ANNUAL REPORT

for 2023

Institute for Human Rights

Institute for Human Rights

CONTENT

Introduction **3**

Management board of the institute for human rights **4**

Advisory board of the institute for human rights **4**

Executive office of the institute for human rights **4**

Activities of the institute for human rights **5**

The institute through numbers **5**

Academy for human rights **6**

Human rights platform **7**

Free legal aid **7**

Legal dialogue **9**

Projects that were implemented in 2023 ..... **10**

- Acces to justice for all 10
- For justice – civil organizations for an independent and efficient judiciary 13
- Together for better quality of local media 14
- The constitutional court – guarantor of human rights 15
- Increased public oversight over the administrative court 18
- Combating cyber-bullying against girls 19
- Youth activism for an inclusive society 20

Additional activities of the institute for human rights **21**

Additional activities of the institute for human rights carried out abroad **23**

Participation in working groups and coordinating bodies **24**

INTRODUCTION

The Institute for Human Rights is an association of citizens that, through its work, advocates for the promotion, advancement and protection of human rights and freedoms. IHR achieves its objectives through continuous education, analysis and research of situations, legal representation and organization of expert discussions within the legal profession and discussions for the general public.

In 2023, the Institute for Human Rights successfully implemented project activities in constant communication with the Management Board. Strategic priorities continued to be oriented towards justice and human rights, legal certainty, promotion of human freedoms and rights, equality and non-discrimination, fight against corruption and participation in the process of negotiations for accession to the European Union. Monitoring the work of the Constitutional Court, the Judicial Council, the Council of Public Prosecutors, the Administrative Court as well as other state institutions continued to be the focus of the work of the Institute for Human Rights.

Within its strategic determinations and beliefs, IHP works in several key segments:

- It monitors the situation regarding the enjoyment of human rights and freedoms through observation and analysis of all relevant processes in the country;
- It raises awareness among the relevant institutions, organizations and other stakeholders about the necessity to establish and build an efficient mechanism for the promotion, guarantee and protection of human rights and freedoms and
- It informs citizens about their rights in cases of discrimination;
- It initiates discussions on the relevant issues and problems that directly affect the enjoyment of the basic rights and freedoms of people and citizens in RNM, both in the professional and in the general public.

This annual report refers to the work of the Institute for Human Rights, which during the past year worked tirelessly to improve the state of human rights, promote equality and non-discrimination, recognize corruption and display the transparency and accountability of state institutions and bodies whose work The Institute for Human Rights continuously monitors. This report aims to present the overall activities of the Institute for Human Rights through the realization of activities in each individual project, the provision of free legal assistance, the Institute's contribution to the promotion of science through the publication of the professional magazine Legal dialogue, publication of educational courses on the IHR Academy for e-learning, promotion of activities that are published on the Platform for Human Rights and the scientific and practical contribution of the Institute through participation in working groups and coordinating bodies on topics related to human rights.

MANAGEMENT BOARD OF THE INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

The president of the Institute for Human Rights is Margarita Tsatsa Nikolovska. The management board is composed of 7 members, namely:

Margarita Tsatsa Nikolovska President of IHR
Agim Miftari Vice President of IHR
Vera Koco | member
Vanja Mihajlova | member
Igor Spirovski | member
Momir Marichikj | member
Filip Medarski | member

ADVISORY BOARD OF THE INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

The Advisory Board of IHP consists of 13 members, namely:

• Margarita Tsatsa Nikolovska • Agim Miftari • Vera Koco • Vanja Mihajlova • Mersel Biljali
• Milojka Kalkashlieva • Konstantin Hadji Lega • Irena Cuculoska • Sashe Dimovski
• Macedonian Association of Young Lawyers • Zharko Hadji Zafirov • Tatijana Temelkoska
• Slavica Dimitrievska

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

In 2023, the executive office of IHR was composed of 5 members who successfully implemented the planned activities of all projects in constant communication with the Management Board. In addition to running and successfully managing the projects, employees of the Executive Office took an active part in working groups and coordination bodies, participating in conferences, debates, focus groups and similar events in the Republic of North Macedonia and abroad.

ACTIVITIES OF THE INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

In 2023, representatives from the Management Board and the Executive Office of the Institute for Human Rights took an active part through guest appearances in talk shows, participation in workshops, working groups, round tables, trainings and conferences on topics related to the rule of law and human rights, as well as topics that represent part of the Institute's strategic priorities. In addition, scientific lectures were held on topics related to human rights and presentation of the activities carried out by the Institute for Human Rights, promotion of the published courses of the Academy for Human Rights.

In the past year, through various guest appearances and participation in events and conferences, the activities implemented in the projects on topics related to access to justice, realization and protection of freedoms and rights before the Constitutional Court, monitoring of the sessions of the Constitutional Court, the Judicial Council and the Council of public prosecutors were promoted.

THE INSTITUTE THROUGH NUMBERS



8 Publications



3 Monitoring reports



2 Courses of the IHR Academy



2 Workshops, trainings and focus groups



4 Study visits and participation in events outside RNM



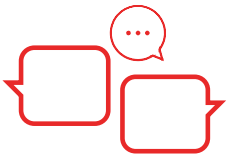
Meetings held with representatives from state institutions



3 Participation in working groups for legislative changes



2 Conclusion of Memorandums of cooperation



2 Published editions of Legal Dialogue



1 Conferences and live debates



3 Presentation of the Academy for Human Rights at law faculties and the Constitutional Court



2 Videos



13 Infographics

ACADEMY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

The concept for the creation of the Academy for Human Rights stems from the vision of the Institute for Human Rights for education aimed at promoting and protecting human rights. Since education is key to securing, advancing, promoting and protecting human rights, the Academy offers free courses on various topics to help registered users enrich their knowledge in the field of human rights.

The Academy for Human Rights is a tool that aims, in a safe and simple way, to educate its users about various issues in the field of human rights. Every available course on the Academy contains multiple chapters and lessons and, in order for the user to move on from one chapter to the next, they answer a few questions about the material. In this way, apart from acquiring certain knowledge, the users have the chance to test their knowledge through questions at the end of each chapter.

In 2023, the Academy continued its established practice of publishing courses which are related to the protection of human rights and dealing with topics that are interesting and which require further education and clarification of the relevant issues.

In 2023, the following courses were published on the Academy:

- **The course for the protection of human freedoms and rights before the Constitutional Court of RNM** was prepared within the framework of the project "The Constitutional Court - Guarantor of Human Rights", which was financially supported by the German Embassy in Skopje. This course is intended for law students, legal academics, and the general public. The course provides an introduction to and explanation of the use of the mechanisms for the protection of human rights before the Constitutional Court (the Court). In addition, the course delineates the different roles that constitutional courts can play in the protection of rights and freedoms, in accordance with the given constitutional jurisdictions, as well as the application of international instruments in the protection of human rights and freedoms.

  The course is divided into four interrelated chapters. Each thematic chapter can be visited independently at any time, according to the individual needs and pace of learning of each user. The chapters are subdivided into lessons, in which concrete examples are to master the course materials more easily. In addition, the case law of the Constitutional Court and the European Court of Human Rights is analysed, relevant constitutional and legal provisions are included, as well as links to those provisions, and additional materials are provided to motivate the visitor to read more and develop, as well as to go back to the course materials during their work or education.

- **The course on the principle of equal treatment and (non)discrimination** was prepared within the operational grant "Access to justice for all", which was financially supported by the European Union. The course is intended for all persons who wish to be educate themselves on topics related to the principle of equal treatment and (non)discrimination. With this course, they will acquire basic knowledge related to: the meaning of the principle of equal treatment and the term discrimination; recognizing and dealing with stereotypes and prejudices and their connection to discrimination; the legal framework for preventing and protecting against discrimination; the bases, forms and areas of discrimination; the difference between violation of rights, unfair treatment and discrimination; the situation regarding discrimination in the country and the protection mechanisms.

  Up until the moment of the preparation of this report, 1152 users were registered at the Academy for Human Rights. This year, the trend of the growing number of new users continues, i.e. 136 new people created their own profile at the Academy. A growing trend of certificates issued in 2023 was also observed. The total number of issued certificates in 2023 is 2108, compared to 1750 issued certificates in 2022.

HUMAN RIGHTS PLATFORM

The human rights platform has a comprehensive approach to human rights, that is, it contains all the information on how human rights can be protected. The human rights platform is divided into 6 segments that contain different types of information that are useful to the visitors of the website of the Institute for Human Rights.

The first segment of the Platform is titled **Human Rights and their Protection**. In this section, information is available on how human rights can be protected and where violations can be reported, which bodies protect human rights at the national and international level, the relevant laws and international documents.

The second segment focuses on the **Human rights-based approach**, i.e., what it encompasses, the standards and principles on which it is based, the basic characteristics that refer to it and the values that it adds to the development concepts and processes.

Online trainings constitute the third segment of the Human Rights Platform, which provides a list of bodies and platforms that allow website visitors to access a variety of trainings related to human rights. This segment also contains a quiz titled 'How well do you know your rights?', which is intended for all those who want to test their knowledge in the field of human rights.

Perhaps one of the most important segments of the Platform is the **Blog**, which aims to give space to various authors to express their opinion on current topics related to human rights.

The last segment of the Platform is the **Documents**, where you can find a multitude of reports, manuals and guides that touch upon the human rights situation in the Republic of North Macedonia.

FREE LEGAL AID

In 2023, the Institute for Human Rights, as a registered association for providing primary legal aid, continued to provide primary legal assistance to all interested citizens.

According to the Law on Free Legal Aid, the Institute for Human Rights provides primary legal aid consisting of:

- initial legal advice on the right to use free legal aid,
- general legal information,
- general legal advice,
- assistance in completing the request for secondary legal assistance,
- assistance in filling out forms, patterns issued by an administrative authority in an administrative procedure for social protection and protection of children's rights; pension, disability and health insurance; protection of victims of gender-based violence and family violence; registration procedure in the register of births; acquisition of personal identification and citizenship documents, and
- drafting petitions to the Commission for Protection against Discrimination and to the Ombudsman and requests for the protection of freedoms and rights to the Constitutional Court of the Republic of North Macedonia.

The aim of the free legal aid program is to provide primary legal aid to all citizens in the Republic of North Macedonia, to promote equal access to justice for all, without discrimination, and primarily to help marginalized groups of citizens, in order to be able to realize the rights they have, but also to give an answer on how they can exercise those rights before the state institutions.

The practice shows that the positive trend from 2022 continues, i.e., in 2023 the questions related to the scope of free legal aid and what it represents have decreased. This indicates that the citizens, for the most part, are familiar with the concept of free legal aid and how they can obtain it, leaving only the questions about the areas it can be applied, as well as the questions arising from the everyday problems of the citizens.

In the past year, the Institute for Human Rights provided primary legal aid in 58 cases in which general legal information or general legal advice was given. Most of the questions that were sent to the IHR were related to health and the realization of social and pension insurance rights, for example: conditions for acquiring a disability pension, benefits for a physical disability benefits in the event of the death of a member of the immediate family, obtaining an allowance for care from another person, recognition of the pensionable service, as well as reporting and dealing with cases of negligent medical treatment.

From the analysis of the rest of the questions that were sent to the Institute for Human Rights, it can be noted that a large part refer to requests for general legal information and/or legal advice in disputes of a legal nature for physical division of property, determination of ownership, as well as disputing contracts for purchase or sale and for lifetime care and support. This year there has been an increase in questions related to the protection of human freedoms and rights and related to submitting complaints to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

LEGAL DIALOGUE

The social function of the journal "Legal Dialogue" is to open discussions and propose new approaches in order to develop, promote and exchange legal knowledge between theoreticians and practitioners in the field of rule of law and human rights, and to make them more accessible to the wider scientific and professional public. For this purpose, the journal publishes:

1. Scientific papers that will reflect the theoretical aspects of topics related to human rights and the rule of law that refer to the Republic of North Macedonia, but also, in general, to other countries in Europe and beyond, and
1. Scientific papers that will provide an analysis from a practical aspect of specific judgments of the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Human Rights.

In 2023, the professional journal "Legal Dialogue" continued to be published within the operational grant "Access to Justice for All", financed by the European Union. The idea of incorporating “Legal Dialogue” within this grant was motivated by the will to raise awareness and promote education on issues related to human rights and initiate a debate on improving access to justice for all citizens, with a particular focus on marginalized groups of citizens, through monitoring of relevant institutions using evidence-based analysis. This creates an opportunity for all legal practitioners and theorists to research and write on topics related to the rule of law and respect for human rights.

In 2023, the Editorial Board of “Legal Dialogue”, which has 5 members, continued to function successfully in the same composition, namely:

- Mancho Mitevski – Editor-in-Chief
- Vesna Stefanovska – Associate Editor
- Mersel Biljali – member
- Slavica Dimitrievska – member
- Angelina Stanojoska – member

The goal of the Editorial Board is for each edition to include different topics written by a wide profile of experts in their fields whose papers will initiate a dialogue and exchange of opinions. The tradition of publishing articles by master's and doctoral students on topics related to human rights and the rule of law continues this year as well, which proves and confirms the premise that the journal “Legal Dialogue” is becoming recognizable among young students and researchers.

In 2023, two editions of the magazine "Legal Dialogue" were published, number 27 in June and number 28 in December. These two editions, like the previous ones, continue the tradition of including a variety of topics, as well as segments that analyse human rights and the rule of law, which are secured and guaranteed by the institutions of the country. The published articles are written by current and former judges of the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court, professors, assistant professors, postgraduates, doctoral students as well as experts from civil society organizations. In “Legal dialogue” no. 28, a special section was included for the first time for papers dealing with topics related to environmental justice and environmental protection. These two editions of “Legal Dialogue” contained 21 articles prepared by 23 authors, which makes them the most numerous editions published so far.

PROJECTS THAT WERE IMPLEMENTED IN 2023

ACCES TO JUSTICE FOR ALL

Financed by the Delegation of the European Union

Duration: 1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023

The goal of the program is to improve the access to justice for everyone, especially for the vulnerable and marginalized groups of citizens in North Macedonia.

The following specific goals have been realized within the framework of the program:

- Facilitating the protection against discrimination of marginalized groups of people by providing free legal aid;
- Raising awareness and promoting education on issues related to human rights;
- Improving citizens' access to justice by monitoring relevant institutions using evidence-based analysis; and
- Advocating for appropriate legislation and policies regarding the protection of human rights and the rule of law in accordance with EU law.

Within the implementation of the project, meetings were held with the deputy president of the Administrative Court of the RNM and with representatives from the Judicial Council of the RNM.

On May 30, 2023, a focus group was held with representatives from civil society organizations that work with vulnerable and marginalized groups of citizens in order to obtain information about the state of the human rights in the country and the observance of international instruments for the protection of human rights, especially conventions and documents of the UN, and in the context of the review of the Republic of North Macedonia within the 4th cycle of the Universal Periodic Review of the UN Human Rights Council. Special focus was placed on the issues and thematic areas highlighted in the letter of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights addressed to the country in the third cycle of UPR, with an emphasis on social protection.

In June 2023, the new edition of the journal "Legal Dialogue" no.27 published 10 papers that deal with various topics related to human rights and the rule of law in the Republic of North Macedonia and beyond.

In July 2023, the Analysis on the status of the extramarital union and the rights of the extramarital partners was published. The analysis presents the key aspects of the status of the extramarital union in our country and the need for more complete legal regulation of the legal relations that arise between extramarital partners in certain segments of cohabitation in such a union, the existence of which is undisputedly accepted in part of the legislation of the Macedonian legal order.

In August 2023,the Report on the monitoring of the work of the Judicial Council for the period between January and July 2023 was published. By attending all open sessions, the Institute for Human Rights regularly monitors the work of the Judicial Council. Through objective monitoring of its work, the aim of this activity is for the Institute of Human Rights to notice the challenges and progress in its work, as well as to contribute, with conclusions and recommendations based on evidence, to the improvement of the situation in the judiciary. The report contains conclusions and recommendations for overcoming current challenges and improving the situation.

In August 2023, the Handbook on European Standards in Administrative Procedures was published by the Institute for Human Rights. The purpose of this Manual is to highlight some of the international standards established at the level of the Council of Europe, such as the European Convention on Human

Rights, Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)7 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on good administration and several other recommendations, as well as in the practice of the European Court of Human Rights. In addition to the European standards, the Handbook also pays attention to the principles for conducting the administrative procedure that derive from the Macedonian Law on General Administrative Procedure.

In October 2023, a written submission was prepared by the Institute for Human Rights within the 4th cycle of the UN Universal Periodic Review. The prepared material provides information to the Working Group regarding judicial reforms, access to justice, discrimination, political participation of persons with disabilities and provision of free legal aid for marginalized and vulnerable groups of people. The material focuses on the Republic of North Macedonia and the shortcomings and progress in the aforementioned areas.

In December 2023, in the new edition of the magazine "Legal Dialogue" no.28, 11 papers dealing with various topics related to human rights and the rule of law in the Republic of North Macedonia were published. In this edition, a special section was published on environmental protection and environmental justice.

In December 2023, the Online Course on (Non)discrimination was published on the Academy for Human Rights. The course is intended for all persons who wish to be educated on topics related to the principle of equal treatment and (non)discrimination. With the course, visitors will acquire basic knowledge related to: the meaning of the principle of equal treatment and the term discrimination; recognizing and dealing with stereotypes and prejudices and their connection to discrimination; the legal framework for preventing and protecting against discrimination; the bases, forms and areas of discrimination; the difference between violation of rights, unfair treatment and discrimination and the situation with discrimination in the country and the mechanisms for protection.

In December 2023, the Annual Report on the work of the Administrative Court in the period from January to December 2023 was prepared and published. The Institute for Human Rights regularly monitors public hearings before the Administrative Court in cases related to social rights. The aim of this activity is to analyse access to administrative justice for all citizens, with special reference to marginalized and vulnerable groups of citizens (recipients of social assistance, persons with disabilities, Roma people, single parents, senior citizens, etc.).

In December 2023, the Report on the monitoring of the work of the Judicial Council for the period between August and December 2023 was published. This report is divided into three main parts that relate to the transparency, effectiveness and efficiency of the Judicial Council. At the same time, the report contains conclusions and recommendations based on the monitoring of the open sessions of the Judicial Council, reports on the Judicial Council, announcements and documents that were published on the website of the Judicial Council.

In December 2023, the Report on the human rights situation in the Republic of North Macedonia for 2023 was prepared and published. The report focuses on several areas, namely on the access to justice with a special focus on the access to administrative justice of marginalized groups and free legal aid, equality and non-discrimination, as well as on the human rights of specific groups, such as women, persons with disabilities, Roma people etc. The report also provides a brief overview of the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, which were passed in 2023 against the Republic of North Macedonia. Finally, the report contains a special section on the right to a healthy environment.

Visualizations:

- Infographic for filing a lawsuit before the Administrative Court
- Infographic - family and old-age pension
- Infographic - exercise of the right to medical treatment abroad
- Infographic – Social security for the elderly
- Infographic - which principles should the administration adhere to when deciding about the rights and obligations of the citizens?
- Infographic - frequently asked questions: European Court of Human Rights
- Infographic - conclusions and recommendations from monitoring the work of the Administrative Court of the RNM
- Video: Principles in Administrative Procedures

FOR JUSTICE – CIVIL ORGANIZATIONS FOR AN INDEPENDENT AND EFFICIENT JUDICIARY

Financed by the Foundation Open Society - Macedonia

Duration: 1 January 2023 – 30 June 2024

The general goal of the project is to increase the influence of civil society organizations in the judicial reform process as a prerequisite for the protection of human rights and ensuring social justice.

Within the framework of the project, the following activities are planned:

- Monitoring and evaluation of the development process and the content of the Justice Reform Strategy 2023-2027, contribution to the development of a methodology for monitoring the implementation of the Strategy and monitoring the implementation of the Strategy and publication of the findings;
- Work meetings for coordination and cooperation with thematic networks and platforms, as well as with civil society organizations in order to identify specific problems and challenges, and plan joint advocacy activities;
- Participation in working groups for the drafting of laws and other regulations arising from or foreseen in strategic documents in the area of justice;
- Monitoring of the current situation in the judiciary;
- Carrying out Watchdog activities, exposing negative situations and ensuring commitments from key stakeholders to overcome them;
- Implementation of activities for the screening process related to the cluster "Fundamentals" (Chapter 23);
- Development of a working document for identifying gaps in domestic legislation, policies and practices as well as the problems and difficulties that the country may face in the further process of compliance with regard to Chapter 23;
- Final conference to present the findings.

During the project's implementation period, the Blueprint group came out with reactions regarding the current situation in the judiciary:

- Reaction of the Blueprint group regarding the events in the Judicial Council of the RNM at the session held on 26.04.2023
- The Judicial Council continues with illegal and non-transparent actions - reaction to the events in the Judicial Council of the RNM at the sessions held on 04.05.2023
- Reaction regarding the developments in the Judicial Council of the RNM in connection with the candidacies for members
- Reaction regarding the election of two members of the Judicial Council of the RNM from among the ranks of judges and the election of public prosecutors by the Council of Public Prosecutors of the RNM
- Reaction to the amendments of the Criminal Code via an abbreviated procedure
- The Blueprint group sent a request to the President of RNM not to sign the decree for the promulgation of the law amending and supplementing the Criminal code
- Announcement: The Blueprint group withdraws from further participation and contribution in the process of drafting the new criminal code

TOGETHER FOR BETTER QUALITY OF LOCAL MEDIA

Financed by the Delegation of the European Union

Duration: 3 January 2023 – 3 January 2025

The aim of the project is to strengthen the capacities and to promote the professional standards of local journalists. Within the framework of the project, the following specific goals were realized:

- Strengthening of the capacities of local journalists, especially from ethnic minorities to practice investigative journalism, digital and media literacy, as well as human rights standards in their work;
- Strengthening of the capacities of journalism students for professional development and creative expression in the media; and
- Improving the influence and cooperation between local civil society organizations and local media for promoting the rights of journalists, encouraging the fight and responding to all forms of violence against journalists, promoting professional standards and freedom of speech.

This project is implemented by the Centre for Community Media Development “MEDIUM" in partnership with the Institute for Human Rights. The activities conducted by the Institute for Human Rights were the development of a Guide for the application of the human rights-based approach in the media work and training for local journalists on the topic of the application of the human rights-based approach in the media work.

In October 2023, the Guide for the application of the human rights-based approach in media work was published, which serves as a useful tool and direction for the inclusion of human rights principles in media reporting. The purpose of the Guide is to serve as an explanatory instrument for overcoming the kind of information that perpetuates stereotypes and prejudices towards certain groups. Therefore, any news and information, especially from this sphere, should be thoroughly researched, checked and professionally written.

In October 2023, a call was published for the selection of journalists to participate in a training about the application of the human rights-based approach (HRBA) in media reporting. With the call, media workers, editors and journalists working in local media from the project municipalities of Gostivar, Tetovo, Kumanovo, Shuto Orizari, Debar, Kichevo, Struga and Ohrid were invited to register.

In November 2023, a training on the application of the human rights-based approach in media reporting was held in Mavrovo. That training allowed the journalists to become familiar with the basic principles of the HRBA, its application and significance for the media work. The topics and issues discussed at the training were: what is HRBA, why is the HRBA important for the media, what are the roles and obligations of the media in the process of promoting and protecting human rights and how to report in a way that respects human rights and adheres to the highest standards in media work.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT – GUARANTOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Donor of the program: The German Embassy in Skopje

Duration: 15 April 2023 – 31 December 2023

The general goal of the project is to improve the overall system for constitutional protection of human rights and freedoms, as well as to increase public interest and knowledge about the work of the Constitutional Court. Within the framework of the project, two specific goals were realized:

Increasing the knowledge and interest of the public about constitutional rights and freedoms and increasing the knowledge and skills of legal professionals, students and the public about the available mechanisms for the protection of human rights and freedoms before the Constitutional Court, and

Improving the constitutional mechanism for the protection of human rights and freedoms based on comparative regional and continental experiences and best practices.

In October 2023, the Guide for submitting initiatives before the Constitutional Court of the RNM was prepared. The Guide aims to clarify how initiatives can be submitted, and at the same time explain who can submit the initiative, what the initiative should contain, against which acts the initiative can be submitted and more. This guide aims to increase access to justice, because, although anyone can submit an initiative to the Constitutional Court, the large number of dismissed and rejected initiatives indicates that there is a need for greater clarity and education regarding the overall procedure for submitting initiatives. In addition, the purpose of this guide is to reduce the number of dismissed and rejected initiatives in order to improve the constitutional protection of human rights and freedoms.

In November, the video - the Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia and the basic human rights and freedoms was published. The video aims to explain the Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia in an illustrative, visual and simple way as the highest legal act in the country with which all other laws and by-laws must be in accordance. The civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution are illustrated through visualizations. The goal is to present an easy-to-read and illustrated Constitution that will enable elementary school students to easily understand the Constitution, the rights and freedoms it protects and the mechanisms it enables in order to protect these rights.

In November 2023, the Institute for Human Rights published the "Course for the Protection of Human Freedoms and Rights before the Constitutional Court of the RNM" which is intended for law students, legal academics, and the general public. The course provides an introduction to and explanation of the use of the Its purpose is the introduction and familiarization with the mechanisms for the protection of human rights before the Constitutional Court, as well as the explanation of their use. In addition, the course also delineates the different roles that constitutional courts can play in the protection of rights and freedoms, in accordance with the given constitutional jurisdictions, as well as the application of international instruments in the protection of human rights and freedoms.

On November 13, 2023, a presentation of the online Course for the Protection of Human Freedoms and Rights before the Constitutional Court of the RNM was held at the Faculty of Law - Bitola, "St. Kliment Ohridski" University. Within the framework of the presentation, representatives of the Institute for Human Rights introduced the attendees to the work of the IHR and the Academy for Human Rights. Within the framework of the event, a Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between the Faculty of Law and the Institute for Human Rights - Skopje. The course is divided into four interconnected chapters: (1) Mechanisms for the protection of freedoms and rights before the Constitutional Court of the Republic of North Macedonia; (2) Initiative for evaluation of constitutionality and legality; (3) Request for protection of freedoms and rights and (4) Application of the European Convention on Human Rights by the Constitutional Court.

On November 21, 2023, at the Faculty of Law of the University of Southeast Europe in Tetovo, the second presentation of the online course for the protection of human freedoms and rights before the Constitutional Court of the RNM was held. During the presentation, representatives of the Institute for Human Rights introduced the students to the work of the IHR and the Academy for Human Rights.

On 22.11.2023, at the Faculty of Law, University "Goce Delchev" - Shtip, the third presentation of the online course for the protection of human freedoms and rights before the Constitutional Court of the RNM was held. During the presentation, representatives of the Institute for Human Rights introduced the students to the work of the IHR and the Academy for Human Rights.

Representatives from the Institute for Human Rights and the Constitutional Court of the Republic of North Macedonia conducted a study visit to the Republic of Slovenia from November 26 to November 29, 2023. During the visit, meetings were held with the President of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Slovenia Dr. Matej Accetto, judges Dr. Špelca Mežnar and Dr. Katja Šugman Stubbs, Secretary General Dr. Sebastian Nerad, as well as the heads of three departments of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Slovenia. The Institute for Human Rights was represented by the President of IHR - Margarita Tsatsa Nikolovska, member of the Management Board of IHR - Igor Spirovski, and two members of the Executive Office - Vesna Stefanovska and Maria Chekredji. The purpose of the study visit was the exchange of experiences and positive practices in the proceedings of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Slovenia with a special focus on the application of the mechanism for the protection of freedoms and rights in the form of a constitutional complaint. Within the framework of the visit, the president of the Constitutional Court of the RNM, Dobrila Kacarska, shared experiences from our Constitutional Court regarding the protection of basic freedoms and rights, while the spokesperson of the Constitutional Court of the RNM, Hristina Belovska, shared experiences in the area of public relations and cooperation with media and civil society organizations. Within the framework of the study visit, a meeting was held with Prof. Dr. Ciril Ribičič - Director of the Institute for Constitutional Law, Ljubljana, Prof. Dr. Albin Igličar as well as with other representatives from the Institute. At the meeting, experiences from both countries were exchanged regarding the protection of freedoms and rights, and especially the Slovenian experience with the application of the constitutional complaint.

On December 10, 2023, the Institute for Human Rights held a debate about the protection of human rights and freedoms before the Constitutional Court of RNM. The debate aimed to initiate a discussion regarding the expansion of the scope of protection of the freedoms and rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the RNM. At the debate, the Analysis of the decisions of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of North Macedonia regarding submitted requests for the protection of freedoms and rights was presented, which provides an overview of the actions of the Constitutional Court, the application of the Constitution and the Rules of Procedure in its work, the application of the European Convention on Human Rights and the practice of the European Court of Human Rights in a three-decade period. In addition, part of the policy document on the need to expand the scope of human rights protection through the introduction of a constitutional complaint was presented.

In December 2023, the Analysis of the decisions of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of North Macedonia was published regarding submitted requests for the protection of freedoms and rights. The aim of the analysis was to review all the decisions of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of North Macedonia in the period from 1992 to 2023, in order to evaluate the implementation of the jurisdiction of the Constitutional Court in the protection of freedoms and rights. Additionally, it identifies issues that could be the basis for improving the level of protection of freedoms and rights, especially from the point of view of international documents, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations, the European Convention on Human Rights and others, as well as from the point of view of the influence of the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights in the decision-making of the Constitutional Court.

The public policy document "The need for the introduction of a constitutional complaint in the legal order of the Republic of North Macedonia" was prepared and published in December. The document represents a comprehensive analysis of the need and the possibility of introducing the legal instrument 'constitutional complaint' in the legal order of the Republic of North Macedonia. The document consists of an introduction to the legal and political context in our country, a short comparative analysis of the normative frameworks for a constitutional complaint in the legal systems of the Republic of Slovenia, the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the Federal Republic of Germany and scenarios for the possibility of introducing this legal instrument in the legal order of the Republic of North Macedonia and strengthening the role of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of North Macedonia as a guarantor of human rights (recommendations). The analysis

starts from the finding that there is an objective and practical need to expand the normative framework of our legal order towards the introduction of the legal means of a constitutional lawsuit, i.e. a constitutional complaint, and with the clear aim of advancing and strengthening the constitutional judicial protection and the freedoms of citizens guaranteed by our Constitution.

Visualizations:

- Infographic - the work of the Constitutional Court of the RNM (period: April - July)
- Infographic - the work of the Constitutional Court of the RNM no. 2 (period: August – October)
- Infographic - the work of the Constitutional Court of the RNM no. 3 (period April – December)
- Infographic - Guide for submitting initiatives before the Constitutional Court of the RNM
- Video - The Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia and basic human rights and freedoms
- Infographic - Analysis of the decisions and solutions of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of North Macedonia after submitted requests for the protection of freedoms and rights
- Infographic - Comparative overview of the application of the constitutional appeal in the region

INCREASED PUBLIC OVERSIGHT OVER THE ADMINISTRATIVE COURT

Financed by the French Embassy in Skopje

Duration: 1 August 2023 – 31 January 2024

The general goal of the project is to highlight the importance of the access to administrative justice for all, with a special focus on marginalized groups, and the strengthening of the capacities of the Administrative Court in dealing with cases related to social rights through the implementation of conclusions and recommendations that will result from the process of monitoring. Within the framework of the project, two specific goals were realized:

Increasing public awareness and understanding of the specific procedures related to social rights and the competences of the Administrative Court.

Raising awareness of the importance of access to justice before the Administrative Court, especially for marginalized groups, in their search for social rights.

In the period from August, to the end of January 2024, the Institute for Human Rights regularly monitored public hearings before the Administrative Court in cases related to social rights. The aim of this activity is to analyse the access to administrative justice for all citizens, with special reference to marginalized and vulnerable groups of citizens (recipients of social assistance, persons with disabilities, Roma people, single parents, senior citizens, etc.).

Social rights generally refer to the rights individuals have in order to access basic services and resources that contribute to their well-being and dignity. These rights can be instruments for alleviating poverty by providing a safety net for those in need. Social assistance programs, unemployment benefits, and other forms of support can help individuals and families during difficult times. The importance of social rights lies in their potential to enhance human dignity, promote equality and contribute to the overall well-being of individuals and society.

In January, the Report on the work of the Administrative Court in deciding cases related to social rights was published. Public hearings in the field of social rights were monitored during the reporting period. The most represented bases that were discussed were the old-age pension, compensation for treatment abroad, compensation for purchased medicines, family pension and other rights. The report contains recommendations for improving access to justice and social rights for citizens.

Visualizations:

- Infographic for filing a lawsuit before the Administrative Court
- Infographic for family and old-age pension
- Infographic for medical treatment abroad
- Infographic for Social Security for the Elderly

COMBATING CYBER-BULLYING AGAINST GIRLS

Financed by the Canadian Embassy in Belgrade

Duration: 28 November 2023 – 28 February 2024

The general goal of the project is to reduce and prevent bullying and cyberbullying against girls in North Macedonia through education of young people.

The following activities will be carried out within the project:

- Gender analysis of posts shared on social networks;
- Conducting a survey among high school students about bullying and cyberbullying;
- Two focus groups for girls where they will be able to share their experiences with bullying and cyber-bullying;
- Three anti-bullying workshops with students from high schools in Skopje in order to educate them on the prevention of bullying and cyberbullying against girls;
- An online campaign to raise awareness about bullying and cyberbullying among high school students.

In the period of the preparation of this report, activities for conducting the survey on bullying and cyber-bullying among high school students in the municipalities of all 8 regions were initiated. In the Eastern region, the survey will be conducted in the Municipality of Berovo and the Municipality of Shtip. In the Pelagonian Region in the Municipality of Bitola. In the South-Eastern region in the Municipality of Valandovo and the Municipality of Strumica. In the Vardar region in the Municipality of Veles and the Municipality of Negotino. In the Polog Region in the Municipality of Gostivar, the Municipality of Mavrovo and Rostusha and the Municipality of Tetovo. In the Skopje region in the City of Skopje and the Municipality of Ilinden. In the Southwest region in the Municipality of Debar and the Municipality of Ohrid. In the Northeast Region in the Municipality of Kriva Palanka and the Municipality of Kumanovo. In the Pelagonian region in the Municipality of Krushevo. At the same time, two focus groups will be held with high schools in the Municipality of Bitola and Municipality of Shtip and three workshops with high schools in the territory of the City of Skopje.

Expected (long-term) results:

- raising awareness on bullying and cyberbullying among girls, how to identify it, prevent it and how students can fight against this negative phenomenon;
- gender- disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data on bullying in schools and cyber-bullying on social media;
- 75 students educated on how to recognize and prevent bullying and cyberbullying;
- creating data-based recommendations to inform policy makers on combating bullying and cyberbullying in North Macedonia.

YOUTH ACTIVISM FOR AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

Grant within the project "EU Support for Confidence Building in the Western Balkans", financed by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the United Nations Development Program

Duration: 1 December 2023 – 30 November 2024

The goal of the project is to raise awareness and engage young people in developing a dialogue on promoting a multi-ethnic society for all. This goal will be achieved by involving the students in developing a multi-ethnic dialogue and raising awareness of the importance of respecting and advancing the different identity features of the communities in order to create a multi-ethnic society.

The following activities will be carried out within the project:

- Organizing four tribunes (multiethnic talks) with students from selected high schools where teaching unfolds in the Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish and Romani language.
- Organizing four workshops to present the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the ethnic communities.
- An online social media campaign which will include the preparation of blog posts by students on topics related to the creation of a multi-ethnic society, nurturing and promotion of multiculturalism.
- Preparation of a report based on the previously realized project activities with conclusions and recommendations for improving the inter-ethnic dialogue and emphasizing the role of the youth in order to create a multi-ethnic society.

Expected results of the project implementation:

- Initiated public debate on the establishment of a multi-ethnic dialogue between students;
- Increased understanding and engagement of young people to get to know the different cultural and linguistic features of other ethnic communities;
- Obtained quantitative and qualitative knowledge about mutual knowledge of cultural, educational and linguistic characteristics.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Preparation and implementation of trainings on topics related to non-discrimination and equality

Representatives from the Executive Office of the Institute for Human Rights, Jelena Kadrikj and Kristina Doda, were hired by the Centre for Change Management to prepare and conduct training for the needs of the project "Strengthening the Rule of Law and Human Rights in North Macedonia II" supported by the OSCE Mission in Skopje. Their engagement is to support the work of the Department for Equal Opportunities in the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy in building a culture in and increasing the capacities of the administration for promoting the principles of equality, non-discrimination and acceptance of diversity in the public sector and society in general. There were 5 trainings prepared and conducted with representatives from local self-government units on topics related to equality and non-discrimination.

Participation in trainings organized by DCAF (Geneva Center for Security Sector Governance)

During 2023, Jelena Kadrikj and Vesna Stefanovska participated, as representatives from the Institute for Human Rights, in 4 trainings organized by DCAF (Geneva Center for Security Sector Governance).. The trainings discussed the harmonization of the security sector reforms with the justice sector reforms, the harmonization of the parliamentary oversight with the civilian oversight of intelligence and security for MPs/parliamentary staff and representatives of civil society organizations/media in North Macedonia, the inclusion of human rights in the security sector reforms, as well as the preparation of standardized guidelines for civil oversight of intelligence and security by civil society organizations and media.

Participation in the process of preparation of the National publication for the purposes of sustainable development of the United Nations

The Institute for Human Rights was engaged by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in the Republic of North Macedonia to prepare a national publication on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations, titled “The Sustainable Development Goals - How to Accelerate Their Achievement in North Macedonia and Leave No One Behind”. In cooperation with the UNDP, the Institute for Human Rights published a public call for all interested professionals, professors, students and experts to submit an essay addressing a topic related to the SDGs. In total, 14 essays were selected for the publication that refer to the various SDGs. The publication will be published and promoted at the beginning of 2024.

Participation in the project "Quality education for all - North Macedonia" implemented by the Program Office of the Council of Europe in Skopje

The project "Quality education for all - North Macedonia" aims to promote democracy and human rights in education as well as to prepare young people with the necessary skills and tools to live in a multicultural society. Margarita Tsatsa Nikolovska, the president of the IHR, and Maria Chekredji, a project associate in the IHR, are part of the implementation of this project as external consultants. They are involved in the implementation of two project activities, namely: preparation of measures and activities for the implementation of the judgment “Elmazova and Others v. North Macedonia” at the community level and implementation of a comprehensive training and mentoring program for 25 pilot schools aimed at improving their inclusive and democratic learning environments.

Margarita Tsatsa Nikolovska will present the measures and activities for the implementation of the judgment “Elmazova and Others against Northern Macedonia” on January 16, 2024 at the round table organized by the Program Office of the Council of Europe in Skopje with the aim of sharing them with representatives of the communities of Shtip and Bitola .

Marija Chekredji has been hired to implement a training and mentoring program with six pilot schools (three from Skopje and three from Kumanovo, of which two are primary schools and four are high schools). Each pilot school participates in the trainings with a basic school team (composed of the school principal, two teachers and a representative of the professional service such as a psychologist, a pedagogue or a social pedagogue). In the mentorship meetings, every school participates with an extended school team (composed of the basic school team and two students, one parent, two additional teachers and one community member, forming a team of ten individuals). On December 4, 2023, an online introductory module was held with the core teams of the six pilot schools, which was essential for setting the general direction of the program and introduction of its goals. In 2024, a total of five trainings and three mentoring meetings will be held with the pilot schools.

Participation at the conference "Discrimination and hate speech" at the "Iustinianus Primus" Faculty of Law in Skopje

On November 21, 2023, the conference on "Discrimination and hate speech" was held at the "Iustinianus Primus" Faculty of Law in Skopje. A representative from the Institute for Human Rights, Stefan Kocevski, also gave a presentation at the conference, emphasizing the connection between hate speech and discrimination, and how both contribute to the climate of prejudice and injustice. While hate speech is a form of expression, discrimination includes unfair actions or practices. Both are areas of concern for societies that wish to promote equality and protect the rights of individuals and groups. In addition, several ways of how hate speech occurs as a form of discrimination were presented, that is, ways where hate speech contributes to a wider atmosphere of discrimination by perpetuating negative stereotypes, inciting hostility and creating a hostile environment. Finally, the key elements to look for when identifying discrimination in hate speech were presented. The conference was a visible point of intersection of various aspects of the relationship between discrimination and hate speech - theoretical insights into the situation, application of international standards, institutional experiences, the role of the media and the influence of social media, all the way to the exit solutions in the broader sense of the word, from legal regulations to the creation of communities of care.

Workshop lectures "Corruption, our challenge to say NO!"

On December 19 and December 25, representatives from the Institute for Human Rights, Marija Chekredji, Martin Sopronov and Vesna Stefanovska held lectures in two elementary schools OOU "Nevena Georgieva-Dunja" and OOU "Partenija Zografski" in Skopje. The workshops consisted of three parts: the students' dramatization of three corruption scenarios, a short lecture on corruption and its consequences in society by the representatives of the Institute for Human Rights, and a discussion during which the students were asking questions.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS CARRIED OUT ABROAD

Participation in a study visit to Berlin - Federal Republic of Germany organized by the DCAF

On September 6 and September 7, 2023, Vesna Stefanovska, program coordinator at the IHR, participated in a study visit in Berlin, organized by the DCAF (Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance). Within the framework of the study visit, in which representatives from civil society organizations and the media participated, meetings were held with representatives from Stiftung Neue Verantwortung, Gesellschaft für Freiheitsrechte e.V and a working meeting in the Bundestag with the chairman of the Parliamentary Committee for Oversight of Intelligence. The working visit was carried out within the framework of the DCAF program for reforms of the Intelligence and Security Sector in the Republic of North Macedonia 2021-2026.

Participation in the Exchange of Opinions with civil society organized by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Marija Pejčinović Burić, in Strasbourg – Republic of France

On September 15, 2023 - the International Day of Democracy, Marija Chekredji, a project associate at the IHR, participated in the first Exchange of Opinions with the Civil Society organized by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Marija Pejčinović Burić, in Strasbourg. The Secretary General emphasized the importance of the Council of Europe's efforts for strengthening the engagement with civil society organizations, national human rights institutions and human rights defenders. The Institute for Human Rights was part of this discussion and supports the efforts of the Secretary General in strengthening the cooperation between the civil society and the Council of Europe.

Participation in the Regional Roundtable on promoting anti-corruption education of young people, organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC)

On September 22, 2023, Sandra Buzlieva, as a representative from the Institute of Human Rights, participated in the Regional Roundtable on promoting anti-corruption education of young people, organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC), which was held in Bečići, Montenegro. The event highlighted the importance of anti-corruption education and enabled the representatives of the relevant anti-corruption institutions, the educational and civil society sectors to exchange experience and identify good practices. The Institute for Human Rights was successful in presenting its experience of working in the field of anti-corruption and education, as well as presenting its course on the Basics of fighting corruption in the Republic of North Macedonia.

Participation in Regional and Global Efforts to Advance the Anti-Corruption Agenda: Dialogue for Asia and Europe

On October 17 and October 18, 2023, the UNODC's GRACE initiative conducted the third regional dialogue in Vienna, Austria. Marija Chekredji participated at this dialogue as a representative of the Institute for Human Rights. The goal of the dialogue was to adopt recommendations about how civil society organizations, the academic sector and the youth can support the implementation of the UNGASS political declaration and UNCAC at national and regional levels. The recommendations adopted from this dialogue were presented at the 10th session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

PARTICIPATION IN WORKING GROUPS AND COORDINATING BODIES

National Coordinating Body for Free Legal Aid

In 2023, the National Coordinating Body held three meetings where the challenges related to the implementation of the Law on free legal aid and the protection of victims of gender-based and family violence were discussed. It was also discussed how to improve the cooperation between the Ministry of Justice, the providers of free legal aid, the courts and the centres for social work regarding the specific challenges which were identified in the process of the implementation of the Law on Free Legal Aid. Additionally, experiences were exchanged at the meetings related to the challenges regarding the costs of the court proceedings in cases where one party is a beneficiary of free legal aid, the subsequently adopted Law on Expertise and the transformation of the Bureau of Forensic Expertise into the Bureau of Assessment and the impact that it will have on secondary legal aid, in accordance with the Law on free legal aid. There was also a discussion about the models for integrating mediation and alternative dispute resolution in national systems of free legal aid, in accordance with the best EU standards. These meetings were organized with the support of the Council of Europe within the action "Supporting enhanced access to higher quality Free Legal Aid services in North Macedonia," which is part of the program "Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Türkiye (Horizontal Facility III)", which is a joint programme of the EU and the Council of Europe, which is also implemented by the Council of Europe. Through its representatives, the Institute for Human Rights shared the challenges of providing primary legal aid as well as dilemmas related to filling out requests for secondary legal aid.

National coordinating body for non-discrimination

Through its representatives, the Institute for Human Rights participates in the meetings organized by the National Coordinating Body for Non-Discrimination whose purpose is to monitor the situation regarding non-discrimination and the implementation of laws, by-laws and strategic documents. This body exists for the purpose of coordination and monitoring of situations with non-discrimination, primarily for raising the transparency in the work of state institutions in this area, coordination of activities between institutions and organizations (citizens' associations and international organizations), joint establishment of annual priorities in this area based on international and other reports and analyses, as well as continuous monitoring of the conditions in this area and joint proposal of measures to improve the conditions.

Membership in the Platform of civil organizations in the fight against corruption

The Institute for Human Rights is a member of the Platform that aims at a proactive, dynamic and empowered civil society that respects, promotes and advocates the principles of good governance. The platform connects civil society organizations and is an open place for cooperation, networking and democratic debate with the purpose of strengthening the role of civil society organizations in the fight against corruption in the Republic of North Macedonia. In 2023, the Platform prepared briefings that touched upon various topics related to anti-corruption, justice and human rights. Briefing were prepared and published related to the adoption of the special Law on the determination of public interest and the nomination of a strategic partner for the implementation of the project for the construction of the infrastructure Corridor 8 and Corridor 10, withdrawal from the working group for the creation of the Law on confiscation of property in civil proceedings, the election of new members of the State Commission for the Prevention of Corruption, the events related to the violent incident in the premises of M-NAV and the protection of those who report possible risks of corruption.

Membership in the Blueprint Group for Judicial Reforms

The Blueprint group for judicial reforms is an informal network of civil society organizations that have been working and operating in the field of justice in recent years. The Institute for Human Rights, togeth-

er with the European Policy Institute, the Coalition All For Fair Trials, the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association, the Centre for Legal Research and Analysis, the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights and the Foundation Open Society–Macedonia, within the framework of its activities during 2023, among other things, published reactions and views on several current events, developments or statements that deviated from the principles of the rule of law. Reactions were prepared and published regarding the developments in the Judicial Council and the amendments to the Criminal Code in an abbreviated procedure. Members of the Blueprint group gave their comments in the process of the preparation of the new Justice Sector Reform Strategy 2023-2027. The executive director of the Institute for Human Rights, as a representative of the Blueprint Group, is a member of the working group for amendments to the Law on Judicial Council of the RNM.

Membership in the Council for Open Judiciary

The Council for Open Judiciary is an advisory body to the courts and judicial authorities, for the coordination and monitoring of the development and implementation of action plans, with a key advisory and decision-making role in all phases of the open judiciary process, throughout the planning cycle, in the development of action plans and in their implementation, monitoring and reporting. The Council was established to encourage the transparency and openness of the work of courts and judicial institutions and to encourage the participation of the civil society in the implementation and monitoring of the Open Judiciary initiative in the Republic of North Macedonia, to ensure inter-sectoral cooperation and to establish clear, structured and permanent mechanisms for constant dialogue between the judiciary and civil society; to increase the participation of civil society in the preparation of action plans for open judiciary and to support, encourage and monitor the implementation of the current action plan. In 2023, a meeting was held for the purpose of discussing the ongoing activities of the Council for Open Judiciary.

Membership in the Management Board of the Action "Promotion of Diversity and Equality in North Macedonia" implemented by the Council of Europe and the European Union

The Institute for Human Rights is part of the Management Board of the action "Promotion of Diversity and Equality in North Macedonia", a project of the Council of Europe and the European Union. The aim of the project is to strengthen the capacity of national and local stakeholders to better address issues related to anti-discrimination, combating hate speech and protecting the rights of LGBTI persons in accordance with the standards and recommendations set by the Council of Europe. The main goal of the Management Board is to monitor the implementation of the project as well as to provide guidelines for the implementation of the activities. Representatives from the Institute for Human Rights attended the meetings of the Management Board of the Project for the Promotion of Diversity and Equality in North Macedonia, which were held in 2022.

