



The issue of human rights is a centrepiece of civilised world efforts to create just and human society. The term Equal Opportunities is antonym of all forms of discrimination and is unifying the efforts to combat inequalities and protection of people from discrimination regarding gender, ethnic origin, religion or beliefs, disability, age and sexual orientation.

The year 2007 has been designated as the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All, after the Commission endorsed Decision of the European Parliament and Council in May 2006. EC elaborates that “the general goal of the European Year is to strengthen the awareness about the values of a just, cohesive society, in which there are equal opportunities for all.

In a country like Macedonia, where the legal protection of many groups has yet to be assured, the example of the European Year of Equal Opportunities carries an important message that needs to be broadcasted throughout the country. Macedonia has not developed the thorough antidiscrimination legislation, but also people's behaviour is to a large extent discriminative. Therefore, in a specific context of lack of public trust and low level of tolerance and public spirit, this programme should tackle the issues of discrimination, equal opportunities and creation of national mechanisms for protection of human rights.

The Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation (MCIC), Polio plus - Movement against Disability and the Centre for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (CHRRCR) have joined forces to draw public attention to the problem of discrimination in the country and to bring about necessary changes in following mid-term period.

They have identified problems in socio-cultural context, systems and institutions and adequately designed the approach based on their previous relevant experience.

Overall objective of the programme is to contribute to a just society, free of discrimination, where all people enjoy rights for equal treatment, as well as benefits of diversities.

Programme purpose is to create favourable framework for promotion of equal opportunities for all people in Macedonia.

Focus of this programme is to improve the situation of certain target groups, discriminated on one or more of the following grounds: disability, age, ethnic origin, religion & beliefs, sex, sexual orientation. In a case of Macedonia, additional target group are people living in poverty.

The programme intends to achieve following results:

- Increased public awareness for tolerance, acceptance of diversities and the equal opportunities concept;
- Improved anti-discrimination systems (including legal environment), based on comparative analysis of national legislation and international standards and practices;
- Formulated mechanism for equality issues (which should become National Equality Body) with improved capacities of (existing and new) institutions;
- Established and active wide coalition for equal opportunities.

Adequately, activities are organised in the same groups, titled:

- Campaign (public opinion survey; general campaign);
- Systems (Terminology adjustment, Analysis of international systems and best practices; Analysis of the national legislation, policies and plans; Formulation of the new model);
- Coalition (Coalition of citizen's organisations; National Coordination Body; Capacity

building of institutions);

- Institutions (Creating institutiogram; Formulation for the new equality body).

Partners will cooperate with the Government and other actors in order to achieve planned results. For implementation of activities, Programme Board will be formed consisting of MCIC (as overall responsible for the management of the programme), Polio Plus and CHRCR.

Programme period is January 2007 - December 2009.

Planned budget is 400,000 EUR. It will be obtained by MCIC sources of funds, other international donors, business sector contributions/donations and with some fundraising activities.

Projects:

- [Structure for support and capacity building](#)
- [framework for nondiscrimination](#)
- [Квалитетно образование за сите](#)
- [Застапување и лобирање за образованието и човековите права и слободи на Ромите во Република Македонија](#)
- [Кампања за недискриминација](#)