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**FINANCE** **THINK**  
OUT OF THE BOX

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**PROGRAM OF  
ACTIVITIES** **2022**

This document presents the program of activities of the Economic research & policy Institute “Finance Think” Skopje for the calendar year 2022. The plan is structured around four pillars of Institute’s work:

- research,
- analytics,
- advocacy and communication;
- and capacity building and networking.

# 1. RESEARCH

Research activities for 2022 have been planned as follows:

## 1. FISCAST Network: Enhancing dialogue for higher municipal transparency, with focus on para-fiscal charges

The overall objective of the project is to strengthen FISCAST network's monitoring of and partnering with local stakeholders on LSGUs' financial transparency, with reference to para-fiscal charges. This overarching aim is broken down into specific objectives involving concrete interventions on four fronts:

- To enhance capacities of local CSOs and of the FISCAST Network to become active stakeholders in the municipal financial transparency processes;
- To improve municipal budget and para-fiscal charges transparency;
- To establish evidence-based, multi-stakeholder policy dialogue for monitoring of financial transparency and building effective municipal policies;
- To increase public awareness about the benefit that higher transparency, accountability and sustainability have for citizens and businesses, in their roles and capacities to act at the local level.

## 2. Interactive and multi-stakeholder mechanism for tracking fulfillment of economy-related political promises

The aim of the project is to promote monitoring and measurement of economic goals and results of political-government programs, by using evidence, findings and data and by encouraging multi-stakeholder engagement. The action will achieve the following results:

- A framework for measuring

economic goals and results has been set, in the context of political and governmental programs, through the use of evidence, findings and data;

- Skills have been developed for stakeholders to critically analyze the possible and achieved results of political promises in the area of economics;
- Stakeholders enrich public discourse through critical, argumentative and lively debate on the feasibility, results and cost of political promises in the economy.

## 3. Budget for all: Citizen consultations to create a budget according to local needs

The aim of the project is to involve all residents of the municipality of Krushevo in the process of creating the local budget.

## 4. Rapid assessment of the impact of Covid-19 on selected local programs and support local planning and budgeting in response to the immediate socio-economic needs of women and men

The objective of this project is to provide support in the development of rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on selected local programmes and support local planning and budgeting in response to the immediate socio-economic needs of women and men. The project will result in short gender budget policy analysis for each LSGU separately, with included assessment of the LSGUs response interventions from gender perspective, as well as policy and recommendations for improving the gender-budgeting process in the post-Covid-19 period.

## 5. V4 support to promote WB6 Common Regional Market: one market for post-COVID recovery

The project focuses on sharing experiences, transferring knowledge and recommending further regional economic integration through development of the WB6 Common Regional Market using experiences from ex-CEFTA and V4 after integration into the EU single market.

## **6. Data analysis and report on Balkan Barometer 2022**

The objective of the project is to conduct a data analysis and contribute to the underlying report on Balkan Barometer 2022.

## **7. Gender-responsive planning at local level: The case of Prilep and Krushevo**

The overall objective of the action is to encourage gender-responsive planning that responds to the different needs of women and men at local level. The action will be aimed at including gender in the programming through concrete interventions on three fronts:

1) Improving the accountability of local governments in implementing their commitments to gender equality, 2) Empowering local women and men to express their needs and priorities through the process of participative planning, and 3) Strengthening local stakeholders with capacities for monitoring the gender-responsive planning process.

## **8. Exploratory analysis of women and men in North Macedonia**

The aim of the project is to identify trends in a series of indicators for women and men in North Macedonia, as well as to identify gaps in gender statistics.

TABLE PRESENTING STAGES AND DEADLINES

| Activity                                                                                                             | Stage                                                                                                 | Planned tasks                                                                                                                                                        | Deadline   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 1. <b>FISCAST Network: Enhancing dialogue for higher municipal transparency, with focus on para-fiscal charges</b>   | Selected 21 municipalities that will be part of the project                                           | Preparing 18 local policy studies on financial transparency                                                                                                          | July 2023  |
|                                                                                                                      | Building capacities of local stakeholders on issues related to financial transparency                 | Preparing 2 national policy studies on financial transparency and accountability and local para-fiscal charges                                                       |            |
|                                                                                                                      | Collecting financial data for all municipalities in the country                                       | Building web-site on local para-fiscal charges                                                                                                                       |            |
|                                                                                                                      | Collecting data on para-fiscal charges in the selected municipalities                                 | Upgrading www.fiscast.mk with data on local budgets of 80 municipalities<br>Preparing visual products and publications for increasing public awareness and knowledge |            |
| 2. <b>Interactive and multi-stakeholder mechanism for tracking fulfillment of economy-related political promises</b> | A measurement framework with economic goals and results is built                                      | Media participation on current economic issues<br>Updating the interactive mechanism                                                                                 | May 2022   |
|                                                                                                                      | A Delphi questionnaire for economic consensus is conducted                                            |                                                                                                                                                                      |            |
|                                                                                                                      | Conducting training with stakeholders                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                      |            |
|                                                                                                                      | Mentoring economic program and texts<br>Producing interactive tools                                   |                                                                                                                                                                      |            |
| 3. <b>Budget for all: Citizen consultations to create a budget according to local needs</b>                          | Building capacities of the local citizens to participate at the budget creating process               | Preparing policy study and brief<br>Organizing final event to present the findings of the participatory budgeting in the rural areas of Krushevo                     | April 2022 |
|                                                                                                                      | Increasing awareness and knowledge on the opportunities to involve in the process                     |                                                                                                                                                                      |            |
|                                                                                                                      | Organizing mutual meetings between local authorities and citizens to discuss the needs and priorities |                                                                                                                                                                      |            |

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
|    |                                                                                                                                                                                          | Desk analysis of all local programs to categorize the activities directed toward improving gender equality at local level                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                |
| 4. | <b>Rapid assessment of the impact of Covid-19 on selected local programs and support local planning and budgeting in response to the immediate socio-economic needs of women and men</b> | Interviews with local representatives of the Equal Opportunities Commission to understand the process of creating gender responsive activities<br><br>Focus groups with local citizens to understand their need and usage on the available local measures for increasing gender equality | Preparing 5 policy studies<br>Preparing 5 info-graphs for raising awareness                                                                                                                            | March 2022     |
| 5. | <b>V4 support to promote WB6 Common Regional Market: one market for post-COVID recovery</b>                                                                                              | Collecting data on regional integration                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Preparing policy study                                                                                                                                                                                 | September 2022 |
| 6. | <b>Data analysis and report on Balkan barometer 2022</b>                                                                                                                                 | Not started yet                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Preparing report                                                                                                                                                                                       | May 2022       |
| 7. | <b>Gender-responsive planning at local level: The case of Prilep and Krushevo</b>                                                                                                        | Analysing the local programs for 2022                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Conducting interviews with representatives of the Equal Opportunities Commission<br>Conducting focus groups with citizens<br>Preparing policy study and brief<br>Organizing awareness-raising campaign | January 2023   |

|    |                                                                 |                                                                                            |                                         |               |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------|
| 8. | <b>Exploratory analysis of women and men in North Macedonia</b> | Collecting and analysing data from the annual publication Women and Men in North Macedonia | Preparing final report and infographics | February 2022 |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------|

|     |                                                                        |                                                                    |                                                             |              |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 13. | <b>Employment diagnostics in the municipalities of North Macedonia</b> | Collected data sets on labor supply and demand in 9 municipalities | Preparing 9 policy brief on the labor market at local level | January 2021 |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|



## 2. ANALYTICS

The following analytical activities have been planned for 2022:

1. Delivering 4 issues of the Macro-monitor – the macro-observer of the national economy with a forward looking elements;
2. Delivering at least 3 FT Comments – a commentary of important national and international documents, reports, strategies and so on, concerning North Macedonia;
3. Delivering few issues of FT Opinion – a condensed and swift reaction to the moves of the daily economic policy and trends;
4. Producing visual products: at least 15 Info-graphs, 40 graphs and 3 Let's chat economics on 'hot' economic topics;
5. Improving the economic datasets to be available for analysis purposes by the other NGOs and other interested parties, and presenting those data in an easily understandable format for non-economists;

TABLE PRESENTING STAGES AND DEADLINES

| Activity                      | Stage   | Planned tasks                                                          | Deadline               |
|-------------------------------|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>1. Macro-monitor</b>       | Ongoing | Devising 4 issues                                                      | Continuously over 2022 |
| <b>2. FT Comment</b>          | Ongoing | Devising at least 3 issues                                             | Continuously over 2022 |
| <b>3. FT Opinion</b>          | Ongoing | Devising few issues                                                    | Continuously over 2022 |
| <b>4. Visual products</b>     | Ongoing | Devising at least 10 info-graphs, 40 graphs and 3 Let's chat economics | Continuously over 2022 |
| <b>5. Improving data-sets</b> | Ongoing | Improving the datasets                                                 | Continuously over 2022 |



### 3. ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION

The following advocacy and communication activities have been planned for 2022:

1. Continuous publication of research results and findings in form of articles in international peer-reviewed journals; monographs; chapters in books and so on;
2. Devising at least five policy briefs on issues pertinent to the economic development in North Macedonia and stemming out of current research – so as to advocate for innovative solutions

and to educate citizens on their potential contribution in solving the problems;

3. Production of videos on the local financial transparency;
4. Organization of a closing events on the project “Budget for all: Local consultations in Krushevo”
5. Organization of economic forum about the current economic situation in North Macedonia;
6. Organizing interactive event to disseminate the publication prepared within the project on gender-responsive budgeting in Prilep and Krushevo;
7. Advocating (“fighting for”) for more space for economic news in the media by stronger links with them.



TABLE PRESENTING STAGES AND DEADLINES

|    | Activity                          | Stage           | Planned tasks                                                                                                           | Deadline               |
|----|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. | <b>International publications</b> | Ongoing         | Articles, monographs, chapters in books                                                                                 | Continuously over 2022 |
| 2. | <b>Policy briefs</b>              | Ongoing         | Devising at least 3 issues                                                                                              | Continuously over 2022 |
| 3. | <b>Video</b>                      | Not started yet | Creating video                                                                                                          | October 2022           |
| 4. | <b>Closing events</b>             | Not started yet | Organization of final event to present the results of the project related to the participative budgeting at local level | April 2022             |
| 5. | <b>Economic forum</b>             | Not started yet | Organization of high-level economic forum                                                                               | April 2022             |
| 6. | <b>Interactive event</b>          | Not started yet | Organizing event to disseminate the publications                                                                        | August 2022            |
| 7. | <b>Media</b>                      | Ongoing         | Increasing the presence in media                                                                                        | Continuously over 2022 |

## 4. CAPACITY BUILDING AND NETWORKING

The following capacity building activities have been planned for 2022:

1. Participation in at least two international conferences to present results of ongoing projects and/or to build network with international researchers;
2. Participation at domestic conference, round tables, forums and other similar events, so as to present ongoing research and build networks with domestic researchers, other NGOs, government representatives and media;
3. Participation on public consultation
4. Study visits of organizations, institutions and CSOs from Slovenia and Montenegro, for networking and establishing cooperation;
5. Networking with citizens, CSOs, business community, local government, Mayor and media within the project on local fiscal transparency and para-fiscal charges;
6. Initiating cooperation (leading to Memos of understanding) with reputable domestic institutions and other NGOs conducting similar or complementary activities;
7. Participation at seminars for equipping with advocacy skills and research methods;
8. Securing a referent literature, mainly research methods and econometrics.

TABLE PRESENTING STAGES AND DEADLINES

|    | Activity                                                       | Stage           | Planned tasks                                                       | Deadline               |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. | <b>International conference participation</b>                  | Not started yet | Participate on at least two conferences                             | Continuously over 2022 |
| 2. | <b>Domestic conference / round table participation</b>         | Not started yet | Participate on at least three events                                | Continuously over 2022 |
| 3. | <b>Public consultations</b>                                    | Ongoing         | Participate to public consultations on important economic issues    | Continuously over 2022 |
| 4. | <b>Meeting with organizations from Slovenia and Montenegro</b> | Ongoing         | Meeting with organization and institutions                          | June 2022              |
| 5. | <b>Networking with municipalities</b>                          | Ongoing         | Networking with citizens, business sector, CSOs, Mayor, local media | Continuously over 2022 |
| 6. | <b>Trainings</b>                                               | Ongoing         | Attend seminars for advocacy and research skills                    | Continuously over 2022 |
| 7. | <b>Literature</b>                                              | Ongoing         | Securing relevant literature                                        | Continuously over 2022 |

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