

PROGRAM OF
ACTIVITIES



This document presents the program of activities of the Economic Research & Policy Institute “Finance Think” Skopje for the calendar year 2023. 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 2023 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. 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:

- Improving the accountability of local

governments in implementing their commitments to gender equality;

- Empowering local women and men to express their needs and priorities through the process of participative planning
- Strengthening local stakeholders with capacities for monitoring the gender-responsive planning process.

3. The perfect storm: Food and energy insecurities threaten the economies of the Western Balkan

The main goal of the project is to generate evidence and foster a policy dialogue for the food and energy insecurities in the Western Balkan economies pertinent to four key fronts: household livelihoods, firms' competitiveness, fiscal space and the regional integration. The specific objectives include:

- To employ and empower the WEBecon network with respect to the national and regional policymaking processes on food- and energy-related policies, by generating evidence on the effects of the crisis on the WB economies and on the regional integration;
- To enhance the policy dialogue and cooperation on energy and food supply security, by creating space for wide stakeholders' consultations and networking at the regional level;
- To increase the public awareness for the importance, consequences of and solutions to the food and energy crisis, including through regional approaches.

4. Action on the move: Monitoring, assessment and proposals for anti-crisis measures in conditions of a tight budget

The general goal of the action is to analyse and monitor budget spending for anti-crisis measures, at the national and local level, and to propose modification and/or new measures in conditions of an emphasized need for rationalization of public money spending. The specific objectives include:

- To analyse and monitor budget spending for existing anti-crisis measures, in three segments: 1) measures to protect the standard of citizens, at the national and local level, 2) measures to help companies, 3) measures in the area of agriculture and security food, and in the context of effective and efficient spending of public money;
- To make proposals for the modification of existing and new measures, based on the need for their targeting and for the rationalization of budget spending in conditions of “expensive money”;
- To raise public awareness of the need for fiscal consolidation and rational spending of public money in the face of multiple crises.

5. Knowledge, measures and policy dialogue for child protection from the food and energy crisis and a sustainable design of policies related to multi-dimensional child poverty

The primary objective of the project is to generate evidence about the impact of the food and energy crisis on overall and child poverty, as well as food and energy poverty, which will be used as a background for designing a roadmap for policy measures at national level. The secondary objective of the project is to increase capacities of the State Statistical Office for multidimensional child-poverty routine measurement and monitoring, to establish a multi-dimensional stakeholder mechanism for designing more coherent policies and to increase stakeholders’ knowledge and awareness for the importance of multi-dimensional policy approach.

6. Open Balkan: Free regional movement of labor in conditions of shortage of qualified workers?

The goal of the project is to assess how the free movement of (skilled) labor in the Open Balkan Initiative will affect the labor market in North Macedonia, and thus to encourage a reasoned debate and adjustment of policies to maximize benefits and minimize risks. Specific objectives include:

- Generating knowledge about how the free movement of (skilled) labor included in the Open Balkan Initiative will affect the labor market in the country;
- Encouraging evidence-based public debate about the benefits and challenges of the issue;
- Contribution to economic policies related to the labor market and bilateral social security agreements, in the context of the implementation of the requirements of this Initiative.

7. Initiative for more inclusive democracy for marginalized groups

The initiative aims to make participatory democracy more inclusive for young people, women and displaced persons (including refugees, immigrants and internally displaced persons). The activities of the initiative include:

- Workshops and in-person convening among People Powered member organizations to identify best practices for making participatory democracy inclusive;
- Creation of online courses and resource materials to help organizations implement the best practices;
- Development of multimedia stories that bring to life the human impact of this work, to persuade more governments and organizations to make participation more inclusive.

TABLE PRESENTING STAGES AND DEADLINES

Activity	Stage	Planned tasks	Deadline
1. FISCAST Network: Enhancing dialogue for higher municipal transparency, with focus on para-fiscal charges	Selected 21 municipalities that will be part of the project		
	Building capacities of local stakeholders on issues related to financial transparency		
	Collecting financial data for all municipalities in the country	Optimization of local para-fiscal charges according project's findings	
	Collecting data on para-fiscal charges in the selected municipalities	Building web-site on local para-fiscal charges	
	Preparing 18 local policy studies on financial transparency	Preparing visual products and publications for increasing public awareness and knowledge	July 2023
	Preparing 2 national policy studies on financial transparency and accountability and local para-fiscal charges	Organizing economic forum for presenting project's findings and outputs	
	Upgrading www.fiscast.mk with data on local budgets of 80 municipalities		
2. Gender-responsive planning at local level: The case of Prilep and Krushevo	Analysing the local programs for 2022	Preparing policy study and brief	
	Conducting interviews with representatives of the Equal Opportunities Commission	Organizing workshop on gender-responsive local planning and budgeting	February 2023
	Conducting focus groups with citizens	Organizing awareness-raising campaign	
3. The perfect storm: Food and energy insecurities threaten the economies of the Western Balkan	Not started yet	Generating evidence on the impact of the crisis on the Western Balkans economy	
		Organizing consultative processes with national and regional stakeholders	January 2025
		Organizing awareness-raising campaign	

4.	Action on the move: Monitoring, assessment and proposals for anti-crisis measures in conditions of a tight budget	Not started yet	Analyzing local and national programs and budgets Preparing three analysis Conducting focus groups with target citizens Conducting interviews with key stakeholders Organizing awareness-raising campaign	October 2023
5.	Knowledge, measures and policy dialogue for child protection from the food and energy crisis and a sustainable design of policies related to multi-dimensional child poverty	Generating evidence on the impact of food and energy crisis on child poverty	Organizing capacity-building activities for representatives of State Statistical Office	January 2024
6.	Open Balkan: Free regional movement of labor in conditions of shortage of qualified workers?	Generating evidence on labor mobility Preparing visual products	Preparing policy study related to free movement of workers Organizing awareness-raising campaign	September 2023
7.	Initiative for more inclusive democracy for marginalized groups	Meetings with People Powered Network to identify best practices for making participatory democracy inclusive	Creation of online courses and resource materials	April 2024



Кoфинансиранo од
Европската Унија

Кoфинансиранo од Шведска



Прoграма за иницијативи со ЕУ
за идновосможитивни ЕУ интеграции



**ЗАРАДИ НЕДОСТИГ НА ПРОДОЛЖЕН
ПРЕСТОЈ ВО УЧИЛИШТАТА, МОРАМ
ДА СЕ ГРИЖАМ ЗА МОЕТО ДЕТЕ
ПОСЛЕ 12 ЧАСОТ. ЗАТОА, НЕ МОЖАМ
ДА СЕ ВРАБОТАМ!**

жителки на Прилеп и Крушево



Прoектoт „Радно одговорно планирање на локално ниво: Случајот со Прилеп и Крушево“, имплементиран од Finance Think - Институт за економски истражувања и политики е поддржан од Реактор - Истражување во акција и мрежите партнери преку акцијата „Изградбување на редовната еднаквост во процесот на пристапување во ЕУ“. Акцијата е финансирана од Европската Унија и ко-финансирана од Шведска.
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2. ANALYTICS

The following analytical activities have been planned for 2023:

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
1. Macro-monitor	Ongoing	Devising 4 issues	Continuously over 2023
2. FT Comment	Ongoing	Devising at least 3 issues	Continuously over 2023
3. FT Opinion	Ongoing	Devising few issues	Continuously over 2023
4. Visual products	Ongoing	Devising at least 10 info-graphs, 40 graphs and 3 Let's chat economics	Continuously over 2023
5. Improving data-sets	Ongoing	Improving the datasets	Continuously over 2023

3. ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION

The following advocacy and communication activities have been planned for 2023:

1. Continuous publication of research results and findings in form of articles in international peer-reviewed journals; 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 projects that end in 2023;
5. Organization of a workshop on gender-responsive planning and budgeting for local stakeholders from Prilep and Krushevo and workshop on multidimensional child-poverty routine measurement and monitoring for representatives of State Statistical Office;
6. Advocating (“fighting for”) for more space for economic news in the media by stronger links with them.
7. Upgrading web-site www.fiscast.mk and building a web-site on para-fiscal charges at local level.
8. Preparing strategic plan for the period 2023-2028.
9. Preparing M&E Strategy for the period 2024-2026.



TABLE PRESENTING STAGES AND DEADLINES

	Activity	Stage	Planned tasks	Deadline
1.	International publications	Ongoing	Articles, monographs, chapters in books	Continuously over 2023
2.	Policy briefs	Ongoing	Devising at least 3 issues	Continuously over 2023
3.	Video	Not started yet	Creating video	January 2023
4.	Closing events	Not started yet	Organization of final event to present the results of the project related to the local para-fiscal charges, labor mobility, the impact of food and energy crisis on the local and national budgets, etc.	Throughout 2023
5.	Workshops	Not started yet	Organization of workshop on gender-responsive planning and budgeting and workshop on multidimensional child-poverty routine measurement and monitoring	November 2023
6.	Media	Ongoing	Increasing the presence in media	Continuously over 2023
7.	Web-sites	Ongoing	Updating the current www.fiscast.mk and creating new on para-fiscal charges	April 2023
8.	Strategic plan	Not started yet	Preparing strategic plan through communication with all key stakeholders of FT	November 2023
9.	M& E strategy	Not started yet	Preparing M&E Strategy for the period 2024-2026	November 2023

4. CAPACITY BUILDING AND NETWORKING

The following capacity building activities have been planned for 2023:

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 on, national budget, economic reforms and other relevant issues;
4. Networking with citizens, CSOs, business community, local government, Mayor and media within the project on local fiscal transparency and para-fiscal charges;
5. Participation at seminars for equipping with advocacy skills and research methods;
6. Securing a referent literature, mainly research methods and econometrics.

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	Activity	Stage	Planned tasks	Deadline
1.	International conference participation	Not started yet	Participate on at least two conferences	Continuously over 2023
2.	Domestic conference / round table participation	Not started yet	Participate on at least three events	Continuously over 2023
3.	Public consultations	Ongoing	Participate to public consultations on important economic issues	Continuously over 2023
4.	Networking with municipalities	Ongoing	Networking with citizens, business sector, CSOs, Mayor, local media	Continuously over 2023
5.	Trainings	Ongoing	Attend seminars for advocacy and research skills	Continuously over 2023
6.	Literature	Ongoing	Securing relevant literature	Continuously over 2023

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