



PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

20 25



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Executive Summary

This document presents the program of activities of Finance Think - Economic Research & Policy Institute for the calendar year 2025. The plan is structured around four pillars of Institute's work:

- 1) research;
- 2) analytics;
- 3) advocacy and communication;
- 4) capacity building and networking.

Research

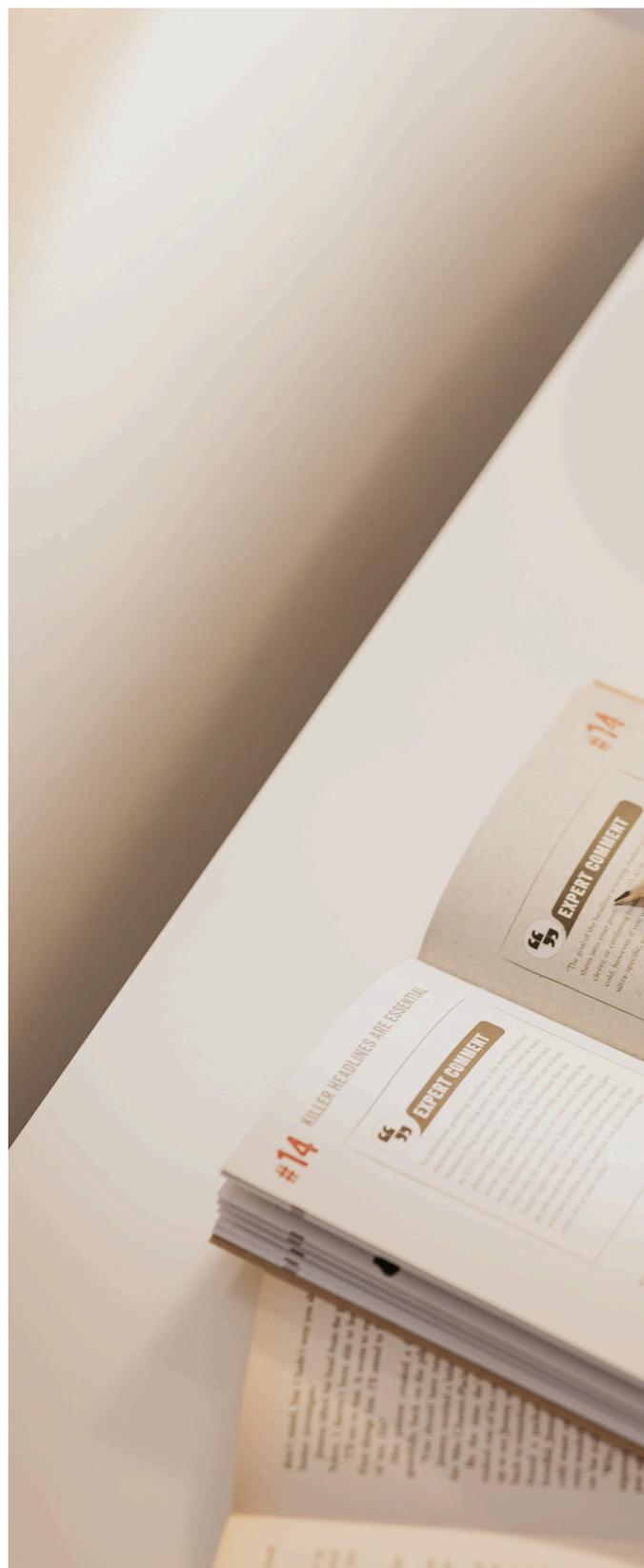
Citizen oversight: Bridging the gap between policy promises and delivery in four development areas

The project is aimed at encouraging participatory and responsible democracy in the development sectors (education, health, social and economy) of North Macedonia, where the voice of citizens is heard, priorities are transparently set and political promises are constantly translated into tangible reality, ensuring a sustainable socio – economic progress and inclusive growth.

The general goal of the project is to promote deliberative democracy in reforms in key development areas with a focus on youth and women, through the engagement of various stakeholders in the process of prioritizing reforms and encouraging political accountability through monitoring the fulfillment of political promises.

Specific objectives include:

- To identify to what extent policy-defined priorities are in accordance with citizens' priorities
- To create evidence of gaps between political promises and needs, and gaps in the realization of political promises
- To encourage political responsibility and strengthen citizens' awareness, by monitoring the implementation of political promises using the Economic Compass as a digital tool



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.

Fostering critical debate in evidence-based budgetary processes and fiscal transparency.

The proposal aims to contribute to the International Budget Partnership's (IBP) objectives by fostering transparency in the country. This overarching aim is broken down into specific objectives involving concrete interventions on two fronts:

- To advance data-driven policymaking.
- To increase municipal transparency and strengthen citizen engagement, by making publicly available and updating 3-digit Budget data for all 80 municipalities in North Macedonia.





Unlocking female economic potential – beyond gender boundaries

The objective of this action is to empower and enable women to reach their full potential in the labor market, with a particular focus on productivity. Specific objectives include:

- To identify drivers of low female participation in the labor market and female productivity, by producing evidence and generating knowledge;
- To emphasize the importance of decent jobs, a stimulative environment, working conditions, and systemic support as drivers of productivity and women's potential, by piloting measures at "Comfy Angel" and in collaboration with the business sector;
- To stimulate policy dialogue among relevant stakeholders (policymakers, business sector, Federation of Trade Unions);
- To advocate for policies that enable decent jobs and a stimulative environment that will boost female productivity.

Research activities within the program 'POVERTY, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS'

This research includes topics related to labor market policies and social policies. It includes but is not limited to issues such as poverty, minimum wage, participation in the labor market, unemployment, quality of education, informal economy, economic migration, social protection, social dialogue and industrial relations and the like.

Research activities within the program 'GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES'

This research program covers a variety of policies and strategies to produce and support economic growth and development, with a focus on three development pillars: education, healthcare and institutions. Other development pillars covered include: infrastructure investment, state aid, development finance and others.

Research activities within the program 'FISCAL TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY'

This research program covers issues like transparency, structure and effects of public spending, participatory budgeting at national and local level, sustainability of the public deficit and debt, public procurement and so on. Also, this program covers our goal to devise local policies and budget that are conducive to local development, democracy and the well-being of citizens and local communities. Community-based programs are particularly pursued.



Table presenting stages and deadlines

Activity	Stage	Planned tasks	Deadline
Citizen oversight: Bridging the gap between policy promises and delivery in four development areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting qualitative data through surveys and focus groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generating evidence on the fulfillment of the political promises Organizing promotional campaign to share the findings Organizing public events to steer debate on the topic 	December 2026
The perfect storm: Food and energy insecurities threaten the economies of the Western Balkan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting data on indicators related to fiscal space, energy consumption, food prices, etc. Preparing regional studies on the effects of the crisis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generating evidence on the impact of the crisis on the Western Balkans economy Organizing consultative processes with national and regional stakeholders Organizing awareness-raising campaign 	April 2025
Unlocking female economic potential - beyond gender boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting administrative data for employees productivity Preparing policy studies and briefs Piloting 'training center' within Comfy Angel - Prilep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizing debate club with employers Preparing policy study on the impact evaluation of the piloted measure Organizing closing event to present findings of the project 	April 2025
Fostering critical debate in evidence-based budgetary processes and fiscal transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collecting data on local budgets Preparing policy briefs Preparing visual products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparing policy briefs Preparing visual products 	October 2026
Research activities within our programs	Collecting data Preparing briefs and studies Preparing visual tool Advocacy activities	Collecting data Preparing briefs and studies Preparing visual tool Advocacy activities	Continuously through 2025

Analytics

The following analytical activities have been planned for 2025:

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 at least 3 policy studies on topics related to labor market, state aid, fiscal transparency, poverty, participatory budgeting and/or economic development;
5. Producing visual products: at least 15 Info-graphs and 40 graphs on ‘hot’ economic topics;
6. 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;
7. Collecting data and generating evidence on the state aid in the WB6.

Table presenting stages and deadlines

Activity	Stage	Planned tasks	Deadline
Macro-monitor	Ongoing	Devising 4 issues	Continuously over 2025
FT Comment	Ongoing	Devising at least 3 issues	Continuously over 2025
FT Opinion	Ongoing	Devising few issues	Continuously over 2025
Policy studies	Ongoing	Producing at least 3	Continuously over 2025
Visual products	Ongoing	Devising at least 10 info-graphs and 40 graphs	Continuously over 2025
Improving data-sets	Ongoing	Improving the datasets	Continuously over 2025
Data and evidence on state aid	Ongoing	Improving the available datasets	Continuously over 2025

Advocacy and communication

The following advocacy and communication activities have been planned for 2025:

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 three policy briefs on issues pertinent to the economic development in North Macedonia and stemming out of current research;
3. Organization of a regional meetings within WebEcon Network;
4. Organization of closing events for the projects that end in 2025;
5. Organization of an awareness campaign on economic topics;
6. Advocating for more space for economic news in the media;
7. Organization of consultative meetings with state aid stakeholders.

Table presenting stages and deadlines

Activity	Stage	Planned tasks	Deadline
International publication	Ongoing	Articles, monographs, book chapters	Continuously over 2025
Policy briefs	Ongoing	Devising at least 3 issues	Continuously over 2025
Regional meetings	Ongoing	Organization of meetings within WebEcon Network, to discuss issues related to the regional projects	Continuously over 2025
Closing events	Not started yet	Organization of closing event to present the results of the project related to the female activity at the labor market.	April 2025
Awareness campaign	Ongoing	Preparing visual products to increase knowledge on municipal budgets and other economic topics	Continuously over 2025
Media	Ongoing	Increasing the presence in media	Continuously over 2025
Consultative meetings	Ongoing	Strengthening the cooperation with state aid stakeholders	Continuously over 2025

Capacity building and networking

The following capacity building activities have been planned for 2025:

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 worldwide CSOs that deal with participatory democracy issues;
5. Participation at seminars for equipping with advocacy skills and research methods;
6. Securing a referent literature, mainly research methods and econometrics.

Table presenting stages and deadlines

Activity	Stage	Planned tasks	Deadline
International conference	Ongoing	Participate on at least two conferences	Continuously over 2025
Domestic conference	Ongoing	Participate on at least three events	Continuously over 2025
Public consultations	Ongoing	Participate to public consultations on important economic issues	Continuously over 2025
Regional networking	Ongoing	Attending meeting with regional NGOs and stakeholders	Continuously over 2025
Trainings	Ongoing	Attending seminars for advocacy and research skills	Continuously over 2025
Literature	Ongoing	Securing relevant literature	Continuously over 2025



Our Mission

To enhance the impact of economic, social and development trends and policies on citizens in North Macedonia and the Western Balkans, through research, evidence-based and data-driven advocacy, and steering critical debate on democratic and economic processes.

Our Vision

To steer economic thinking for increased wellbeing tomorrow.