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MYLA
ANNUAL
REPORT



MYLA

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

In 2022, we continued our long-standing commitment in the field of human rights protection by providing the necessary assistance to all persons in need, guided by the fact that the enjoyment of human rights is an inalienable right for all persons.

The year was very successful for us, as can be seen from the people and the commitments that we managed to achieve, the projects and activities that we implemented, and above all our involvement and the focus that we had in encouraging success stories for changing the legislation, strengthening on the capacity of legal professionals and encouraging the building of a system where all persons will enjoy their rights.

We will continue to maintain the excellent communication and partnership relationship with the institutions, the donor community and the civil organizations that for a long time recognize our organization as an experienced and partner that has the necessary capacity.

Next year we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the organization and we are ready to do even more as a team and together, to continue with the energy that guides us and to climb many more successful stairs.

Sincerely yours,

Alexandra Cvetanovska
President of MYLA

ABOUT THE MACEDONIAN YOUNG LAWYERS ASSOCIATION

Macedonian Young Lawyers Association (MYLA) is an independent, non-profit, professional organization of lawyers established in 2003. MYLA identifies young lawyers as a key component of society, having the knowledge, skills and desire to contribute to establishing the values of protection of human rights and the rule of law in our country. For this purpose, the MYLA's work is dedicated to the guidance and training of young lawyers in order to increase their participation in activities for human rights protection and promotion of the principle of the rule of law.

Vision

MYLA is a leading organization of lawyers that protects human rights and advocates for rule of law, by using the young lawyers' innovative approach and capacities.

MYLA's strategic objectives

- 1 Legal empowerment and protection of basic human rights;
- 2 Promotion of the rule of law and harmonization of the national policies with the EU acquis;
- 3 Strengthening the professionalism, competences and integrity of young lawyers;
- 4 Improving the quality of services of institutions to the citizens.

Areas of work

Priority areas that MYLA works on:

- Access to justice for vulnerable categories of citizens;
- Asylum, migrations and statelessness;
- Legal protection against discrimination and violations of human rights;
- Rights of victims of crimes and trafficking in human beings;
- Protection of rights of persons deprived of liberty;
- Protection of the right to a healthy environment;
- Legal support to civil society organizations;
- Strengthening the skills of young lawyers.

Mission

MYLA is a non-profit organization. By providing legal aid, legal research and strengthening the capacities of young lawyers, MYLA encourages changes in the public policies and the implementation of the laws, and advocates for the protection of and respect for human rights and legal certainty.

MYLA's activities

In order to achieve the established strategic objectives, MYLA's activities are structured in three interrelated programs:

- Legal aid and strategic litigation;
- Legal research and policies;
- Legal education.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS PRESENTED IN NUMBERS IN 2022

- 4320 → MYLA provided a total of 4320 pieces of free legal advice
- 40/9 → 40 judicial, administrative and other litigations were conducted, of which 9 were strategic
- 463 → 463 pieces of legal advice to low-income persons and families
- 1974 → 1974 pieces of legal advice and information on the asylum procedure were provided to persons transiting the country, including asylum seekers and persons under protection
- 408 → Legal aid to 408 stateless persons
- 1003/365 → 1003 pieces of legal advice to 365 people from Kosovo for integration in Macedonia
- 154 → Legal aid to 154 convicted persons and wards
- 84 → Legal advice to 84 people on access in the area of health care, hospital therapy, care and other rights
- 85 → Legal aid and assistance was provided to 85 families by the Mobile Teams to support persons and families at social risk
- 46 → MYLA provided free legal aid to 46 victims of violent crimes and additionally to 2 victims of human trafficking.
- 82 → MYLA provided 82 free legal advices related to environmental protection.
- 7 → MYLA provided legal assistance and mentoring to 7 non-governmental organizations.

12	→	MYLA provided legal assistance to 12 people for violation of the right to equality.
473	→	473 lawyers, attorneys, representatives of the judicial and government institutions, representatives of the educational system, representatives of civil society, representatives of the Ministry of Interior, representatives of state institutions, journalists, as well as the population were trained in the relevant field
85	→	85 trainings, workshops, lectures, conferences, academies, strategic fora, informative and educational sessions were conducted
17	→	17 young lawyers acquired practical knowledge in courts, civil society organizations, law firms, the Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination and the offices of the Ombudsman in 4 cities in the country
38	→	38 publications on specific topics in the area of law have been published
6	→	MYLA was part of 6 working groups for drafting laws and participated in 3 groups for drafting by-laws
11	→	MYLA signed 11 Memoranda of Cooperation

LEGAL AID AND STRATEGIC LITIGATION

- MYLA provided a total of 4320 pieces of free legal advice and information
- 40 judicial, administrative and other litigations were conducted, of which 9 were strategic
- 1974 pieces of legal advice and information on the asylum procedure were given to person transiting the country.
- MYLA's legal aid and strategic litigation program consists of providing primary legal aid, legal aid to special categories of persons and for certain legal issues, as well as strategic litigation in court cases of wider social interest.
- Activities related to legal aid are provided within special projects.
- Legal aid is provided by a team of lawyers employed in the Association, who have passed the bar exam and a team of trained lawyers.

LEGAL AID TO LOW-INCOME PERSONS AND FAMILIES AT RISK (PRIMARY LEGAL AID)

In the course of 2022, MYLA continued to provide primary legal aid to low-income individuals and families. Primary legal aid was provided in accordance with the 2019 Law on Free Legal Aid. MYLA provided legal aid services in the form of general legal information, legal advice, information on the right to use free legal aid and assistance in filling out an application for secondary legal aid. In the cases where the legal aid was not possible to be provided with physical presence was provided through information technologies, by phone, by email, on the MYLA Facebook profiles and the projects, as well as by other means of online meeting with interested persons.

During this period, MYLA provided free primary legal aid to 463 persons, and submitted 23 applications for free legal aid, of which 18 were approved, 2 were rejected, while 3 are still pending in the procedure for approval. Twelve (12) of the submitted applications related to solving status issues, primarily regarding divorce, one (1) application referred to temporary measures for protection against domestic violence, seven (7) applications referred to the child protection, one (1) application referred to real estate legal issues and two (2) applications regarded other areas.

LEGAL AID TO ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

MYLA has been a strategic partner of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in North Macedonia (UNHCR) for 13 years. Within the joint cooperation, MYLA provides legal aid to refugees, asylum seekers and persons under international protection. Legal aid refers to the procedure for recognition of the right to asylum, legal remedy procedure as well as the refugee integration procedures. In 2022, MYLA provided 638 pieces of legal advice and aid to asylum seekers, and this year, according to MYLA statistics, a total of 174 asylum applications were submitted. Following the current procedures, administrative disputes were initiated in 24 cases, whereas appeals to the decisions of the Administrative Court in 22 cases. 306 persons who have been residing in the country since 1999, originating from Kosovo, were provided with legal aid for their integration in the country in a total of 1103 times.

In the “Vinojug” and “Tabanovce” reception-transit centers, 465 persons were provided with the information about the procedure for obtaining the right to asylum. 6 complaints were submitted to the Ombudsman, and at the same time 36 written and verbal interventions were made to other institutions for individual cases or general issues with the aim of respecting the rights of these persons, indicating a specific violation or finding a way to solve problems that affect these persons. In total, in the course of 2022, 1974 pieces of legal advice and information on the asylum procedure were provided to persons transiting the country, including asylum seekers and persons under protection.

Regarding issues related to asylum and migration, a large number of lawyers are involved in almost all regions of the country, and the following stands out in particular:

➤ **STRATEGIC LITIGATION GROUP** - The strategic litigation for cases in the area of asylum was formed in order to identify and strategically represent those cases that are eligible to create a change in legal provisions or in certain practices that violate the fundamental rights and human freedoms of refugees in the asylum procedures. The group also strives to improve the asylum system in our country, through representation before the authorities and courts in North Macedonia, but also before the European Court of Human Rights and other international mechanisms. In 2022, the group continued to function with 5 lawyers and 1 law firm, also in 2022 the group worked on 1 strategic case which is before the European Court of Human Rights.

LEGAL AID TO STATELESS PERSONS

As a strategic partner of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, MYLA has been providing free legal aid to stateless persons for 13 years. Legal aid refers to procedures for registration in the Registry of Births, regulation of residence and procedures for acquisition of Macedonian citizenship. In addition to free legal aid, MYLA advocates for a systemic solution to the problem of statelessness.

In 2022, MYLA provided legal aid to a total of 408 stateless persons. Out of these, 56 stateless persons acquired Macedonian citizenship, 14 persons were provided with legal aid in the procedure for regulating residence, and for 25 persons the procedure for registration in the Registry of Births was completed. 76 people were registered in the special Registry of Births, and 18 of them received a special identification document.

In the course of 2022, 45 field visits were made to 20 locations throughout Macedonia and 217 persons of interest were visited. MYLA identified 9 new stateless persons, of whom 6 stateless persons obtained documents from their countries of origin.

For 2 persons, court proceedings were initiated to establish paternity as a prerequisite for establishing Macedonian citizenship.

LEGAL AID TO AFGHAN EVACUEE CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Legal aid and support was provided to Afghan children and their families in order to regulate their legal status and residence, including information on rights and obligations, free legal advice and legal aid for humanitarian stay and visa conditions, communication with authorities and handling individual cases. In this activity, apart from providing legal aid in the preparation of applications for relocation to Canada or other countries, MYLA organized and conducted several open days as information sessions on issues of interest and based on the needs of the beneficiaries. MYLA provided two field workers with constant presence in the three Skopje hotels where the beneficiaries were accommodated.

Actions were taken to strengthen the protection services, whereby 2 workshops were conducted to strengthen the capacities of the teams that provided their services in the hotels where the evacuees were accommodated, and a Guide for the coordination of the teams was developed.

The above-mentioned actions were part of the *"Advancing a sound response to the needs of Afghan evacuee children and their families"* project, part of the UNICEF Humanitarian Program, in response to the humanitarian crisis in which the Afghan citizens found themselves after Kabul was taken over by the Taliban.

ACCESS TO HOSPITAL THERAPY, CARE AND OTHER RIGHTS

By implementing the *"Access to hospital therapy is a human right - Legal pharmacy"* project, MYLA, with the support of Roche Macedonia, formed a team of lawyers who provided legal aid and counseling to patients with malignant, rare and other chronic diseases, facing problems with access to hospital therapy, care and other rights to which they are entitled according to the laws. In the course of 2022, legal advice, information and aid were provided to 64 persons from 13 towns throughout N. Macedonia. Two information sessions were organized on specific legal issues in the area of health insurance and health care, access to hospital therapy, procedure for realization and procedure for protection of these rights. 3 complaints were submitted to the Ombudsman regarding the denied right of access to hospital therapy and several applications for reimbursement of funds for privately procured therapy, due to a temporary lack of therapy, in addition, MYLA provided 20 legal advices related to health care.

VICTIMS OF DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Through the free legal aid line, in 2022, MYLA provided 12 initial pieces of legal advice related to discrimination to 12 persons, most of which - violation of the right to equality in the workplace, as well as violations on the grounds of gender. Additionally, in the course of the second half of 2022, a request for information was registered by parents of children with disabilities regarding the realization of the right to education due to the untimely possibility of categorization before enrollment in the first grade and due to the untimely provision of an educational assistant in the school. One complaint was submitted to the Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination.

PERSONS SERVING A PRISON SENTENCE

In 2022, the monitoring team conducted visits to all penitentiary-correctional institutions and the correctional facility. Direct legal aid was provided to 154 convicted persons and wards in relation to a specific legal issue. 95 complaints/grievances have been submitted to various state institutions and the Ombudsman. 16 of the complaints refer to ill-treatment in prisons such as the quality of health care, inadequate and poor conditions in Idrizovo prison, violence among convicted persons as well as overcrowding in prisons.

Within the “Establishing services in the community to support the resocialization and reintegration of ex-convicts” project in 2022, in cooperation with AES and the Shtip penitentiary-correctional facility, the implementation of a pilot program for providing support to convicted persons before release was started. A psychologist and a social worker from the association “IZBOR” work with convicted persons individually and in group sessions. A Memorandum of Cooperation was signed with AES and the Institute for Social Activities for the implementation of the project activities for the development of the first module for capacity building of professionals and social service providers to work with convicted persons, ex-convicts and persons subject to probation.

TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

As part of the “Prevention of Human Trafficking in Migrants and Seasonal Agricultural Workers” project, which was implemented in the course of 2022, activities were carried out to raise awareness among migrants, refugees and asylum seekers about the risks of trafficking in human beings, through campaign preparation and production of graphic videos (in English, Farsi, Pashto and Arabic). They also worked on raising awareness among seasonal workers, especially among agricultural workers, about the risks of trafficking in human beings and labor exploitation and their rights.

In coordination with the Reception Center for Asylum Seekers and the Transit Centers, 3 info sessions were held with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

Through cooperation with lawyers, MYLA provided legal counseling and representation of victims of trafficking in human beings before competent authorities in criminal proceedings. Legal aid has been provided to 5 identified victims of trafficking in human beings. Legal aid was provided prior to giving a statement before the Basic Public Prosecutor's Office for Prosecution of Organized Crime and Corruption (BPPO POCC), and for representation at the main hearing in the Basic Criminal Court as injured parties. This practice fills the gaps existing in the free legal aid system, which is not yet functional in terms of providing a lawyer to the victims at the expense of the state budget.

Through its representatives, MYLA continued to take part in the Mobile Teams for the identification of vulnerable groups, including victims of trafficking in human beings, formed in 2018. MYLA has its representatives in the Mobile Teams in four towns: Bitola, Gevgelija, Kumanovo and Tetovo. In 2022, the competent institutions identified 9 (nine) child victims of trafficking in human beings.

“Bad Blood” documentary, produced by the Investigative Reporting Lab, revealed a series of violations of basic human and constitutionally guaranteed rights, as well as a complete failure of the system, which is obliged to prevent and protect citizens against abuses. In view of the numerous reports from citizens, which arrived at IRL following the broadcast of the documentary, and taking into account that the legal processing of cases is not within the domain of a single media editorial office, IRL established cooperation with the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights and the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association. The aim of this cooperation is to establish a common and systematized approach to the appropriate processing of the reports of citizens whose health and rights as patients were grossly threatened by health institutions, private and public, and in particular by the absence of essential supervision over their work by the competent institutions.

Although cases of violations of health rights are continuously present in our daily practice, the COVID 19-pandemic has brought to light deep systemic problems, which on the one hand cause severe consequences for people's health and life, and on the other hand, enable huge profits for individuals at the expense of patients and their families.

STATISTICAL DATA ON LEGAL AID SERVICES PROVIDED IN 2022

1.

LEGAL AID TO LOW-INCOME PERSONS AND FAMILIES AT RISK

4320 Pieces of legal advice to families at risk

463 Number of persons who received primary free legal aid

23 Submitted applications for free legal aid

2.

ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES

638 Asylum seekers who used legal aid from MYLA

174 Asylum seekers who submitted an application in 2022

365 Beneficiaries of legal aid for integration (refugees from Kosovo)

1974 Pieces of legal advice and information on the asylum procedure provided to persons transiting the country

3.

STATELESS PERSONS

408 Stateless persons who used legal aid from the Ministry of Justice

56 Persons acquired citizenship

76 persons registered in the Registry of Births

4.

DISCRIMINATION

12 Pieces of legal advice

1 Complaint

5.

PERSONS SERVING A PRISON SENTENCE

154 Persons who used legal aid

6.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

7 (seven) civil society organizations which used legal aid

7.

VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS AND VULNERABLE CATEGORIES OF PERSONS

5 Victims of trafficking in human beings who received legal aid

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

In 2019, MYLA started working on environmental protection by using legal mechanisms. In 2022, the Association implemented several projects on environmental protection, in cooperation with other civil society organizations.

The implementation of *“The right to defend against the negative impact of small hydropower plants in Macedonia”* project has influenced the policies and practices that stimulate the construction and operation of small hydropower plants (SHPP) which have negative impacts on nature and people, for the purpose of preventing and reducing the negative impacts of the construction and operation of the SHPP. An Analysis of the regulations in the field of operation of small hydropower plants and a policy brief were prepared and cooperation with the competent institutions for participation in the drafting the law was established. Comments on the Draft Law on Environment and the initiative to amend and supplement the Law on Waters and the initiative to amend and supplement the Law on Environment were prepared. Two lawsuits were filed before the Administrative Court for failure to adopt the river basin management plans and water resource management basis plans.

The *“Action for advanced legal and institutional water protection”* project aimed at creating an enhanced legal and institutional framework for water management and protection. A team was formed for drafting by-laws arising from the Law on Waters, cooperation with the MEPP, Water Department was established, two by-laws were drafted for the Law on Waters.

Creation of a strong and vibrant civil society that plays a meaningful role in the process of decarbonization, transformation and renewal of the society, resulting in a clean environment, green economy and healthy citizens of North Macedonia is the general objective of the *“CSOs Action for Climate”* project. The project should ensure the participation of civil society organizations in changing policies; provide support to organizations in climate actions through grants, enable improved visibility, communication and representation of civil society organizations, as well as mobilize citizens for climate action.

The *“Youth Activism for Greener Municipalities”* project aims at ensuring that civil society organizations led by young people, as well as informal youth groups and/or individual activists have continuous access to legal and other expert support for their activities aimed at environmental protection. A support office for environmental activism (Help Desk) was established, providing professional support in the area of law, urban planning, environmental protection, etc. A training program for environmental protection intended for young lawyers has been developed, a baseline report has been prepared for participation in the policy making processes for environmental protection at the local level, and three Action Plans to signed Memoranda of Cooperation with the municipalities for providing technical and mentoring support.

MENTORING SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

In 2022, MYLA organized 9 trainings for civil society organizations with a focus on environmental organizations on various topics (trainings on legal and financial operations of CSOs, environmental law, preparation of project applications, preparation of policy briefs and advocacy). The Association simultaneously provided legal and mentoring support to the same organizations. Throughout the year, we were also contacted by other civil society organizations for issues and challenges in their daily work, project management, changes in associations, etc.

STRATEGIC LITIGATION IN 2022

KEY CASES



Acquisition of Citizenship for Valentin Rakip - a person without citizenship since his birth

The case of Valentin and his siblings is one of the more difficult cases for establishing legal identity that we have handled in our practice to date. The legal battle to prove his identity first and then his citizenship started with his birth in 2002 and ended in September 2022 - two decades later.

He was born in Macedonia, to a Macedonian father and a Serbian mother. The birth registration process took several years, mainly because the children were abandoned by the mother and the father passed away before he could acknowledge the paternity of the children, except for one child, Valentin's sister.

Finally, in 2017, 15 years after his birth, with huge efforts by his relatives, we managed to register Valentin and his siblings in the Registry of Births, and at the age of 15, for the first time, he received a birth certificate as a confirmation of his identity. Yet, the problem of establishing citizenship remained. He was a foreigner in his own country. We tried to start a procedure for acquisition of Serbian citizenship, but we encountered administrative obstacles there as well.

Therefore, MYLA started conducting two consecutive litigations:

- Litigation for regulation of residence as a foreign citizen and furthermore, we hired a lawyer who conducted court proceedings to prove his paternity, based on which his citizenship would be established.
- The litigation for regulation of residence started in 2020 and is still ongoing. The court proceedings began with the filing of the lawsuit on December 31, 2020 and ended with the adoption of a positive verdict establishing paternity on December 07, 2021. Then we started a procedure for registering Valentin's father in his birth certificate and establishing Macedonian citizenship and obtaining a Macedonian identification number, which ended with the issuance of a birth certificate on September 5, 2022.

New decision-making practice of the Criminal Court, in which the measure - Compulsory psychiatric treatment and custody in a health institution was replaced by the measure - Compulsory psychiatric treatment at liberty

Through strategic litigation in two similar cases before the national courts and before the HR, MYLA influenced the establishment of a new decision-making practice of the Criminal Court in which the measure - Compulsory psychiatric treatment and custody in a health institution was replaced by the measure - Compulsory psychiatric treatment at liberty. It is of particular importance that the Basic Criminal Court began to establish its verdicts on the grounds of the neuropsychiatric expert opinion and the opinion of the doctors of the psychiatric institution about the person, stating that a reduction of the psychopathological content has been achieved and the current positive treatment allows to conclude that the measure can be replaced by a measure of compulsory treatment at liberty under outpatient conditions.

This positive practice is of great importance since by such decisions primacy is given to the freedom and protection of the individual interest of the person instead of the deprivation of freedom, regardless of the disability. By such decisions, the decision-making practice has already been raised to a higher level in accordance with the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights in which primacy is given to the freedom of the individual in terms of faster and more efficient resocialization of persons in the environment, while simultaneously taking into account the public interest as well.

Access to justice for parturient women - right to health care

MYLA provided legal support in exercising the right to health care of the parturient woman from Tetovo with uterine necrosis, who was not adequately treated and transferred from Tetovo to the clinic in Skopje in a serious condition. At the clinic, the parturient woman was diagnosed with postoperative ileus (complication after the surgery) as well as necrotic changes of the uterus (womb) due to which removal of the uterus was necessary. Already on December 27, 2021, the then Minister of Health Venko Filipche announced that an analysis and expert supervision of the case would be made, and the document would be made public. Requests regarding the case have been sent to the Health and Sanitary Inspectorate, as well as to the Ministry of Health, but there is still no response. Without information and findings of the expert supervision, court proceedings cannot be initiated. However, based on the circumstances of the case, it follows that the health workers in the home health institution were obliged to monitor the health condition with particular attention, taking into account that the complications faced by the parturient woman could be expected after such an intervention. MYLA will continue to handle the case and make commitments to improve access to justice for parturient women who have been increasingly facing violations of the right to health care, whereas the medical negligence due to untimely action by the competent institutions is very difficult to be determined.

A police officer was sentenced to prison for the crime of harassment while performing duty

The Basic Criminal Court of Skopje passed a judgment declaring the accused G.P., a uniformed police officer employed by the SVR Bitola, guilty and sentenced him to a prison term of one year for the crime of Harassment while performing his duties, Article 143 of the Criminal Code, after repeating the procedure.

The court's decision and reasoning are of enormous importance since it is among the first first-instance judgments where an effective prison sentence is imposed on a police officer for using excessive force against an injured person for the crime of Harassment while performing duty, Article 143 of the Criminal Code. Current judicial practice is the imposition of a suspended sentence for police officers even when the use of excessive force in exceeding police powers has been established.

The injured party was represented by Tatjana Doneska, a lawyer from Skopje, a member of the team of lawyers of the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association.

CONTINUED DISCRIMINATION ON THE GROUNDS OF GENDER IN THE AREA OF HEALTH CARE IDENTIFIED

In 2022, MYLA acted upon an application for legal aid by the father of a 13-year-old child with a health condition, causing him to be frequently hospitalized. The father could not exercise his right to health care as a parent and accompany his child during hospital treatment at the PHI University Clinic for Children's Diseases - Skopje. In the hospital, only the mother is allowed to accompany the children during the night, and in case when the mother is prevented, it is possible only for female relatives of the hospitalized child (grandmother, aunts, etc.).

This behavior of the health institution is contrary to the Law on Health Insurance, according to which during hospital health care a companion can be both a male or a female. According to the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination, this behavior constitutes discrimination on the grounds of gender.

MYLA submitted a complaint to the Commission for the Prevention and Protection against Discrimination (CPPD) and requested the Commission to issue an opinion and establish that PHI University Clinic for Children's Diseases Skopje, by restricting fathers as parents from accompanying their children during their hospitalization, is committing direct continued discrimination on the grounds of gender, that is, it limits male parents in terms of exercising their rights to health care and parental rights.

The Commission for the Prevention and Protection against Discrimination issued an opinion establishing that the PHI UC for Children's Diseases- Skopje committed direct continued discrimination on the grounds of gender in the area of health care. The continued discrimination was established in terms of the fact that this behavior by public health institutions (including PHI UC for Children's Diseases-Skopje) was ascertained already in 2016 by the Ombudsman. This behavior is a common practice of all public health institutions having pediatric ward.

CPPD provided a recommendation to PHI UC for Children's Diseases- Skopje, within 90 days, to remove the discriminatory practice and to find a way to enable conditions for fathers to accompany their children under equal conditions and to have the same treatment as mothers; as well as the institution in the future to refrain from taking discriminatory actions on the ground of gender or any discriminatory grounds according to the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination. CPPD established that if the recommendation had not been acted upon, it would have submitted an application to initiate misdemeanor proceedings before a competent court for misdemeanors.

The Ombudsman submitted a recommendation to the Ministry of Health and to the directors of health institutions to take all necessary measures to ensure spatial and other conditions in the wards where a child with a companion is hospitalized, thereby the right can be exercised equally by each parent, regardless of gender.

During the investigation of the case, MYLA noticed other violations of the right to health care and is taking actions before competent institutions.

LEGAL RESEARCH AND POLICIES

38 publications on specific topics in the area of law have been published.

MYLA was part of 6 working groups for drafting laws and strategies.

Participation in drafting 3 by-laws

ShapeAdditionally, MYLA actively monitored the implementation of laws and by-laws in the areas in which it works and accordingly submitted initiatives for changes independently or together with a group of civil society organizations;

In the course of this year, MYLA also worked dedicatedly on research and policies which contribute to the advancement of the system for realizing the constitutionally and legally guaranteed rights of citizens. MYLA continues to work on identifying systemic problems and gaps and to find and propose appropriate, evidence-based solutions. This process is an indispensable part in the improvement of the legislation and the system for the protection of human rights.

In 2022, MYLA published and took part in the development of 38 publications on various topics in the areas in which it works, including reports, analyses, legal opinions, policy briefs, handbooks and guides, brochures and infographics. All topics on which the Association is actively working are represented within the published documents, whereby referring to the public interest and new current topics. The following is an overview of all publications that were published and made public in the course of 2022, available on the MYLA website.

5

REPORTS

5

ANALYSES

11

POLICY BRIEFS

1

RULEBOOK

4

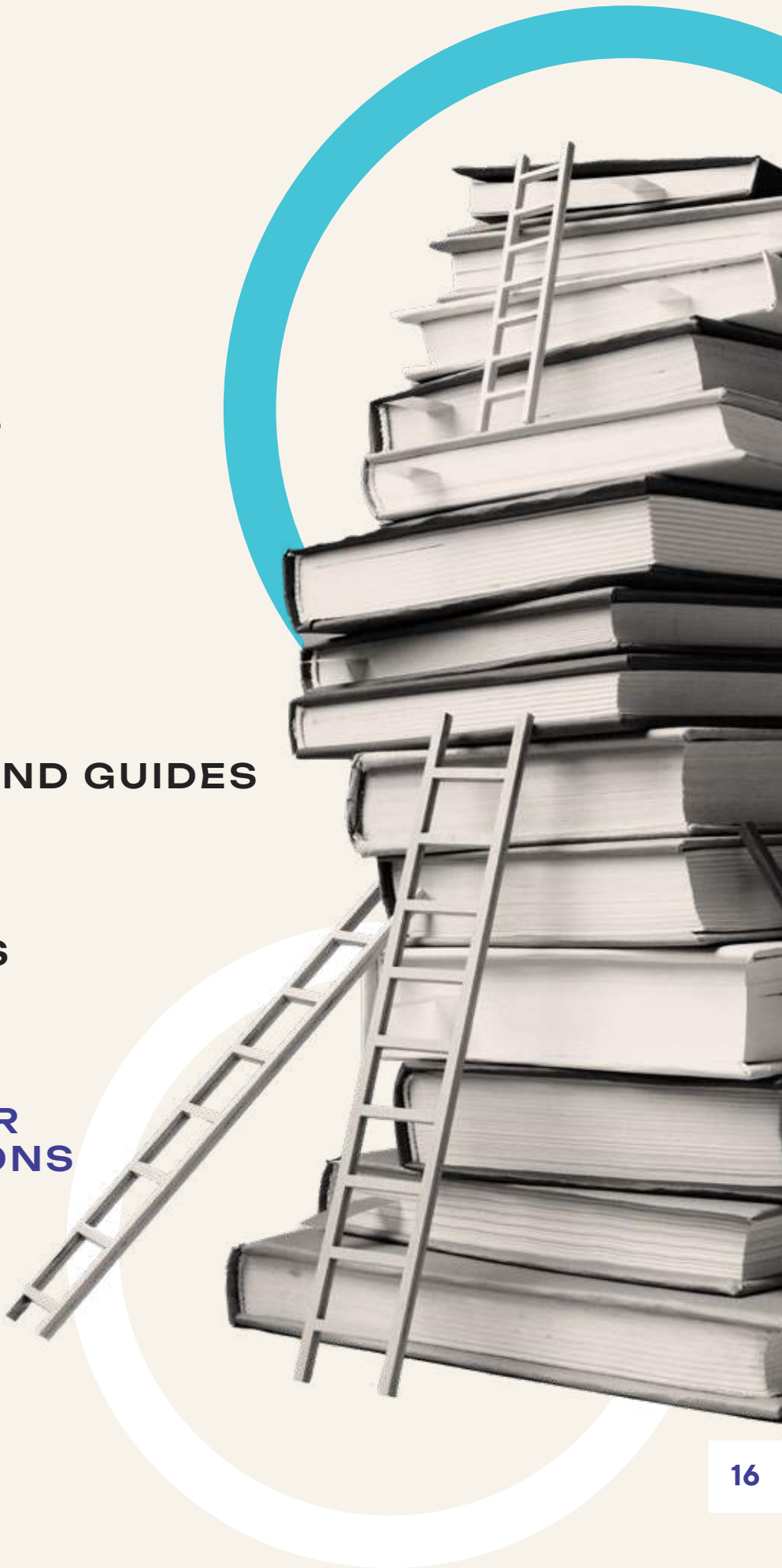
HANDBOOKS AND GUIDES

12

INFOGRAPHICS

TOTAL NUMBER
OF PUBLICATIONS

38



REPORTS

Shadow Report - THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY FOR REFORM OF THE JUDICIAL SECTOR (2018 – 2022) IN 2021



This report offers a comprehensive and independent analysis of the process of implementing the measures and actions planned in the Strategy during 2021, through the prism of civil society organizations that have been monitoring the situation in the judiciary for a long period of time. The aim of the Report is to describe and analyze the Strategy implementation process in 2021. The report assesses whether the implementation of the Strategy is timely, transparent and inclusive, whether the adopted laws and measures are eligible to contribute to the achievement of the goals for which they were planned, and analyzes the impact of the reforms on respect for human rights, the realization of the principle of the rule of law and social justice in general.

The state of asylum in the Republic of North Macedonia 2021

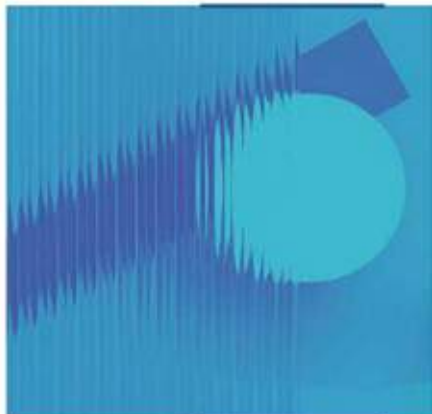


This report presents a comprehensive overview of the various practices, policies and procedures regarding the asylum system in the Republic of North Macedonia in 2021. The report highlights the main challenges faced by asylum seekers and international protection during the asylum procedure and persons under protection and the exercise of other rights. In the preparation of this document, the following data were used: a) data obtained during the representation of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, persons under subsidiary protection and recognized refugees in the Republic of North Macedonia, b) data obtained during monitoring of the situation and treatment of refugees and migrants by the authorities in the transit centers, where MYLA has offices available, and c) data obtained during the presence in the office at the Reception Center for Asylum Seekers in Skopje. Additionally, for the purposes of this report, public information was obtained and numerous available reports and literature were used.

Effectiveness of the legal protection of human rights in the Republic of North Macedonia

Ефикасноста на правната заштита на човековите права во Република Северна Македонија

Годешни извештај 2022 година



МЗМП

By the eighth Annual Report on the effectiveness of the legal protection of human rights in the Republic of North Macedonia, the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association objectively presents and documents the violations of human rights identified in 2022. Objective and transparent presentation of the situation regarding the respect and protection of human rights in the country is of primary importance for the MYLA team. This document builds on other national and international reports dedicated to human rights, but focuses on legal protection.

Digitally-mediated assemblies in North Macedonia Monitoring report

ДИГИТАЛНО ПОСРЕДУВАНИ ЈАВНИ СОБИРИ ВО СЕВЕРНА МАКЕДОНИЈА

Мониторинг извештај



The report provides an overview of the current situation regarding digitally-mediated assemblies (DMA) in N. Macedonia, including on the relevant legal framework, the frequency, occurrence and types of DMA and the enabling environment in which they occur. The objectives of the monitoring were to gain a greater understanding of how the DMA are taking place in N. Macedonia, their types and the extent to which they are enabled, facilitated and protected by governmental and private actors, as well as to identify the key problems and challenges that hinder the use of DMA as a form of realizing the freedom of peaceful assembly.

Quarterly field reports on the human rights situation of refugees and migrants and asylum seekers



In the course of 2022, 4 field quarterly reports on the human rights situation of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers were published. The reports refer to the following periods: October - December 2022, January - March 2022, April - June 2022 and July - September 2022. Quarterly field reports contain the observations of the Ministry of Interior regarding the treatment of migrants and refugees in “Vinojug” and “Tabanovce” reception-transit centers, with a special focus on women, children and other vulnerable categories of persons.

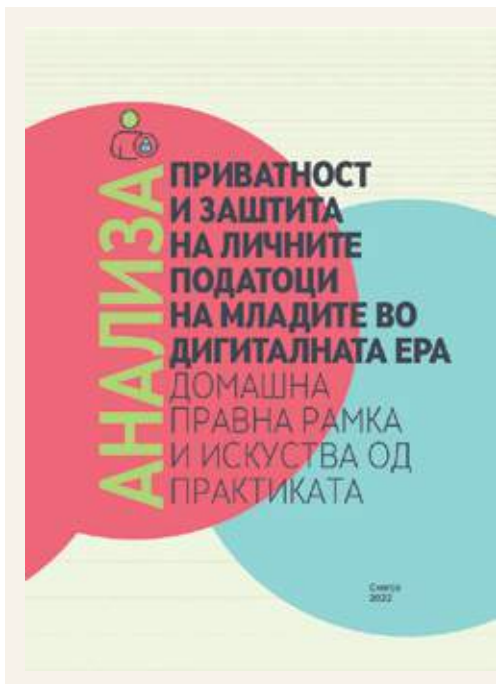
ANALYSES

Analysis of the operation of small hydropower plants



The aim of this analysis is to provide a comprehensive overview of the law in the area of the operation of small hydropower plants and its application. The analysis covers the period until March 11, 2022 and provides an overview of the Macedonian legislation (laws, by-laws and strategic documents) regulating the planning and establishment of small hydropower plants in terms of minimizing their impact on the environment and ecosystems. At the same time, there is an overview of the most important international documents in this area that North Macedonia has ratified and, consequently, are part of the domestic law. Taking into account the country's strategic commitment to membership in the European Union, the Analysis provides an overview of the most important relevant directives of the European Union and provides a general assessment of Macedonian compliance with international law. In addition to an overview of the applicable law, the Analysis provides a presentation of its implementation.

Analysis of privacy and protection of personal data of young people in the digital era



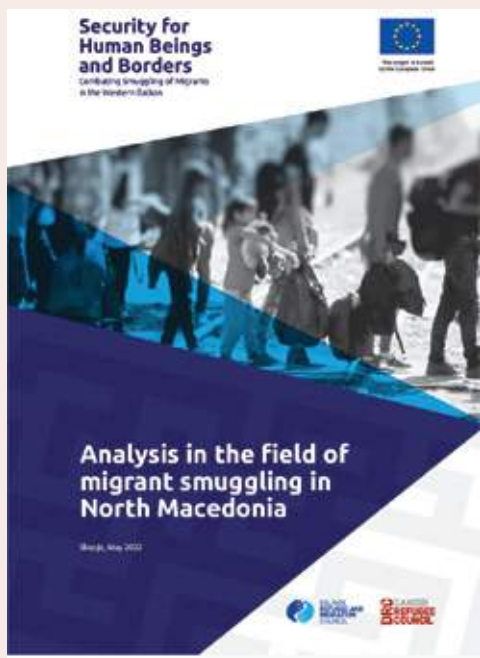
The subject of this analysis are the relevant laws in the existing national legislation, which in some way affect or should affect privacy and the effective exercise of privacy rights on the Internet and the freedom to use the Internet among high school students as the most affected category of individuals, as well as gender-based online violence among students in secondary schools.

Analysis in the area of management and sustainable use of forests in RNM



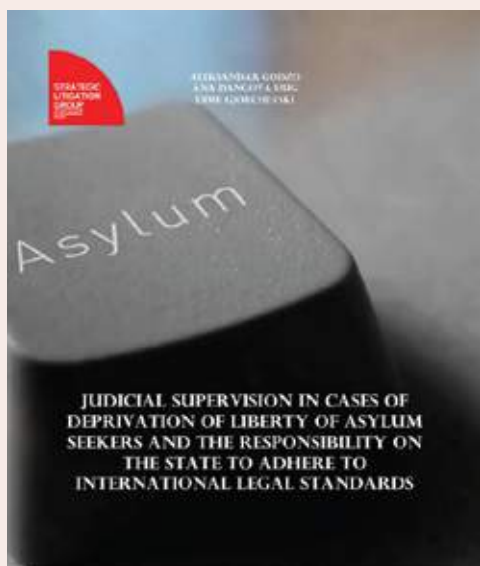
The analysis in the area of management and sustainable use of forests should be a guidance on the national legislation to the civil society sector, which will improve the capacities of civil society organizations for advocacy and monitoring of legal processes related to this area. This goal is closely correlated with one of the specific objectives of the project to empower the civil society organizations to take part in climate related decision-making, and take local action through improving their capacities, knowledge and skills, and providing support to civil society organizations. The second goal of the analysis is to increase the awareness not only of civil society organizations and the general public, whose rights are often violated indirectly through the unstoppable destruction of the environment, but also of the judicial, executive and legislative authorities, which should have a far greater and proactive role in the improvement of the conditions in the environmental protection.

Analysis in the field of migrant smuggling in North Macedonia



The analysis provides an overview of the trends in the movement of migrants across North Macedonia and the situation with migrant smuggling in 2020. Although North Macedonia is a central point on the Balkan route, migrants perceive RNM as a transit country, and on average migrants spend only a few days in transit centers, if they get there to be accommodated. However, in 2020, the main change affecting several processes was the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, there was a 17.3% increase in illegal migrant smuggling as a detected crime. 95 cases were reported, of which 91 perpetrators and 2,732 smuggled illegal migrants.

JUDICIAL SUPERVISION IN CASES OF DEPRIVATION OF LIBERTY OF ASYLUM SEEKERS AND THE RESPONSIBILITY ON THE STATE TO ADHERE TO INTERNATIONAL LEGAL STANDARDS



The unique case of an asylum seeker inspired this paper. The case attracted international attention and eventually led to the first Rule 39 decision against the Republic of North Macedonia by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). It seems that domestic authorities, both administrative and judicial, still do not pay enough attention to international law and do not understand why and how to interpret and use international standards and relevant jurisprudence. This paper also briefly elaborates on how states can be held accountable based on standards set elsewhere. Furthermore, it will be examined whether the current procedures provided for in the Law on International and Temporary Protection (LITP) provide enough, effective and rapid review of the deprivation of freedom and restrictions on the freedom of movement of asylum seekers and respect available legal remedies in that regard.

POLICY BRIEFS

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN WATER USE PROCEDURES FOR SMALL HYDROPOWER PLANTS



Projects involving the use of natural resources, which are limited, should necessarily take into account the voice of the public and it should be reflected in the decision made. The existence of legislation which provides for public participation in the decision-making process does not in itself mean that participation is effective. This brief analyzes the legal regulation of public participation in the planning and use of water for small hydropower plants projects. Since access to information is a prerequisite for effective public participation, the brief partially addresses this aspect as well.

STIMULATING THE ELECTRICITY GENERATION FROM RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES



The aim of this brief is to provide an overview of state aid measures for renewable energy sources (RES) and through a comparative analysis of national and European regulations and practices, to provide recommendations for harmonizing national legislation with EU legislation on state aid for electricity generation from RES. This brief should also contribute to the improvement of the legal regulation to support the electricity generation from renewable energy sources, in order to avoid favoring certain technologies for generation from RES, to ensure a balanced development and diversification of generation from different RES.

Seasonal work - fertile ground for labor exploitation



The brief contains recommendations for improving the legal and institutional framework regarding seasonal agricultural workers and the degree of respect for labor rights in their engagement during the harvesting of agricultural products. The absence of a clear definition of what is meant by the term exploitation makes it difficult to draw the line between exploitation in the sense of violation of labor rights and extreme exploitation regarding forced labor. The recommendations in the brief should contribute to improving the position of seasonal workers and legal regulation of their seasonal work engagement, which will result in a reduction in the degree of vulnerability of seasonal agricultural workers and a reduction in the risks of trafficking in human beings, in particular labor exploitation.

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES OF THE WATER SECTOR FOR WATER MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION



The legislation in the area of environmental protection and natural resource management, including water, is extremely extensive and complex. Macedonian law establishes a large number of obligations, duties and rules for legal entities and natural persons, as well as state institutions. The state has an obligation to implement the applicable law in the area of the environment, that is, to monitor whether legal entities and natural persons and state institutions act in accordance with the prescribed guidelines and restrictions. The effective implementation of the legislation implies the establishment of an appropriate institutional framework, which should be adequately staffed with human resources and technically. The reports of the Macedonian and international organizations continuously state deficiencies in the institutional framework and the capacities for the implementation of the legislation in this area. For this purpose, this brief analyzes the institutional framework for water management and protection in terms of quantitative and qualitative capacities.

THE ENERGY CRISIS VERSUS DECARBONIZATION IN RNM



This brief provides a brief overview of the energy crisis since the beginning of 2022 that the Republic of North Macedonia has been faced with and of the existing goals, plans and strategies for the energy development in the direction of the Energy Trends for the transition to a low-carbon economy. The aim of the brief is, through the presentation of certain decisions and documents, to indicate and raise the question whether the undertaken obligations and commitments of the state for the transition to a low-carbon economy are possible and achievable, that is, whether they can become a reality or will remain a dead letter on the paper. The implementation of the foreseen policies and measures, as well as the implementation of the laws in the area of energy, has a significant impact on the climate and the environment. The brief resulted in conclusions that could influence the improvement of certain policies for the consistent implementation of the undertaken obligations by the relevant stakeholders.

Systemic problems in the area of social and child protection rights



The brief contains three parts that deal with various systemic problems in the area of social and child protection rights: Guaranteed minimum assistance and the maintenance claim; Cases with permanent disability and the obligation to renew examinations every two years for the right to permanent allowance for a parent with a child with a disability and the right to allowance for assistance and care from another person; and Legal gap when persons who are right-holders for cash entitlement to social and child protection receive donations. The brief provides an overview of the legislation and its application in practice through the analysis of several specific cases for certain rights provided for by the Law on Social Protection, the Law on the Protection of Children's Rights and the by-laws, guidelines and recommendations for solving the perceived gaps.

Seasonal work - fertile ground for labor exploitation



The document contains recommendations for improving the legal and institutional framework that is submitted to seasonal agricultural workers and the degree of respect for labor rights during their engagement during the harvesting of agricultural products. The absence of a clear definition of what is meant by the term exploitation makes it difficult to draw the line between exploitation in the sense of violation of labor rights and extreme exploitation that is subjected to forced labor. The recommendations from the document should contribute to improving the position of seasonal workers and legal regulation of their seasonal work engagement, which will result in a reduction in the degree of vulnerability of seasonal agricultural workers and a reduction in the risks of human trafficking, especially labor exploitation.

Institutional capacities of the water sector for water management and protection



The legislation in the field of environmental protection and management of natural resources, including water, is extremely extensive and complex. Macedonian law establishes a large number of obligations, duties and rules for legal and natural persons, as well as state institutions. The state has an obligation to implement the applicable law in the field of the environment, that is, to monitor whether legal and natural persons and state institutions act in accordance with the prescribed guidelines and restrictions. The effective implementation of the legislation implies the establishment of an appropriate institutional framework, which should be adequately human and technically staffed. The reports of the Macedonian and international organizations continuously state deficiencies in the institutional framework and the capacities for the implementation of the legislation in this area. For this purpose, this document analyzes the institutional framework for water management and protection, from the aspect of quantitative and qualitative capacities.

Freedom of movement of Afghan evacuees

Did the Afghan evacuees enjoy the freedom of movement during their temporary stay in the Republic of North Macedonia?



The Afghan citizens who were accepted by the RNM were accommodated in several locations on the territory of the country, whereas in Skopje, they were accommodated in three hotels. This brief provides an overview of the situation that has arisen in terms of the freedom of movement of the persons temporarily accommodated in the three Skopje hotels, identified through the work of the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association within the humanitarian program “Advancing a sound response to the needs of Afghan evacuee children and their families”, part of the activities to support Afghan citizens, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and supported by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Registration in the Registry of Births of foreign children born in the Republic of North Macedonia whose parents have a temporary stay for humanitarian reasons

Should children born in Macedonia whose parents have a temporary stay for humanitarian reasons get a birth certificate?



This brief provides an overview of the situation that has been imposed in terms of the registration in the Registry of Births of children whose parents have temporary stay for humanitarian reasons, temporarily accommodated in the three hotels in Skopje. This situation has been identified through the work of the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association (MYLA) within the humanitarian program “Advancing a sound response to the needs of Afghan evacuee children and their families”, part of the activities to support Afghan citizens, funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and supported by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN URBAN PLANNING



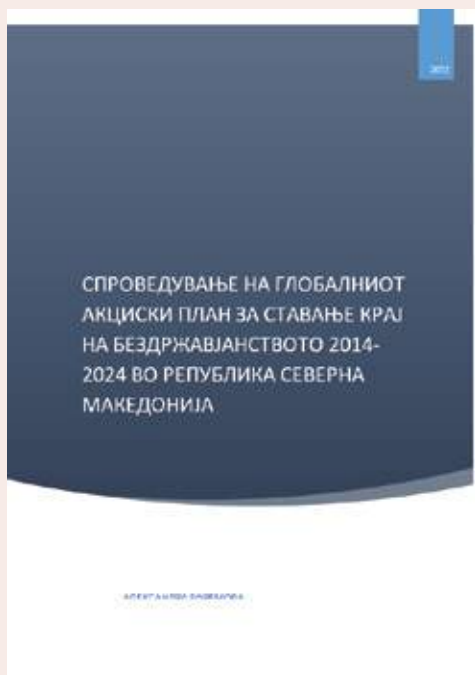
This brief aims to provide an overview of the importance of public participation in urban planning as a complex process that is related to the needs of people and the development of the space where they live. The brief provides a description of what urban planning is, why public participation is important, an overview of the basic law that regulates this area in the Republic of North Macedonia, as well as how certain legal solutions are implemented in practice in terms of public participation. Given the fact that urban planning affects the environment, certain regulations related to public participation in the area of the environment are included. The brief resulted in certain conclusions and recommendations that could have an impact on certain policy making or improvement in the area in the future.

Rulebook on irrigation water monitoring



The Macedonian Young Lawyers Association, within the "Action for advanced legal and institutional protection of waters" project, and in cooperation and consultation with the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, supports the drafting of the by-law of Article 151 paragraph 2 (water irrigation monitoring) of the Law on Waters. The rulebook stipulates the technical conditions, the method and the procedure for measuring the quantity and quality of the collected or abstracted quantities of irrigation water at the points of abstraction or catchment.

Implementation of the global action plan for ending statelessness 2014-2024 in Republic of North Macedonia



This document provides an analysis of the current situation with statelessness in the Republic of North Macedonia, as well as the implementation of the specific recommendations and guidelines of the Action Plan in our country, following the Global Action Plan. The Global Action Plan contains ten actions that are recommended to achieve the goals of the plan. In order to implement the plan, all countries facing this problem are encouraged to take one or more of the proposed actions, depending on the situation in each country individually, but in addition to the countries, non-governmental organizations, regional organizations, as well as international organizations, but also the stateless persons themselves are encouraged to give their contribution and support to the states in the implementation of this plan and the achievement of the foreseen goals.

HANDBOOKS

Handbook of Invasion of Privacy and Peer Violence on the Internet



The handbook is intended primarily for secondary school students, but it can also be useful for their parents/guardians, teachers and social workers, as well as for other professionals working on the plan for protection of children's rights. We live in an age of information and the advancement of technologies has enabled faster and easier distance interaction through social platforms. However, the free flow of information and the massive use of social media exposes us to various risks and dangers, such as the violation of privacy and peer violence. Although they used to occur even before the advent of the Internet and are still present "offline", by the use of the Internet, personal data abuse and peer violence take on new forms and a new space. This does not mean that we should avoid our favorite social media and completely "disconnect" from online communication. But it is of great importance to be well informed about the possible dangers and about the ways to avoid them.

Handbook on lodging individual complaints with a Human Rights Committee



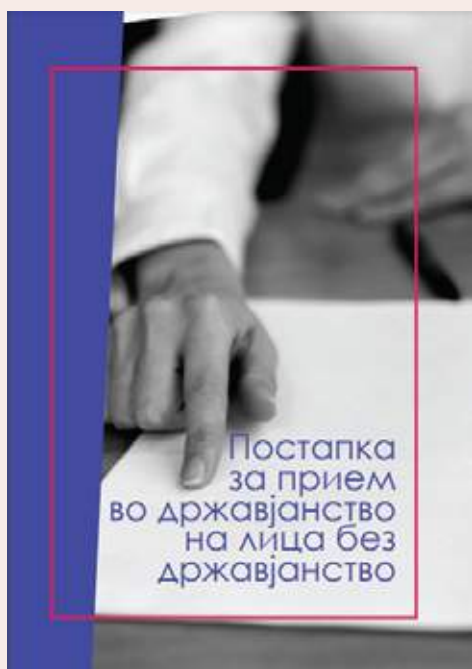
This handbook is based on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the first Optional Protocol, which establishes the possibility of each individual to lodge individual complaint with the Committee. Its purpose is to provide simple guidelines and steps of action in the process of lodging an individual complaint with a Committee, but also to be used as an educational and informative material for the purpose of promoting the human rights protection mechanisms. The handbook was developed by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of North Macedonia (MJ) and the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association (MYLA) on the basis of a signed Memorandum of Cooperation, starting from the joint commitment to promote and advance the protection of human rights and to realize the principle of the rule of law.

Guide on Treatment of Afghan children with a temporary stay in RNM



This guide for the coordination of service providers established as Mobile Child Protection Teams is a protocol for coordination of the teams that provide their services in the locations where the evacuees are accommodated. The guide covers the general principles and rules for the protection of children, whereas the services offered by several actors in several areas are independent of state institutions and systems and services established by law. Among other things, it also contains general information, methods and mechanisms for referring specific cases, managing the risk that may arise, personal data protection, responsibilities of involved actors and other stakeholders, as well as methods and mechanisms for mutual coordination and cooperation among teams, by establishing a notification mechanism between them and the donor. The aim of the guide is to strengthen the links between the formal (state) and informal protection mechanisms and systems established in the hotels.

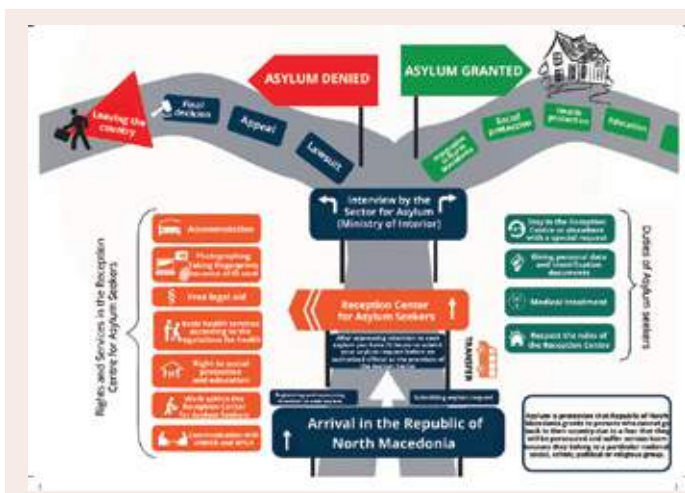
Procedure for admission to citizenship of persons without citizenship



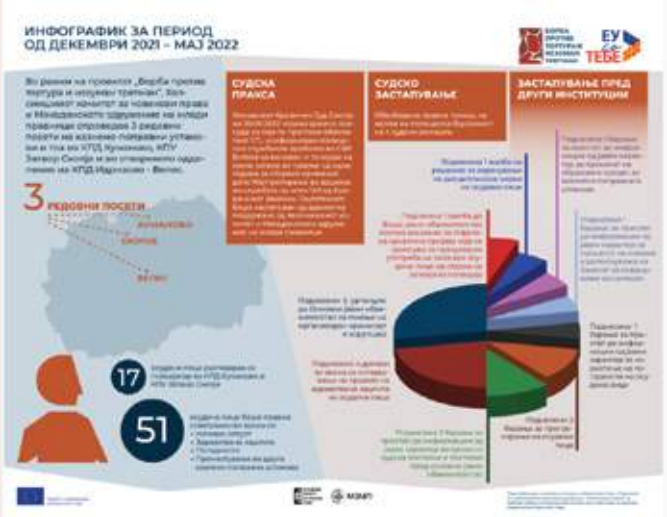
The brochure contains information about the procedure for acquisition of citizenship of persons without citizenship - necessary documents, steps, legal framework, types of citizenship, etc.

INFOGRAPHICS

In the course of 2022, 12 infographics were developed. The infographics refer to the following areas:



1. The asylum procedure in N. Macedonia - steps, rights and procedures.



2. The activities carried out within the project - Fight against torture and ill-treatment in penitentiary - correctional institutions - number of visits, legal representation in court, representation before other institutions, case-law, etc.



3. Infographics on the consequences of existence of small hydropower plants



Барњата за дозвола за водно право, одлучувања, формуларите и останатите документи при подготвувањето на управивната документација, информациите за јавно распространување и извештаите од учество на јавноста треба да бидат објавени на интернет страницата на Министерството за животна средина и просторно планирање.

Потребно е војворавно објавување на информациите и податоците во вее-страницата на Министерството за животна средина и просторно планирање со сја полковна интеракција, а со обзема тоа и овозможување на пристап до информации код в клучки за ефикасно учество на јавноста.

Законот за водите предвидува дека Барњата за добивање дозвола за водно право се објавуваат на интернет страницата на Министерството за животна средина и просторно планирање и во еден дневен работен ден достапни на целата територија, маѓутоа не прецизира кога започнува да тече рокот за учество на јавноста доколку објавите се на различни датуми.

Потребно е прецизирање на Законот за водите во оваа насока.

Позитивната тенденција развојот в енергетичкиот потенцијал зашто водите во водостраните електрични централи е позитивна тенденција во развојот на енергетиката во Република Македонија.

Министерството за животна средина и просторно планирање е одговорно за мониторинг на животната средина на водостраните електрични централи.

Развојот на малите хидроелектрани е позитивна тенденција во развојот на енергетиката во Република Македонија.

5% - Процентот на малите хидроелектрани во енергетичкиот потенцијал на водостраните електрични централи.

91% - Процентот на малите хидроелектрани во енергетичкиот потенцијал на водостраните електрични централи.

2% - Процентот на малите хидроелектрани во енергетичкиот потенцијал на водостраните електрични централи.

300 - Бројот на малите хидроелектрани во Република Македонија.

100 - Бројот на малите хидроелектрани во Република Македонија.

3. Infographics on the consequences of existence of small hydropower plants

PARTICIPATION IN DRAFTING REGULATIONS



In the course of 2022, MYLA and representatives of the Association were involved and contributed to 6 working groups for drafting laws and strategies.

LAW ON JUVENILE JUSTICE

In 2022, the process of drafting the Law on Juvenile Justice continued. This year, the meetings of the working group have been intensified, where MYLA continued with its commitment to facilitate access to legal aid for juvenile perpetrators, children at risk, victims and witnesses of crimes by simplifying the procedure for providing legal aid.

LAW ON CIVIL REGISTRY

MYLA is part of the working group for drafting a new Law on Civil Registry, which provides for a systemic solution to the problem of unregistered persons in the Registry of Births. By the working group, MYLA was tasked with drafting a draft law that would contain a systemic solution to the problem of unregistered persons in the Registry of Births.

LAW ON PROTECTION AGAINST HARASSMENT AT THE WORKPLACE

The working group that started working in 2021 continued to work in the course of 2022. MYLA's commitments and efforts as a member of this working group is for the law to be based on the human rights-based principle, by providing simple and enforceable measures for the protection, certainty and safety of the worker for reporting and requesting the prevention of violence at the workplace, as well as by adapted specific obligations for the employer to provide a safe working environment and for reporting harassment by the employee.

LAW ON DONATIONS AND SPONSORSHIPS

MYLA is part of the working group for and amendments and supplements to the Law on Donations and Sponsorships. The goal that MYLA strives for in the process is the improvement of the legal framework for donations and sponsorships in public activities in order to facilitate donations to civil society organizations.

LAW ON GENDER EQUALITY

In 2022, the working group continued to actively work on the draft legal text. The key changes are in the direction of achieving full gender equality through the introduction of protection, encouragement and promotion mechanisms, as well as implementation monitoring mechanisms. The group continues to work in 2023 as well.

JUDICIARY STRATEGY

In 2022, a working group was also formed for the development of the Strategy for Reform of the Judicial Sector, where the Blueprint platform of civil society organizations is a member through CLRA-member and MYLA-deputy member.

Additionally, the Association submitted comments on the Draft Law amending and supplementing the Law on Waters, and an initiative to amend and supplement the Law on Environment was also submitted.

In 2022, MYLA and its representatives participated in the National Co-ordination Body on Free Legal Aid and the National Coordinating Body for Monitoring Non-Discrimination Issues and the Implementation of Laws, Bylaws and Strategic Documents in this area.

BY-LAWS

- 1 MYLA was part of the team drafting the by-laws arising from the **Law on Waters** (specifically from Articles 151 and 152). Two external experts in the area of water management were part of the team. Throughout the process, consultative meetings with the MEPP and the Water Department, meetings with stakeholders, as well as a public debate on the by-laws were held. The process was rounded off with the drafting of the Rulebook on the technical conditions, the method and the procedure for irrigation water monitoring and the Rulebook on the technical conditions, the method and the procedure for land drainage water monitoring.
- 2 MYLA assisted the Administration for Execution of Sanctions in drafting two by-laws arising from the **Law on Execution of Sanctions**. They have not been adopted considering the fact that the drafting of a new Law on Execution of Sanctions is ongoing and they should be harmonized with the new law. The following Rulebooks have been developed: Rulebook for work under conditions of a prison police strike, in accordance with Article 84 of the Law on Execution of Sanctions and Rulebook on the manner of carrying and using firearms, in accordance with Article 87 paragraph 3 of the Law on Execution of Sanctions.
- 3 Upon the request of the **National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Smuggling of Migrants**, the Ministry of Interior prepared a Memorandum of inter-institutional cooperation in the detection of crimes related to human trafficking in human beings and labor exploitation and referral of potential victims of this crime for cooperation between the Ministry of Interior and the State Labor Inspectorate in accordance with the GRETA recommendations, with the support of the EU and the Council of Europe project – Preventing and combatting trafficking in human beings.

NETWORKING AND MEMORANDA OF COOPERATION

In 2022, MYLA continued its active contribution to the work of the thematic networks together with other civil society organizations. MYLA is part of 14 networks where it actively contributes.

- In 2022 MYLA became part of the **Roma Rights Network**. The network includes 18 human rights organizations from 15 different countries with the aim of uniting Roma and non-Roma activists fighting for the protection of Roma human rights across Europe. The Roma Rights Network exists to promote a human rights-based approach to Roma activism. Its members are Roma-led organizations as well as human rights groups focused on improving access to fundamental rights for Roma communities. The network aims to influence the protection of Roma human rights in Europe, strengthen rights-based advocacy efforts, stimulate debate on Roma rights and pursue human rights litigation as a tool for activism.

MEMORANDA

A Memorandum of Cooperation was signed with the **Administration for Execution of Sanctions and the Institute for Social Activities** for the implementation of the project activities, which include the development of a module for capacity building of professionals and social service providers to work with convicted persons, ex-convicts and persons subject to probation.

In 2022, MYLA signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Personal Data Protection Agency in order to promote and strengthen the right to personal data protection and the privacy of the personal data subjects, which represent an indivisible aspect of human rights.

The Macedonian Young Lawyers Association and the **Ministry of Environment** and Physical Planning signed a Memorandum of Cooperation in the process of drafting two rulebooks arising from the Law on Waters and mutual support in strengthening the legal environmental protection.

In the course of 2022, Memoranda of Cooperation were signed with **three secondary schools**: “Vasil Antevski Dren” and the International School “NOVA” in Skopje and SOU “Josif Josifovski” - Gevgelija, on the basis of which area experts, part of the MYLA held six lectures on “Privacy on the Internet and personal data protection”.

As part of the project “Youth Activism for Greener Municipalities”, three Memoranda of Cooperation were signed with the municipalities of Kavadarci, Krushevo and Kriva Palanka. Additionally, three Action Plans are inserted as part of the Memoranda of Cooperation with the municipalities for providing technical and mentoring support. The main goal of this support is, after the end of the action, to establish structured and sustainable mechanisms for the participation of young people in the environmental and climate policy making, implementation and monitoring within the municipalities.

LEGAL EDUCATION

A total of 86 trainings, workshops, lectures, academies, strategic fora and educational sessions (events) were held for pupils, young lawyers, students, attorneys, representatives of the judicial and government institutions, representatives of the educational system, representatives of civil society, representatives of state authorities, journalists, as well as the population trained in the relevant field

17 young lawyers acquired practical knowledge and skills, and more than 10 young lawyers have been employed with the support of MYLA

In 2022, 1 cycle of the Internship Program was implemented and 17 interns who did an internship for a duration of 3 months were involved. In addition to the three-month practical work within the Program, the interns were part of the trainings on following topics:

- ✔ Practical legal skills and basic ethical values of the legal profession
- ✔ Job search skills in the legal profession
- ✔ Sensitization



The goal of the Internship Program is to strengthen the professionalism and build the capacities of young lawyers. Through the Program, on the one hand, practical work is enabled in order for young lawyers to become competitive on the labor market, and on the other hand, it provides trainings that will help young lawyers acquire additional knowledge and skills. Therefore, through the Internship Program, MYLA tries to provide this balance for young lawyers.

IN THE PERIOD FROM 2015 TO 2022, 609 YOUNG LAWYERS HAVE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The interns, part of the Internship Program, did their internship in the following cities: Skopje, Tetovo, Prilep and Bitola.

MYLA's cooperation during the first cycle of the Internship Program in the period from October-December 2022 was carried out with:

- 4 basic courts
- 1 appellate court
- 2 non-governmental organizations
- Constitutional Court of RNM
- Commission for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination
- The Office of the Ombudsman in Skopje
- 1 law office

The acquisition of first work experience through the implementation of practical work by young law graduates has a key role in legal education and it can be a successful part in the fight against youth unemployment while at the same time making them competitive candidates for future employment.

In the first cycle of the Internship Program:

- 70% evaluated the quality of the internship with a score of 5, whereas 30% gave a score of 4
- 60% of the interns assessed that their competitiveness on the labor market increased after completing the Internship Program
- 4 young lawyers from the Internship Program have continued their internship or have been engaged in another way



STEFAN KOCEVSKI

Intern in the Institute of Human Rights in Skopje through the Internship Program at MYLA

Through the internship within the program organized by MYLA, it was possible for me to continue the cooperation with the Institute for Human Rights that I had previously had, and to see more closely the work that non-governmental organizations do.

Throughout these 3 months, I met many people who have to do with the law, and whose opinion and attitude I duly observed and apply to this day. I was even more satisfied by the fact that I could closely follow the work of the Judicial Council, the Council of Public Prosecutors and the Administrative Court, an experience which seriously helped me to understand the practical skills needed to be at least a good lawyer. The monitoring of these 3 institutions made it possible for me for the first time to be in contact with persons who are holders and organizers of the judicial authority in the country.

I also had a great advantage for being directly involved in the projects of the Institute and their activities regarding the organization and implementation of the projects, which was a special honor for me to get to know how the non-governmental organizations work and how much they fight for a better future for the citizens and in particular for their basic human rights.

SEMRAN MURTEZANI

Intern in the Basic Criminal Court through the Internship Program at MYLA

I think that it is of particular importance for the young lawyers to network among themselves as well as with the key institutions of justice, since in this way opportunities to share opinions and perspectives on the challenges of the legal system in North Macedonia and the challenges of lawyers in general are created.

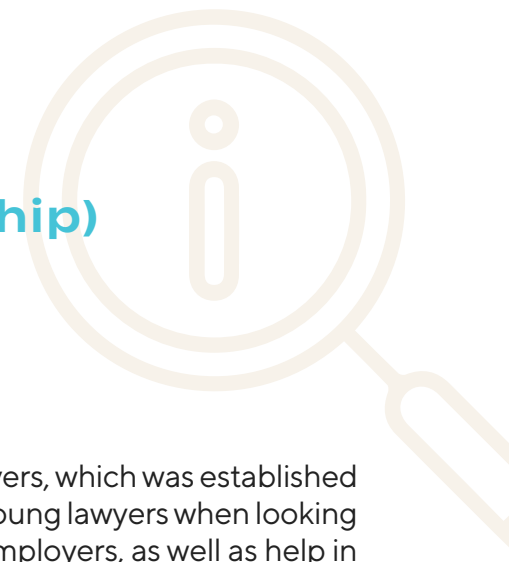
This was exactly provided to me by the participation in the Internship Program organized by MYLA. Discussions with the judge I worked with about the various challenges in the judicial system are ideal opportunities for us as young lawyers to open new horizons for exploring possible solutions in the future for the judicial system and increasing the credibility of the courts.

In general, considering that the citizens' perception of the reliability of the courts is low, it was a big challenge for me in terms of what kind of experience I could gain in this institution. The experience of the daily work within the court, the daily communication with the employees and the excellent cooperation with the judge I worked with allowed me to see the work of the court from a different perspective, that is, from the perspective of a young female lawyer. To my satisfaction, I worked with a very professional judge who enabled me to acquire a lot of new knowledge and skills, as well as to gain a positive perception of the work of the court and of the judges who perform their work professionally.

The contacts and experience I gained within the Internship Program are of great importance to me, considering the fact that due to the excellent cooperation I had with the judge I worked with, I continued doing it for a few more months. I can say that the whole experience of being part of the MYLA's Internship Program is special for me.



HELP DESK for young lawyers (job search support and internship)



- 26 calls for job positions and engagements shared
- 4 educational event calls shared
- 12 young lawyers employed or engaged

In 2022, the HELP DESK, that is, the office for supporting young lawyers, which was established in 2018, continued to operate. The office offers help and support to young lawyers when looking for a job or internship by connecting young lawyers with potential employers, as well as help in creating a resume, motivation letter and preparation for a job interview.

MYLA has established a database containing information on open job positions and internship/volunteering calls for young lawyers and it is regularly shared via e-mail, in order to connect young lawyers looking for job with law firms, offices and organizations.

Additionally, through this tool, MYLA constantly shares information regarding trainings and workshops that are intended for young lawyers in order to strengthen their capacities in legal areas. In the course of 2022, 103 calls for job positions and engagements, as well as 22 calls for trainings were shared. For a total of 12 jobs, MYLA helped and connected law graduates who were looking for a job in a law office and civil society organizations.

2022

78 events

16 legal areas

473 trained people

AREAS OF EVENTS ORGANIZED IN 2022

PROFESSIONALIZATION OF YOUNG LAWYERS

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

LEGAL MECHANISMS AND POLICIES
FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION

DIGITAL ASSEMBLIES

ASYLUM AND MIGRATION

CITIZENSHIP AND STATELESSNESS

JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN

HEALTH PROTECTION

TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

FIGHT AGAINST MIGRANT SMUGGLING

SOCIAL PROTECTION

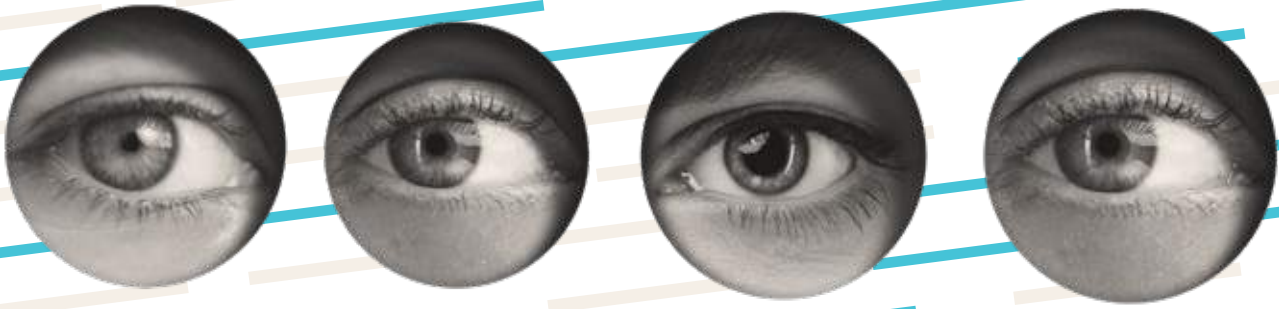
CHILD PROTECTION

DISCRIMINATION

INTERNAL STRENGTHENING OF
CIVIL ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

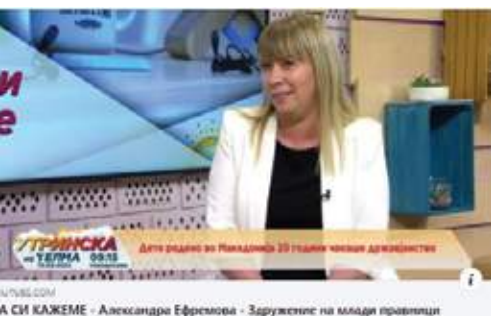
PREVENTION OF RADICALIZATION AND
VIOLENT EXTREMISM AND FIGHT
AGAINST TERRORISM





STRENGTHENING PUBLIC AWARENESS

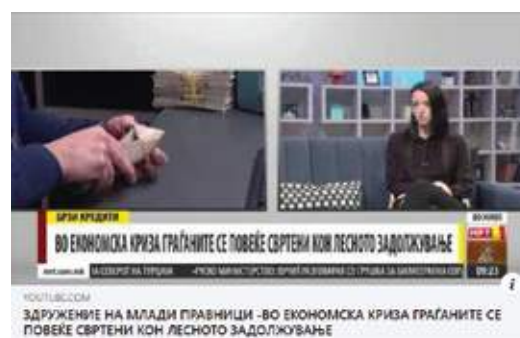
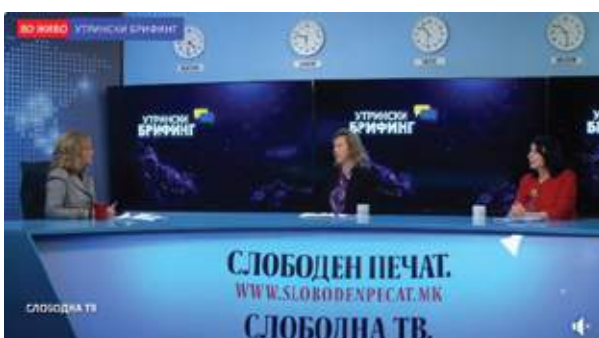
In 2022, MYLA was committed to raising awareness and informing citizens of the topics on which it has been working for a long time, and it implemented several campaigns. The topics we were focused on this year were the environment, trafficking in human beings, eradicating statelessness, personal data protection, the right to peaceful assembly and human rights in general. Within the cooperation with “Utrinska na Telma”, established in 2021, several MYLA’s lawyers were guests and spoke on topics in the area of statelessness - the case of Valentin Rakip, environmental protection and the right to citizenship.



There were guest appearances on several other national televisions on the topics of quick loans, trafficking in human beings and labor exploitation and protection against discrimination.

Vesna Dishlijovska was a guest at MRT on the morning show where she spoke on the topic of quick loans, the risks of quick loans, that is, what should be paid attention to when taking out so-called quick loans?

Irena Zdravkova, Program Coordinator at MYLA and Ms. Magdalena Nestorovska, State Secretary of the Ministry of Interior and National Coordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration Antitrafficking North Macedonia discussed the fight against trafficking in human beings, the spread of labor exploitation as well as the state's commitments in this area on the Morning Briefing on Slobodna TV.



MYLA's President Aleksandra Cvetanovska was a guest on Top Tema on Telma TV, together with Vesna Bendevska from the Commission for Protection against Discrimination and Martin Sopronov from the Institute for Human Rights, discussing discrimination in the country.



As part of a project cooperation with the European Center for Non-Profit Law (ECNL) and the monitoring report on *digitally-mediated assemblies*, a campaign was carried out to acquaint the general public and stakeholders in general with the definitions and types of digitally-mediated assemblies, their specificities and characteristics, but to also share the findings of the report and the recommendations that resulted from it.



“Together for Climate Action” campaign is a broader campaign that Eco Svest, in partnership with MYLA and CNVP, implements in the direction of raising public awareness of climate change and the consequences it causes.



The campaign on *personal data protection and peer violence* aimed to inform young people, parents, teachers and other stakeholders about how to protect themselves and/or what to do in case of personal data violation and in cases of peer violence.

The campaign is part of the “*Your Privacy is Your Freedom*” project that MYLA implemented with the American Bar Association.



The Campaign of UNHCR team employees in the Macedonian Young Lawyers Association aimed to convey testimonies of the team members about their work, experiences and impressions from many years of work with refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons.

AWARDS FOR JOURNALISTS

The Macedonian Young Lawyers Association, in cooperation with the Association of Journalists of Macedonia - AJM and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees UNHCR in North Macedonia, also this year presented awards for professional reporting on the situation of refugees and stateless persons in the Republic of North Macedonia for 2021" as follows:

First prize: Sonja Delevska for the article - “The 19-year-old boy who was left by the state without a birth certificate and health card passed away, the only proof that he existed were the “A” grades in the school certificates” - publication medium: Sakam Da Kazam

Second prize: Valentina Vurmo for the article - “LIFE IN A CAGE - The state does not count Sudahan among the living, but “revived” him only when it was supposed to put him behind bars!” - publication medium: Focus

Third prize: Darko Shtargoski for the multimedia product, “They have been waiting for citizenship in Macedonia even for 15 years - a huge number of their rights have been cut off” - publication medium: Info Kompas

ORGANIZATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES

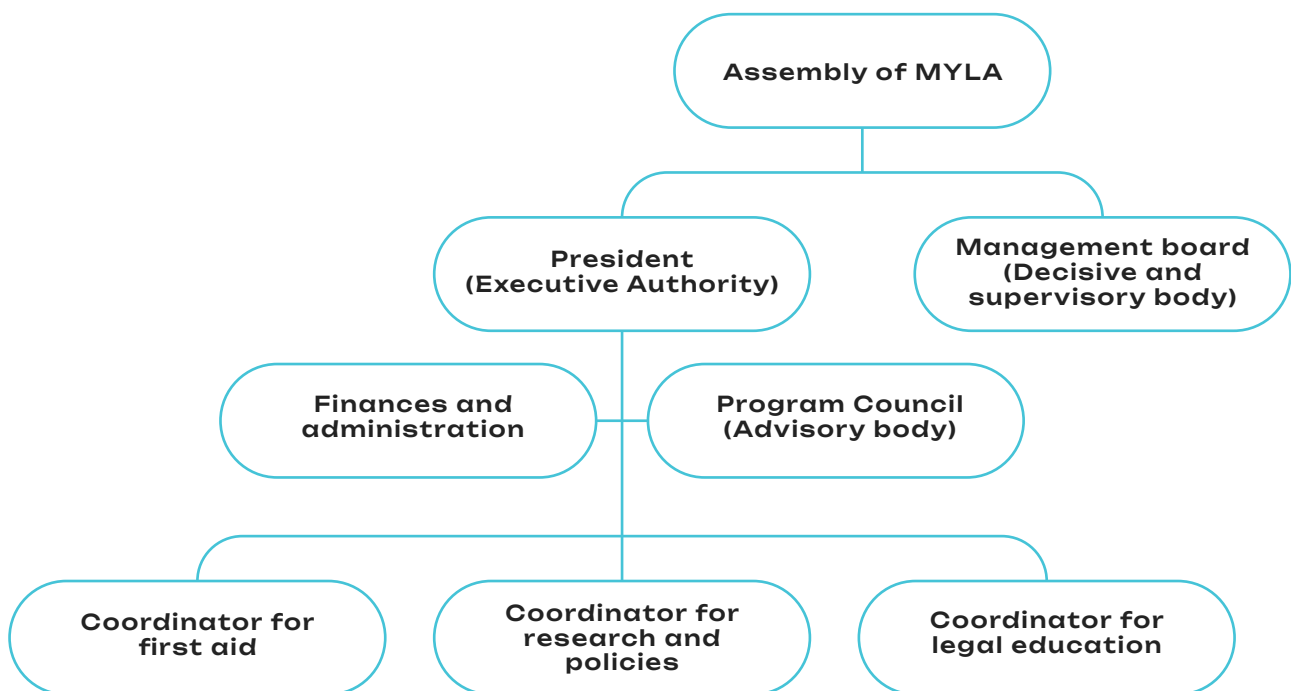
Bodies of the Association

The Assembly of the Association was convened on December 15, 2022, where the Annual Report on the work of MYLA was presented and adopted, as well as the 2021 final account and financial plan. The reports on the work of the President of MYLA and the Management Board were also presented.

The Management Board, as a key authority responsible for decision-making and supervising the work of the Association, held 7 meetings, whereas electronic meetings and voting were used to make urgent decisions in accordance with the Statute.

The President of MYLA, as an executive body, ensured the implementation of the Strategic Plan of the organization, the decisions of the MB, as well as took care of the coordination of the work of the MYLA Program Office. The work of the President is supported by the Program Council, which proposes and develops the Association's programs. The members of the Program Council were elected by the Management Board upon the proposal of the President with a mandate of two years and the right to re-election. The work of the Program Council is chaired by the Program Director.

ORGANOGRAM



Management board

Dime Gjorceski, lawyer - Chairman of the Management Board
Ljupka Noveska Andonova, lawyer
Borjanka Monevska, lawyer
Ana Bozharova

President

Aleksandra Cvetanovska

Finances and administration

Bedria Kolasinac, Financial Manager
Daniela Nastevska, Financial Manager
Liljana Cekik Lazoroska, Financial Manager

Program Council

Aleksandra Cvetanovska, President
Goce Kocevski, Program Director
Zoran Drangovski, Senior Project Manager
Nazif Avdi, Senior Project Manager
Irena Zdravkova, Senior Project Manager
Jasna Arandjelovik Orovchanec, Senior Project Manager

HUMAN RESOURCES

In 2022, MYLA team consisted of 33 people, 25 of whom are employed by the Association, while eight were hired under a service contract. According to the gender structure in MYLA, 20 (61%) are women, and 13 (39%) are men. 25 of the persons are law graduates, three are in the field of finance, one is in the field of communications and four are interpreters/translators from Arabic, Urdu and Farsi. 12 of the persons with legal education have passed the bar exam. MYLA is committed to continuous professional development of its employees through training and study visits.

Finances

The assets for conducting the program activities and operational costs of the Association in 2022 were mostly provided through grants and donations, and in a smaller portion from personal sources of income and membership fees. The Statement on Incomes and Expenditures, as well as well as the Balance Sheet are published on MYLA web-site.

Annual budget for 2022 (in thousand denars)

List of realized incomes	2022
Open Government Partnership-USA	22,105
European Commission	17,957
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	10,711
Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF)	9,962
Foundation Open Society - Macedonia	8,393
Sigrid Rausing Trust	6,711
The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	5,973
SIDA	5,342
Netherlands Embassy Skopje	4,730
Group 484	3,818
The American Bar Association	998
European Network of Statelessness (ENS)	951
Giz GMBH	770
Roche Macedonia	535
ECNL-Netherland	530
National Democratic Institute	338
Danish refugee council	244
Other donations	156
Services	87
Excess of income over expenditure from the previous year	23,343
Income from membership fees	10
Income and extraordinary income	23
TOTAL	123,687



20
22



