></p>	
<p>This window is comprised of a separate list of thematic priorities given in Annex 2 to the IPA III Regulation.<sup>6</sup> Modalities for implementation of this component include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ cross-border cooperation with IPA countries;</li> <li>◆ participation in micro region strategies.</li> </ul>	

According to the IPA III Regulation, the European Commission propos-

<sup>6</sup> COM/2018/465



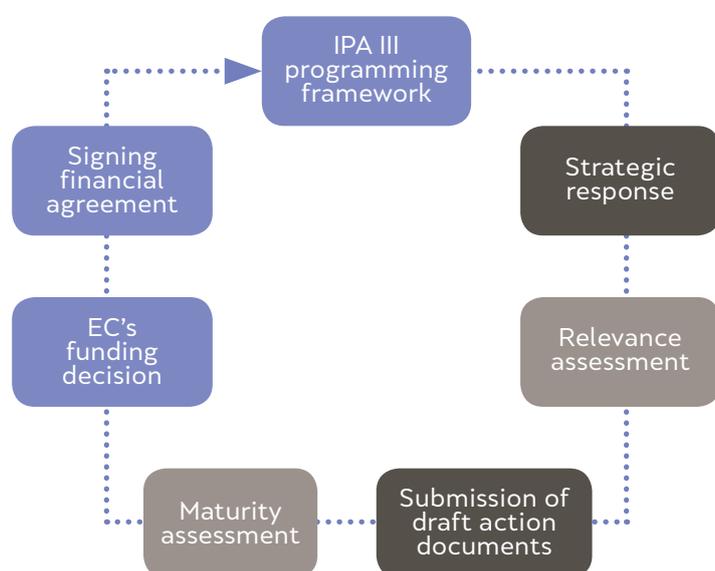
es a programming framework for the period 2021-2027 that includes all priority areas eligible for funding. Based on this programming framework, each IPA III country develops its strategic responses, elaborating links between EU priorities and those under national and sector strategies, followed by development 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.

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.

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



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>7</sup> and 12 for the year 2022.<sup>8</sup>

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

ACTION FISHERS 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%	

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.sep.gov.mk/data/file/Dokumenti/Akciski%20fisea/2021.zip>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.sep.gov.mk/data/file/Dokumenti/Akciski%20fisea/2022.zip>



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>9</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%
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 home affairs

The strategic response in the sector on home affairs is part of Window 1: Rule of Law, Fundamental Rights and Democracy, thematic priorities 3 and 4, and is cross-cutting issues under thematic priorities 2 and 6.

<sup>9</sup> Sector fiche with remaining funds under Component I from IPA I for the years 2012 and 2013.

**TABLE 3 . Strategic response and action fiche for home affairs**

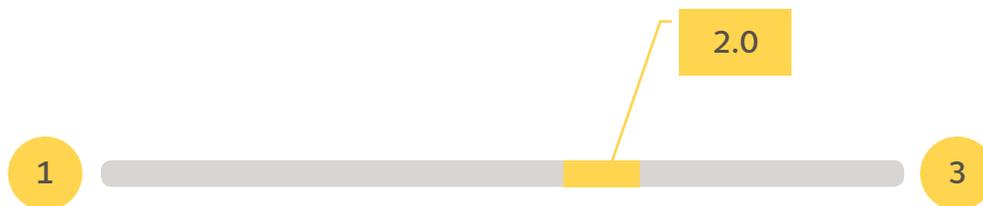
SWG	STRATEGIC RESPONSE	KEY THEMATIC PRIORITY	ACTION FICHE	ACTION FICHE OBJECTIVES
HOME AFFAIRS	WINDOW 1: RULE OF LAW, FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY <b>Thematic priority 3: Fight against organized crime</b>	(1) Strong legislative and institutional framework on fight against organized crime (2) Modernization of operative tools for fight against organized crime	(2022) <i>EU in Support of the Fight against Organized Crime</i> – 5.2 million euros, 88% EU financing	◆ To improve technical and operational capacity of the law enforcement and other national agencies to proactively prevent, detect and combat serious and organized crime, including movable and immovable cultural heritage, environmental and cultural crimes and all types of cross-border crimes
	WINDOW 1: RULE OF LAW, FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY <b>Thematic priority 4: Migration and border management</b>	(1) Enhanced border security in compliance with the EU Schengen acquis and the Schengen Borders Code (2) Support and protection for migrants and asylum seekers		
	WINDOW 1: RULE OF LAW, FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY <b>Thematic priority 2: Fight against corruption</b>	(1) Enhance the institutional system and legislative framework on prevention of corruption (2) Enhance the institutional system for suppression of corruption	(2022) <i>EU for Improved Border Management, Migration and Asylum Policy</i> – 7.8 million euros, 90% EU financing	◆ To enhance the operational capacity of the border police and to improve border and migration management capacity with special attention to vulnerable asylum seekers
	- <i>Cross-cutting thematic priority</i> WINDOW 1: RULE OF LAW, FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY <b>Thematic priority 6: Democracy</b>	(1) Transparent, inclusive and credible political and election system		

## 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 through 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 Home Affairs 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>10</sup>, the European Union’s Gender Action Plan (GAP II)<sup>11</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>12</sup> while IPA II treats gender equality as cross-cutting issue and as separate priority area for support.<sup>13</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 women’s participation in the labour market in RNM, whose activity

<sup>10</sup> 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>

<sup>11</sup> 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>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> 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>



rate was already low before the crisis. According to the most recent data available, 62.3% of women<sup>14</sup> in the country are economically inactive, compared to 37.7% of men.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, 77% of health sector employees in RNM are women,<sup>16</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>17</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>18</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.

### 6.1.2 Trainings

Recommendations made under the 2019 Shadow Report concerned specially designed training for SWG members on gender mainstream-

14 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>

15 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>

16 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>

17 Ibid.

18 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.

ing that would be complementary to already existing gender equality training for administrative officers.

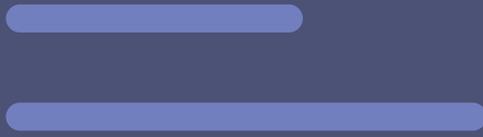
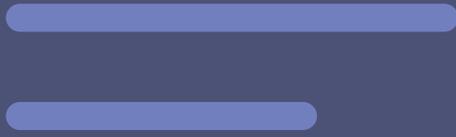
Namely, in 2017 the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP), with the support from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN WOMEN), developed an e-training course on gender equality intended to enhance knowledge of public administration employees. This training course 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>19</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>20</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>19</sup> Ministry of Information Society and Administration. 2020 Report from the Register of Public Sector Employees. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2T3DTxW>

<sup>20</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

Based on the above elaborated, it could be concluded that space for participation of CSOs in work of SWG Home Affairs is very limited and efficient mechanisms are not in place to ensure broader involvement of the civil society.

Below is the list of potential recommendations that emerged from meetings with civil society representatives and Mol, and based on information obtained through the instrument for free access to public information.

- 1.** SWG Home Affairs should improve involvement of and communication with civil society representatives by sending timely invitations for all plenary sessions, raising the level of cooperation, i.e. inviting CSOs to also participate in operational/technical meetings, and ensuring greater flow of information to CSOs in advance of meetings, so that the latter are able to make more specific proposals. Moreover, meetings should be organized between CSOs and IPA coordinator at Mol, in order to clearly define the need for civil society participation in SWG meetings and for exchange of information.
- 2.** As regards general performance, this sector group should organize more frequent meetings because of the loss of memory between meetings, and it should have an indicative work plan that would cover information about how much, when and what is performed by this group.
- 3.** As regards communication with the public, visibility of SWG work needs to be improved and increased, notably by improving availability of relevant documents on SEA's website, but also on Mol's website, and by frequent dissemination of information on implementation of projects.

## 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.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ◆ Responses disclosed by MoI upon information requests submitted under the instrument for free access to public information
- ◆ Desk analysis of documents relevant for SWG Home Affairs and available on websites of MoI, ENER and SEA
- ◆ Interviews with the IPA coordinator from MoI and representatives from civil society organizations that participate in SWG Home Affairs



