

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

ACTIVITIES



PROJECTS



GOALS



RESULTS



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1.Introduction

The Union-National Council for Gender Equality (NCGE) is a national multiethnic, multigenerational, creative network, oriented towards the future - an organization dedicated to achieving gender equality, development, protection of women's, human rights and peace. Founded in October 1994, NCGE has grown into one of the largest women's networks in the country, uniting women from different ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds. Through its activities, NCGE promotes a culture of peace and non-violence, contributes to the political and economic empowerment of women and advocates for the social inclusion of women from rural areas and marginalized groups. The organization is dedicated to advancing policies related to gender-based violence and advocating for equality in all spheres of society. The NCGE operates the free mobile SOS line for women victims of domestic violence 141 700. The functionality of the SOS line is supported by specially trained operators in Macedonian, Albanian, Roma and Turkish with many years of experience in providing assistance and support to women victims of violence. Since its establishment, the NCGE has achieved significant results and has emerged as a leading actor in the civil society sector for women's rights in North Macedonia and the region. With over 100 successfully implemented projects, the organization has had a significant impact on the advancement of women's rights.

The organization has a long tradition of building the capacities of its members and employees. More than 1,000 young women and girls have enriched the organization with their contributions, while gaining invaluable experience that has prepared them for their future professional paths.

Vision, mission and goals of the NCGE

Our vision represents gender equality, guaranteed women's rights, elimination of discrimination against women in society and the family, development and peace.

Our mission is to promote women's rights as human rights, eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, and build a society with equal opportunities.

Principles and values on which the work of the NCGE is based: equality, non-violence, tolerance, solidarity, dialogue, cooperation, civic activism, sustainable development, responsibility, transparency, multiculturalism, respect and protection of human rights, participatory democracy, social justice and inclusion.

2.Organizational structure of the NCGE network

In order to strengthen regional connectivity, foster development and promote cross-border cooperation, the NCGE network has established regional centers in Kavadarci, Struga, Radoviš, Bitola and Berovo. These centers serve as key points for coordination,

implementation of activities and direct support to local communities. The NCGE Executive Office is located in the central area of Skopje, ensuring strategic connectivity and efficient management.

Regional centers play a significant role in strengthening local initiatives and building partnerships with other civil society organizations, institutions, and international partners.

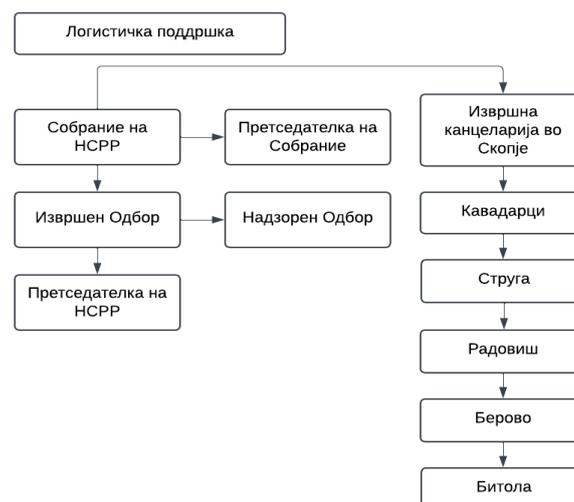
The governing bodies of the Union - National Council for Gender Equality are:

- Assembly
- Executive Board
- Supervisory Board

The Assembly is the highest body of the NCGE and is composed of the presidents of the member organizations of the network, the members of the executive office, as well as the presidents of the regional centers. The Assembly meets once a year and is convened by the President of the NCGE.

The Executive Board is the operational body of the NCGE and is composed of nine members, with a mandate of four years. This board is key in ensuring the continuity and effectiveness of the NCGE's activities.

The Supervisory Board, on the other hand, is composed of three members and has the role of a supervisory body for the financial operations of the organization. It is responsible for monitoring material and financial management, preparing reports on the financial situation, and ensuring transparency and accountability in the operations of the NCGE.



3.NCGE Strategy for the period 2022 – 2025

The Strategic Plan of the Union-National Council for Gender Equality 2022-2025 includes six strategic goals:

1. Institutional development and organizational strengthening of the network;
2. Prevention of gender stereotypes, sexism, violence against women and domestic violence;

3. Economic empowerment of women;
4. Women, leadership and participation;
5. Gender equality and climate change;
6. Women, peace and security.

During 2024, the NCGE worked on the implementation of activities within all six strategic areas:

1. *Effective, efficient, transparent, accountable and sustainable organization and regional centers*

Results related to strategic objective 1:

- Increased transparency and accountability of the organization and its regional centers;
- Improved procedures for increasing and strengthening the organizational, institutional and technical capacities of the NCGE;
- Strengthened accountability and commitment of the organization towards implementing strategic priorities.

During 2024, the NCGE actively worked to improve procedures and practices for **transparency, accountability, and effective governance** .

Through a systematic approach and application of best practices, the organization has managed to strengthen its existing structure, enabling **efficient implementation of the NCGE strategic plan** and achieving concrete results in line with its mission and vision. These efforts have contributed to building **greater trust and support** from network members, as well as relevant partners and institutions.

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2. *Reduced gender-based violence, violence against women and domestic violence and reintegration of victims of gender-based and domestic violence*

Results related to strategic objective 2:

- Increased public awareness on the challenges related to gender-based violence, violence against women and domestic violence, through continuous campaigns, education and public activities;
- Protection and support for victims gender-based violence, violence against women and domestic violence, by improving services, access to services and strengthening institutional support;
- Strengthened inter-sectoral cooperation, aiming to improve the process of reporting and processing domestic violence cases;
- Increased awareness among young people regarding domestic and gender-based violence;
- Functional Counseling Center for Women Victims of Domestic Violence at the NCGE.

3. *Women's economic empowerment with a focus on rural women and social entrepreneurship*

Results related to strategic objective 3:

- Increased awareness of women's economic empowerment, with a special focus on rural women and girls;
- Strengthened personal capacities of women for competitive participation in the labor market;
- Encouraged female entrepreneurship, with a special focus on social entrepreneurship, improving the socio-economic position of women and their inclusion in social life;
- Developing and strengthening the skills for using digital tools of women from urban and rural areas, enabling their inclusion in modern processes.

4. Equal participation of women in political and public life and all other aspects of society

Results related to strategic objective 4:

- Raised awareness of women and girls about gender-based discrimination and gender equality;
- Inclusion of women in political parties and increased involvement of women in political and public life and active engagement in all aspects of society;
- Increased participation of women in decision-making processes at the local level, through strengthening women's identity and self-confidence to take individual and group initiatives;
- Increased representation of women in mayoral positions.

5. Women are equally included and participate in climate change adaptation processes.

Results related to strategic objective 5:

- Women are equally involved in climate change programs;
- Women have equal access to resources in the process of adaptation to climate change;
- Networking with national institutions and organizations, with the aim of sharing positive practices;
- Women actively and equally participate in the process of planning and allocating budget funds for climate change adaptation.

6. Women, peace and security

Results related to strategic objective 6:

- Promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence in relation to interpersonal and interethnic relations;
- Promotion of values of democracy, dialogue and tolerance;
- Encouraging civic activism as an important factor of democracy, social development and peace;
- Involving women and girls in peace and security decision-making processes at all levels;
- Involving women and girls in peacebuilding processes;
- Implementation of Resolution 1325 in the Republic of North Macedonia.

Component 1 of the annual work program: Institutional development and organizational strengthening of the NCGE network

Activities:

- Improving transparency - publishing an annual report and additional information related to the program and activities within the framework of the annual work program of the NCGE;
- Regularly updating the organization's website and social media;
- Development of the skills and capacities of local women's organizations from the NCGE network;
- Monitoring of organizational activities in cooperation with an external expert;
- Audit of the organization's financial statements for 2023;
- Organizing a series of trainings for building the capacities of civil society organizations.

Results:

- Publication of an annual report in 250 hard copy copies;
- 370 social media posts;
- Implemented monitoring of the activities of the organization's annual work program for 2024;
- Published audit report on the financial statements of the NCGE for 2023;
- A series of four trainings was implemented to strengthen the capacities of representatives of civil society organizations;
- Strengthened knowledge and capacities of 100 representatives of civil society organizations.

Component 2 of the annual work program: Prevention of gender stereotypes, sexism, violence against women and domestic violence

Activities:

- A functional national, free mobile SOS line 141 700 for assistance and support to women victims of domestic and gender-based violence;
- Functional counseling center for free psycho-social and legal assistance for women victims of domestic and gender-based violence;
- Available digital counseling for women victims of domestic violence, through the NCGE website;
- Strengthened cooperation and provision of free legal and psycho-social counseling for the citizens of the Municipality of Centar;
- Appearances on radio and TV shows to promote the helpline SOS, the counseling center at the NCGE, and to raise awareness about domestic and gender-based violence;
- Participation in the international campaign "16 Days of Activism against Violence against Women" in the period from 25.11 to 10.12.2022;
- Debates to raise public awareness about the problem of gender-based and domestic violence against women.

Results:

- Memorandum signed with the Minister of Social Policy, Demography and Youth, Mr. Fatmir Limani;
- Three round tables were held in Skopje, Radoviš and Bitola;
- 760 calls and 360 victims accessed the National, free SOS line and;
- 85 victims and 130 visits to the Counseling Center for Psycho-Social and Legal Assistance at the NCGE;
- 10 appearances on radio and television shows;
- A campaign was implemented on the occasion of "16 Days of Activism against Violence against Women" under the motto - IT'S TIME TO END on social media, with more than a million impressions;
- 18 expert articles published on the official website of the NCGE;
- 30 online tips for preventing and dealing with domestic and gender-based violence have been published.

Component 3 of the annual work program: Improved social and economic position of women in urban and rural areas

Activities:

- Strengthened cooperation with the National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia;
- Increased public awareness about the role of young women and girls from rural and urban areas;
- Organizing training to strengthen the capacities of women and girls from rural areas related to tools intended for digital entrepreneurship;

Results:

- A meeting with Governor Anita Angelovska-Bezhoska was held, with the aim of educating women about socio-economic rights, business development and financial opportunities, which is a key step in reducing gender inequality in society and the economy;
- Organized training on the use of digital entrepreneurship tools in Skopje;
- Increased knowledge and skills in the use of digital tools of members of the NCGE network;
- A social media campaign was implemented, aiming to raise awareness about the position of women from rural areas in society.

Component 4 of the annual work program : Equal participation of women in political and public life and all other aspects of society

Activities:

- Organizing workshops for the harmonization of Macedonian and European legislation towards equal participation of women in the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia, intended for young girls;
- Organizing forums for equality and diversity in 17 municipalities within the RSM with representatives from the municipalities and civil society organizations;
- Specific challenges identified that require allocation of funds from municipal budgets within 17 municipalities in the Republic of Macedonia;

- Analysis of women's political participation in the Republic of North Macedonia.

Results:

- Three workshops were held to harmonize Macedonian and European legislation towards equal participation of women in the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia;
- 34 forums for equality and diversity implemented in 17 municipalities in the Republic of Macedonia;
- An analysis of women's political participation in the Republic of North Macedonia has been carried out.

Component 5 of the annual program: Women are equally included and participate in climate change adaptation processes.

Activities:

- Organizing an ecological - humanitarian action in Skopje;
- A roundtable was held with representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Ecology, Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, local governments at the level of the City of Skopje, civil society organizations and regional centers of the NCGE, related to the importance of women's participation in the processes of adopting policies aimed at climate change adaptation.

Results:

- Implemented ecological and humanitarian action "EcoGardarober: Donate and Reuse" in Skopje;
- 500 kilograms of laundry donated to the Momin Potok checkpoint ;
- A roundtable discussion on the topic "Women and the processes of adaptation to climate change" was held in Skopje;
- Strengthened cooperation with relevant institutions and civil society organizations working in the field of climate change.

Component 6 of the annual program: Women, peace and security

Activities:

- Raising awareness among citizens about the importance of women's participation in peacebuilding processes;
- Organizing training for capacity building and communication skills of young women and girls, necessary for active participation in peace and security building processes;
- Networking with institutions and civil society organizations working in the field of women, peace and security;
- Organizing a roundtable with relevant stakeholders, aimed at empowering women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes;
- Analysis of strategic documents and legal regulations of crisis management bodies.

Results:

- A memorandum of cooperation was signed with the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Macedonia;
- Awareness raising campaign implemented;

- Strengthened cooperation with relevant institutions and civil society organizations working in the field of women, peace and security;
- A networking meeting with representatives from civil society organizations was held;
- Capacity building training for young women and girls implemented;
- A roundtable discussion was held with representatives from the Ministry of Interior, the SVR Skopje and civil society organizations;
- Analysis of strategic documents and legal regulations of crisis management bodies carried out.



4. Projects implemented in 2024

1. *"Vision, Mission and Strategy of the Union-National Council for Gender Equality 2022-2025, GRP 2024"*

The project "Vision, Mission and Strategy of the Union-National Council for Gender Equality 2022-2025, GRP 2024" supports the annual work program of the NCGE and addresses the six strategic goals of the organization. It enables capacity building of the NCGE network through mobilization and strengthening of the executive office and regional centers in Kavadarci, Struga, Radovish, Bitola and Berovo. During 2024, the NCGE, together with its members, worked on the main challenges related to gender equality with the aim of increasing the participation of women in public life and in decision-making processes, through cooperation and mutual supporting, advocating and promoting women's rights, the fight against violence, the fight for equal opportunities in all spheres of social life.

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Donor: Delegation of the European Union to North Macedonia

Donation: 3,788,400 MKD

Duration: 12 months

2. *"From unaware of diversity to transformative local communities that recognize diversity and inclusive equality"*

The project aims to enable local civil society organizations to become active participants in the evaluation of local budgets and policies, promoting equality and inclusiveness in their communities. The focus is on fostering dialogue with local and national governments, effective advocacy and monitoring of reforms related to the accession process. In addition, the project will improve sectoral CSO networking and policy dialogue through two of the twelve IPA sectoral working groups. The project will adopt an inclusive approach and work closely with CSO representatives in 17 municipalities to develop evidence-based policies that will counter discrimination and advance equality and inclusiveness. The target group of the project is representatives of rights-based local civil society organizations and 17 units of LSGUs at the level of the RSM.

Donor: Delegation of the European Union to North Macedonia

Donation: 20,434,482 MKD

Duration: 36 months

3. "Digitization and digital visibility of the services of the Counseling Center at the NCGE and the SOS line for women - victims of domestic violence"

The project aims to improve the accessibility, visibility and functionality of counseling services for women victims of domestic and gender-based violence. Through digitalization and innovation, it will enable: anonymous online counseling, increased awareness of different forms of violence, as well as preventive action through educational campaigns and digital promotion.

Donor: Commercial Bank AD Skopje

Donation: 200,000 MKD

Duration: 12 months

4. "Crisis-Resistant Balkans"

The overall objective of the project is to achieve gender equality, social inclusion and better outcomes for women and marginalized groups during crisis situations. The project is implemented regionally in partnership with Protecta Niš and Ipakt-Sarajevo, and aims to strengthen the resilience of women and marginalized groups and prioritize their needs in crisis response and recovery efforts. By promoting gender-responsive budgeting and financing, the project contributes to the empowerment of women and marginalized groups and seeks to create lasting change.

Donor: Center for Research and Policy Making (CRPM)

Donation: 1,537,500 MKD

Duration: 12 months

5. SOS National Mobile Helpline for Support of Women Victims of Domestic Violence 141 700

The project aims to provide 24/7 access to help, support and protection for victims of violence through a national free SOS mobile line. The service provides 24-hour operation of the SOS line, from all mobile operators in the country, all days of the month, enabling constant access to support and assistance, counseling, referral of victims to other direct services, and connection with institutions responsible for dealing with violence. The SOS line is staffed by six operators in Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish and Romani.

Donor: Ministry of Social Policy, Demography and Youth

Donation: 1 448 000 MKD

Duration: 12 months

6. "Empowering rural women to strengthen their resilience in climate change adaptation processes"

The project is dedicated to empowering young women and girls in the rural areas of Rosoman, Lozovo and Lipkovo in North Macedonia by improving their skills in the areas of ecological production and digital entrepreneurship. The project seeks to empower both individuals and women's organizations to effectively address the challenges of climate change. The ultimate goal is to foster a more adaptive and innovative response to climate change through community-led efforts.

Donor: Slovak Agency for International Development and Cooperation

Donation: 614,000 MKD

Duration: 12 months

7. "FemForce: Economically Empowered Girls"

The project aims to network and strengthen cooperation between the NCGE, the business sector and the diplomatic corps in the country. By organizing a fundraising event, the NCGE team will raise funds that will be used to develop and implement a program for the economic empowerment of girls in the country. The project highlights the importance of educating young women and girls and the culture of philanthropy in society.

Donor: Connect Association

Donation: 582,000 MKD

Duration: 12 months

8. Providing free counseling services for the citizens of the municipality of Centar

The project is implemented in the municipality of Centar and includes the provision of a free National SOS line (141 700) in order to offer an anonymous and accessible point of contact for citizens of the municipality seeking urgent support. It also provides direct weekly psychosocial and legal counseling for victims of domestic and gender-based violence where they can consult with a psychologist, social worker and lawyer for ongoing support.

Donor: Municipality of Centar
Donation: 100,000 MKD
Duration: 12 months



5. Moments to remember 2024

1. Promotion of the book and video **“30+: Women Can Do It”** and holding a jubilee 30th annual Assembly of the NCGE network



2. implemented *in 17 municipalities in the Republic of Macedonia*



- Strengthened cooperation with the Embassies of the United States, the Republic of Greece, the Slovak Republic, the Republic of Germany, the Republic of Sweden , the Republic of Hungary , the Republic of Romania and the Republic of Austria



- Memorandum of cooperation signed with the Minister of Social Policy, Demography and Youth, Mr. Fatmir Limani



5. Ecological - humanitarian action "EcoGarderober: Donate and Reuse", half a ton of clothing donated at the Momin Potok checkpoint

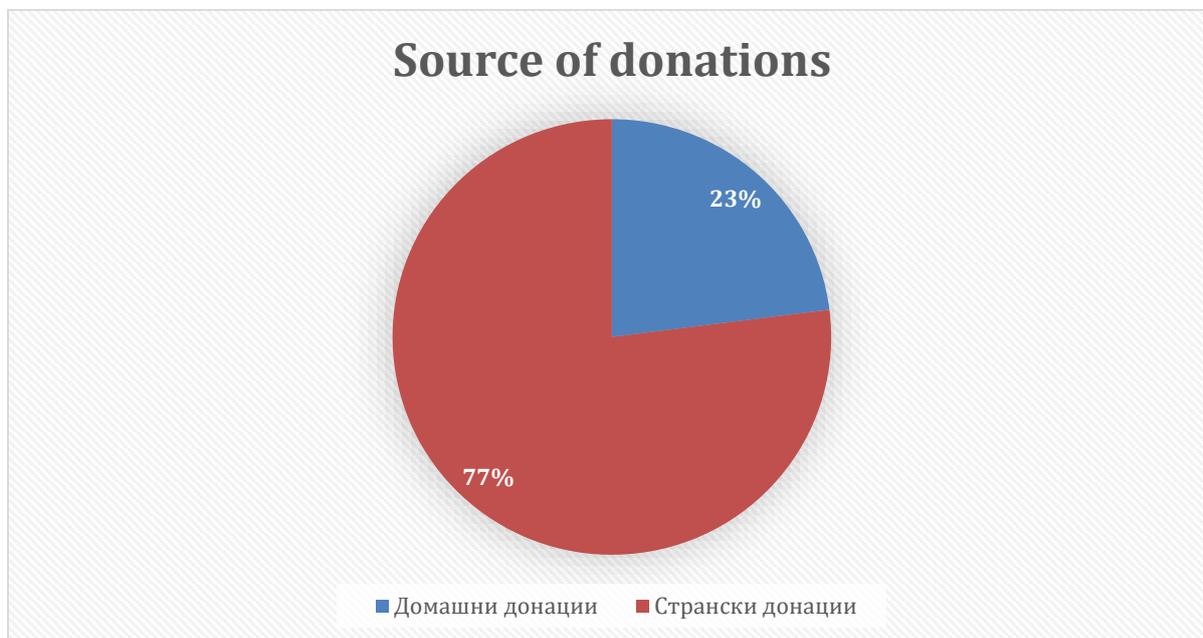


6. Participation in the "Beijing 30+ Regional Review" conference in Geneva



6. Financial review

During 2024, the NCGE had **a total of 9,241,060 denars at its disposal**, provided by domestic and foreign donors.





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