

Policy papers

The research stories published by the sub-grantees discuss the human rights and democracy issues which refer to certain public policies. For some of these issues, the Centre for Change Management and the Human Rights Institute, currently prepare documents for the policies of interest and for the professional and general public.



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INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM – SAFEGUARD OF DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

January 1st, 2016 – December 31st, 2017
Project budget: 289,064.35 Euro.

The project is funded by the European Union and co-funded by the British Embassy Skopje, and conducted by the Centre for Change Management (CCM) and the Institute for Human Rights (IHR). Media associates of the project are Telma TV, the Nova TV web-portal and the weekly magazine Focus.

Main objective of the project

How does investigative journalism protect the democracy and the human rights?
How can this role strengthen and further deepen these values?
How to increase the contribution of civil society organizations in the process of creating policies regarding the freedom of the media?

Our vision includes strong, independent and active mediums and civil society organisations. We focus on the freedom of expression and media integrity, as key elements in the process of European Union integration.

We consider that investigative journalism is of vital interest to citizens because it is one of the instruments that most effectively protect human rights. Investigative stories are vigilant about any possible abuse of power, they warn and point out negative practices in institutions, reveal clues about possible abuse of power, and promote the interests of some of the most vulnerable communities.

We believe that it is necessary to strengthen the capacities of the civil society organisations which operate in the media sphere and support the freedom of expression. We encourage their more notable role in accomplishing this goal by creating an active platform for dialogue and mutual cooperation of the civil society organisations and the media.

What did we achieve with this project? What are our results?

Some of the most renowned and prominent investigative journalists in the country, with our support, shared their knowledge and experience with more than 150 journalism students at the Ss. "Cyril and Methodius" University - Skopje, at the State University in Tetovo and at the "Goce Delchev" University - Shtip.

In order to support young investigative journalists and journalism students, we organised and conducted a two-month course in investigative journalism in the field of human rights and the judiciary.

The best 11 students were awarded with certificates, but the greatest satisfaction is the fact that 4 students were employed after the completion of the course in some of the media houses - associates of this project.

The students who participated in the investigative journalism course prepared their own investigative stories, from which we selected the three most interesting ones and prepared short videos based on them.

Seven students also were interns in the partner media in this project, Telma TV, Nova TV and Fokus where they worked under the mentorship of experienced investigative journalists.

The possibility to closely feel and participate in the daily working process in the media of different types (television, web-portal, weekly magazine) is certainly of great importance for every young journalist.

Considering that the internship is particularly important for beginner journalists, we also organised two-day trainings for young journalists for developing and promoting the professional standards and the media integrity, conducted by famous journalists from Slovenia, Croatia and Romania.

The most important is the fact that this allows journalists to become familiar with the conditions and practice of journalistic research in the Member States of the European Union.

We prepared two manuals designed for the students and the journalists:

- Freedom of Expression Manual – legal aspects
- Investigative Journalism and Information Access Manual

Simultaneously, as a result of two surveys, a field research and in-depth analysis, we also prepared two analyses:

- Exercising the Right to Freedom of Expression – Theory and practice
- Citizens' Perception of Media and Professionalism among Journalists

The manuals are of great importance for both journalism students and young journalists to become familiar with the theoretic and legal aspects of investigative journalism and freedom of expression.

At the same time, the analyses provide a meaningful insight in what citizens think about the work of the media, but also, how the journalists themselves perceive the conditions offered by the media, regarding the investigative journalism, professional standards and ethical principles.

You can download the investigative stories, analyses and the manuals from:

www.istrazifakti.mk



Istrazi fakti (Investigate Facts) –Platform for Dialogue and Cooperation between Civil Society Organisations and Investigative Journalism Media

One of the most important results of the project is the established Platform for cooperation of civil society organizations (through a program for re-granting) and media organizations, on the basis of which the investigative journalism is actively promoting, working in accordance with the highest professional journalistic standards and ethics.

The Platform is supported by the Website www.istrazifakti.mk.

The uniqueness of the Platform is that the civil society organisations and the media cooperate with each other on investigative stories in the interest of advancing democracy and protecting human rights. In this manner they share experiences and learn from each other.

Results of the sub-granting scheme

Eight projects were funded through the sub-granting scheme within the project. The civil society organisations have successfully conducted these projects in cooperation with media organisations. The results of these small-scale projects are numerous research stories in form of interviews, printed stories and videos.

Sixth Star

Project: Untold Stories – Special Team for Media Promotion of the Civil Initiatives for Protecting the Rights of the Marginalized Communities.

Twenty eight stories were published by Sakam da kazham (SDK.mk) and they reported on the protection or violation of human rights of marginalized groups.

An exhibition of photographs marking the World Day of Persons with Down Syndrome was also organised.

Diversity Media

Project: Freedom of Expression through Investigative Journalism. Eighteen TV interviews on the situation of the media, freedom of speech and the judiciary, which reflect the level of democracy in the society, were broadcasted on the national TV ALSAT-M in the program Researchers in Action. Based on the conducted interviews, 2 research stories were published on the same topics.

Plostad Sloboda

Project: Judiciary – Protector or violator of Human Rights? Three research stories in the Focus weekly magazine have been published, which clearly point out the human rights violations by the courts, or more specifically, the right of the Roma people to travel abroad, labour rights and the right to social protection, which were not protected by judicial authorities due to political pressures.

Citadela 16

Project: Review of the Construction of the Road Infrastructure. The Focus weekly magazine published 3 research stories that reveal aspects of possible abuse of official duty in the implementation of tenders for the construction of three highway sections throughout the country.

Centre for Investigative Journalism SCOOP

Project: Protecting the Rights through Investigative Journalism. SCOOP published 3 research stories about how, in a large percentage, the lawsuits for insult and defamation were used by politicians for pressuring and intimidating journalists and among the citizens as well.

Metamorphosis

Project: Who Ties the Hands of Journalists and How to Untie Them? Metamorphosis Foundation prepared a series of 3 short video stories about the excessive use of custody as a means of intimidating journalists.

Media Development Center

The project: „Anti-Corruption News of Local Media“. Three research stories about local government corruption were produced, which were broadcast on several regional and local televisions.

Association for Creative Tactics

Project: Blogs and Social Media as Tools and Platform for Investigative Journalism in Area of Judiciary and Human Rights.

Five research stories were published on the topic of individual versus collective rights, three of were written by bloggers supported by experienced investigative journalists from Nova TV.

