



Metamorphosis Annual Report

Year 2024

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Two Decades of Impact: Serving Democracy in a Changing Digital World

Bardhyl Jashari, Executive Director

In 2024, Metamorphosis Foundation proudly marked twenty years of commitment to democracy, digital rights, and civic empowerment. What began as a small, locally rooted initiative has evolved into a regional leader, defending truth, advancing civic participation, and shaping digital in a world where technology opens new possibilities for progress, while also demanding thoughtful action and shared responsibility. This journey has been shaped by the dedication, creativity, and conviction of our donors, partners, and staff who believe deeply in our mission and make its impact real every day.

This milestone year was not only a moment for reflection, but also a period of strategic renewal. We launched our Strategy 2024–2028, shaped through broad community consultation and grounded in the belief that people must be at the center of the digital transformation. In an era of accelerated technological change, we remain committed to helping individuals navigate the complex and rapidly evolving digital landscape — to feel secure, protected, and competent in their online environments.

At the same time, Metamorphosis is also pushing back against a rising fear we often encounter — the fear of technology itself. In a world of rapid change, it's natural to feel overwhelmed. But when fear turns into avoidance, it risks cutting people off from the very tools that can empower them, protect their rights, and amplify their voices. We believe technology should be understood, not feared — and that everyone deserves the chance to adapt, to learn, and to feel confident navigating the digital world. If we leave people behind, we don't just risk widening divides — we risk sliding toward a future shaped by exclusion, manipulation, and disempowerment. The future doesn't have to be dystopian. With active engagement, the right skills, protections, and choices, it can be fair, free, and human-centered.

Our efforts in 2024 spanned from countering disinformation during national elections to driving institutional transparency, building civic resilience, and advocating for rights-based digital governance. But we know that empowering citizens is not enough: we must also be actively engaged in shaping the policies, standards, and systems that govern how technologies are developed, deployed, and used — ensuring they serve the public interest.

Throughout this report, you'll find evidence of our impact, innovation, and enduring partnerships. Whether leading regional fact-checking coalitions, amplifying civic voices, or championing responsible digital transformation, Metamorphosis continues to operate at the intersection of technology and democratic values — with integrity, vision, and a commitment to ensuring that no one is left behind.

Metamorphosis Vision and Mission

Vision:

The Metamorphosis Foundation envisions a society where empowered citizens hold governments accountable, technology and institutions serve the people, and truth triumphs over manipulation.

Mission to Achieve the Vision:

The Metamorphosis Foundation is an independent organization operating in North Macedonia and its broader European context. Its team is composed of committed democracy activists, united by a common cause and shared values of mutual accountability, open communication, and firm commitment to universal human rights and democracy.

The Foundation strengthens to bridge the knowledge gap, promote responsible technology and empower citizens to be active participants in a thriving democracy.

Metamorphosis' programmes include:

- Responsible digital transformation
- Social accountability
- Media and information integrity

2024 at a glance

- 🇲🇰 Celebrated **20 years** of defending democracy and digital rights in North Macedonia and the region
- 🗳️ Played a key role in **countering disinformation during parliamentary elections**
- 📖 Launched a new 2024–2028 Strategy and began developing the flagship initiative **Civic Education in the Digital Era**
- 🖥️ Trained and supported **hundreds of journalists, activists, and public servants** through capacity building, media literacy, and policy advocacy
- 📰 Published over **17,000 articles across Meta.mk, Portalb.mk, and Truthmeter.mk**, reaching millions of readers
- 🌐 Strengthened international partnerships and networks, including **EFCSN Board election and leadership in regional networks** like the **Anti-Disinformation Network for the Balkans**
- 📊 Conducted groundbreaking research and advocacy on the **Digital Services Act, Artificial Intelligence, media financing, and institutional openness**
- 🏆 Launched the **“Ilija Županoski” Award** for excellence in combating disinformation
- 🧠 Organized many events including the **20th international e-Society.mk conference** and the **second annual conference marking International Fact-Checking Day**, bringing together experts, journalists, and policymakers from across the region

Summary

In 2024, the Metamorphosis Foundation **continued to build on two decades of work dedicated to fostering democracy, human rights, and responsible digital transformation in North Macedonia and beyond**. Following a comprehensive evaluation of the previous strategy's implementation, we collaboratively developed a new mid-term Strategy for the period 2024–2028. This inclusive and participatory process enabled us to integrate diverse perspectives, ensuring that the new Strategy was responsive to evolving challenges and reflective of the shared values and goals of our broader community. Our Strategy served not only our internal needs but also addressed our beneficiaries – especially youth, decision-makers, local, national, regional, and international partner CSOs, journalists, and the general public.

Throughout the year, Metamorphosis maintained its commitment to **partnering with both governments and citizens to advance democracy**. We upheld responsible innovation as a guiding principle, constantly exploring and implementing creative solutions to enhance civic engagement and support democratic processes.

The year 2024 held special significance for us, as we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Foundation's establishment. To mark this milestone, we organized the traditional e-Society.mk conference under the theme *"Digital Transformation for Life"*. Once again, we gathered experts, policymakers, and civil society representatives to deliberate on the advancements and challenges of digitalization, emphasizing its impact on societal development and quality of life. A memorable moment at this celebration was the inaugural presentation of the *"Ilija Županoski"* Award, introduced to honour outstanding contributions to combating disinformation.

Throughout 2024, **Metamorphosis Foundation continued to apply a human rights-based approach** to capacity building, targeting both public authorities responsible for ensuring good governance and rights holders advocating for a democratic and inclusive society. We prioritized ensuring that ongoing technological development and future digital transformations protected human rights online and left no one behind. Special focus was placed on reducing the digital divide among citizens by equipping them with essential digital skills and ensuring their participation in decision-making processes related to digital development.

Our efforts to counter disinformation and foreign information manipulation and interference remained continuous. Combining approaches such as fact-checking, watchdog and investigative journalism, and media monitoring, we worked to expose and debunk manipulations across North Macedonia and the Western Balkans region. Beyond strengthening our partnerships with civil society and journalist organizations, we actively advocated for the government to develop comprehensive policy against disinformation, upholding our belief in a whole-of-society approach. These efforts were recognized internationally, as **the Executive Director, Bardhyl Jashari, was elected as a member of the new Governing Board of the European Fact-Checking Standards Network (EFCSN)**, further bonding our leadership in strengthening fact-checking practices and promoting media accountability.

In 2024, we reshaped and **focused our programmes on three key areas: *Responsible Digital Transformation, Social Accountability, and Media and Information Integrity***. We provided

substantial support to civil society organizations, public servants, youth, and journalists to navigate digital challenges, while promoting the protection of online human rights, with particular attention to privacy, safety, and freedom of expression. Our work also included strong advocacy against hate speech and impunity. Through our online media, *Meta.mk*, *Portalb.mk* and *Truthmeter.mk*, we maintained our watchdog role, pushing institutions to be more responsive to citizens' needs, while increasingly tailoring content to meet the needs of youth and helping Generation Z become informed and active citizens.

Our collaborations with an **established network of partners, donors, and beneficiaries remained a pillar of our activities**. In 2024, Metamorphosis continued the cooperation with the established network of partners, donors and beneficiaries, building upon and expanding the relationships developed during the 20 years of existence and activity. It continued implementing projects and activities with the support from European Union, USAID, the governments/ministries and the embassies of USA, Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Swiss Government through Civica Mobilitas, UK Government's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES); as well as with support of civil society partners including National Endowment for Democracy - NED, Open Society Foundation – Western Balkans, Foundation Open Society – Macedonia, American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative - ABA ROLI and International Centre for Journalists - ICFJ. Metamorphosis Foundation also continued to receive institutional support from the Sigrid Rousing Trust, which significantly contributed amplify our advocacy work and impact on national level and at the same time to strengthen our networking efforts in countering disinformation on regional level. With the support of Peace Nexus, we had the opportunity to strategically grow and develop a new strategy. Cooperation with the private sector also continued, including Meta (Facebook), as well as Google and other corporate donors, via the TechSoup Network.

Internationally, Metamorphosis remained an active member of leading civil society networks such as the International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX), the Association for Progressive Computing (APC), European Digital Rights (EDRi), the International Fact-Checking Network, Global Voices, the International Network Against Cyber Hate (INACH), and the European Fact-Checking Standards Network, of which we are a co-founder. Regionally, we deepened our cooperation with civil society organizations within the ACTION SEE network, ICEDA, and the Regional Anti-Disinformation Network for the Balkans. We also continued to coordinate the CSO Network for Open Government Partnership in North Macedonia, reinforcing the civil society's engagement in the OGP process.

As the following pages will illustrate, 2024 was a year of strategic growth, strengthened partnerships, and continued impact for Metamorphosis. Below is a summary of the projects our team worked on and the highlights of our achievements within our three programme areas.

Media and Information Integrity program

A dynamic and professional media sector has always been fundamental in fostering an informed public, promoting transparency, and encouraging constructive critical discourse. These elements are the cornerstone of enabling citizens to safely and actively engage in democratic processes. In 2024, as North Macedonia held its parliamentary elections, the Metamorphosis Foundation's media outlets—

Meta News Agency, Portalb, and Truthmeter—continued their pivotal role in shaping public discourse and promoting democracy through high-quality, independent journalism.

The year 2024 saw continued commitment in Metamorphosis' efforts to tackle misinformation, disinformation, and media manipulation. The Foundation's media outlets remained at the forefront of countering false narratives that undermine democratic institutions and public trust. As part of its broader regional commitment, Metamorphosis continued its coordination of the Regional Anti-Disinformation Network for the Balkans, a key initiative aimed at promoting media literacy and reinforcing the importance of fact-based reporting across the Western Balkans. The Foundation's leadership in addressing disinformation not only contributed to more accurate reporting during election periods but also to a more resilient media landscape in North Macedonia and the broader region.

In 2024, the fact-checking service Truthmeter continued its tireless work independently verifying election-related claims and challenging false narratives. This dedication helped reinforce public trust in reliable information sources, positioning Metamorphosis as a regional leader in the fight against disinformation.




The year was also marked by significant milestones, including notable conferences, workshops, awards, and groundbreaking investigative journalism. These efforts demonstrate Metamorphosis Foundation's unwavering commitment to upholding democratic values and ensuring that the public remains informed and equipped to critically engage with the media.

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS IN 2024

- In 2024, engaging young audiences (ages 14–29) remained a central focus for Meta News Agency and Portalb. One of the most notable activities was the series of workshops which Metamorphosis Foundation organized together with the International Center for Journalists. More than 50 young journalists and students participated in the workshops on subjects like data journalism and countering disinformation. In 2024 for the first time in North Macedonia, Metamorphosis together with ICFJ organized a workshop on [pre-bunking](#). The best 6 participants on the workshops were invited for a one-month internship at Metamorphosis media, and out of them three got the chance to attend a weeklong study tour in Washington DC. For young journalists at the beginning of their career, visiting newsrooms like Voice of America, Washington Post, as well as organizations like ICFJ or the Philip Merrill School of Journalism is an endeavor they will never forget which will guide them in their media careers.
- In February 2024, European Union Ambassador in North Macedonia David Geer, along with ambassadors from Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Italy [visited](#) the Metamorphosis Foundation to express solidarity following recent threats and smear campaigns against its staff. They emphasized the vital role of fact-checkers in safeguarding democracy and ensuring public access to accurate information. Ambassador Geer stated: " There should be no place for incitement of hatred or spreading false accusations in the media".
- In November 2024, the Metamorphosis Foundation hosted the 20th annual international conference, e-Society.mk: "Digital Transformation for Life". The event convened experts, policymakers, and civil society representatives to discuss advancements and challenges in digitalization, emphasizing its impact on societal development and quality of life. A notable feature of this year's conference was the inaugural [presentation](#) of the "[Ilija Županoski](#)" award, recognizing significant contributions to combating disinformation. The winners of the award were the Institute for Media and Analytics – IMA and the journalist Ardit Ramadani. Additionally, the conference included presentations from individuals with disabilities, highlighting how artificial intelligence technologies are enhancing accessibility and inclusion.
- In 2024, the Metamorphosis Foundation conducted a pioneering [study](#) analyzing the influence of state-allocated funds on the impartiality of online media portals during the parliamentary elections. The research monitored 30 selected news portals, examining 13,645 election-related articles between April 15 and May 10, 2024. Findings revealed a significant correlation: portals receiving substantial funding from a particular political coalition exhibited less impartial reporting, often favoring the funding coalition. Additionally, Meta.mk's investigative journalism [uncovered](#) that political coalitions allocated a total of €811,000 for advertising across more than 150 online portals during the parliamentary elections. In November 2024, Meta.mk published another investigative report revealing that out of 150 online portals receiving state funds for the parliamentary election campaign, 40 lacked an impressum, indicating unclear ownership. This underscores the need for transparent allocation of public funds to media outlets to maintain journalistic integrity and public trust. Metamorphosis Foundation also organized a [two-day event](#) titled "Money, Media, and Elections," bringing together experts, politicians, and civil society representatives to examine the interplay between finances, media, and politics during election processes. This significant expenditure raised concerns about transparency and accountability in the allocation of state funds

for political advertising, emphasizing the need for stricter oversight and clearer regulations in media financing during election campaigns.

- In October 2024, the Metamorphosis Foundation further solidified its international standing as a leader in countering disinformation by being [elected](#) to the new governing board of the European Fact-Checking Standards Network (EFCSN). This recognition reflects Metamorphosis's ongoing contributions to strengthening fact-checking practices, promoting media accountability, and enhancing the integrity of public information across Europe.
- In June 2024, Meta.mk journalist Goše Nikolov was honored with the "Herald of the Invisible" [award](#) by the Macedonian Platform Against Poverty (MPAP). This accolade was awarded for his [article and accompanying video](#) in the series "Why Is It (Not) So," addressing prevalent myths and disinformation about individuals with disabilities. Nikolov's work involved collaboration with participants who debunked societal misconceptions, contributing to greater awareness and inclusion.
- Meta.mk journalist and founder of the Instagram account Studentarija, Goshe Nikolov, has won [another award](#) for production excellence from the Thomson Foundation and the British Council for the story about the language of memes as part of the Culture and Creativity for the Western Balkans (CC4WB) project, supported by the European Union. This recognition was for his innovative and high-quality multimedia journalism, particularly in projects that creatively presented complex societal issues. In his article, Nikolov highlighted the growing influence of memes as a communication tool among young people on social media but also recognizing that they serve as instant messages conveying complex ideas succinctly, making them effective in political communication.
- Albanian language news outlet Portalb.mk conducted an [analysis](#) revealing a significant increase in Chinese influence within North Macedonia, facilitated through various propaganda mechanisms. The study highlighted that Chinese state-owned media have established a presence in the country, engaging in cooperation with local media outlets and co-opting local journalists. This strategy has led to the dissemination of content that promotes China's undemocratic value systems and foreign policy objectives, often portraying them as viable alternatives for national development. The analysis underscores the need for heightened media literacy and critical engagement with foreign media content to safeguard democratic values and ensure an informed citizenry.
- Metamorphosis Foundation in 2024 organized another annual [conference](#) on April 2, the International Fact-checking Day. The conference was opened by EU Ambassador David Geere, and the Dutch Ambassador in North Macedonia, Dirk Jan Kop. Recognizing that disinformation undermines democratic institutions and public trust, the Foundation advocated for robust fact-checking mechanisms to ensure the dissemination of accurate information. Metamorphosis emphasized that combating disinformation is a collective responsibility involving all sectors of society.
- On February 21, 2024, the Metamorphosis Foundation hosted a "[Cyber Shake](#)" event titled "Deepfake or Reality" at the "KOTUR" café and cinema. The event aimed to educate young people on identifying deepfakes— synthetic media created using artificial intelligence that can manipulate videos, audios, and images to mislead viewers. Participants engaged in discussions and quizzes to enhance their ability to recognize and critically assess such content. Speakers included Bojan Stojkovski, editor-in-chief of IT.mk, Ivan Čorbiev, a professor from FINKI, and Meri Jordanovska, deputy editor-in-chief of Meta.mk.

<p>Meta.mk - Independent News Agency</p> <p>In 2024 Meta News Agency celebrated one decade of existence! It officially started working in November 2014 and established a solid reputation of a reliable source of objective news on current events in Macedonian and English, as well as other Balkan languages, whose contents is republished by over thirty domestic and foreign media outlets. Meta.mk provides a professional news service, and its reporting is used as a reference both by the media and decision makers, including the highest representatives of the international community.</p> <p>Meta News Agency in 2024 published more than 7000 articles in total out of which 6000 in Macedonian language and the rest in English, Albanian and BCS. Its website had more than one million pageviews and 680,000 users.</p>	 <p>META.MK</p> <p>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 North Macedonia. Its reputation based on strict implementation of journalistic standards is complemented with the popularity as one of the most influential online media among decision makers and general audience, with fan base of over 230,000 social networks followers.</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 and other languages.</p> <p>In 2024 Portalb published more than 8000 articles, receiving 1.5 million pageviews and about 650,000 users on its website.</p>	 <p>portalb.mk</p>
<p>Truthmeter - Fact-Checking Service</p> <p>Truthmeter is the only fact-checking service in North Macedonia, a certified member of the International Fact-Checking Network and a founding member of European Fact-Checking Standards Network. It was founded in 2011 as a political fact-checking service, starting with analysis of veracity of statements by politicians and fulfilment of election promises.</p>	 <p>vistinomer.mk</p>

From 2020 the Truthmeter has been a member of Meta’s Third-Party Fact-Checking Partnership that works with independent, IFCN-certified fact-checkers who identify, review and rate viral misinformation across Facebook and Instagram.

During 2024 the Truthmeter published more than 2000 articles out of which more than 1000 in Macedonian and the rest in Albanian and English language. Truthmeter had more than 200,000 pageviews and over 100,000 users on its website during the year.

vertetmates.mk
truthmeter.mk

The projects implemented by Metamorphosis within the Media for Democracy programme during 2024 are presented in the following table:

Western Balkans Anti-Disinformation Hub: Exposing Malign Influences through Watchdog Journalism

The Western Balkans Anti-Disinformation Hub continues to expose foreign malign influences in the region by debunking and mapping the spread of disinformation, misinformation, and propaganda that hinder democratic development and Euro-Atlantic integration. The project addresses narratives originating from external actors aimed at destabilizing countries across the Western Balkans.

In 2024, the project expanded its reach and impact by equipping media professionals, policymakers, and the public with essential tools and knowledge to detect and counter disinformation linked to foreign malign interests.

Key achievements during 2024:

- Strengthened the Regional Anti-Disinformation Hub: The multilingual platform antidisinfo.net solidified its role as a central hub for regional anti-disinformation efforts. Available in English, Macedonian, BCS (Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian), and Albanian, the website continues to host content from six Western Balkan countries. The platform experienced increased traffic and engagement in 2024, reflecting growing public and institutional interest in the issue.
- Produced and Disseminated Over 650 Original Articles: The network produced over 500 original anti-disinformation articles, including 400 shorter debunks and more than 100 longer



antidisinfo.net/hub

Period:

01.11. 2021 – 30.04.2025


Donor:

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Kingdom of the
Netherlands



Kingdom of the Netherlands

<p>analytical pieces. Additionally, 10 investigative articles were published including multi-parti investigative stories and 20 in-depth long reads. These materials were widely disseminated and republished across regional media, amplifying the project’s impact on public discourse and editorial practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded the Knowledge Hub Monitoring System: The database now includes more than 3,500 suspected disinformation instances, more than 2,000 verified debunks, and a detailed mapping of over 280 media outlets, 400 individuals, and 250 legal entities. The Hub has become an essential tool for identifying trends and alerting stakeholders about disinformation campaigns in real time. • Research-Based Advocacy and Policy Influence: The project carried out regional and national-level advocacy based on research findings. It organized consultations and produced policy recommendations addressing systemic vulnerabilities to foreign information manipulation. These were shared with institutions and civil society actors, laying the groundwork for coordinated responses to disinformation. • The former government accepted the proposal for a whole-of-society approach and notified the need for creation of a strategic document mentioned in their plan for work for 2024. The new government has stated that it has the intention to continue the efforts to counter disinformation and Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI). • As part of the project, Metamorphosis Foundation organized a Conference on April 2 – International Fact-Checking day which was opened by the EU Ambassador in North Macedonia, David Geer, and the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Netherlands, Dirk Jan Kop. The Conference on April 2 has become an annual event bringing together regional and European stakeholders determined in the struggle for higher Information integrity. • In late 2024, the regional team from the Anti-disinformation Hub started preparing and issuing a monthly Disinformation Alert to all stakeholders, local, national, regional and international about the predicted most likely disinformation narratives. 	<p>Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center for Democratic Transition, Montenegro • Faktoje, Albania • ISAC – International and Security Affairs Centre, Serbia • Sbunker, Kosovo • Zašto ne (Why Not), Bosnia and Herzegovina
<p>Digital Activism Program</p> <p>Across the world, the spread of disinformation is on the rise. Its volatile growth is the result of the strategic use of online disinformation, which</p>	<p>Period:</p> <p>25.10.2022 – 31.7.2025</p>

<p>undermines democracy, and polarizes societies.</p> <p>While ways to combat disinformation are currently trending in the media, the existing tactics are primarily directed at fact-checkers and journalists, leaving wider civil society actors to their own devices.</p> <p>Since 2018, TechSoup Network’s Digital Activism Program aims to provide multi-faceted support to civil society organizations (CSOs) and their staff in Central and Easter Europe (CEE), Latin America and West Africa. In the area of countering disinformation, the program strives to increase their understanding of the issues connected with direct disinformation threats through research, strengthen their capacity to deal with disinformation, boost their knowledge and connections within the nonprofit network.</p> <p>As part of the program, our focus is on the CSOs, frontline workers, and activists working with the vulnerable communities that are the most frequent target of propaganda. The program focuses but is not limited to the following areas of CSOs’ work: supporting democracy, migration, climate, women’s, and LGBTQ+ rights.</p> <p>We believe that no progress can be made without access to technology. In the span of the Digital Activism Program activities, we are providing CSOs from North Macedonia, Serbia and Kosovo with bespoke training and workshops, individual consultations, community events, small grants, and access to tech solutions or tools which will help them design effective disinformation response campaigns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainings and capacity strengthening workshops for 15 CSOs • Individual consultations and trainings for 15 CSOs • Expert support in tech adoption and digital security plans for 9 CSOs • 15 small grants for CSOs • 3 collaborative grants for groups of CSOs 	<p>Donor: Supported by Google.org and led by TechSoup in close collaboration with TechSoup Network’s partners.</p> 
<p>Journalism for a new generation</p> <p>The Journalism for New Generation Project, implemented by Metamorphosis Foundation in partnership with ICFJ, has marked a transformative step in advancing ethical, fact-based journalism in North Macedonia. Running from July 1 to September 30, 2024, the project combined intensive journalistic training, practical hands-on internships, and an international study tour to both enhance the skills of emerging journalists and strengthen the nation’s media landscape.</p> <p>Central to the project was a one-month paid internship component involving top interns from previous workshops. Five promising young</p>	<p>Period: 1.12.2023 – 31.08.2024</p> <p>Donor: US Embassy in North Macedonia</p> <p>Partners:</p>

journalists were selected to work across Metamorphosis media outlets—Meta News Agency, Portalb.mk, and Vistinomer (Truthmeter.mk). These interns, coming from various regions and backgrounds, engaged in rigorous on-the-job training that spanned diverse journalistic tasks such as writing news articles, video reporting, fact-checking, and data analysis. The program was designed not just to boost productivity but also to foster a culture of ethical reporting and critical thinking among the participants.

During the internship, interns significantly increased the volume and quality of journalistic output, collectively producing between 10 to 59 articles per participant. Their work—ranging from standard news reporting to in-depth investigative pieces and timely coverage of events like wildfires—resulted in a notable increase in pageviews and audience engagement. Interns reported substantial improvements in their reporting, communication, and technical skills. For instance, one intern enhanced fact-checking procedures by integrating AI, and another highlighted the profound professional growth achieved during the training.

The performance of the interns was meticulously evaluated across several key areas, including analytical capability, writing quality, and teamwork. Based on these evaluations, the top three performers were chosen to participate in an enriching study tour in Washington, DC, further broadening their international exposure. During the tour, they engaged with leading media professionals and visited prestigious institutions such as the Washington Post, Foreign Policy, and the University of Maryland—gaining insights into combating disinformation, using AI in journalism, and leveraging data-driven reporting methods.

Building on the success of this project, the Metamorphosis Foundation is set to expand its training initiatives and explore new technological integrations to combat misinformation. The program has not only equipped young journalists with advanced skills but also laid the groundwork for stronger international collaborations and innovative fact-checking models. The legacy of the Journalism for New Generation Project is expected to persist, bolstering professional standards, enhancing media accountability, and contributing to a more informed, engaged public sphere in North Macedonia.

International Center for Journalists (ICFJ),
Meta.mk, Portalb.mk,
Vistinomer.mk



Debunking disinformation hindering waste management projects in North Macedonia and Albania

This cross-border investigation explored disinformation, corruption, and environmental risks tied to waste management projects in North Macedonia and Albania. In Sveti Nikole, a €40 million EU-supported regional landfill has faced over a decade of delays, blocked by local authorities and targeted by disinformation campaigns portraying it as a threat akin to "a new Chernobyl." In Fier and Elbasan, promised eco-

Period:

01.12.2023-30.06.2024

Donor: Journalism Fund Europe



<p>friendly incinerators became symbols of corruption, with high-ranking officials convicted or on the run, while garbage piles up.</p> <p>Journalists from Meta.mk and Faktoje uncovered how anti-EU narratives, political interference, and foreign malign influences obstruct much-needed reforms. The investigation produced a series of stories and videos exposing how misinformation and misuse of public funds undermine environmental progress, public health, and EU accession paths.</p> <p>Во Свети Николе нема да се гори ниту медицински, ниту опасен отпад – <i>Meta.mk, 08/04/2024</i></p> <p>This article debunks misinformation about the project, clearly stating that there are no plans to incinerate medical or hazardous waste at the landfill site in Sveti Nikole.</p> <p>Disinformation surrounding the project of the first regional landfill: Neither medical nor hazardous waste will be incinerated in Sveti Nikole – <i>Meta.mk, 08/04/2024</i></p> <p>The English version of the above article, emphasizing how disinformation is being used to undermine public trust in environmental projects.</p> <p>Регионална депонија во Свети Николе: Зошто да биде европска кога може да е дива – <i>Meta.mk, 09/05/2024</i></p> <p>This critical piece questions the implementation of the regional landfill project and highlights the risk of failing to meet EU environmental standards, potentially resulting in an unregulated and harmful site.</p> <p>Sharra në emergjencë, landfilli i tejmbushur me plehra – <i>Faktoje, 09/05/2024</i></p> <p>Reporting from Albania, this article describes the overflowing Sharra landfill in Tirana, presenting a cautionary tale of mismanagement that could mirror the concerns raised in Sveti Nikole.</p> <p>Emergency in Sharra, landfill overflowing with garbage – <i>Faktoje, 10/05/2024</i></p> <p>The English-language version of the article above, providing detailed context and imagery of the waste management crisis in Albania.</p> <p>Regional landfill in Sveti Nikole: why should it be European, when it can be illegal – <i>Meta.mk, 20/05/2024</i></p> <p>This follow-up analysis dives deeper into the governance issues and disinformation tactics surrounding the landfill project, calling for improved accountability and citizen engagement.</p>	<p>Partners:</p> <p>Faktoje Albania</p>
<p>Elections 24 Check - EFCSN</p>	<p>Period:</p> <p>15.12.2023-1.07.2024</p>

In collaboration with [Google News Initiative](#), the EFCSN has developed a [fact-checking database](#) focused on the [2024 European Elections](#), called Elections24Check.

Truthmeter.mk, fact-checking web site by the Metamorphosis Foundation contributed over 50 fact-checks and reports to the project and the database.

This first-of-its-kind database collects and categorizes political fact-checks, disinformation debunks, prebunking articles, and narrative reports on transcontinental trends reported by over 40 fact-checking organizations across Europe. The project emphasizes checks on claims made related to the 2024 European Elections. Users can search and filter for articles in different languages, relating to specific countries and political parties, and pertaining to certain topics, such as climate change and security and defense. The goal is to increase cross-country collaboration and act as a resource for European citizens.

Researchers and journalists can also request access to an in-depth data set for their own analysis.

Donor:
The European Fact-Checking Standards Network



Google News Initiative



Media, Money and Elections in North Macedonia

In collaboration with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) and with support from the UK Government's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the Metamorphosis Foundation implemented the project "Money, Media, and Elections in North Macedonia."

As part of the project, Metamorphosis conducted a pioneering study monitoring election-related reporting across 30 online news portals during the 2024 parliamentary elections. Between April 15 and May 10, 2024, over 13,645 election-related articles were analyzed, revealing a significant correlation between state-allocated campaign funding and biased reporting favoring the funding political coalition.

Meta.mk, part of the Metamorphosis Foundation, contributed two major investigative reports to the project, uncovering that political coalitions spent over €811,000 on advertising through more than 150 online portals. A follow-up investigation revealed that 40 of these portals did not have an impressum, highlighting issues of transparency and ownership in the media landscape.

To further advocate for transparency and accountability, Metamorphosis produced a [final monitoring report](#) with key findings and recommendations, three thematic policy briefs (on [political finance](#),



Period:
15.04.2024 – 28.02.2025

Donor:
UK Government's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)



Partner:
International Foundation for

<p>women's representation, and vulnerable groups' media coverage), and organized a two-day public event. In addition, Metamorphosis produced three video talk shows and held four journalist briefings to disseminate the findings and advocate for reforms.</p> <p>The project aimed to improve understanding of online political advertising practices, foster electoral stakeholders' compliance with regulatory frameworks, and support efforts to strengthen the online media environment during elections in North Macedonia.</p>	<p>Electoral Systems (IFES)</p> 
<p>Climate Facts Europe</p> <p>With the support of the European Climate Foundation, the Climate Facts Europe project aims to facilitate collaboration between fact-checking organisations for work related to climate misinformation and disinformation during the European Elections.</p> <p>The project was implemented by the European Fact-Checking Standards network, while the metamorphosis Foundation was one of the partners in the project. Journalists from the Truthmeter web site prepared 12 fact-checks covering different aspects of climate disinformation.</p> <p>The project also result in the publication of several in-depth reports about climate misinformation, analyzing data collected by participating members to provide a wider picture of trends observed pre- and post-elections.</p> <p>One of those reports was prepared by the Metamorphosis Foundation - an all encompassing regional report titled: Climate Conspiracies in the Western Balkans: Widely Imported and Persistently Repeated covering the state of climate disinformation in the region.</p>	<p>Period: 15.12.2023 - 31.07.2024</p> <p>Donor: The European Fact-Checking Standards Network</p>  <p>European Climate Foundation</p> 
<p>AI EU Elections Check</p> <p>With the support of Meta, the EFCSN conducted training sessions to help train fact-checkers across Europe on best practices, new techniques and essential tools for identifying AI generated and digitally altered content. The project also included a media literacy campaign to raise public awareness of how to spot this type of content.</p>	<p>Period: 01.03.2024-30.06.2024</p> <p>Donor: The European Fact-Checking Standards Network</p>

<p>Metamorphosis Foundation and the Truthmeter editors and journalists edited the literacy campaign materials in macedonian language (infographics and video) and promoted them on Meta on-line platforms.</p>	
<p>Meta 2024 EU Elections Fact-Checking Project</p> <p>During the 2024 EU Elections of the European Parliament the Truthmeter fact-checking web site prepared 26 fact-checks fact-checking false and manipulative content on the topic of EU elections and attacks on the European Union, whose goal was to influence the EU elections through disinformation.</p> <p>Additional benefit of this effort was the fact that at approximately the same time the national elections in North Macedonia also took place and content attacking EU and the EU elections also influenced Macedonian elections, mainly by causing damage to the pro-European players in the elections. By fact-checking this content, the damage such disinformation tried to cause was lowered, since the fact-checked content reach was diminished.</p>	<p>Period: 01.05.2024-30.06.2024</p> <p>Donor: Meta</p> 

Social Accountability Programme


Metamorphosis places strong emphasis on promoting social accountability as a core strategy to tackle governance challenges. By bridging the gap between citizens and decision-makers, this approach ensures that citizens’ concerns, needs, and priorities are effectively communicated to government officials with the authority and responsibility to enact meaningful change. Through this citizen-centric methodology, Metamorphosis advances the principles of transparent, inclusive, and participatory governance across local, national, and regional levels. This focus not only empowers communities to voice their concerns but also reinforces the responsiveness and accountability of governing bodies.

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS IN 2024

- Metamorphosis actively contributed to the creation and implementation of [Open Government Partnership National Action Plan 2024-2026](#) with 3 adopted commitments in the domain “fight against corruption” – advancing the transparency of government sessions, in the domain “participatory decision-making and civic participation” – advancing the public consultation quality at national level, also supporting the implementation of the commitment on determining a methodology for selecting tools for e-consultations and participative involvement of citizens in decision-making processes in municipalities, and in the domain “development and use of digital technologies” – digitalization of financial reporting of political parties.
- As part of the preparation of the Annual Work Program of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia for 2025, Metamorphosis submitted its [5 policy initiatives](#), including the initiative for establishing a [National Strategy for e-Services at the Local Level](#) and adopting the [Digital Agenda Observatory as a Self-Assessment Structure](#).
- Metamorphosis presented the [Analysis of e-services offered by municipalities in the North Macedonia](#) as a result of the research conducted by Metamorphosis for the third time (2014, 2021, 2023) which shows a general slow progress compared to the previous research, emphasizing that what has changed is more in terms of automation than a fundamental digital transformation from which we are still very far away from.
- Metamorphosis continued to enhance its watchdog role in order to increase the levels of transparency and accountability of state institutions. Through the Openness Index, Metamorphosis monitored the openness of a total of 37 institutions at the central level ([36 executive institutions](#) and the [Assembly](#)), and disseminated evidence-based recommendations through meetings, trainings and public events.
- Moreover, Metamorphosis invested continuous efforts in the capacity building and awareness raising of state institutions to respond effectively to the citizens’ needs which was done through a tailor-made training of 40 public administration representatives, meetings, public discussions and other activities. Based on the trainings but also advocacy, consultations and external support, combined with the institutions’ individual efforts in improving their openness, the following institutions achieved better scoring in the [monitoring in 2024](#) as opposed to the [monitoring in 2023](#): Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management (24.22% improvement, becoming the second most transparent institution in the Western Balkans and the second most open ministry in the country as opposed to the previous monitoring where they scored below the average ministerial openness level in North Macedonia), Public Procurement Bureau (19% improvement), Sanctions Enforcement Authority (13.57%), Financial Police Office (11.31% improvement), State Market Inspectorate (8.14% improvement), Ministry of Transport and Communications (7.65% improvement), State Sanitary and Health Inspectorate (7.59% improvement), Ministry of Culture (6.71% improvement), Ministry of Finance (5.41% improvement), State Technical Inspectorate (4.07% improvement), Ministry of Health and Ministry of Justice (3.92% improvement), Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (3.73% improvement), Assembly (3.3% improvement), Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning (2.98% improvement), Ministry of Local Self-Government (2.24% improvement), and the Ministry of Defense (1.12% improvement, becoming the most open institution in the Western Balkan).
- Metamorphosis gathered a 100 stakeholders on the hybrid conference “[Commitment to Openness for Long-Term Success](#)” who jointly discussed the state of play of institutional openness in North Macedonia at national level, as well as the recommendations for improvement.

- Additionally, through [two trainings for CSO representatives](#), Metamorphosis built the capacities of 35 CSO activists on using the right to access to public information, transparency of public sector institutions and open data, the integrity of public institutions and the role of CSOs in building the institutional integrity of public bodies, as well as strategic planning.
- Once again, Metamorphosis contributed to the systemic changes in local governance by [monitoring of the openness of all 81 local self-government units](#) in North Macedonia using the Openness Index methodology which revealed an increase in openness at local level from 27% in 2022 to 37% in 2024. More specifically, improvements in the openness can be seen in Kavadarci by 39%, Karbinci by 33%, Butel by 30%, Demir Kapija by 27%, Gazi Baba by 25%, Gradsko, Zelenikovo, Kichevo by 24%, Vinica by 21%, Kumanovo, Novaci by 20%, Zrnovci by 19%, Probishtip by 18%, Arachinovo, Gevgelija, Negotino by 17%, Dolneni, Kriva Palanka by 16%, Berovo, Delchevo, Demir Hisar, Mavrovo I Rostushe, Centar by 14%, Krivogashtani, Lipkovo, Strumica, Tearce, Tetovo, Shtip, Saraj by 13%, Makedonski Brod, Novo Selo, Cheshinovo-Obleshevo by 12%, Vrapchishte by 11%, Bitola, Bosilovo, Brvenica, Gostivar, Debar, Debrca, Dojran, Jegunovce, Pehchevo, Plasnica, Aerodrom by 10%, Vasilevo by 9%, Veles, Resen, Centar Zhupa, Karposh by 8%, Kratovo, Staro Nagorichane, Kisela Voda by 7%, Bogovinje by 6%, Ilinden, Makedonska Kamenica, Rankovce, Sveti Nikole, Gjorche Petrov by 5%, Lozovo, Chashka, Chucher Sandevo, Chair, the City of Skopje by 4%, Konche, Kochani, Shuto Orizari by 3%, Petrovec, Radovish by 2%, Bogdanci, Mogila, Vevchani by 1%.
- To further empower the local administration to independently assess the openness of their institution, Metamorphosis created [a bilingual self-evaluation checklist](#) and a methodology for mentoring support for strengthening their capacities based on which in 2025 and 2026 select eight LSGUs are going to be mentored.
- As a contribution to the discussion of openness of the local authorities and digitalization of services as a mechanism to combat corruption, Metamorphosis organised a hybrid [thematic forum “Engaged community for corruption resistance”](#). The forum was organised at the Civic Resource Center in Skopje, via ZOOM and Facebook live broadcast with over 800 views. The forum brought together 77 representatives from local self-governments, state institutions, CSOs, international organizations, media, faculties and students, to effectively tackle corruption by promoting inclusivity, engagement and cooperation.
- Metamorphosis continued to coordinate the new [CSO Network for Open Government Partnership](#) which represents a structure for coordinating the process of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in North Macedonia in line with international experience, with the aim of improving the communication of all involved parties and strengthening the monitoring and evaluation of the activities within the OGP.

The projects implemented within the Social Accountability programme during 2024 are presented in the following table.

<p>Leveraging technology to promote institutional accountability and transparency</p> <p>Through this initiative, Metamorphosis works on promoting the use of new technologies in fostering government transparency in Southeast Europe through the Openness Index. The Openness Index is a composite index measuring the openness of institutions and 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.</p>	 <p>Period: 01.10.2022 – 30.09.2024 01.11.2024 – 31.10.2026</p> <p>Donor: National Endowment for Democracy</p>
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This research is a strategic activity of the Social Accountability Programme monitoring institutions at the central level, including the state Assembly. 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. These findings are also supporting civil society from North Macedonia and the Western Balkan countries in strengthening their advocacy and demand for bigger accountability from their institutions. The Assessment of Good Governance in North Macedonia and the region through the Openness Index for 2024 for the Parliament is available [here](#) and for the Executive Government is available [here](#).

Within the framework of the project, Metamorphosis shared its findings and expertise at national and regional events talking about a bigger [commitment to openness for long-term success](#), the need for [a cohesive digital infrastructure based on open data](#) for achieving bigger transparency and supporting innovative solutions, the role of political will in the [freedom of expression and information in times of crisis and political turbulence](#), as well as [the lack of key information about the work of the governments in the region](#).

In line with Metamorphosis’ advocacy efforts, Metamorphosis conducted meetings with interested institutions among which also the **Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy** and **Ministry of Defense**, for discussing the specific Openness Index findings for both institutions and recommendations for their improvement, as well as promoting the [Proactive disclosure of information: Guidelines and practices](#). Thanks to this support, both institutions have significantly increased their openness ranking, the Ministry of Defense being the most open institution in the Western Balkans, while the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy becoming the second most transparent institution in the Western Balkans and the second most open ministry in the country as opposed to the previous monitoring where they scored below the average ministerial openness level.

Based on the key findings, in cooperation with journalists from Meta.mk News Agency, Metamorphosis worked on two journalistic stories, highlighting the issues of [the four new ministries being formed without public debate which further shook the trust in the institutions](#) and the boycott of [the Council for Cooperation with Civil Society which must work in the interest of the citizens](#).

Moreover, Metamorphosis was part of the [regional podcast](#) “How Governments communicate with the media and citizens” emphasizing that transparency is not centered only around publishing information about daily meetings of decision-makers, but also responding to journalists’ inquiries.

Partners:

- Center for Democratic Transition, Montenegro
- Why Not, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Partners for Democratic Change Serbia, Serbia

Transparency and accountability of state Institutions in the Republic of North Macedonia

Period:
01.01.2023 – 30.06.2024

Metamorphosis implemented this initiative in order to contribute to the processes of improving the active transparency of institutions at the central level. Through the project activities, Metamorphosis increased the access to public information and enabled bigger involvement of citizens in the decision making processes, also providing civil servants with better access to the tools and methods for improving openness in their institutions and strengthening their integrity.

This initiative enabled Metamorphosis to proceed to encourage a culture of institutional openness, build capacities in the public administration and empower citizens with knowledge and mechanism to demand greater accountability from institutions. This was achieved through the activities in continuation.

- On December 6th, 2023 the Government adopted the [“Transparency Strategy of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia and Action Plan 2023-2026”](#) whose co-creation was supported by Metamorphosis based on an a [Memorandum of cooperation](#) with the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of North Macedonia, in charge of good governance policies, Slavica Grkovska.
- In cooperation with journalists from Portalb and Meta.mk News Agency, Metamorphosis [prepared and published 12 journalistic in depth analysis](#) on topics of transparency and accountability in Albanian and Macedonian language, ensuring greater visibility and public understanding of the importance of these topics.
- Over 40 public administration representatives built their capacities through [two trainings on transparency and accountability](#) organised by Metamorphosis, while through additional two trainings, more than 30 CSO activists were trained on [obtaining access to public information and keeping the institutions accountable](#).
- Approximately 200 representatives of national and local institutions, civil society, media and citizens participated in two public debates on the [“Transparency Strategy of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia and Action Plan 2023-2026”](#) and the closing project conference “Commitment to openness for long-term success” where the findings from the Openness Index were presented.

To support the awareness raising on the need for a bigger institutional openness based on the Openness Index key findings, [20 infographics in Macedonian and Albanian language](#) were disseminated as part of a big social media campaign.

(DIGILOC) Digital transformation at local level – Engaged community for corruption resilience

The project aims at increasing active engagement of the local communities for greater resilience to corruption at local level. More specifically, it aims at promoting the openness of the local self-

Donor: Foundation Open Society - Macedonia



DIGILOC

government through improved cooperation between civil society organisations and citizens with local authorities, and increasing active civic involvement in decision-making through innovative digital tools.

During 2024, the project contributed to the systemic changes in local governance by monitoring of the openness of all 81 local self-government units (LSGUs) in North Macedonia using the Openness Index methodology which revealed an increase in openness at local level from 27% in 2022 to 37% in 2024. The monitoring was complemented with [a policy assessment](#) shared during a hybrid [thematic forum “Engaged community for corruption resistance”](#) with over 70 stakeholders, including an online awareness raising campaign consisted of infographics in Macedonian and Albanian language highlighting the key findings, and media presence.

The project empowered the LSGUs to independently assess the openness of their institution by creating [a bilingual self-evaluation checklist](#) which was promoted through [four online tailor-made meetings with over 30 representatives of LSGUs](#), enabling them to identify their weaknesses and strengths. The project also continued with the efforts of building the capacities of LSGUs in increasing their openness and in parallel decreasing the corruption at local level, through creating a “Methodology for mentoring support for strengthening the capacities of LSGUs” based on which in 2025 and 2026 select eight LSGUs are going to be mentored.

Through upgrading the digital platform [mCommunity](#) with new functionalities, including UX/UI upgrades and mechanisms for public consultations, and introducing new LSGUs for using this tool, the project established firm ground for enhancing the communication between the citizens and the local administration, supporting better public service delivery, public consultation processes and fostering a more inclusive and participatory decision-making.

Through two surveys, the project also inspected the [citizen perception on LSGUs’ openness](#) and the [local administration self-evaluation on the openness on their LSGUs](#).

In parallel, the project is actively contributing to different processes affecting the openness of LSGUs and anticorruption through participating in working groups, civic initiatives, meetings and events related to anti-corruption, free access to information, urban planning, open data, etc. also participating in the implementation of the Open Government Partnership National Action plan for 2024–2026.

In conclusion, this year the project has made strides in fostering open and accountable governance at the local level, demonstrating measurable improvements in municipal transparency and citizen participation. Its activities have laid the groundwork for long-term resilience against corruption and enhanced public trust in local institutions.

Period:

01.12.2023 – 30.09.2026

Donor: Swiss Government through Civica Mobilitas




Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

Partners:

- Rural Coalition
- Center for Social Innovations Blink 42-21

Public Record Resources

<p>Openness Index</p> <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>The research results of the Openness Index inform Metamorphosis' advocacy activities, including coaching for civil servants provided to support institutions to open up their data and processes.</p> <p>In 2024 this research project has been supported by Foundation Open Society Macedonia and the National Endowment for Democracy.</p>	 <p>index.actionsee.org otvoreneinstitucije.cdtmn.org</p> <p>Period: 01.01.2016 – ongoing</p> <p>Donors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- European Commission- National Endowment for Democracy- Foundation Open Society Macedonia
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Responsible Digital Transformation Programme

Through its “Responsible Digital Transformation” program, Metamorphosis drives the protection and advancement of human rights in the digital age. The Foundation empowers communities to navigate the rapid societal changes brought about by emerging technologies, while resisting anti-democratic forces that exploit digital vulnerabilities. By promoting ethical technology use, countering online hate speech, and defending freedom of expression, Metamorphosis fosters a safe, inclusive, and rights-based digital environment. This work strengthens digital resilience and ensures that technological progress upholds fundamental rights and democratic values.

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS IN 2024

- Together with a large array of CSOs and experts, Metamorphosis has called on the state delegations participating in the concluding session of the UN Ad Hoc Committee to ensure that the proposed [Cybercrime Convention](#) is narrowly focused on tackling cybercrime, and not used as a tool to undermine human rights.
- Metamorphosis developed an evidence-based [research on the effect of new technologies, with a particular focus on AI, on human rights](#) and [ethical standards for the protection of human rights in automated decision-making](#), both of which were used in advocating for the creation of policies and regulations for AI that protect human rights and dignity.
- Based on a tailor-made training curriculum, Metamorphosis built the capacities of 50 CSO activists from 42 CSOs from 6 planning regions working with marginalized groups through [three capacity-building trainings](#), building an informal coalition of empowered CSO foreseen to serve as an effective mechanism for further cooperation, creating synergies, providing resources and advocacy tools for raising issues related to human rights online in the public discourse.
- Metamorphosis co-organised the international [Internet Freedom Summit](#), together with relevant experts and practitioners from civil society, academia and media, advocating on [safeguarding humanity in a digital landscape](#), [digital equality and protection of human rights online in North Macedonia and the Western Balkans](#), and [the implementation of the Digital Service Act of the European Union and its impact on the Southeast region](#).
- Metamorphosis conducted a research during March and April 2024 with the aim of assessing the readiness of the public and civil sectors in North Macedonia for the adoption and implementation of regulations under the EU Digital Services Act (DSA) which resulted in the analysis [Towards a Feasible Implementation of the Digital Services Act in the Western Balkans: Study of the regulatory and institutional preparedness for harmonization with DSA in the Western Balkans](#) that elaborates on the readiness of Western Balkan countries for the harmonization of their national regulations with the EU's Digital Services Act and also provides practical examples from several EU member states.
- Metamorphosis published the text "[Misogyny with one click](#)" in the [German magazine Info Europa 2/2024 - "Navigieren durch die Datenflut" - IDM](#) raising awareness on the gender perspective of hate speech online in North Macedonia.
- As part of the preparation of the Annual Work Program of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia for 2025, Metamorphosis submitted its [5 policy initiatives](#), including the initiatives for creating a [National Strategy for Digital Literacy](#) and [harmonization with the EU Law on Digital Services](#).
- Metamorphosis supported the Nonprofit Cyber's campaign of "[More Than A Password Day](#)" raising awareness on the importance of stronger online authentication.
- Metamorphosis built the knowledge and awareness of over 30 CSOs and activists on digital safety and digital rights through two trainings. Moreover, through two public campaigns, Metamorphosis raised awareness on these issues, with specific focus on online security and the dangers of election interference and misinformation.
- Metamorphosis organised the 20th international e-Society conference on the topic "[Digital Transformation for Life](#)" marking the 20 years of the Foundation's existence and contribution to a secure, inclusive and efficient digital society. The conference gathered over 250 participants live and through ZOOM, and around 2800 views through Facebook Live streaming. The event featured diverse activities, including panel discussions, exhibitions, quizzes and presentations, fostering engagement among participants from institutional, civil and business sectors. This year, the conference addressed the topic of digital transformation through multiple panel discussions, exhibitions, quizzes, and presentations. Within the framework of the conference, the "Ilija Zhupanovski" Award for combating disinformation was also awarded for the first time.

The projects implemented within the Responsible Digital Transformation in 2024 are presented in the following table:

<p>Human Rights Protection in the Age of Artificial Intelligence</p> <p>Through this project, Metamorphosis gave its contribution in shaping AI policies and regulatory frameworks that uphold human rights online. More specifically, Metamorphosis worked on raising public awareness of the challenges and risks imposed by adopting upcoming strategic framework and related legislation related to AI to human rights online, and supported the policy development in North Macedonia, in the area of protection of online privacy and other human rights online.</p> <p>The project resulted in an evidence-based research on the effect of new technologies, with a particular focus on AI, on human rights and ethical standards for the protection of human rights in automated decision-making. Both of these products were used in advocating for the creation of policies and regulations for AI that protect human rights and dignity.</p> <p>Based on a tailor-made training curriculum, Metamorphosis built the capacities of 50 CSO activists from 42 CSOs from 6 planning regions working with marginalized groups through three capacity-building trainings, building an informal coalition of empowered CSO foreseen to serve as an effective mechanism for further cooperation, building synergies and providing resources, advocacy tools and methodologies for raising issues related to human rights online in the public discourse.</p> <p>Moreover, Metamorphosis launched an educational campaign that consisted of seven in-depth explanatory media articles with the aim to further exploit the benefits of new technologies and demand protection of their human rights online and raising citizens' awareness in the area of human rights online protection. This campaign also became part of the Internet Freedom Platform where Metamorphosis raised awareness through approximately 20 articles on topics related to human rights online.</p> <p>Co-organising the international Internet Freedom Summit, together with relevant experts and practitioners from civil society, academia and media, Metamorphosis advocated on safeguarding humanity in a digital landscape, digital equality and protection of human rights online in North Macedonia and the Western Balkans, and the</p>	<p>Period: 01.08.2023 - 14.06.2024</p> <p>Donor: American Bar Association – Rule of Law Initiative</p> 
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[implementation of the Digital Service Act of the European Union and its impact on the Southeast region.](#)

Growth and Digital Rights: Ensuring the Integration of the Western Balkans into the Digital Single Market

The project aims at advancing digital rights standards in the Western Balkan region and contributing to its successful integration into the Digital Single Market. More specifically, it aims at:

- developing and utilizing joint advocacy strategy for adequate alignment and protection of human rights in digital context, focusing on multi-stakeholder approach.
- increasing capacities of civil society, media organizations and relevant state actors in Western Balkan 6 (WB6) for engaging in digital rights-related regulatory processes and monitoring the implementation of relevant legislation.
- raising awareness and fostering dialogue and exchange among public, private and civil society actors on digital rights issues, focusing on impact of Digital Services Act (DSA) and Digital Markets Act (DMA) to digital rights in WB6.

In September 2024, the CSOs Strategic Planning Workshop in Belgrade brought together representatives from the six partner organizations to exchange ideas on project implementation and design a [joint advocacy approach](#) aimed at citizens, state and non-state actors. The analysis [Towards a Feasible Implementation of the Digital Services Act in the Western Balkans: Study of the regulatory and institutional preparedness for harmonization with DSA in the Western Balkans](#) - which elaborates on the readiness of Western Balkan countries for the harmonization of their national regulations with the EU's Digital Services Act and also provides practical examples from several EU member states - served as a foundation for selecting priority areas for advocacy interventions at the regional level. The workshop effectively advanced the project's objectives by fostering collaborative efforts and laying the groundwork for coordinated advocacy initiatives.

Based on an open call, a team of researchers was selected for conducting research on the implications of the DSA on CSOs and investigative journalists in North Macedonia was announced. The research is an in-depth analysis that will explore the potential implications of implementation of DSA on civil society organizations and investigative journalism outlets in North Macedonia; DSA legislation and its relevance to North Macedonia's political context; and the current position of civil society and investigative journalism in the country. The research findings will be instrumental in shaping the content of upcoming training session for CSOs and media

Period: 15.06.2024 – 14.06.2025

Donor: Open Society Foundations – Western

OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS
WESTERN BALKANS

Balkans

Partners:

- Partners Serbia (Serbia)
- Why not? (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- NVO 35 mm (Montenegro)
- Women in Tech Kosovo (Kosovo)
- Institute for Democracy and Mediation (Albania)



<p>organizations, focusing on participation in regulatory processes and monitoring of DSA and DMA, highlighting the importance of effective mechanisms enabling citizens to exercise and protect their rights. The findings will also feed into a capacity-building event on DSA and DMA for relevant institutions.</p> <p>As part of the 20th International Conference e-Society.mk “Digital Transformation for Life”, a panel “Digital Society — What’s The Point?” brought together speakers from the institutional, civil and business sectors to discuss their roles and practices in creating a digital society that benefits all citizens. Key topics included the evolution of the e-society in North Macedonia, ethical considerations in technology use and the balance between responsible technological development and potential abuses. Panelists shared insights on future technological challenges and solutions, addressing the importance of civic, corporate and institutional responsibility in shaping digital society.</p> <p>Furthermore, translating the section of the analysis “Towards a Feasible Implementation of the Digital Services Act in the Western Balkans - Study of the Regulatory and Institutional Preparedness for Harmonization with DSA in the Western Balkans” dedicated to North Macedonia into Macedonian has made the analysis more accessible to the general public, raising awareness about DSA and its implications for North Macedonia.</p>	
<p>Greater Internet Freedom</p> <p>Through this initiative, Metamorphosis built the knowledge and awareness of CSOs, activists and citizens with a focus on youth, on digital safety and digital rights, through two trainings and two public campaigns.</p> <p>The Digital Safety training was used to build the capacities of 15 CSOs and activists from North Macedonia on how to protect themselves from cyber-crime by understanding the history of cyber-crime and its consequences. The training was accompanied by a Digital Safety and Security campaign consisted of 42 graphic solutions which empowered CSOs with crucial knowledge and tools to protect themselves from online threats. The campaign covered topics such as phishing scams, malware, and the importance of strong passwords and two-factor authentication, directly contributing to enhancing the digital security posture of the CSOs.</p> <p>The Digital Rights Campaign aimed at young first-time voters in North Macedonia addressed how disinformation can mess with democratic practices like voting, was implemented with animated graphic videos to highlight the dangers of election interference and misinformation. By focusing on first-time voters and educating them about</p>	<p>Period: 13.12.2023 – 12.07.2024</p> <p>Donor: Internews</p> 

<p>disinformation, the campaign helped them better understand how to protect their vote and stay informed. Additionally, through the Digital Rights training Metamorphosis built the capacities of 17 participants, mostly youth from media and CSOs about their digital rights, especially in the Western Balkans, focusing on privacy and safety. They learned how to protect their privacy online, tweak social media privacy settings, and use tools to stay safe, as well as how to handle being harassed or bullied online. The training also covered freedom of speech and the right to access open data, giving everyone a well-rounded understanding of their digital rights.</p>	
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Public Record Resources

<p>Digital first aid kit</p> <p>With the support of the Information Safety & Capacity (ISC) Project within the Digital Security project, Metamorphosis launched and maintains the first aid resource center – digitalfirstaid.mk. This is a localized and adapted version in Macedonian and Albanian of the original English language site (digitalfirstaid.org). This resource center contains instructions that interactively lead the user toward appropriate responses in case of losing a device, problems logging in, unavailability of the website or online harassment, and other issues.</p>	<p>digitalfirstaid.mk</p>
<p>Е-училница (azlp.mk)</p> <p>With the support of the Delegation of the European Union in North Macedonia and in partnership with the Personal Data Protection Agency, Metamorphosis created and launched the privacy educational tool e-ucilnica as a resource hub for everyone interested in protecting their personal data. This tool became an integral part of the website of the Personal Data Protection Agency.</p>	<p>Е-училница (azlp.mk)</p>

Awareness raising and advocacy

- Filip Stojanovski, Partnership and Resource Development Director, was a guest in the [program of TV24](#) on the topic of the impact of artificial intelligence systems on society and education.
- Meri Jordanovska, Deputy Editor-in-chief of News Agency Meta.mk, was a guest in the [morning program of TV Telma](#) and explained how to recognize AI generated fake content on social media.
- Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, was a guest the [morning programme of MRT “Makedonija Nautro”](#) on the topic of the impact of artificial intelligence on human rights.
- Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, was a guest at the [Sitel Daily News](#) segment on the topic of openness of local self-government units.
- Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, was [interviewed by Innovativnost.mk](#) on the topic of the impact of artificial intelligence on human rights.
- Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, was [interviewed by Radio Slobodna Evropa](#) and [Frontline.mk](#) on the factors behind the slow digitalization pace in North Macedonia.
- Danche Danilovska-Bajdevska, Programme director, was [interviewed by Radio Slobodna Evropa](#) on digitalization as a key mechanism on combating corruption.
- As part of the Greater Internet Freedom consortium, Metamorphosis contributed to the preparation of the [Global Digital Compact](#) with specific input on “Governing emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence, for humanity”, in the direction of ensuring ethical standards in the creation and use of new technologies for the preservation of human rights, fostering public awareness and education, multi-stakeholder dialogue, establishing mechanisms on addressing the impact of generative AI on human rights and democratic institutions, among other things.
- Metamorphosis also contributed to other elements of the Global Digital Compact, advocating for the inclusion of marginalized groups such as the elderly and people with disabilities in digital safety measures, addressing misinformation and malinformation, promoted digital literacy and ethics through formal and non-formal education, capacity-building for policymakers and legal professionals, combating cybercrime while upholding fundamental rights, enhancing e-government services and acknowledging the digital divides faced by people with disabilities.
- Bardhyl Jashari, Executive director, participated at panel “AI and disinformation” as part of the [Cyber Zero Conference](#) in Prishtina, highlighting the instances where AI was employed to spread disinformation, particularly during elections, and emphasizing the increasing sophistication of such tactics.
- Goran Rizaov, Programme manager, participated in the fourth annual Conference [“Privacy Week”](#) organised by Partners for Democratic Change Serbia in Belgrade, in the opening panel titled [“Choose privacy – the role of personal data in a global election year”](#) tackling the threats of deepfake audio and video in the context of changing public perception in election campaigns.
- In collaboration with the National Youth Council of Macedonia and in the premises of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office, Metamorphosis conducted [a workshop for young women and girls against online harassment and cyberbullying](#), equipping youth with the knowledge and skills to understand, prevent, and respond to online harassment, particularly in the era of AI. Through interactive exercises and open dialogue, the youth explored the dynamics of cyberbullying, its disproportionate impact on women and marginalized communities, and the importance of digital literacy and responsible digital citizenship. The event fostered practical solutions and advocacy for creating a safer online environment for all.
- Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, and Despina Kovachevska, Media monitoring specialist, prepared the text [“Misogyny with one click”](#) which was published in the

[German magazine Info Europa 2/2024 - "Navigieren durch die Datenflut" - IDM](#) raising awareness on the gender perspective of hate speech online in North Macedonia.

- Marijana Jancheska, Openness and Engagement Specialist, was part of the [Constitutive session of the Council for Coordination and Monitoring of the Open Government Partnership Process 2024-2026](#).
- Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, was part of the [EU Civil Society Forum for the Western Balkans and Türkiye](#) held in Belgrade.
- Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, participated at the [CIVICA grantees' meeting with the Ambassador of Switzerland](#) aimed at encouraging dialogue on the challenges civil society faces and strengthening the cooperation between different projects supported by Switzerland.
- Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, participated in the panel discussion on "[Building a cohesive digital infrastructure for the development of advanced public finance](#)" organised by the National Convention for the European Union in the Republic of North Macedonia as part of the Working group on Anti-corruption. Through this panel Metamorphosis advocated for the use of open data as a critical component for achieving transparent and inclusive digital transformation, emphasizing that public institutions should make data freely accessible to citizens as to enhance transparency and innovation, particularly in the development of AI-driven solutions in the public sector.
- Danche Danilovska-Bajdevska, Programme director, participated at the panel on "[Freedom of expression and information in times of crisis and political turbulence](#)" as part of the regional transparency conference "The future of free access to information" organised in Belgrade by Partners for Democratic Change Serbia, where she highlighted the key role that the political will plays in increasing the openness of institutions.
- Danche Danilovska-Bajdevska, Programme director, participated in the Dialogue between the Government and the Civil Society Sector on the topic of "Rule of Law, Good Governance and the Fight against Corruption", discussing the key priorities of CSOs in these fields.
- Danche Danilovska-Bajdevska, Programme director, participated at the two-day conference titled "[Parliamentary Openness and Monitoring in the Western Balkans](#)" organised in Sarajevo by the National Democratic Institute, aimed at fostering dialogue on parliamentary integrity and independence in the Western Balkans, exchanging experiences on open parliaments and monitoring practices, identifying measurement gaps, and promoting networking among parliamentary monitoring organizations.
- Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, and Ildir Luma, Programme assistant, were part of the [CIVICA Communication workshop](#).
- Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, spoke at the National Conference on the Implementation of Roma Inclusion Policies, highlighting the need [for digital inclusion of all categories of citizens, especially marginalized communities](#), by providing opportunities for digital literacy and equitable access to digital infrastructure.
- Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, spoke at the [Media Literacy Days at the panel "Ethics in Artificial Intelligence"](#) together with Prof. Dr. Anis Sefidanis, emphasizing that the path to responsible use of artificial intelligence is a collective effort in which the protection of human rights must be ensured.
- Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, was a speaker at the regional conference "[Public Policy Making Process: Participation, Transparency, Accountability](#)" where the main conclusion was that the region lacks key information about the work of governments.
- At the invite of the Municipality of Kisela Voda, Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, contributed to the creation of the [Local Open Government Partnership Action Plan 2024 – 2028 of the Municipality of Kisela Voda](#) with a focus on strengthening the transparency

of the municipality and increasing the digital participation of citizens in the processes of the municipality.

- Dance Danilovska-Bajdevska, Programme director, participated in meetings of the working groups for amending the Law on Prevention of Corruption and Conflict of Interest and the Law on Free Access to Public Information.
- At the invite of the global initiative Open Government Partnership and the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA), Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, was a speaker at the regional conference "Strengthening Open Government: OGP Meeting for the Western Balkans" in Tirana, at the panel "[Advancing Digital Governance in OGP Areas](#)" where she highlighted the opportunities and risks brought by new technologies, especially artificial intelligence, in the context of digital governance.
- As part of its Internship initiative, Metamorphosis Foundation supported Atdhe Lila from the Institute for Technology and Society (Kosovo) in conducting research on the [Effects of Artificial Intelligence on Human Rights with a Special Focus on Kosovo](#).
- Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, was part of the event "[Openness and Monitoring of Parliaments in the Western Balkans](#)" organised by the National Democratic Institute in Tirana.
- Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, was part of the [national and regional laboratory for youth, media literacy and digitalization](#), organized by the NGO Infocenter, aimed at gathering young activists, experts, policymakers and practitioners to discuss, identify, and propose efficient and effective ways of including the needs of youth in the policies of the Western Balkan countries.
- Dance Danilovska-Bajdevska, Programme director, participated was part of the [National Conference of Civil Society Organizations – National Forum of Civica Mobilitas](#), where she shared the CSOs concerns related to the process of digital transformation and the Government plans for the implementation of digital tools that will increase citizen participation and enable monitoring of the progress of public policies.
- Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, and Marijana Jancheska, Openness and Engagement Specialist, were part of the [CARGrow program](#) organised by the Prespa Institute, which aims to encourage the formation of an alliance of civil society organizations and networks that, through trainings and workshops, will acquire knowledge and skills for monitoring the implementation of the Reform Agenda of the Republic of North Macedonia (2024-2027).
- Dance Danilovska-Bajdevska, Programme director, and Mila Josifovska Danilovska, Programme manager, were part of the CIVICA network meeting together with representatives of 58 civil society organisations.