



Metamorphosis Annual Report for 2020

**Covering the programme activities
between**

January 1 to December 31, 2020

**June 2021
Skopje, North Macedonia**

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Background

Vision: The Metamorphosis Foundation envisions a society where engaged and aware citizens actively use innovative tools to exercise their civic rights and responsibilities, where they are vigilant in influencing and holding their government to account, and thus ensure democratic, accountable, and responsive governance.

Mission to Achieve the Vision: The Metamorphosis Foundation is an independent organization, working in North Macedonia and its wider European home. The team is composed of committed democracy activists, united in common cause and the common values of mutual accountability, open communication, and an unshakeable commitment to universal human rights and democracy.

The Foundation strengthens the awareness and capacity of citizens and civil society to assume their fullest possible role as activists for democracy, while supporting government to fulfil its democratic role in serving society. Metamorphosis' programmes focus on:

- media for democracy;
- social accountability;
- education for innovation;
- human rights online.

The Foundation supports those who struggle for these essential elements of a democratic and inclusive society, and it advocates for this work as a key partner with governments and citizens. It aims to become a leading national and regional advocate in supporting and enabling citizen engagement and government accountability, with a particular emphasis on the use of information technology and knowledge-sharing.

Metamorphosis was established in 1999 as part of the e-publishing program of the Foundation Open Society – Macedonia (FOSM), it became an independent foundation in 2004. During the first fourteen years of activity it established diverse portfolio of capacities as a basis of its reputation. Metamorphosis has formed lasting partnerships with various donors, including the EU, OSCE, USAID, the foreign affairs ministries and the embassies of USA, UK, Netherlands, France, Germany, Poland; grant makers such as Open Society Institute and FOSM, NED, BTD, as well as cooperation with business sector donors such as Microsoft and Google.

Metamorphosis responded effectively across the four programmes to the pandemic crisis which marked the year of 2020. Our programmes proved substantial to supporting civil society, civil servants, youth, journalists and teachers in facing the new conditions that were imposed on all of us. The media outlets of the Foundation responded with agility to the growing volume of disinformation preceding and following the outbreak of the pandemic as well as the political processes in the country that exacerbated the situation with the disinformation often time. Metamorphosis Foundation initiated the establishment of the [Anti-Disinformation Network for the Balkans \(ADN-Balkans\)](#) as a means of jointly combating the cross-border spread of disinformation through various forms of interventions and cooperation. In addition, Metamorphosis partnered with Facebook as part of its third-party fact-checking programme in North Macedonia to check the accuracy of content published on Facebook. The media outlets also maintained their commitment to give steady visibility and analysis to

community problems and seek public accountability from the authorities. In November 2020 Portalb.mk [received a certificate of gratitude](#) from the mayor of Bogovinje for professional and timely reporting about the struggle for drinking water in the village of Sinican.

Supporting civil society, journalists, youth and teachers in operating in the digital world safely and confidently has been among the highlights of Metamorphosis work in 2020. Educational efforts were intensified and we **offered over 61 trainings and reached over 1359 representatives among civil society, journalists, youth, teachers and civil servants**. The main topics covered during the reporting period include open data, open educational resources, increasing civic engagement in implementing the Digital Agenda, digital safety and security, countering disinformation, building positive narratives, media literacy online, data journalism as well as trainings on how to use online classroom software. In addition to extensive trainings, we also managed and **mentored 32 sub-grantees** and actions with the goal of **empowering community organisations** to take initiative in their immediate community. In the efforts to support civil society to thrive during the pandemic we also supported 67 CSOs from North Macedonia, Kosovo and Albania to gain access to licensed software.

Significant achievements were also made in advocacy for good governance, given that 50 central level institutions were monitored for their openness via the Openness Index and for the degree to which they implement the Government Strategy for Transparency. At the local level we also monitored the openness of 17 municipalities and used the body of knowledge generated through this research to advocate for improvement of policies and practices in institutions at the local as well as central level. Hand in hand with the trainings and meetings with civil servants to contribute to the improvement of policies, we have also supported 5 central level institutions and 17 municipalities in opening up over 126 significant data sets with the direct support of our team. The institutions were trained on the use of open data and equipped with respective procedure templates to be able to continue the mission of providing open access to as much of data they possess as possible.

In 2020 Metamorphosis continued to receive institutional support from the Sigrid Rousing Trust, what has contributed significantly to the amount of advocacy and networking activities that we have undertaken in the second half of the year.

Metamorphosis continued its work as a member of international civil society networks IFEX, APC, EDRI, Global Voices, Creative Commons, ACTION SEE, TransparenCEE and the Internet Freedom Platform of Eastern and Central Europe and Eurasia. In 2020 besides being one of the founding members of the Anti-disinfo Balkans Network, we also join the SEE Digital Rights Network.

2020 was a highly productive and awarding year for Metamorphosis. The programme objectives pursued through the projects implemented in 2020 continue to be our priorities in 2021. Below is a summary of the projects Metamorphosis has worked on in 2020 and of the highlights of the achievements in the four programmes.

Media for Democracy

Free and professional media plays a crucial role in providing knowledge and in giving voice to citizens, disclosing corruption and developing a culture of criticism where citizens are less fearful about questioning government action and empowered to meaningfully participate in democratic processes.

Metamorphosis Foundation recognizes that an informed citizenry is vital to ensuring public and private sector accountability. Moreover, broad public access to information and the freedom to create and communicate ideas are critical to the advancement of knowledge, economic opportunity and human potential.

Key media outlets established through Metamorphosis programmes are Meta.mk, Portalb.mk and Vistinomer.mk.

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS IN 2020

- In July 2020 Metamorphosis Foundation and Truthmeter (North Macedonia's only signatory of the IFCN Code of Principles) partnered with Facebook as a third party independent fact checker to check Facebook content in Macedonian and Albanian languages originating from North Macedonia.
- To intensify our commitment to combat cross-border disinformation, together with eight other CSOs from the Balkan region we launched the Anti-Disinformation Network for the Balkans (AND-Balkans) in April 2020, as a community of practitioners that will share experiences and support toward this mission.
- In the commitment to counter the infodemia around the Corona virus, we joined the IFCN Corona Virus Facts Alliance and, until December 2020, we have registered over 178 fact-checks on the Database, a database that gives greater visibility to our content and allows the partners of this alliance to raise awareness about the dissemination of these disinformation across borders.
- Metamorphosis media outlets conducted a pre and post-election rapid-fact checking action in July, expecting that the discourse during the campaign of the general elections on 15 July would be charged with harmful rhetoric around the Corona virus as well as the relations with neighbouring Greece and Bulgaria. This action was concluded with 84 debunked media articles and some social-media posts which shared disinformation and were broadly disseminated on social media. This rapid response action aimed to minimize the distraction caused by disinformation on the right to vote.
- Portalb, [received a certificate of gratitude](#) from the mayor of Bogovinje, Albon Xhemaili for professional and timely reporting live from the field about the struggle for drinking water in a village called Sinican, populated by ethnic Albanians, in the region of Polog in North Macedonia. Portalb's journalist and photographer [spent days and nights reporting live on the issue and these articles](#) became some of the most read and shared articles in 2020/
- Metamorphosis media outlets continued to exert pressure on public authorities to address relevant issues, that are often left unattended. An example of such work is addressing the issue of the leaked personal data of patients infected with coronavirus in the town of Kumanovo that Portalb.mk and Meta.mk followed closely. This incident stigmatized and abused their privacy as patients and Portalb.mk and Meta.mk were the first ones to address the topic, which was then picked up by multiple media. The Director of Personal Data Protection Agency filed criminal charges against an unknown perpetrator in the Public Prosecutor's office and stated that this decision was made after following the media coverage on the issue.
- The Anti-Corruption Commission started an investigation regarding irregularities with the spending of the Public Enterprise City Parking in the town of Tetovo that was noted by the State Audit Office. The decision of the Anti-Corruption Commission was likely provoked by giving public attention to this corruption case via a series of articles on this issue as well as a video in cooperation with the youtubers - Ce Team TV, since not all irregularities found by the State Audit Office are addressed by the respective Commission.

<p>Meta.mk - Independent News Agency</p> <p>The general project goal is to enhance freedom of expression and access to information by supporting an independent news agency implementing the highest standards of professional journalism.</p> <p>The Meta.mk News Agency officially started working in 3 languages (English, Macedonian and Albanian) in November 2014 and established a solid reputation of a reliable source of objective news on current events, whose contents is republished by over thirty domestic and foreign media outlets.</p> <p>Meta.mk provides professional news service, and its reporting is used as a reference both by media and decision makers, including the highest representatives of international community. Meta.mk employed innovative use of social media to engage citizens and promote its contents. Foreign news agencies and key decision makers at EU level have been frequently using and re-distributing contents from the English version.</p>	 <p>www.meta.mk</p>
<p>Portalb.mk – News Portal in Albanian Language</p> <p>The news portal Portalb.mk was developed in April 2012, and over the years grew into one of the leading and most credible sources of information in Albanian language from Macedonia.</p> <p>Its dedication to strict implementation of journalistic standards makes Portalb the attention to audience According to research by rating agency Gemius, Portalb is the most influential Albanian-language online media outlet in Macedonia, in terms of audience reception, and its original production also serves as a beacon of professional journalism and increases the pluralism in this segment of the media scene in Macedonia and the region.</p> <p>In a very segregated media environment, Portalb contributes to increasing the social cohesion by providing an important linguistic bridge towards the Albanian-speaking communities by reporting on issues affecting citizens of all ethnicities in the country and translating contents produced in Macedonian.</p> <p>Its reputation as relevant and serious source of information is compounded by high popularity thanks to innovative use of new technologies media. It introduced consistent use of live video streaming via social networks which further increased its popularity.</p>	 <p>portalb.mk</p>

Promoting the Accountability of Elected Officials by using New Technologies – the Truthmeter

The TruthMeter is a political fact-checking website that contributes to better citizen education and information about the elections and other democratic processes; contributes to greater government openness and accountability of public officials.

The general goal of the project is to contribute to greater government openness and accountability through providing online tools to increase access to public information and foster accountability of public officials. As key public watchdog it promotes fact-based evaluation of the public discourse in North Macedonia, thus inciting independent analyses and investigative journalism.

The public education contents cater to a growing community of readers, primarily engaged via the social networks, represented by a Facebook fan page with over 20 thousand fans, a newly launched [Youtube channel](#), as well as a network of media that reuse/republish the articles.

During 2020, the Truthmeter's focus has shifted to disinformation around the COVID 19 pandemic based on objective verification of claims by media, public actors from the political as well as medical sphere and beyond. Significant focus was committed to the disinformation and manipulations revolving around the early parliamentary elections in July as well as the preparations for the census, which was nevertheless delayed – always relying on strict and consistent implementation of the established and transparent Methodology put in place since 2011.



vistinomer.mk
vertetmates.mk
truthmeter.mk



glasomer.mk
politichkispektar.mk

Critical Thinking for Mediawise Citizens – CriThink.mk

The overall objective of CriThink is to promote media literacy as a basis for safeguarding the right of citizens to hold diverse opinions, via stimulating a culture of critical thinking, pluralism of opinion and democratic values.

CriThink has the following specific objectives:

- To foster a culture of critical thinking via education of the general public on the detrimental impact of media manipulations on democracy and European values;
- To increase capacities of civil society organizations (CSOs) and media to address media manipulations (incl.



crithink.mk

Period:
01.01.2018 – 31.12.2020

<p>hate speech) by improving the media literacy levels via joint engagement with state institutions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To increase citizen demand for accountable media through public education, promotion of professional standards and international practices that protect freedom of opinion and expression. <p>During 2020 the project further developed its decentralized system for public education for critical thinking through media literacy producing educational contents in Macedonian and Albanian, using a suite of innovative instruments; the development of mobile application (game) for promoting media literacy and critical thinking and a Handbook for Non-formal Education on Media Literacy at local level through. In 2020 we also concluded the activities supported through the Small Grants Scheme in the 8 planning statistical regions of the country.</p>	<p>Partners: Centre for European Strategies – EUROTHINK</p> <p>Donor: European Union</p>
<p>Upholding democratic values and change in society through journalism</p> <p>The project was continued in April 2019 with the goal to empower Macedonian citizens to make informed decisions on current affairs that affect their lives, via data journalism and direct engagement with citizens through new media channels.</p> <p>The increased media capacity to provide sustained coverage of issues affecting the lives of citizens and use of innovative methods of networking and multimedia production (online videos, data visualisations) resulted in increased level of public awareness about democratic values through practical application of professional journalism standards and critical thinking. The project also gives a voice and engages Generation Z in important social processes and events.</p> <p>The project incited response by relevant institutions, based on increased demand for accountability by informed citizens, on the following topics: pollution (lindane in Skopje, mines in Eastern Macedonia), public health - immunization (incl. debunking of antivaxing propaganda), prehospital system (emergency aid), infrastructure issues at local as well as the national level (public transportation, railways and highways). The project has also managed to engage youth successfully by cooperating with social media influencers and by utilizing media widely used by them to raise important discussions regarding corruption, climate change, public transportation, menstrual hygiene and cyber security.</p>	<p>Implemented through synergy of Meta.mk News Agency and Portalb.mk news portal.</p> <p>Period: 01.09.2018 – 31.03.2021</p> <p>Donor: UK Embassy in Skopje</p>

<p>Media Reforms Observatory</p> <p>The Media Reforms Observatory contributes to, and assess the level of, the achievement of the Urgent Reform Priorities, as a condition for the RM to join the EU, through identifying and removing the obstacles for democratic development of the media sector.</p> <p>The website informs the citizens about the reform priorities implementation process in a comprehensible manner, adjusted to a non-expert audience, to make the citizens come to the realization why the reform priorities are so important and how implementation thereof will contribute to enhancing their life. At the same time, the project provides the citizens and civil society organizations with opportunities for contributing to the public debate, through creating mechanisms and channels for their connection with the media and decision-makers.</p>	 <p>www.mediaobservatorium.mk</p> <p>Period: 01.11.2019 – 31.10.2020</p> <p>Donor: Foundation Open Society - Macedonia</p>
<p>Fostering Improved Media Standards</p> <p>This project combated the cross-border dissemination of disinformation and relied on the informal network of fact-checking organizations and individual activists to identify trends and tackle them through a series of fact-checks. Its effect was especially visible at the outbreak of the pandemic as the network coordinated about the spreading disinformation in their respective countries and enabled us to track the flow quickly as well as to act upon it.</p>	<p>Period: 01.09.2019 – 31.05.2020</p> <p>Donor: National Endowment for Democracy</p>
<p>Countering Disinformation for Greater Election Turnout</p> <p>The objectives of the project is to inform the general public about pre-election disinformation disseminated at the local level as well as to strengthen awareness about the basic values of civic engagement, accountability and responsibility of political actors and media. The main tool used to serve this objective was the publication of verified facts and debunking of content about key social issues and elections.</p> <p>This rapid response intervention was conducted in cooperation with local media and journalists who were able to respond effectively to burning issues that dominated the electoral campaign as the COVID19 Pandemic and the Prespa Agreement.</p>	<p>Period: 15.06 -15.07.2020</p> <p>Donor: Foundation Open Society Macedonia</p>
<p>Counter-spin TV</p> <p>This six-months intervention aimed to amplify the distribution of content produced by Truthmeter, with particular attention to youth and</p>	<p>Period: 15.10.2020 – 15.04.2021</p>

<p>senior citizens – targeting them with video production and distribution on social media and TV stations.</p> <p>In addition to production of counter-spin stories and videos, the project also conducted networking meetings with engaged journalists as well as trainings to increase understanding of the fact-checking methodology and its importance.</p>	<p>Donor: International Fact Checking</p> 
<p>Region Through the Facts</p> <p>This cooperation with Faktoje, supported by the Balkan Trust for Democracy has addressed issues affecting citizens on both sides of the border on a daily basis. Metamorphosis' media outlet Portalb, successfully affected the intervention of the authorities in changing the traffic signs leading to the border crossing point to Albania, which still reads People's Republic of Albania although the name of the country has changed since 1991. Additionally, during the heavy snowfall in January, the road toward the border crossing remained stuck in snow, until Portalb began seeking accountability from the authorities. In addition, this project trains young journalists from both sides of the border on the methodology of fact-checking as well as on data journalism.</p>	<p>Partners: Faktoje, Albania</p> <p>Period: 30.07.2020 – 30.07.2021</p> <p>Donor: Balkan Trust for Democracy</p>

Public Record Resources

Media Fact-Checking Service Component

The Media Fact-Checking Service counters propaganda and media manipulations by providing fact-checking of Macedonian media contents. The Service increases citizen demand for fact-based, objective and professional news and information, through practical implementation of standards of ethical journalism so they can hold media accountable and demand higher quality of media production.

The production in three languages (Macedonian, Albanian, and English), reflects the needs of the diverse audiences.

The online application Time Machine, maintains an online archive of media contents enabling comparisons over time. It automatically harvests articles from key media websites in Macedonia and also enables citizens to save individual articles within its database. It compares the stored articles using advanced algorithm and graphically represents the similarities.



Media Fact-Checking Service
proverkanafakti.mk
verifikimiifakteve.mk
factchecking.mk

The Time Machine
vremeplov.vistinomer.mk
makinaekohes.vertetmates.mk
timemachine.truthmeter.mk

Social Accountability

Social accountability is the key approach to address governance issues. It enables information related to the concerns and the priorities of the citizens to be presented directly to government officials who have the capacity and mandate to act and make change happen. The Metamorphosis approach promotes the principles of citizen-centric good governance at all levels: local, national, regional.

In 2020 Metamorphosis continued to enhance its watchdog role in order to increase the levels of transparency and accountability of state institutions, local authorities and the private sector. Metamorphosis contributed to strengthening citizens' voices and supported the capacity of civil society and state institutions to respond effectively to their needs, thus producing a constructive engagement between governments and civil society.

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS IN 2020

- Metamorphosis developed the [online national Open Government Partnership platform](#) which allows for direct public accountability on the degree of implementation of the Action Plan, possibilities for e-meetings between stakeholders, as well as the promotion of related news and events.
- We monitored the openness of a total of 68 institutions via the Openness Index at the local and central level and disseminated evidence-based recommendations via one-on-one meetings as well as public events.
- For the purpose of promoting openness and transparency we also monitored the implementation of Government's Strategy for Transparency semi-annually, assessing the degree to which the respective Strategy is implemented by the Government. These 'shadow-reports' based on the monitoring were used as advocacy tools in meetings with government officials and donors to push for more ambitious reforms in the area of transparency and good governance. These reports provide the only available information about the progress of implementation as the government is lagging behind with this Strategy and has not published any reports about it for over a year.
- We promoted the concept of Open Cities among civil society and civil servants in all municipalities in the country. In addition, we trained 50 civil servants about the values of Open City.
- 129 public data sets were registered and categorized through the coaching provided to 5 central level institutions by Metamorphosis. In addition, 63 civil servants were trained on working with open data.

Openness Index

01.01.2016 – ongoing

<p>The Openness Index is a composite index measuring the openness of institutions. It was initially developed as part of the regional ACTION SEE project and network aiming to compare the openness of institutions and governments across the region. This research is a strategic activity of the Social Accountability Programme monitoring institutions at the local and central level, including the Assembly.</p> <p>In 2020 this research project has been supported by USAID's Civic Engagement Project and the National Endowment for Democracy.</p> <p>To deepen the knowledge generated by the research on the openness of institutions at the local level we amended the methodology of the local component of the Index, now observing the executive as well as the legislative (city council) and the public enterprises separately. The new methodology will be applied in the research in 2021 for the first time.</p> <p>The research results of the Openness Index inform Metamorphosis' advocacy activities and the coaching we provide to support institutions to open up their data and processes.</p>	<p>Donors: European Union National Endowment for Democracy USAID</p>
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Civic Engagement Project – CEP

The Civic Engagement Project strengthens the constructive engagement by CSOs on policies and issues of public concern, and increase and sustain youth involvement in public life in North Macedonia.

Through CEP, participating young people and CSOs acquire knowledge, gain motivation and develop skills that will allow them to contribute to policy discussions with the government, the private sector, the media and other CSOs. The overall goal of the Civic Engagement Project is to enhance CSOs and youth's capacity to advance public policies, improve public services, promote good governance and contribute to improving the standard of living of people in Macedonia. The Project is committed to gender equity and the protection of the rights of socially excluded groups in Macedonia. Metamorphosis is responsible for the implementation of three of its components: (1) Strengthen Civil Society Organization Alliances through Partnership Grants Program, (2) Strengthen CSOs through flexible and tailored grants and capacity development assistance and (3) Provide Technical Assistance in Support of Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Reforms, which was rolled out in 2020.

In the framework of CEP, in 2020 Metamorphosis has provided significant support to institutions in improving their openness. We monitored the openness of 17 municipalities and 50 central level institutions, in addition to monitoring the implementation of the Strategy for Transparency. The findings of the research informed our advocacy meetings and public events where we presented the concept of open cities among municipality staff and CSO representatives.

We also trained and coached five institutions on how to open up their data, who released more than 129 datasets as a direct result of this intervention.

CEP also gave significant contribution to OGP processes in North Macedonia in 2020 by developing the national OGP portal as well as organising community meetings on topics relevant to OGP and the people.

Increasing Civic Engagement in the Digital Agenda

The project aims to increase the engagement of CSOs in shaping and implementing the Digital Agenda in the Western Balkans by providing multiple networking and capacity building opportunities. The network has been joined by 20 CSOs/ subgrantees in partnership with 20 institutions, working together on 15 e-government support centres. In one year the project has provided 12 capacity building opportunities



Period:
17.08.2016 – 17.08.2021

Donor:
- USAID, through East West Management Institute (EWMI)

Partners:
- Metamorphosis
- Association for Democratic Initiatives (ADI)
- Foundation for Open Society in Macedonia (FOSM)
- National Youth Council of Macedonia.

Partners:
Metamorphosis Foundation
Center for Democratic Transition, Montenegro
Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability, Serbia,
e-Governance Academy Estonia,
Levizja Mjaft! (Albania),

<p>for civil servants, CSOs, media workers and the total number of participants from the whole region that have benefited from these trainings is 899.</p>	<p>NGO 35 mm, Montenegro, Open Data Kosovo (Kosovo)</p> <p>Period: 01.01.2020 – 31.12.2022</p> <p>Donor: European Union</p>
<p>Western Balkans and the EU Accession Process: Application of Political Criteria</p> <p>The project aims to increase the engagement of CSOs in shaping and implementing the Digital Agenda in the Western Balkans by providing multiple networking and capacity building opportunities. The network has been joined by 20 CSOs/ subgrantees in partnership with 20 institutions, working together on 15 e-government support centres. In one year the project has provided 12 capacity building opportunities for civil servants, CSOs, media workers and the total number of participants from the whole region that have benefited from these trainings is 899.</p>	<p>Partners Center for Democratic Transition, Montenegro CRTA, Serbia, Zasto Ne, Bosnia and Herzegovina</p> <p>Period 15.10.2019 – 14.10.2020</p> <p>Donor: Balkan Democracy Fund and the Embassy of the Kingdom of Norway</p>

Public Record Resources

<p>Follow the Money Online Service</p> <p>Metamorphosis continues to maintain the Follow the Money online service, started with funding from IRI in 2013, and continued to work with Metamorphosis support, promoting transparency and accountability related to spending of municipal budgets and presenting them through interactive visualizations.</p> <p>The work of the service is based on use of open data obtained through collaboration with other NGOs such as Finance Think through implementation of Freedom of Information Act. The citizens can compare spending of various budget items between municipalities and obtain knowledge about the fiscal processes.</p>	 <p>sledigiparite.mk</p>
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Education for Innovation

Metamorphosis recognizes that citizens today, in all their multiple capacities, require education that will provide them a set of skills that are essential to navigate the complexities of modern life in competent manner. Activities within this programme will contribute to achieving the aims of the European Commissions’ Digital Agenda for the Western Balkans and that is to support the transition of the region into a digital economy and bring the benefits of the digital transformation, such as faster economic growth, more jobs, and better services.

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS IN 2020

- The Itop.mk platform was created with the purpose of empowering local touristic entities to advance their presence in the digital world and in this way improve their promotion. For the same reason in 2020 Metamorphosis trained over 200 touristic entities on how to use innovative and digital tools.
- 34 local CSOs were coached and equipped with skills to successfully manage their projects as well as programme-related trainings on Metamorphosis’ areas of expertise with the goal of empowering community organisations to take initiative in their immediate community.
- 333 teachers were trained on the development of digital resources as well as on the safe and efficient use of e-learning platforms. Simultaneous a situation analysis of the preparedness of teachers to transit to online teaching was conducted – raising awareness about the support as well as the policy interventions needed to enable it.
- 67 CSOs from North Macedonia, Kosovo and Albania were supported with a total of 930 software donations, and in this way we directly addressed the security challenge that most organizations face working with unlicensed software, particularly during the complete shift that occurred due to the pandemic.

Smart Tourism Enhancement Project (STEP)

The objectives of the STEP project include: Promoting a vibrant touristic sector that effectively adapts to the needs of both domestic and international markets; Increasing capacities of tourism businesses and building of strategic partnerships and collaboration domestically, regionally and globally; Broadening and enhancing strategic and coordinated access to specific new and strategic tourism markets for tourism businesses; Acceleration of growth and stimulation of new job creation.



<p>The key elements of the project are raised awareness and understanding of the need for new marketing approach in tourism, as well as exchange of information, cooperation, and joint product development within the cross-border area.</p> <p>It promotes increasing local expertise among private and public entities to develop enabling policies and conformity standards that meets international standard on tourism development through creation of STEP network of informed and empowered tourism public and private entities, CSOs, Tourism clusters and/or chambers of commerce.</p> <p>The innovative use of digital technologies includes practical application and capacity building for online marketing through social networks, and use of Inter-Regional Tourism Online Platform (iTOP).</p>	<p>Period: 01.01.2018 – 01.04.2020</p> <p>Partners: Centre for Development of Polog Planning Region Council of the Elbasan County</p> <p>Donor: European Union (IPA 2, The EU's Cross-Border Cooperation Programme)</p>
<p>Techsoup North Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo</p> <p>Continuing the support for CSOs in North Macedonia, Kosovo and Albania, started in 2014, Metamorphosis has been implementing the TechSoup software donation programme.</p> <p>The program offers a wide range of software products for non-profit organizations and public libraries, and they are only required to pay an administrative fee. These donations are available for organizations with the status of non-profit according to their respective country regulations (North Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo).</p> <p>Until June 2019, the program was implemented within Techsoup Balkans platform, which was run together with our Bosnian partner Mashta. Since September 2019, Metamorphosis manages the platforms for North Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo.</p> <p>During 2019, 42 new NGOs registered in all three platforms (27 NM, 5 AL, 10 KS), while there were 32 new orders for software donations with total revenues of 3,629 euros (2,327 NM, 681 AL, 621 KS).</p>	 <p>https://www.techsoupnorthmacedonia.org/ https://www.techsoupkosovo.org/ https://www.techsoupalbania.org/</p> <p>Period: 2014- ongoing</p> <p>Partners: - Techsoup Global</p> <p>Donor: - Microsoft - BitDefender - NortonLifeLock - Okta - Symantec - Tableau Software - Clever Reach</p>

	<p>-DokuSign Discounted -DokuSign Donated -AutoDesk</p>
<p>Open Educational Resources Initiative</p> <p>The overall project goal is to contribute to the development of critical thinking and democratization in North Macedonia through the constructive use of new technologies as tools to increase the quantity and quality of educational, scientific and academic e-content.</p> <p>In 2019 this action contributed to raising public awareness about the Open Educational Resources (OER), expanding the Alliance for Open Educational Resources and lobbying for the OER initiative in schools and among teachers teaching in the minority languages used in North Macedonia. These activities will contribute to closing the gap between the quality and quantity of available OER in all the languages in the country.</p>	 <p>oer.mk</p> <p>Period: 01.12.2015 – 01.12.2017 01.10.2019 – 01.10.2020 10.10.2020 – 10.06.2021</p> <p>Donor: Foundation Open Society - Macedonia</p>
<p>Digital Security Training in North Macedonia</p> <p>This project conducted 10 trainings and 10 webinars during the summer of 2020 with civil society and media representatives with the aim of preparing them to successfully carry out their activities online while maintaining security of their data and the beneficiaries they serve. These events were attended by over 130 participants from more than 30 CSOs. It also equipped around 20 organizations with Information Security and Integrity policies as a means of ensuring sustainable effect of the trainings carried out.</p>	<p>Period: 27.05.2020 – 28.08.2020</p>
<p>Strengthening the Civil Sector through Training and Education</p> <p>The general objective of this Erasmus+ project is to develop the training and educational capacities of the engaged partners so that their programmes are more effective, impactful, relevant to current trends and technology.</p>	<p>Partners: Fundacja Techsoup, Poland NIOK Foundation, Hungary Workshop for Civic Initiatives Foundation WCIF, Bulgaria Solidatech, France Fundraising Verband Austria, Austria Metamorphosis Foundation for Internet and Society, North Macedonia SocialTechno, Italy Asociata Romania</p>

<p>The project trained over 72 NGO trainers on (1) building effective NGO communication strategy, (2) guiding NGOs on the digital transformation journey; (3) how to develop training methodology, (4) how to combat shrinking civil space and the effect of disinformation on civil society and (5) how to create effective campaigns through storytelling and creation of positive narratives.</p>	<p>Civil Society Development Center (STGM), Turkey Period: 01.11.2019 – 30.09.2021 Donor: European Union</p>
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Human Rights Online

Metamorphosis has been at the forefront of the promotion of human rights online - helping communities face the enormous changes that stem from the increased impact of new technologies and countering the malign anti-democratic tendencies that exploit fissures across societies.

Metamorphosis is committed to the development of democracy and improvement of the quality of life through innovative application and dissemination of knowledge, and supports the use of new technologies for creating new spaces enabling a public debate and exchange of objective information, in parallel with the efforts for increasing digital literacy and fighting hate speech.

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS IN 2020

- Trainings on digital skills, privacy protection and media literacy were intensified in 2020 to support civil society, journalists, teachers, parents and youth to thrive in their work and education online as it became the only available operating space.
- At the outbreak of the corona virus epidemic in North Macedonia, Metamorphosis initiated a discussion among the members of the European Digital Rights Initiative regarding the challenges of privacy protection while implementing the COVID-19 countermeasures and compiled a [blog text](#) to share practices from other countries and the views of the partners – as a means to inform the public and institutions about the thin line between abusing privacy and increasing security measures.
- We also provided an [opinion piece](#), widely disseminated and published by the media on the data protection policy of the Stop Korona tracking application that was commissioned by the Ministry of Information Society and Administration

Commented [QS1]: Резултат 2 - Институциите ја воведуваат заштитата на човековите права како дел од нивната секојдневна работа во дигиталната сфера. Во однос на застапувачки активности, прифатени се две препораки на Метаморфозис во изготвувањето на Законот за заштита на лични податоци. Мониторингот на Законот за следење на комуникациите резултираше со два јавно споделени наоди, додека мониторингот на примената на Законите за национална безбедност продуцираше три јавно споделени наоди.

Internet Freedom in Macedonia

During 2020 Metamorphosis continued to work on promotion of human rights online through cooperation with international networks, particularly highlighting the threats and challenges that uncovered with the pandemic.

On 25-26 November 2020 Metamorphosis Foundation organized the 16th edition of the traditional annual international conference e-Society, this year with a focus on the topic “Engagement and Effectiveness: Good Governance and the Internet.” The conference was held online for the first time, however, it managed to gather over 130 participants and speakers from around the world – sharing experiences and recommendations on how delivery of public services can improve, along with overall governance, by utilizing the internet and technology responsibly.

Metamorphosis cooperated with international human rights networks like Global Voices, IFEX, EDRI, APC and ACTION SEE; as well as initiatives like Freedom Not Fear, to enable spreading of information about North Macedonia abroad, and incite freedom of expression advocacy.



e-society.mk



kauza.mk



ping.mk

Networks

During 2020, Metamorphosis participated in the work of the following networks and coalitions:

International Freedom of Expression Exchange - IFEX

Metamorphosis became a member of IFEX in June 2014, contributing to alerting the global public, civil society and relevant institutions regarding the overall situation in Macedonia and particular cases of endangering freedom of expression, as well as breaches of professional standards of journalism. Other IFEX members include well known international organizations fighting for freedom of expression such as: Article 19, Freedom House, Reporters without Borders, Human Rights Watch, Index on Censorship, the International PEN Center, etc.



www.ifex.org

<p>Association for Progressive Communications - APC APC's mission is to empower and support organisations, social movements and individuals in and through the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to build strategic communities and initiatives for the purpose of making meaningful contributions to equitable human development, social justice, participatory political processes and environmental sustainability. APC is both a network and an organisation. APC has 50 members in 35 countries - groups working in their own countries to advance the same mission as APC.</p>	 <p>www.apc.org</p>
<p>European Digital Rights – EDRI EDRI is an international advocacy group headquartered in Brussels, with an objective to promote, protect and uphold civil rights in the field of information and communication technology. Founded in June 2002 as a result of a growing awareness of the importance of European policy making in the digital environment, it includes 35 privacy and civil rights organisations from 21 different countries in Europe.</p>	 <p>edri.org</p>
<p>Global Voices in Macedonian and Albanian Metamorphosis is managing the Macedonian and Albanian versions of the international network of bloggers and citizens journalists Global Voices Online, enabling worldwide distribution of news and views related to social change, activism, and citizen journalism. Global Voices is a borderless, largely volunteer community of more than 1200 writers, analysts, online media experts and translators, reporting from 167 countries and translating into up to 30 languages.</p>	 <p>mk.globalvoicesonline.org sq.globalvoicesonline.org</p>
<p>World Summit Award The WSA is a global initiative to promote the world's best in mobile content and innovative applications within the framework of the United Nations' World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), in collaboration with UNESCO, UNIDO and UN GAID.</p>	 <p>wsa.org.mk</p>
<p>Creative Commons Europe CC Europe is the central online platform of the European Creative Commons Jurisdiction Projects, composed of CC leads from European countries. CC Europe is the channel for communication with interested stakeholders and in particular the European-level policy makers.</p>	 <p>europe.creativecommons.org</p>  <p>cc.org.mk</p>
<p>COMMUNIA International Association on the Public Domain COMMUNIA is a network of researchers and practitioners from universities, NGOs and SME with a mission to foster, strengthen and enrich the Public Domain. It raises awareness in, educate about, advocate for, and research about the Public Domain in the digital age within society and with policy-makers. It has WIPO observer status.</p>	 <p>communia-association.org</p>

<p>ACTION SEE - Accountability, Technology and Institutional Openness Network in South-East Europe</p> <p>ACTION SEE network that resulted from the cooperation between leading ICT and human rights-oriented organizations from Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Albania. Members use new technologies for empowering citizens and increasing public institutions' accountability via Truthmeter projects, annual POINT conferences on new technologies and political accountability, and developing the regional Index of Transparency.</p>	 <p>www.actionsee.org</p>
<p>TransparenCEE - Technology for Transparency in CEE and Eurasia</p> <p>TransparenCEE is a network of Central Eastern European and Euroasian NGOs interested in using technology in transparency and accountability work. It documents, catalogues and scales local solutions regionally. The objective of the network is to ultimately make the technology for transparency work more transparent and easier to both finance and implement.</p>	 <p>transparencee.org</p>
<p>Internet Freedom Platform</p> <p>The Internet Freedom Platform of Eastern and Central Europe and Eurasia is established by civil society organizations in these regions, that work on fostering of the freedom of expression, association and flow of information on internet.</p>	<p>internetfreedom.blog</p>
<p>Platform of Civic Organizations for Fight Against Corruption</p> <p>The Platform for Fight Against Corruption founded in 2014 unites the leading anti-corruption NGOs from Macedonia through collaborative projects based on monitoring the legal framework and the ongoing public policies, initiating legal changes through joint initiatives.</p>	 <p>antikorupcija.mk</p>
<p>Platform Against Hate Speech</p> <p>Founded by leading human rights or media development CSOs in Macedonia, the Platform coordinates efforts against hate speech, hate crimes and discrimination in the media and beyond.</p>	
<p>Anti-Disinformation Network for the Balkans (AND-Balkans)</p> <p>The network serves as the basis of a cooperation between civil society organizations, media outlets, educational institutions and all other relevant stakeholders with a goal of forming a wide front on countering disinformation through affirmation of the highest standards of fact-checking and all other ethical principles of professional journalism, as well as promoting media literacy and critical thinking.</p> <p>Its members adhere to the Declaration that re-affirms the freedom of expression in its various forms, stressing that the situation in the Balkans requires an added focus on countering the problem of disinformation at regional level, especially cross-border disinformation, as well as empowerment of citizens through education and putting their actual needs as priority in the work of the media.</p>	<p>https://antidisinfo.net</p>

ADN-Balkans developed gradually through bilateral and multilateral cooperation of its founding members which had intensified since 2018 in response to increasing level of disinformation in the region.	
SEE Digital Rights Network The platform aims to advance the protection of digital rights in Southeast Europe. It brings together 19 organisations from Southeast Europe who are dedicated to the protection and promotion of human rights, both online and offline.	

Executive Board and Staff

Metamorphosis Executive Board, consisting of five members:

- Ms Radmila Živanovikj, Board Chair
- Mr Zoran Cali
- Mr Zoran Janevski
- Mr Vladimir Lazovski
- Ms Biljana Radonjanin

During 2020, Metamorphosis staff consisted of the following employees:

Management

- Mr Bardhyl Jashari, Executive Director
- Mr Filip Stojanovski, Partnership and Resource Development Director
- Ms Qëndresa Sulejmani, Director of Programme
- Ms Marija Panchevska, Finance and Administration Director

Program Staff

- Ms Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme Manager, Social Accountability and Human Rights Online
- Mr Goran Rizaov, Programme Manager, Media for Democracy and Education for Innovation
- Ms Elena Stojanovska, PR and Communications Specialist
- Ms Violeta Joncevska, Social Media Specialist
- Vaska Cvetanoska Panova, M&E Specialist
- Goce Arsovski, Programme Support Officer
- Ms Elida Zylbeari, project lead
- Mr Vladimir Petreski, project lead
- Ms Violeta Gligoroska, project lead
- Mr Florent Bajrami, project lead
- Ms Olivera Vojnovska, journalist
- Mr Teofil Blazhevski, journalist
- Mr Drilon Saliu, journalist

- Ms Silvana Zhezhova Stankovska, journalist
- Mr Sasho Spasoski, journalist
- Mr Bojan Blazeovski, journalist
- Ms Maja Tomic, journalist
- Ms Bjanka Stankovic, journalist
- Mr Suad Bajrami, journalist
- Ms Teuta Buçi, journalist
- Mr Ardit Ramadani, journalist

Administration and Finance staff

- Ms Anita Milanovska, HR and Administration Manager
- Ms Emilija Georgievska, Finance Assistant
- Ms Elena Stojanova, Finance Assistant

Operations Support Staff

- Mr Filip Neshkoski, Team lead
- Mr Miron Cali, IT assistant
- Igor Krstevski, IT assistant
- Ms Frosina Georgieva, translator
- Mr Valon Abdiu, translator