



## BACKGROUND

Almost 100 people returned to North Macedonia from foreign conflicts, particularly from Syria and Iraq. Political instability and inadequate reconciliation caused by previous conflicts have polarized communities along ethnic, religious, and cultural lines. The situation in North Macedonia regarding violent extremism is determined by the country's history of ethnic conflicts and by the ideologies to which ethnic Macedonians and ethnic Albanians have been exposed since the 2001 conflict. These factors have produced three types of extremist trends: ethno-nationalism, religiously motivated extremism, and violent right-wing extremism.

GCERF's work in North Macedonia has achieved significant progress in supporting the reintegration and rehabilitation of returnees while strengthening community resilience against violent extremism. Through collaboration with local organisations, GCERF has facilitated essential individual and family counselling, fostering trust and open communication.

## OUR INVESTMENT STRATEGY IN NORTH MACEDONIA



Support the rehabilitation and reintegration (R&R) of people returning from Northeast Syria and Iraq.



Enhance cooperation among institutions and NGOs to counteract far-right ideologies and ethno-nationalist elements.



Empower local communities and organisations through strengthening their capacities to take ownership of and sustain R&R and P/CVE programmes.

**2020**

North Macedonia became a GCERF partner country in 2020

**USD 2.6 M**

GCERF's total investment in North Macedonia to date

**USD 0.8 M**

Active grants value

**6**

Current civil society partners

## DRIVERS OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Inter-ethnic tensions and polarisation

Political instability and reconciliation issues

Limited employment opportunities and social exclusion

## GCERF FOCUS AREAS AND POPULATION GROUPS IN NORTH MACEDONIA



### LOCATIONS

Skopje  
Polog  
South-western region  
North-eastern region

### POPULATION GROUPS

Individuals at-risk of radicalisation (children and youth)  
  
Returnees and their family members or legal guardians

## KEY RESULTS\*

**1700+**

Young people at-risk of radicalisation and community members engaged through initiatives aimed at increasing awareness on preventing violent extremism

**500+**

Frontline workers trained to facilitate effective rehabilitation and reintegration of returnees

**130+**

Teachers and school professionals trained on PVE and R&R

**25**

Women and children returning from Iraq and Syria received counselling and psychosocial support

“The workshop on preventing radicalisation and supporting the reintegration of returnees helped us better understand the specific challenges these children face in school settings. It raised our awareness about how to approach and support them sensitively, especially when they’ve experienced trauma. We also learned how to better document behavioural and emotional concerns, which can be early signs of distress. With the introduction of a designated reporting officer and clear procedures, we now feel more prepared to respond in a timely and supportive way.

-An educator who participated in the capacity strengthening workshop on rehabilitation and reintegration

Scan the QR code for additional information or visit our website: [www.gcerf.org/northmacedonia/](http://www.gcerf.org/northmacedonia/)



\*Cumulative figures from 2020 until December 2025