

REACTOR ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT – RESEARCH IN ACTION FOR 2022

INTRODUCTION

Reactor – Research in Action (hereinafter: Reactor) is an independent non-profit research organization [think-tank] based in Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia, dedicated to strengthening the state's European integration processes and civic participation by providing relevant research and alternative evidence-based policies and active community outreach. Reactor's main thematic areas of action are gender equality, youth and urban development.

All of Reactor's activities are inspired and guided by the vision of gender-equal, socially and environmentally just societies, nationally and globally, where people in all their diversity can live a free and dignified life while actively contributing to the establishment of a fair, just, and sustainable society.

The main focus and foundation of Reactor's work is research. Taking into account the lack of available (or underprocessed) data in policy-making processes at local, national and regional levels, one of the main strategic objectives of Reactor has always been to provide relevant, timely and thoroughly researched data in order to inform policy processes and key stakeholders within the thematic areas of the organization's activities, but also beyond. Reactor's core business includes providing timely and relevant research, data-driven alternative policy proposals, as well as actively advocating and collaborating with the community, civil society organizations, academic institutions, and policy actors.

Through research, advocacy, and fostering debate and discussion on issues relevant to Macedonian citizens, Reactor contributes to policy-making processes at the local, national, and regional levels and monitors their implementation.

The impact of Reactor's work is further enhanced through collaboration with and support from the international community. Reactor fosters partnerships with key actors in the country and the region and regularly engages with EU institutions, leveraging opportunities arising from UN processes and providing insight and evidence to embassies and international organizations. These efforts aim to influence domestic politics, accelerate social development, and promote civic participation, human rights, gender equality, and the rule of law.

Reactor's strategic priorities are also recognized in key planning documents under IPA mechanisms. Youth and women remain a particular focus in both EU and Sida support frameworks, which aim to stimulate smart, inclusive, and sustainable growth in North Macedonia and the Western Balkans.

THE YEAR IN A NUTSHELL (2022)

2022 was a year of transition and reaffirmation for Reactor. We closed a chapter with the completion of the Dialogue for the EU project, took bold steps toward regional leadership in feminist EU advocacy, and paused to reflect and reorient through our strategic retreat. Despite political turbulence, shrinking civic space, and increasing anti-gender narratives, our team showed resilience and continued to push boundaries through evidence-based work and strategic partnerships. We extend our gratitude to our partners, donors, and the wider community that walks this path with us.

Our Mission in Action

Reactor is a feminist think tank that generates data, insight, and policy alternatives rooted in justice, equity, and care. Our work focuses on these pillars, which are strengthened by ongoing work in advocacy, research, coalition building, and regional cooperation:

- **Gender Equality**
- **Youth Empowerment**
- **Urban Development & Public Spaces**
- **EU Accession & Civic Engagement**

In 2022, Reactor continued its mission of shaping evidence-based, inclusive policies by advancing gender equality, civic participation, and socially just development in North Macedonia and beyond. Amid global disruptions (COVID-19 pandemic and a war in EU), political challenges, and shrinking civic space, our team remained committed to delivering impact through feminist research, strategic advocacy, and meaningful partnerships.

Quick Highlights

- Several major multi-year projects active, including topics like EU-focused advocacy through gender lenses, monitoring the EU accession and contributing to its overall gender mainstreaming, working with youth, regional networking, furthering women's labour rights, and overall civic engagement.
- 10+ evidence-based publications and briefings released.
- Over 20,000 individuals reached directly through activities, with far greater indirect reach via media and advocacy.
- Strategic retreat held to define Reactor's new organisational strategy.
- Foundation European Dialogue launched as a legacy of the "Dialogue with the EU" project.

KEY PROGRAMME ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022

Gender Equality & EU Accession Advocacy Amid Rising Anti-Gender Narratives

The operating environment for gender equality advocacy in North Macedonia in 2022 was shaped by both persistent structural inequalities and the intensifying presence of anti-gender movements. While the year saw some positive shifts, such as the adoption of the new National Gender Equality Strategy (2022–2026), these were undermined by delays in legislative reform and a hostile socio-political climate. Key draft laws, including the Law on Gender Equality and the Law on Labour Relations, remained stalled due to political resistance and growing backlash. Anti-gender narratives, propagated by conservative groups and amplified through mainstream and social media, targeted feminist activists, LGBTQ+ rights, and comprehensive sexuality education. These narratives, often framed as defense of traditional values or national identity, significantly impacted public discourse and institutional responsiveness, creating additional challenges for women's rights organizations and weakening public support for gender equality reforms. Reactor and its partners had to respond with agility and solidarity to counter misinformation and ensure continued civic space for feminist advocacy.

Despite all the challenges, our flagship Kvinna till Kvinna-supported initiative entered its second year, aiming to mainstream gender in EU processes and increase visibility of women's rights. Highlights include:

- Substantive written contributions to the EC Country Report for North Macedonia.
- Ongoing work on the National Gender Equality Strategy (NGES) and related laws.
- Advocacy visit to Berlin (first in-person post-pandemic), strengthening bilateral and regional links through feminist foreign policy.
- Coordinated inputs towards key stakeholders in relation to ongoing gender equality and youth related issues.
- Coordination and joint initiatives with 26 WCSOs through the National Gender Equality Platform (NGEP) but also other CSOs working at national and local level.

Regional Feminist Networking & Joint Advocacy

As a lead in the “**Furthering Gender Equality in the EU Accession Process**” project, Reactor:

- Facilitated sub-granting and mentoring of over 30 grassroots WCSOs across the Western Balkans.
- Produced new sectoral Gender Analyses in unanalysed sectors across all partner countries
- Hosted national consultations, trainings, and joint regional meetings.

- Participated in the structured dialogue on GAP III.
- Monitored the IPA III and Gender Action Plan (GAP) III implementation through gender lenses at both national and regional level, while ensuring local level activists and WCSO perspectives are also taken into account

Civic Engagement and Youth Work

Through the **Dijalog Kon EU** project (completed mid-2022), Reactor:

- Engaged hundreds of citizens in structured deliberations on the EU future.
- Helped establish *Foundation European Dialogue* as a spin-off to sustain civic dialogue.
- Produced a unique Civic Engagement Toolkit and visual outputs.
- Finalised a follow-up study on civic engagement and EU sentiments.
- Monitoring sector working groups across different areas, while ensuring a gender perspective.

Research and Monitoring

(in partnership with Kvinna till Kvinna, NDI North Macedonia and Sweden)

- Conducted watchdog analysis of local government gender mainstreaming.
- Updated, further developed and disseminated the [Local Gender Equality Index \(LGEI\)](#) update.
- Published the follow-up research study: [“Women in Politics 2: Path to Public Office and Local Impact”](#) (based on 2014 baseline), tracking women’s political paths and impact at local level.

Organizational Milestones

- Held a strategic retreat with staff and board members to reflect and plan for the next programme cycle.
- Contributed to the shaping of a new organizational strategy, deepening our commitment to intersectional feminism and policy impact.
- Invested in organisational assessment, capacity development and communications systems.

Partnerships & Outreach

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- Strengthened ties with the EU Delegation in Skopje, DG NEAR, SEA, MLSP, CPPD, and municipalities.
- Actively involved in the Berlin Process gender consultations.
- Increased engagement with media, CSOs, and institutions through public events and co-authored statements.

Furthermore, there are more details on the ongoing projects that enabled the environment for our contributions and achievements throughout 2022.

And, special thanks to the brilliant communities we work with, the EU, the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), Austrian federal ministry of social affairs, health, care and consumer protection, and our feminist allies across the Western Balkans and the EU.

THEMATIC AREAS AND PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

(ONGOING PROJECTS)

GENDER EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

EU ADVOCACY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS

DURATION: JANUARY 2021 - DECEMBER 2023

DONOR: KVINNA TILL KVINNA FOUNDATION

This project, supported by Sweden through the [Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation](#), as part of the Regional EU Advocacy programme ([Advocating towards the EU—how Kvinna till Kvinna and partners make a difference for women in the Western Balkans](#)).

The aim of [this project](#) is to raise the visibility of women's rights in the EU accession process, as well as to increase the participation of women's organisations at all levels of public policy. The project aims to contribute to improving the lives of women and men, girls and boys by promoting gender equality in the EU accession process, advocating for better and gender-informed policies, as well as more successful and effective implementation of national legislation and strategic documents related to gender equality and women's rights. It more particularly addresses women's organizations inadequate inclusion in the accession processes and the insufficient allocation of human and financial resources for advancement of women's human rights by EU and Macedonian institutions.

FURTHERING GENDER EQUALITY IN THE EU ACCESSION PROCESS

DURATION: MARCH 2020 - FEBRUARY 2024

DONOR: *EUROPEAN COMMISSION, SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY*

This [project](#) builds on the activities of the Kvinna till Kvinna network and the previously mentioned project and further builds on efforts to strengthen regional cooperation of women's civil society organisations, research and gender analysis for policy information, evidence-based advocacy and monitoring of EU accession-related reforms, aimed at advancing gender equality in the Western Balkans region in the EU accession process.

The main objective of this four-year project led by Reactor is to strengthen and expand existing regional cooperation, strengthen participatory democracies and achieve an inclusive gender-sensitive EU accession process. In addition to this broader objective, the specific objectives of the project include:

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- Strengthening the capacities of women's civil society organisations to effectively cooperate with governments, EU delegations and offices, local civil society organisations (CSOs) and other CSOs in the region, thereby raising the awareness of all stakeholders involved about the gender dimensions of the EU accession process;
- Improve the accountability of governments and delegations and the EU office in implementing commitments on gender equality and women's rights during the EU accession process.

This project is funded by the European Union and co-funded by the Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency (AIDS), and the partner organisations for its implementation are:

- Reactor – Research in Action (Lead Organization), The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation (Partner Organization)
- Kosovo: [Women's Network of Kosovo](#) (partner organization)
- Albania: [Albanian Network for the Strengthening of Women \(AWEN\)](#) (partner organization)
- Bosnia and Herzegovina: [Rights for All](#) (partner organization)
- Montenegro: [Center for Women's Rights](#) (partner organization)

The key activities under this project, which also took place during 2022, are:

- Networking meetings and events and exchange of experiences for the WGO regional network, aimed at strengthening their influence in the EU accession process and expanding the existing WGO regional network;
- Capacity building and awareness raising of various civil society organizations on the gender aspects of the EU accession process;
- Produce gender analyses for various sectors at the national level, especially for sectors where such analyses are lacking;
- Collaborate with local LGOs to monitor and report on the implementation of gender equality commitments by governments;
- Monitor and prepare reports to inform and include a gender perspective in the EC Country Reports, as well as the political dialogue on EU accession; and
- Advocating for an improved gender perspective in the EU accession process at national and regional level.

More information on the produced analyses and monitoring documents can be found at the following link: <https://reactor.org.mk/en/projects-all/furthering-gender-equality-through-the-eu-accession-process/>

**STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION
AND PROMOTING WOMEN'S WORKERS' RIGHTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA**

DURATION: AUGUST 2018 – DECEMBER 2021/MAY 2022¹

DONOR: EUROPEAN COMMISSION, SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

Most SEE countries have anti-discrimination legislation in place, often aligned with EU gender equality legislation. However, enforcement of anti-discrimination legislation remains weak across the region. Additionally, a small number of cases of discrimination are reported or addressed by the courts. As a result, there is little existing or available case law related to discrimination. Knowledge regarding anti-discrimination legislation, its significance and application to relevant institutions. This includes key stakeholders (several of whom are related entities) that might otherwise support awareness raising and implementation of anti-discrimination legislation, such as National Gender Equality Mechanisms, social partners (e.g. trade unions), labour inspectorates, state legal aid services and civil society organisations (CSOs). This [project](#) aimed to improve the capacities of these target groups to understand discrimination and to establish procedures and policies to better address gender discrimination, especially with regard to women's workers' rights. Reactor was a full partner of this regional project which was implemented in all 6 countries of the Western Balkans, and it played a major role in the planning, set-up, overall implementation, analysis and processing of data for the two waves of research surveys carried out in all partner countries, in 2020 and 2021, while the final comparative study was published in 2022.

More information about the work and topics related to this project can be found in the following **publications:**

- ⇒ [Paid and Unpaid Work, Gender-Based Discrimination, and Labor Rights in the Time of COVID-19](#)
- ⇒ [Gender-Based Discrimination and Workers' Rights in North Macedonia \(II\)](#)
- ⇒ [What should the new Labor Relations Act contain?](#)

Establishment of multi-professional prevention of gender-based violence, victim-safety oriented work with perpetrators and men's counselling in North Macedonia

DURATION: SEPTEMBER 2021 - NOVEMBER 2022

DONOR: AUSTRIAN FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, HEALTH, CARE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

The project focuses on a comprehensive analysis of the situation and need for men's counseling centers in the Republic of North Macedonia, with a focus on gender-based violence. Through mapping of the needs and consultation with a wide circle of representatives from national institutions and relevant stakeholders, as well as analysis of the situation through existing reports and published

¹ (The project's final conference and accompanying activities were planned for the end of 2021, but due to the Covid-19 pandemic they were postponed to 2022, in agreement with the donor and on the principle of extension with no financial implications – *no cost extension*)

databases, the main goal of the research is to compile recommendations that will facilitate the establishment of effective primary prevention against gender-based violence, multi-professional support and work with perpetrators through victim-safety oriented approach, as well as establishing centers for comprehensive support and counseling of men for the prevention of gender-based violence, encouraging gender equality and inclusion of men in care (parenting, partnership, etc.).

More information on the studies and data stemming out from this important cooperation of Reactor with the Verein für Männer- und Geschlechterthemen Steiermark (Association for Male and Gender Issues Steiermark) (Graz, Austria) and H.E.R.A. (North Macedonia), can be found at the following links:

- [Status quo report on gender-based violence, legal framework and institutional response and needs and resources analysis on victim-safety oriented work with perpetrators and men's counselling \(final report\)](#)
- [Combating violence against women must include men, too – for their own sake](#)
- [За поголема безбедност на жртвите, Реактор и ХЕРА ќе отпочнат проект за воспоставување на советувајќи центри за превенција на насилство кај мажи и за работа со сторители на насилство](#)
- [Воспоставување мултипрофесионална превенција на родово-базирано насилство и работа со сторители со фокус на безбедноста на жртвата – Краток осврт на состојбите и анализа на ресурси и потреби](#)

Men in Care – Best Practice Promotion for Men in Care to Improve Work-Life Balance

DURATION: DECEMBER 2019 – MAY 2022²

DONOR: *AUSTRIAN FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, HEALTH, CARE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION*

The project "Caring Masculinity in North Macedonia" was implemented by Reactor, for the needs of the Verein für Männer- und Geschlechterthemen Steiermark (Association for Male and Gender Issues Steiermark) (Graz, Austria) with financial support from the Austrian Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection. The project is a collaboration with the European project Men in Care (MiC), a project of 26 national partners and affiliated organizations from 7 different European countries (plus the ETUC), which aims to reduce barriers for men who want to engage in care activities. Facilitating the inclusion of men in care can have positive effects on individuals, on people in their close social environment, on organizations, and on society as a whole. Employees with a better work-life balance are more satisfied with their lives, have stronger family relationships, show greater loyalty to their organizations, and develop more

² (The project's final conference and accompanying activities were planned for 2021, but due to the Covid-19 pandemic they were postponed to 2022, under agreement with the donor and on the principle of extension with no financial implications – *no cost extension*)

competencies. MiC's actions will show ways to reduce gender inequalities in work-life balance policies and practices to improve the well-being of women and men.

More information about this project and specific topics can be found in the national reports, which include context analyses as well as organisational analyses, at the following [link](#). This project was completed during 2021, however, it also marked this year as the final working conference taking place in Berlin was postponed due to the pandemic with Covid-19 and it took place in May 2022. Reactor's president contributed to the overall and specific round table discussions alongside other partners and stakeholders that joined forces for this important initiative.

ESTABLISHING MULTI-PROFESSIONAL PREVENTION OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, WORKING WITH PERPETRATORS THROUGH A VICTIM-SAFETY-FOCUSED APPROACH AND COUNSELLING FOR MEN IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

DURATION: SEPTEMBER 2021 - NOVEMBER 2022

DONOR: *AUSTRIAN FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS, HEALTH, CARE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION*

[The project](#) focuses on a detailed analysis of the conditions and needs of men's counseling centers in the Republic of North Macedonia, with a focus on gender-based violence. The main objective of the research is through needs mapping and consultation with a wider range of representatives of national institutions and relevant actors, as well as analyzing the conditions through existing reports and published databases, to formulate recommendations that will allow for the establishment of effective primary prevention of gender-based violence, multi-professional support and work with perpetrators through a victim-centered approach, as well as to establish centers for comprehensive support and counselling of men on the prevention of gender-based violence, promoting gender equality and the inclusion of men in the field of care (parenting, partnership, etc.).

NATIONAL PLATFORM FOR GENDER EQUALITY

DURATION: Continuous

DONOR: ACTIVITIES ARE CARRIED OUT ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS

As a result of the Gender Equality Council project, the Gender Equality Platform was established in 2014 and continues to be coordinated by Reactor. The aim of the platform is to improve the general climate in the country in the field of gender equality, to enable strengthened action by women's organizations, to create an interactive knowledge base on the topic of gender equality and to raise public awareness.

In 2022, Reactor continued to coordinate the work of the National Gender Equality Platform (NGEP), which brought together 28 women's civil society organizations from across the country. The platform served as a joint voice for gender equality in national and EU-related policy discussions, and it continued with its members' support activities and joint advocacy and lobbying, aimed at

strengthening cooperation between the civil sector and government institutions, as well as monitoring activities and seeking accountability from the latter. However, this advocacy took place against a backdrop of increasingly hostile public discourse and institutional inertia.

The broader socio-political environment was marked by the growing influence of anti-gender narratives that directly impacted the work of NGEF and its members. Conservative and nationalist actors mobilized against progressive gender policies, targeting feminist organizations, LGBTQ+ rights, and comprehensive sexuality education with misinformation and fear-based rhetoric. These narratives, often framed as protecting tradition or national identity, not only stalled key reforms, such as the Law on Gender Equality and the Law on Labour Relations, but also diminished public support for gender justice.

Despite the challenges, NGEF tried to keep its format and work on its resilience to ensure collective feminist action. Through coordinated advocacy, peer solidarity, and strategic engagement of some of the members with institutions, the platform pushed back against regressive trends and ensured that gender equality remained on the policy agenda. Reactor's role as convenor and facilitator of NGEF was especially vital in sustaining the space for feminist voices and navigating a difficult advocacy landscape.

The platform's activities in 2022 took place at a reduced intensity, and a series of ad hoc activities were carried out and member organizations engaged in various initiatives and advocacy activities. Of the more significant ones, the finalization of the first shadow report for the GREVIO Committee took place and it was submitted in due time. Some of the members of the Platform, under the coordination of the Helsinki Committee in Skopje, helped in the preparation of this report, as well as participated to related consultations, including the official sessions with the GREVIO committee, which visited the country for the first ever report. In addition, the Platform's participation in gender equality bodies in relevant ministries continued, and in 2022, Reactor continued to act as an alternate member of the Inter-Departmental Group on Gender Equality coordinated by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies.

Among the main activities of the Gender Equality Platform for 2022, one can single out the March for Women's Rights, which was held for the sixth year in a row and organized by the Platform members and activists. More information on the Platform's 2022 series of initiatives and advocacy efforts is available at the following links:

- <https://rodovaplatforma.mk/blog/2022/03/08/на-шестиот-марш-за-женски-права-се-марш/>
- <https://rodovaplatforma.mk/blog/2022/05/30/реакција-неопходни-се-конкретни-мерк/>
- <https://rodovaplatforma.mk/blog/2022/08/08/реакција-на-платформа-за-родова-еднак-2/>
- <https://rodovaplatforma.mk/blog/2022/09/02/солидарност-со-приштина-реакција-на-п/>
- <https://rodovaplatforma.mk/blog/2022/09/28/правото-на-здравје-значи-и-пристап-до-л/>
- <https://rodovaplatforma.mk/blog/2022/11/01/реакција-несоодветната-квалификаци/>
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YOUTH

During 2021, the Reactor team implemented several initiatives in terms of the youth program, as well as addressed the problems of youth through some of its projects, though it did not have any dedicated funding for this program area.

As in previous years, Reactor continued its membership in **the National Youth Council of Macedonia**, participating in the regular assemblies of the Council, but also in activities aimed at creating cohesion and prioritizing the position of young people in the country, and successfully supported initiatives by NMSM related to various relevant events affecting young people.

Within the framework of other projects that do not necessarily involve young citizens, Reactor has tried to include **youth perspectives in the prepared analyses and publications, advocacy, consultations and events**. For example, through the implementation of project activities within the framework of the project "A Dialogue with the EU", 15 youth organizations and 200 youth were involved. As part of the project activity to explore civic participation in the country, we included a youth perspective in the data analysis, which gives us a significant basis for additional work over the coming years and the development of activities in this direction, as well as the refinement of Reactor's programs and advocacy policies on youth-related topics in the country.

Furthermore, Reactor's selected staff (Blazen Maleski) for **the board of directors of the Regional Youth Office in the Western Balkans (RICO)** continued his mandate, thus expanding Reactor's networking and impact in the region, in terms of youth participation but also in terms of opportunities for regional youth cooperation.

In addition, Reactor actively participates in conferences, panel discussions and guest appearances in the media space on the topic of youth.

PROMOTING CIVIL SOCIETY

DIALOGUE WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS – A PLATFORM FOR STRUCTURAL PARTICIPATION IN THE EU INTEGRATION

DONOR: EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DURATION: APRIL 2019 - JUNE 2022

Civic Participation and EU Sectoral Reforms

The participation of civil society in the formulation and implementation of public policies is a fundamental feature of democratic governance. In 2022, Reactor continued its involvement in a

key EU accession-focused initiative implemented in partnership with three other civil society organizations under the leadership of the Open Society Foundations. The project aimed to ensure structured and meaningful participation of civil society in the EU accession process by incorporating citizen perspectives and strengthening institutional mechanisms for dialogue.

One of the central components of the project was support for the work of the 12 Sector Working Groups (SWGs), tasked with shaping sectoral reforms aligned with EU integration objectives. The project sought to institutionalize CSO participation in these working groups and related bodies, such as the Government-Civil Society Cooperation Council and national negotiating teams, thereby enhancing civil society's influence on reform agendas.

Reactor's specific contribution included monitoring the functioning of several SWGs and reporting on their progress. Additionally, Reactor led the gender-focused analysis of the entire sectoral architecture, producing a baseline and two follow-up studies to assess the gender dimension in all 12 SWGs. The organization also contributed to a broader research component assessing civic participation through two major surveys—one targeting civil society organizations and the other focusing on public perceptions among citizens in North Macedonia.

The second survey wave was conducted in 2022, with findings summarized in an interim report presented to institutional stakeholders and the general public through online events. These sessions were held virtually due to COVID-19 precaution measures and aimed to deepen dialogue between policymakers and civil society around democratic participation in EU-related reforms.

For more detailed insights and outputs from this initiative, including survey publications and related resources, please visit: www.dijalogkoneu.mk

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

During 2022, the Reactor team did not have defined activities in this area as all the team's capacities were busy and directed to other program activities, and the transition that began in 2021 further influenced the decision to put this topic "at rest". Within the framework of strategic planning and talks, it was decided to reactivate work in this important area in the future and to consider possible sources of funding.

ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES

ADVOCACY

As in previous years, in 2022 Reactor continued to serve as a resource center for relevant research and analysis, which was continuously used and distributed to local, national and international stakeholders in the political and social spheres.

Our advocacy approach consists of two components: 1) Online access – launching web platforms and social profile content that use modern data visualization and display 2) Offline approach – continuously producing research and recommendations, lobbying, consultative meetings, initiating debates and discussions. In addition to regularly producing relevant research products, we also strive to create simple [web spaces](#) for presenting data, findings, and recommendations.

Advocacy activities are usually part of project activities (described above), but Reactor also advocates outside of these activities, according to goals and program priorities, depending on needs, through ad-hoc or rapid response responses to specific social developments, as well as in synergies with other organizations and programs.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In 2022, Reactor maintained its focus on strategic planning and organizational evaluation, while navigating the lingering transitional challenges carried over from the previous year. Despite a demanding pace and the increasingly hostile societal narratives surrounding gender and civil society, the team demonstrated resilience and adaptability. While certain administrative processes experienced temporary slowdowns, Reactor continued to operate effectively, delivering on its mission and achieving key objectives. Rather than being hindered, the organization closed the year with renewed focus and momentum, reinforcing its role as a key actor in evidence-based advocacy and progressive social change.

In line with Reactor's commitment to continuous improvement and guided by its organizational development strategy, a dedicated 2.5-day strategic retreat was held in Mavrovo in 2022. The entire team took part in the workshop, facilitated by external organizational development expert Mr. Smilevski, whose role was to support Reactor in assessing its internal capacities and planning for the future.

Using structured self-assessment tools and participatory methods, the team jointly reflected on Reactor's current position across its areas of work, revisited the theory of change, and carried out

an internal evaluation. The process helped define new strategic directions and operational pathways for strengthening the organization's research and advocacy work in support of positive social change. The retreat also initiated discussions on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes at the organizational level—complementing the existing M&E practices conducted at the project level in accordance with donor requirements and timelines.

As foreseen in 2021, Reactor began revising and updating its core strategic documents and internal policies, ensuring alignment with evolving national legislation—particularly on issues such as data protection and confidentiality. This process reflects Reactor's dedication to organizational integrity, compliance, and good governance.

In parallel, the organization continued to foster a learning culture through internal knowledge-sharing and peer-to-peer support, especially for onboarding new team members. Several staff also participated in external capacity-building activities, either as part of project commitments or based on organizational priorities. These training opportunities covered a broad range of topics, including financial and administrative systems, data processing and statistical analysis, program monitoring and evaluation, gender mainstreaming, gender-based violence (including perpetrator-related interventions), and institutional advocacy assessment.