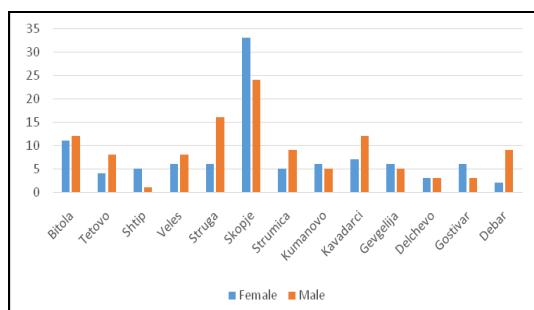


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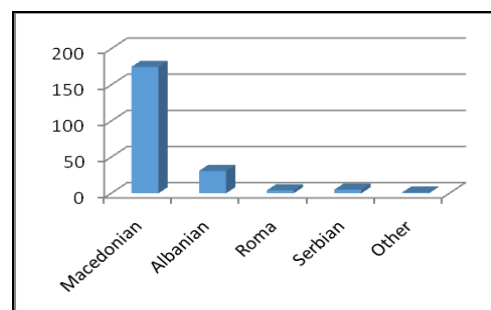
160 participants in debates throughout Macedonia, express their readiness to become part of the National Coordination Body



By the end of September and throughout October 2017, 8 public debates in each planning region of Macedonia were organized in: Bitola (Pelagonia Region), Tetovo (Polog Region), Shtip (East Region), Veles (Vardar Region), Struga (South-west Region), Skopje, Strumica (South-east Region) and Kumanovo (North-east Region). Additional 5 events/debates (meetings with CSOs) were organized in: Kavadarci (Vardar Region), Gevgelija (South-east Region), Delchevo (East Region), Gostivar (Polog Region) and Debar (South-west Region), in order to increase both the geographical outreach and the access to information and support mechanisms for bigger number of CSOs coming from smaller towns/rural areas. The public debates had an outreach of 160 CSOs that directly participated and provided their recommendations. Identified sectors have been validated and cooperation models with CSOs have been confirmed during the series of debates. Total of 217 participants (101 female/116 male) provided their inputs during these events of initially targeted 160, out of which 205 were CSOs representatives (160 separate CSOs participated), 9 were individuals interested in project activities, and 4 were representatives from Municipalities working with CSOs or local economic development.



Gender segregation (Debates' participants)



Nationality (Debates' participants)

PROJECT: Improving the Macedonian CSOs active participation in decision – making process through the empowerment of grass – root CSOs



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Identified and participating CSOs were predominantly from the sector covering social rights and protection, which presents the leading sector in which CSOs are active. Additionally, the following sectors and sector initiatives were identified with potential for changes and confirmed during the debates: environment/ecology; economic development/technology/innovation; youth policies/youth activism; sports and recreation.



The debates were designed to validate gathered data during Inception Phase and to gather more information about the areas in which CSOs are active, their biggest challenges they have to overcome, cooperation between CSOs and local authorities and the business sector. The level of support and inclusion, as well as ongoing initiatives and projects of CSOs from the region, were discussed. The debate resulted in numerous proposals related to future activities within the project, specifically for the participation of the coordination bodies. Current legislative framework, commitments and recommendations by the decision makers and the stimulus the EU integration process could additionally bring in the identified sectors were discussed during the events. Significant data has been collected for current activities and planned future actions of CSOs and grass-root CSOs throughout Macedonia. As main finding from the debates can be taken the challenging communication and coordination with the local authorities as well as the limited access and cooperation with business sector. We highly encourage and within this Project will facilitate the improvement of the communication and the active involvement of CSOs concerning these two main issues.

During these debates the participants had the opportunity to ask questions and provide comments concerning the project and its further implementation. All of the CSOs representatives have shown interest in taking participation in future activities concerning project implementation. Such participatory and inclusive process will facilitate communication and dialogue between civil-public and business sector, and all ethnic and target groups of participating CSOs for common future benefits.



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