GCERF in North Macedonia

GCERF partners build the capacity of governmental and non-governmental actors in the prevention of violent extremism (PVE) and rehabilitation and reintegration (R&R); provide direct assistance to returnees from conflict zones covering medical, psycho-social, educational, administrative and livelihood support; contribute to reducing the stigmatisation of returnees and promote inter-religious and ethnic tolerance and social cohesion.

Active grants

**Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation (MCIC)**
- 2021-24 | Principal Recipient with 4 sub-recipients
  - R&R support to returnees
  - Build capacity and coordination among governmental and non-governmental R&R stakeholders
  - Raise awareness on PCVE and R&R and reduce stigmatisation of returnees

**Macedonian Young Lawyers Association (MYLA)**
- 2021-24 | Principal Recipient with 3 sub-recipients
  - Build capacities of local institutions on R&R
  - Build resilience of children, youth and parents on PCVE
  - Reduce stigmatisation and increase acceptance of returnees

Current Programming: Systems Approach

**National:** improve coordination among governmental and non-governmental PCVE and R&R stakeholders

**Municipality:** Building PVE and R&R capacity of Local Multidisciplinary Teams (LMTs) mandated with R&R of returnees; improve capacity and coordination of frontline practitioners

**Community:** Building inter-ethnic tolerance among youth; fostering reduced stigmatisation of returnees; improving local media coverage on PCVE and R&R.

**Individual:** Provide tailored R&R support to returnees; provide livelihood support to returnees and vulnerable groups; building capacity of parents on pedagogical skills;

Violent Extremism in the North Macedonia: Drivers

**Returnees from foreign conflict zones:**
Almost 100 people returned to North Macedonia from foreign conflicts, particularly from Syria and Iraq.

**Post and pre-conflict context:**
Political instability and inadequate reconciliation caused by previous conflicts have polarised communities along ethnic, religious, and cultural lines.

**Socio-economic drivers:**
High unemployment, limited trust in institutions, and established crime networks contribute to violent extremist narratives.

Investment Focus

Community-based rehabilitation and reintegration of returnees

Skopje, Polog, Southwestern Northeastern districts

Returnees from conflict zones; men, women, children and youth in receiving communities; frontline workers and other R&R actors, religious leaders, media actors.

2021–2024

GCERF in North Macedonia works with the National Committee for Countering Violent Extremism and Countering Terrorism (NCCVECT).
**Key Outputs**

October 2021 – December 2022

- **366** students took part in workshops on trust building and life skills
- **122** women took part in focus groups learning about the role of women in PVE and R&R
- **95** actions were done to promote access to social services intervention and advocacy

Topics covered include conflict-sensitive approaches, mental health and well-being of returnees, data protection and security.

Workshops covered media literacy, conflict resolution, social cohesion and inter-ethnic trust building and sightseeing of multicultural places in the city of Ohrid.

**Key achievements**

October 2021 – December 2022

- In order to allow RFTFs freely express themselves and address their concerns, MCIC partners Pleiades and Horizon Civitas started supporting each of the RFTFs in receiving individual and family psycho-social counselling interventions.
- MYLA partner Search for Common Ground promotes healthy lifestyle and habits among youth and raises awareness for diversity and prevention of bullying. 72 participants took part in youth debates. The activity aims to promote participation in sports and other extracurricular activities which improves inter-ethnic communication and tolerance.
- Representatives of MCIC and NEXUS participated in workshops for the preparation of new National Strategies for CVE and CT (2023–2026) by sharing experiences, good practices and possible activities to be taken into consideration for the future work on PCVE issue.

**GCERF’s Added Value**

- GCERF focuses on building institutional capacity e.g., CSOs, and government agencies
  - All project design and implementation are done in coordination with nationally-aligned, locally-led programmes
- GCERF invests in building a PVE-focused community of practice with CSOs, government agencies, and experts
  - GCERF connects CSOs, communities, and other stakeholders with government and security actors, leading to better coordination and relationships
- Communities are at the forefront of project design and implementation, and the programme works with existing community structures for sustainability
  - GCERF’s consortium model and capacity-building approach enables us to work in remote areas

Find out more about becoming an investor, our work, and the collective impact we make at: [www.gcerf.org](http://www.gcerf.org)

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