


Annual report 2023

Transparency International-Macedonia





*A state in which
government, politics,
business, civil society and
the daily lives of people
are free of corruption*

Mission

Oriented towards analysis of the national legislation, comparative analysis and recommendations for improvement of the legal framework, detecting vulnerabilities in the laws and the legal framework that enable corruption, analysis of the national integrity system of the Republic of North Macedonia through analysis of the anti-corruption pillars, cooperation with key stakeholders (public institutions, civil society, business community, media, citizens)

Objective

To establish a system of good governance for efficient fight and prevention against corruption

Vision

Elimination of corruption from the Macedonian society and establishment of a system of rule of law and a society in which the citizens and institutions fight corruption and the unlawful policies

INTRODUCTION

Transparency International Macedonia is a national chapter of Transparency International, the global civil society organization that leads the fight against corruption with over 100 national chapters worldwide.

The organization is committed to fighting corruption and promoting policies that support crucial reforms in the political and social spheres and plays a significant role in raising awareness among citizens about corruption and the importance of whistleblowing as an effective measure to reinforce anti-corruption efforts.

Successfully accomplishment of our goals is made possible through the efficient implementation of various projects.

TI-Macedonia currently implements the following projects: EU4 Rule of Law- Citizen Engagement for Public Integrity (CEPI) in the Western Balkans and Turkey, Promoting Active Citizen Engagement to Fight Against Corruption in South Eastern Europe (ACE) and Integrity Watch in the Western Balkans and Turkey: Civil society combating corruption with political integrity data.

We are continuously strengthen our cooperation with domestic and foreign governmental and non-governmental organizations and bodies, individuals and groups, as well as with the media that fight against corruption.

As a result of it, the organization is a member of the coalitions: the Platform of Civic Organizations for the Fight against Corruption, the Southeast Europe Coalition on Whistleblower Protection and the UNCAC Coalition.

In 2023, TI-Macedonia proudly celebrated its 17th anniversary of existence and will continue to work tirelessly towards creating a corruption-free society



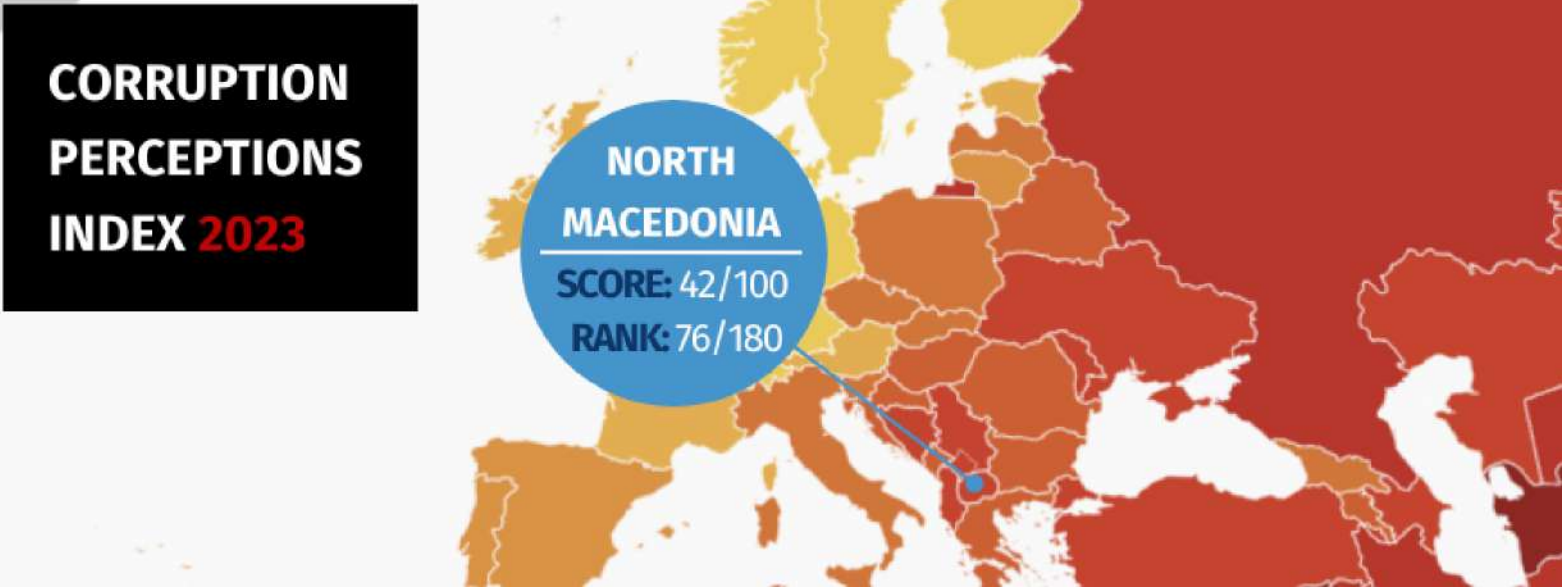
Slagjana Taseva

*President of
Transparency International
Macedonia*

Corruption Perceptions Index 2023

At the beginning of the year, the results from the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2023 were published. TI-Macedonia held a press conference in which the results were presented. North Macedonia is ranked at 76th place out of 180 countries, with a score of 42. This scale ranges from 0 (most corrupt) to 100 (least corrupt).

The country has advanced nine places compared to its ranking the previous year. However, there has been only a two-point increase compared to 2022. The main reasons for this are the undemocratically made amendments to the criminal code and the politically motivated appointments and dismissals of court officials.



Projects



EU4 Rule of Law: Citizen Engagement for Public Integrity (CEPI) in the Western Balkans and Turkey




Promoting Active Citizen Engagement to Fight Against Corruption in South Eastern Europe (ACE)




Integrity Watch in the Western Balkans and Turkey: Civil Society Combating Corruption with Political Integrity Data


Coalitions



Platform of Civic Organization for Fight against Corruption



Southeast Europe Coalition on Whistleblower Protection



UNCAC Coalition

EU4 Rule of Law: Citizen Engagement for Public Integrity (CEPI) in the Western Balkans and Turkey

Period of implementation: January 2022- December 2024

Donors: European Union and Government of Switzerland

Objective

To strengthen the rule of law by addressing public integrity deficiencies

Corruption barometer

TI-Macedonia regularly monitors cases and activities related to corrupt behavior and the fight against corruption. As a result of it, a monthly report Corruption Barometer was developed. It provides information on effective implementation of the law in the fight against corruption while detecting gaps and risks of corruption in the general conduct of work by the institutions.

In the Corruption Barometer, cases related to the fight against corruption and the rule of law are selected as „light“ or „dark“ cases.

The monitoring of these cases has received significant attention, both in the public sphere and among domestic and foreign institutions, and over time, it has evolved into a relevant alternative barometer for measuring corruption and assessing the government's willingness to address this issue. As a result of it, from September 2023 TI-Macedonia started publishing an English version of the barometer.

The Corruption Barometers are published on the website of TI-Macedonia.



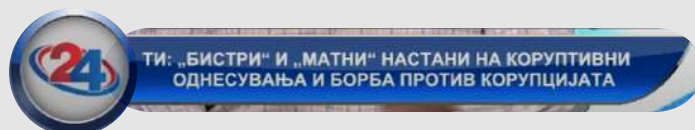
[English version](#)

[Macedonian version](#)

Corruption barometer – topic in a debate on a TV contact show



The Corruption Barometer has been widely recognized for its significant impact. It has initiated discussions and debates on the subject of corruption. For instance, the Corruption Barometer report for September 2023 was topic of a debate in a national TV contact show, broadcasted on TV24, which reaches the entire country.



Regional meeting: EU4 Rule of Law: Civic Engagement for Public Integrity (CEPI) in the Western Balkans and Turkey

9th - 11th May 2023
Bar, Montenegro

Representatives from Transparency International - Macedonia, Transparency International - BiH, Transparency International - Serbia, Transparency International - Turkey, KDI - Kosovo, MANS - Montenegro and Transparency International - Secretariat attended a project meeting to discuss current activities and their implementation as part of the project. The meeting focused on the preparation of the National Integrity System, which provides an assessment of a country's integrity.



Political Finance Transparency in the Western Balkans and Türkiye



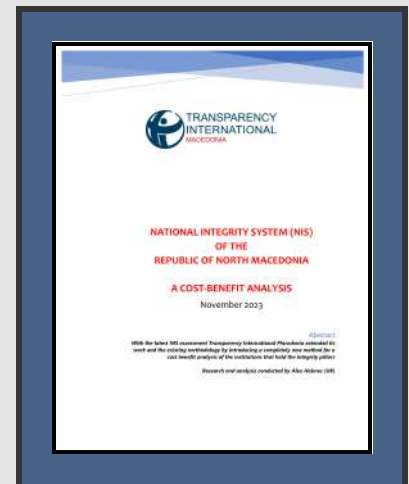
Political parties and candidates require funding to adequately exercise their ordinary functions or to campaign for elections. However, donations made by individuals and corporations to political parties and candidates can come with corruption risks.

Weak controls on political finance can lead to the entry of dirty money into politics, causing a cycle of corruption and dependence. Therefore, it is crucial to overhaul these controls to fight against corruption and strengthen democracy.

This study analyses political finance regimes in North Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Türkiye.

Presentation: Cost-benefit analysis of the anti-corruption

Transparency International Macedonia marked the anti-corruption week with an event on which the Cost-benefit analysis of the anti-corruption was presented, as part of the Open Forum on Anti-Corruption



Skopje, December 7, 2023

The event was moderated by the President of Transparency International – Macedonia, Ms. Slagjana Taseva. The project donors had their representatives in the Deputy Head of the European Union Delegation, Mr. Ben Nupnau and the Ambassador of Switzerland, H. E. Véronique Hulmann.

The author of the analysis, Mr. Alex Holmes from Transparency International – Macedonia emphasized that existence of a centralized database which will be updated promptly is necessary in order to have a better insight into the funds received from international community and their effective use in improving the rule of law and the fight against corruption.

This analysis was prepared based on the findings of the NIS assessment. The NIS assessment has been finalized and it will be publicly promoted and disseminated in January 2024.



Promoting Active Citizen Engagement to Fight Against Corruption in South Eastern Europe (ACE)

Period of implementation: July 2022- June 2024

Donors: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Embassy of France in North Macedonia

Advocacy and Legal Advice Centers (ALAC) are present in over 60 countries for two decades. Their primary aim is to encourage individuals and private and public organizations to report cases of corruption and support them in seeking justice.

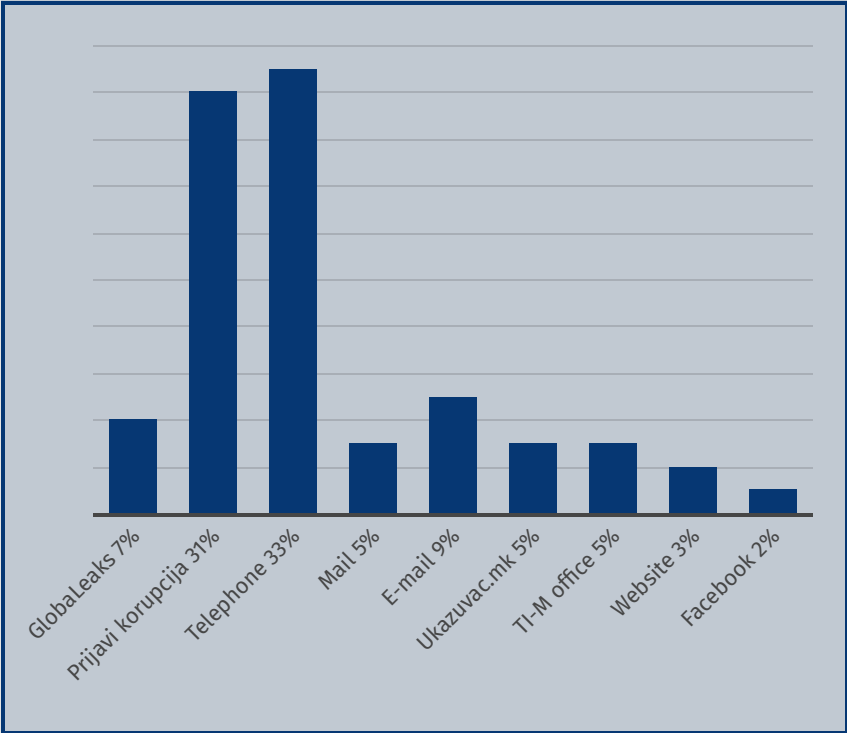
Objective

To enable rights holders and duty bearers in BiH, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia to participate in the fight against corruption towards improving the quality of democratic governance in the Southeast Europe

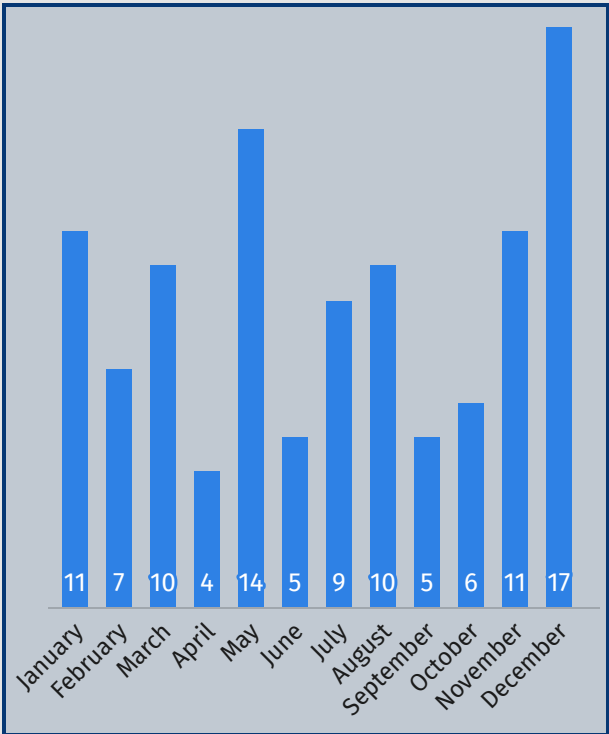
Advocacy and Legal Advice Center 2023 – TI Macedonia

In 2023, the ALAC center of TI-Macedonia made a significant impact by receiving 109 reports from citizens who bravely stood up against various types of corrupt actions. The citizens' efforts will undoubtedly contribute to a more transparent and fair society.

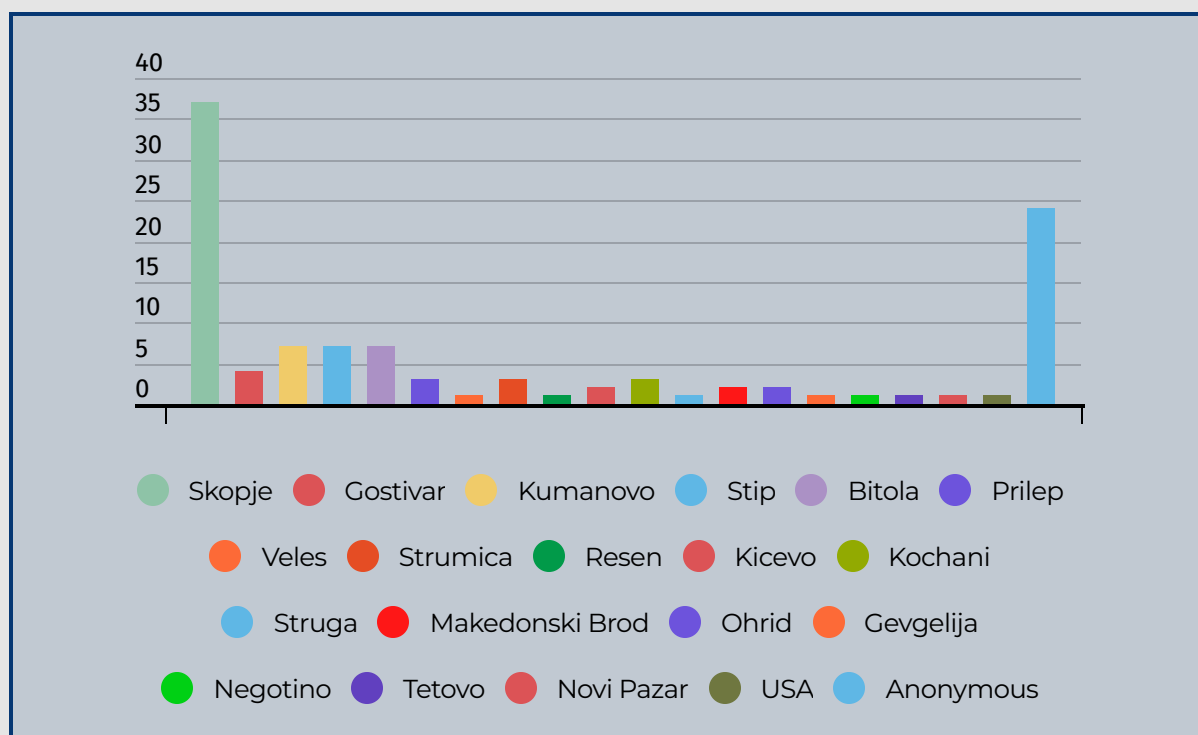
Ways in which citizens reported corruption, expressed in percentages



Reports received by month



Reports received by place



Press conference for the 2022 Project Funding Competition of the Film Agency

In late 2022, the Advocacy and Legal Advice Center (ALAC) received a report about a potential conflict of interest at the Macedonian Film Agency. An analysis was conducted, which revealed that there was indeed a conflict of interest and potential corrupt actions taking place within the Agency.



TI-Macedonia held a press conference where the findings from the analysis were presented. The press conference was attended by numerous journalists and film workers and was broadcast across various media platforms.

Third Annual Regional Multi-Beneficiary Training on Whistleblower Protection

Member of TI-Macedonia attended the Third Annual Regional Multi-Beneficiary Training on Whistleblower Protection in Sarajevo, organized by the RAI Secretariat. The training was held on February 2023. TI-Macedonia regularly attend these meetings which are good base for sharing experiences and good practices for enhancing the protection of whistleblowers. TI-Macedonia is actively working on the improvement of the legal framework in the area and its practical implementation.



Draft Law on Whistleblower Protection

Representative of TI-Macedonia was part of the working group tasked with preparing a Draft Law on Whistleblower Protection formed by the Ministry of Justice. The organization contributed with knowledge and expertise to improving the legal framework for whistleblower protection. In the process of drafting the law, 15 meetings and two public debates were held. With the recommendations and notes received about the text and the application of the existing Law on Whistleblower Protection, solutions were proposed to improve the legal framework for whistleblower protection. Years of work and advocacy for whistleblowers, their rights and their importance in society by our organization were highlighted and proposals were made to align with the new EU Directive 2019/1937 on whistleblower protection.



Monitoring case: Clinical Hospital "Zhan Mitrev"

Transparency International-Macedonia is monitoring a case involving the "Zhan Mitrev" Clinical Hospital. Doctor Zhan Mitrev and the hospital have been charged with the crime of fraud under Article 247 of the Criminal Code. The case has gained attention due to the unusual nature of the crime and is being followed by various citizen associations and organizations, and the OSCE Mission in Skopje.



Integrity Watch in the Western Balkans and Turkey: Civil Society Combating Corruption with Political Integrity Data

Period of implementation: March 2023 - February 2026

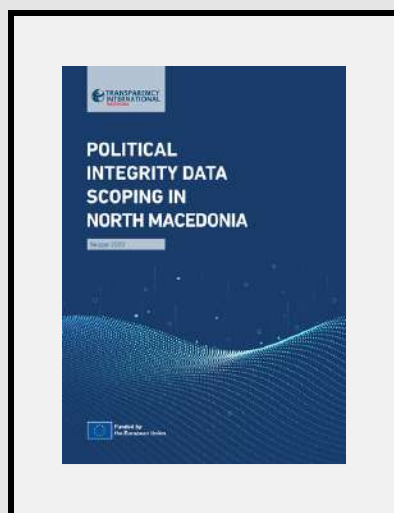
Donor: European Union

Objective

To empower citizens and civil society actors to hold their political office holders to account for the integrity of political finance, law-making and resource allocation

Thus strengthened political integrity shall foster more public decisions consistent with the common good

Political Integrity Data Scoping in Macedonia



This report builds on the assessment of nine datasets, conducted by TI-Macedonia, including: lobbying meetings, assets and interests of public officials, directories of public officials, government budget and spending, public procurement, political financing, voting records and awarded concessions for exploration of mineral goods.



These datasets were identified as critical tools for ensuring transparency, detecting political corruption and developing risk indicators of political integrity.

Databases on political financing, public procurement and awarded concessions for exploration of mineral goods will be build by TI-Macedonia.

Coalitions

Platform of Civic Organizations for Fight against Corruption



The platform is consisted of 17 CSOs and aims to create a proactive, dynamic, and empowered civil society that respects, promotes and advocates the principles of good governance. The platform connects civil society organizations and provides an open space for collaboration, networking, and democratic debate in order to strengthen the role of civil society organizations in the fight against corruption.

Anticorruption monthly reports



The Platform of Civic Organizations for the Fight against Corruption produces a monthly report that highlights the activities of the member organizations in the preceding month. These reports contain information about events, publications, workshops, meetings, interviews conducted by the members. This report serves as an informative tool for anti-corruption activities.

The Anticorruption monthly reports are published on the website of the Anticorruption Platform.

Southeast Europe Coalition on Whistleblower Protection



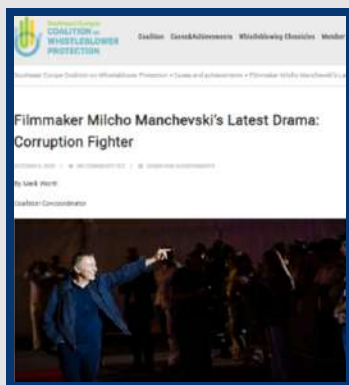
A regional organization dedicated to strengthening legal protections and rights for whistleblowers, investigating whistleblower cases, and raising awareness of the value of whistleblowing to fight crime and corruption. The Coalition is comprised of more than 35 NGOs and other groups from 15 Southeast and East European countries.

SEE Coalition on Whistleblower Protection Annual Meeting held in Sarajevo

The Annual Meeting of the Southeast Europe Coalition on Whistleblower Protection was held in Sarajevo on February 3, 2023 with the support of RAI Secretariat.

The Annual Meeting serves as a platform for discussion of common challenges, strategies and solutions for improving the protection of whistleblowers, as well as on how to best utilize the Coalition resources.

This was also an opportunity to celebrate success through among other things the granting of the Free Speech Awards and sharing lessons learned. The awards are given for activist efforts, engagement in the public interest and contribution to transparency within their community in 2022.



TI-Macedonia maintains a continuous cooperation with the Southeast Europe Coalition on Whistleblower Protection throughout the year. The team is actively engaged in protecting whistleblowers who have cases under investigation. These cases have garnered media attention and interest from relevant stakeholders in Macedonia and beyond.

UNCAC Coalition

The UNCAC Coalition is a global network of over 350 civil society organizations (CSOs) in over 100 countries, committed to promoting the ratification, implementation and monitoring of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). The Coalition mobilizes civil society action for UNCAC at international, regional and national levels.



Resolution with recommendations for the 10th UNCAC Conference of States Parties (CoSP)

A group of Transparency International chapters: Transparency International Macedonia, Transparency International Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosova Democratic Institute, Transparency Serbia as well as MANS Montenegro collaborated to draft a resolution aimed at promoting transparency in the funding of political parties and candidates.

The resolution provided recommendations for the 10th UNCAC Conference of States Parties (CoSP) about political financing, which can lead to corruption and undermine the integrity of elections. The resolution on enhancing transparency in the financing of political parties and election campaigns is a way to advance integrity of politics, one of Transparency International's strategic goals for 2030.

Slagjana Taseva PhD, President of TI-Macedonia, actively participated on CoSP 10 in Atlanta

The President of Transparency International- Macedonia participated on the 10th session of the Conference of States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption.



Ms. Taseva took an active part in several panels and participated in the discussions of the plenary sessions related to Organized Crime Index to Analyze Corruption, the need for cooperation and assistance between states regarding investigative and prosecutorial strategies to combat corruption and international cooperation.

Ms. Taseva noted that the international instruments for property recovery and investigations should be available and used in such cases, especially in cases where the institutions in the country are weak and inefficient and have lost their credibility and integrity.



Public reactions - highlights

Request for resignation of the members of the Judicial Council

The Platform of Civic Organizations for Fight against Corruption with regret notes that the Council continues to base its decisions on illegal behavior, thus ruining the already bad reputation of the judiciary in the public. Therefore, we ask the current members to submit their resignations and enable the formation of another composition of the Council, as its the only credible way to overcome the situations caused by the illegal actions of the Council.

<https://transparency.mk/2023/05/11/bara%20za-podnesuva-na-ostavka-na-chlenovite-na-sudski-sovet/>

The Platform of Civic Organizations for Fight against Corruption demands the resignation of Joveski

The Platform of Civic Organizations for Fight against Corruption demands the resignation of the Public Prosecutor, Ljubomir Joveski. This demand is due to the actions of the Public Prosecutor's office regarding the fire that occurred at the Tetovo modular hospital. The fire caused the death of 14 people.

<https://transparency.mk/2023/08/17/%20oveski-da-podnese-ostavka-pobara-platformata-na-gra%20anski-organizaczii-za-borba-protiv-korupczii%20a/>

Request from TI-Macedonia for withdrawal of the changes in the Criminal law

TI-Macedonia has issued a public request against the adoption of amendments to the Criminal Code due to their potential serious consequences. TI-Macedonia pointed out the implementation of these amendments will result in a statute of limitation for a significant percentage of judicial corruption cases and ongoing investigations. The enactment of these changes would provide amnesty to many accused individuals, including politicians and former government officials, thus demonstrating selective justice. This selective justice will have a negative financial impact in the form of large legal costs and incurred damages in the future.

<https://transparency.mk/2023/09/06/izvestuva-do-mediumi-povlekuva-na-predlogot-za-izmena-na-kzm-toa-e-obid-za-tivka-amnesti%20a/>

The Platform of Civic Organizations for Fight against Corruption strongly condemns the partisanship in the election of new members of the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption

The Platform of Civic Organizations for Fight against Corruption is concerned that party influences on the election of the president and members of the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption will negatively affect the objectivity and impartiality of the Commission, as one of the main stakeholders in the fight against corruption in the country.

<https://transparency.mk/2023/11/30/platformata-na-gra%20anski-organizaczii-za-borba-protiv-korupczii%20a-ostro-%20a-osuduva-partizaczii%20ata-pri-izborot-na-novi-chlenovi-na-drzhavnata-komisi%20a-za-sprechuva-na-kor/>

Events - highlights

Participation of the President of TI-Macedonia at the conference Measuring Grand Corruption and Reducing Its Powers in the USA

At the conference, which took place from May 18th to 20th in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Ms. Taseva presented a document on anti-corruption efforts in Macedonia. The topic of the document is the problem of high corruption and the need to overcome it.

<https://transparency.mk/2023/05/20/uchestvo-na-pretседателkata-na-ti-makedoni%d1%98a-na-konferenci%d1%98ata-measuring-grand-corruption-and-reducing-its-powers-vo-sad/>

The President of TI-Macedonia, Sladjana Taseva participated in an event organized by TI BiH on the topic "EU Integration Forum"

At the event held on 31 October 2023, attended experts from the field of rule of law and EU accession, representatives of institutions at all levels of BiH government, as well as representatives of international organizations, civil society, academic community and media.

<https://ti-bih.org/transparency-international-organizes-the-eu-integration-forum-in-sarajevo/?lang=en>

Interviews/TV debates - highlights

Sladjana Taseva in "Trilling" about the justice system in Macedonia

Ms. Taseva in „Triling“ shared her views regarding the justice system in Macedonia, the influences, as well as the verdict on the "Magyar Telecom" case.

<https://transparency.mk/2023/03/27/sla%d1%93ana-taseva-vo-triling-za-pravosudniot-sistem-vo-makedoni%d1%98a-i-za-slucha%d1%98ot-ma%d1%93ar-telekom/>

Sladjana Taseva in Top Tema: Why is the debate with the public and experts skipped?

Ms. Taseva emphasized the integrity and responsibility of the MPs in the Assembly in the eventual voting on legal decisions without looking at the agreement, given that "Bechtel and Enka" as a company is considered one of the most non-transparent companies in the world that insist on the absolute secrecy of their contracts.

<https://transparency.mk/2023/04/19/sla%d1%93ana-taseva-vo-top-tema-zoshto-e-potrebna-a-e-preskoknata-debatata-so-%d1%98avnosta-i-ekspertite/>

All news related to TI-Macedonia can be found at the following links:

[English](#)

[Macedonian](#)



February, 2024