



MINISTRY OF  
LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT



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**TRILATRAL COMMITTEE**  
**for training coordination**

**STRATEGY**

FOR TRAINING IN THE LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

**2006-2010**

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This strategy document was developed in the second half of 2005 and was finalized in the first quarter of 2006, in accordance with the Action Plan on European Partnership 2005. The Strategy was developed by a Working group comprising representatives of MLSG, CSA, ZELS and TSF, supported by experts from the Baltic Countries, within the UNDP Project "Support to the Training System for Local Government Administration". The Working Group held several working and consultative meetings with all stakeholders, including representatives from the donor community in the initial and the development stages of the process.

## ACRONYMS

MLSG	The Ministry of Local Self-Government
CSA	Civil Servants Agency
ZELS	Association of the Units of local self-government
LSGU	Local Self-government Unit
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
TSF	Training Support Facility
CS	Civil servant
RM	The Republic of Macedonia
LSG	Local Self-Government

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The local self-government, as one of the core values of the constitutional order of the Republic of Macedonia, its development and the process of decentralization imposed the need of strengthening of the institutional capacities of the local self-government units. Therefore, the development of professional, competent, efficient, responsible, citizens- and service-oriented local self-government, which will be guided by high ethic principles and will enjoy the respect and the confidence of the citizens, has elevated the training as a high priority in the process of decentralization.

Trainings of civil servants and elected representatives of the local-self-government in the Republic of Macedonia was taking place in an environment characterized by a lack of a nationally defined policy of trainings and of a system for planning and coordination of trainings; budget constraints on the state and the local level; lack of coordinated management of funds provided by the donor projects and programmes at national level; lack of a system for quality assurance of trainings. The lack of training needs assessment resulted in supply-driven, instead of demand-driven trainings, as well as overlapping of the training topics offered by many training providers. Also, the numerous trainings supported by the local and international training providers did not result in a developed competitive local training market, which could contribute towards the improved quality of trainings.

To overcome the problems in the area of trainings, identified was the need to establish an institutional mechanism for exchange of information, coordination and decision-making in the area of professional development and training of the civil servants in the municipal administrations. For this purpose, on October 23, 2003, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Ministry of Local Self-Government (MLSG), Civil Servants Agency (CSA) and Association of the Units of Local Self-government (ZELS), by which the Trilateral Committee for Coordination of Trainings (TCCT) was established. To implement the activities related to the planning and coordination of trainings in the local self-government units, in September 2004 a Training Support Facility (TSF) was established as a technical support to the activities of the Committee, and with technical and financial assistance from UNDP.

As a result of the activities of the Trilateral Committee, and with technical support from the TSF, development of a strategy for training of CS and elected representatives in the local self-government was commenced, in order to ensure strategic approach in the coordination of trainings and professional development.

The importance and the need of establishing and operation of a training system at the local level were identified by the central<sup>1</sup> and the local authorities as a relevant instrument in the implementation of the reforms. Therefore, the strategy for training of the CS and the elected representatives was developed and accepted by all relevant stakeholders in the process of trainings (the Government of the RM, ZELS, MLSG, CSA, the donor community, training providers, etc.)

The Strategy is a paper on establishment, operation and development of a sustainable training system in the local self-government, which defines the strategic objectives, the target groups, training priorities, the system and the policy of training and professional development, training quality assurance and the financing.

The Strategy is based on the comprehensive Training Needs Assessment, conducted in 2005, which identifies the organizational and the individual training needs in the LSGU.

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<sup>1</sup> European partnership 2005, Action plan, page 32-Martix of measures and activities, chapter Public Administration: M3 and M4.

## **2. AIMS OF THE STRATEGY**

### **2.1. The main aim of the Strategy**

Starting with the theoretical foundations and having in mind the specific baseline in the Republic of Macedonia, as well as the experiences from other countries in building a system for training and professional development of CS and elected representatives, the Strategy should provide for:

- Establishment and development of a sustainable training system in LSGU, aiming towards development of a highly professional, accountable and efficient local self-government, which will implement the competences transferred in the process of decentralization, and will support the process of accession to the European Union.

The establishment of the training system, as well as its operation, are the key prerequisites which need to be achieved within the first three years of the implementation of the Strategy.

### **2.2. Specific objectives of the Strategy**

To achieve the main aim, six specific objectives were identified:

- 1) Defining of the goals and significance of the trainings of civil servants and the elected representatives in the local self-government;
- 2) Defining of the organization of the system for training and professional development in the local self-government;
- 3) Defining of the system for planning of trainings;
- 4) Defining of the bases for quality assurance of training;
- 5) Defining of the system for financing of trainings, and
- 6) Transformation of the Training Support Facility into a Training Center for the local self-government

### **2.3. Target groups**

The strategy is oriented towards upgrade of the professional skills and qualifications of the three groups of civil servants: managerial, expert and expert-administrative. At the same time, the aims of the Strategy are relevant also for the elected representatives in the LSGU, the other employees in the LSGU, as well as the employees in the public services of the local self-government who do not have status of civil servants.

### **3. FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY**

#### **3.1. The legal basis**

The Law on Civil Servants (Official Gazette 59/2000, 112/2000, 34/2001, 103/2001, 43/2002, 98/2002, 17/2003, 85/2003, 17/2004, 69/2004 and 81/2005) provides the general legislative framework for the training and the professional development of the civil servants, which needs to serve as a basis for the comprehensive development of the training system of civil servants and for defining of the national policy for training of civil servants. The law establishes that:

- The civil servant has the right and duty to professional development and training, in accordance with the needs of the body where they are employed (article 24, paragraph 1);
- Civil Servants Agency by an act establishes the system for coordination of the training and development of the civil servants (article 24, paragraph 2);
- The professional development and training is implemented on the basis of an Annual Programme adopted in the current year for the following year (article 24, paragraph 3);
- The programme mentioned in paragraph (3) of this article is adopted by the body mentioned in article 3 paragraph (2) of this Law, upon a previously obtained opinion of the Agency (article 24, paragraph 4);
- For the needs mentioned in paragraph (1) of this article, funds are provided from the Budget of the Republic of Macedonia and the budget of the municipality and of City of Skopje (article 24, paragraph 5).

#### **3.2. Strategic Factors**

The development of professional and competent local administration is essential for successful achieving of the strategic priorities of the state. The main motivations for training and development of the employees in the LSG are based on the following priorities for strategic development of the Republic of Macedonia:

1. Integration of the Republic of Macedonia into the EU;
2. Decentralization of power;
3. Improved adequate and equitable representation of communities within the state administration;
4. Prevention and suppression of corruption;
5. Public administration reform.



Apart from the strategic priorities of the state, taken into account are also the relevant strategic documents on the training and professional development of civil servants and the elected representatives: the National System for Coordination of the Professional Development and Training of Civil Servants; the Strategic plan of ZELS for the period 2001 – 2006; the Strategy for Public Administration Reform; EU Training Strategy for Macedonian Civil Servants; Programme for Implementation of the Decentralization Process 2004-2006 and the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Programme; Analytical Report for the Opinion on the application from the Republic of Macedonia for EU membership; European Partnership 2005 - Action Plan and the Framework Agreement.

Out the aforementioned strategic documents, the key role belongs to:

- The National System for coordination of the professional development and training of the civil servants – act of CSA based on the Law on Civil Servants which establishes the policy and the system for training of civil servants in RM, aimed at creating a professional and competent civil service, capable of providing high quality services to all clients.
- Strategic Plan of ZELS for the period 2001 - 2006 which establishes the role of ZELS aiming at: improvement of capabilities and the knowledge of the elected officials in the local self-government to perform their functions; and establishment of a Committee for training and development of the elected representatives.

### **3.3. The key players in the area of training**

One of the objectives of this Strategy is to determine the responsibilities of the institutions involved in the training of LSG and the support to the implementation of the national training system.

The key players in the area of training of civil servants and elected representatives, and their role in the overall training environment, are:

- The Government of the Republic of Macedonia - pursuant to the Law on Civil Servants (article 24, paragraph 5), provides funds from the Budget of RM for training and professional development of civil servants.
- Civil Servants Agency – independent state body which, pursuant to the Law on Civil Servants performs: coordination of activities related to professional development and training of civil servants; establishing, through an act, of the system of coordination of professional development and training of civil servants, providing opinions to the LSGU on the annual programmes for training and professional development, improvement of the efficient and effective operation of the civil servants, monitoring of the human resources management procedures by the LSGU and provision of relevant advice;

- The Ministry of Local Self-Government – performs the overall coordination and monitoring of the decentralization process, which involves also the identification of the relevant needs and undertaking appropriate measures to build capacities in the LSGU;
- The Association of the Units of Local Self-government - articulates the needs of training and development in the LSGU, operates as a service center for the local self-government units, works on improvement of the capacities and skills and manages the process of education and training of the elected officials;
- The Trilateral Committee for Coordination of Training – composed of representatives of MLSG, CSA and ZELS as an institutional mechanism for mutual exchange of information, coordination and decision-making in the area of professional development and training of civil servants in the municipal administration. The Trilateral Committee does the mobilization and allocation of funds provided on the basis of projects and programmes financed by local, foreign and international institutions and organizations;
- Training Support Facility – technical support to The Trilateral Committee which implements the activities originating from the planning and coordination of trainings in the LSGU. TSF provides expert and technical assistance in: coordinating training and preparing for its implementation; conducting a comprehensive Training Needs Assessment of the civil servants in the LSGUs; developing training programmes for the civil servants and elected representatives in the LSGU; support to the implementation of the training activities by the international community; design and implementation of the Training Strategy and the Annual Programme for training of civil servants and elected representatives of the LSGU;
- The local self-government units – perform assessment of training needs, adopt annual programmes for training and promote the need of continuous learning, which imposes the need to establish an organizational form for human resources management. Such determination leads to effective training programmes and purposeful utilization of the funds for training;
- Donors (the international community) – provide expert, technical and financial assistance for the trainings in the local self-government and following of the international trends in the area of training, as well as modern methodological approach in all stages of the process of training.

### **3.4. Training market**

The existence of a competitive market of training providers is a basic guarantee for quality assurance of training. Therefore, through the national strategy the aforementioned key players should create an environment for development of a dynamic, efficient and competitive training market, without favoring or granting monopolistic position to individual training providers.

In the Republic of Macedonia there is a small number of organizations and individual training providers considered necessary for a modern administration in the local self-government. At the same time, in the absence of appropriate criteria and standards for quality assurance of training, the Strategy supports initiatives for development of the training market through the establishment of a system for quality assurance of the trainings and strengthening of the capacities of the training providers.

Within this context, the Strategy supports the need for the professional trainers to join in an association, aiming at raising the awareness, creating prerequisites and environment for provision of quality training.

## **4. STRATEGIC APPROACH AND OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING IN THE LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT**

### **4.1. Strategic approach to the training**

The training of civil servants and elected representatives in the local self-government:

- Is an integral part of the training system in the Republic of Macedonia;
- Supports the implementation of the reforms in the public administration;
- Is based on the organizational and individual training needs in the local self-government;
- Is provided upon clearly defined training objectives.

### **4.2. Strategic objectives of the training**

- Civil servants and elected representatives should acquire knowledge and skills to perform the competencies aiming at successful implementation of the decentralization
- To introduce contemporary work methods of the administration, gearing towards improved quality of services of the LSGU.

### **4.3. Types and levels of training**

Main types of training:

- Induction training –mandatory training for all newly employed in the LSGU to acquire knowledge about the organization and competences of the local self-government;
- Generic training – to acquire knowledge and skills that are equal for groups of CS, irrespective of the specificities of their job positions
- Specialized training – to acquire knowledge and skills for the specific needs of the job position of a civil servant and the needs of LSGU and
- Package trainings for the elected representatives<sup>2</sup> – to acquire knowledge and skills of elected representatives to perform the competences, in accordance with the identified needs of the body.

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<sup>2</sup> The package of trainings for the elected representatives contains a basic package of curricula for the induction trainings for the newly elected representatives and a package of curricula for specialized and generic trainings for the elected representatives, throughout their entire term of office.

The contents of the trainings in the local self-government should be adequate to the hierarchical order of the target groups, in four levels:

- 1) Strategic level – elected representatives;
- 2) Managerial level – managerial civil servants;
- 3) Expert – professional level – expert civil servants; and
- 4) Operation level – expert-administrative civil servants.

It is necessary to take into account that for certain trainings conditioned by the specific features of the content of training, it is necessary to have vertical and horizontal integration.

## **5. TRAINING SYSTEM IN THE LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT**

### **5.1. Policy and measures for training and professional development**

The policy for training and professional development in the local self-government in the Republic of Macedonia should be implemented at three levels:

#### **- at the local level**

The bodies of the LSGU must establish organizational forms responsible for human resources management and strategic planning and to provide funds from the budget.

ZELS, through the Commission for the Municipal Administration, initiates development of organizational forms for human resources in the LSGU and monitors the process of training to improve the efficiency and quality of the training.

#### **- at the inter-institutional level**

The Trilateral Committee for Coordination of Training establishes the national annual priorities for training, coordinates the activities in the area of trainings, adopts training plans and defines the standards of training quality.

#### **- at the national level**

The Government of RM adopts the Strategy for Training in the local self-government 2006-2010 and participates in the provision of funds from the Budget of RM for training and professional development of civil servants, (article 24, paragraph 5 of the Law on CS).

### **5.2. System for training and professional development**

The system for training, which is based on the institutional setup, strategic priorities of the state and the strategic objectives of the training and the professional development, should provide for the implementation of the training policy through the following components:

- Determination of the priority training needs
- Planning and coordination of trainings
- Implementation of trainings
- Quality assurance, and
- Evaluation and measuring of the impact of the training

On the basis of the present circumstances and the reform priorities, as well as comparative advantages of the centralized<sup>3</sup> and decentralized<sup>4</sup> model for training, the System for Training in the RM will be developed according to the combined model for training, which comprises a shared responsibility in the training and professional development between central and local government.

The establishment of a system for financing of the trainings in the local self-government will take place in stages, as a combined system.

### **5.3. Determination of priority needs for training and professional development**

Conducting of a training needs assessment in the LSGU presents a basis to determine the priority trainings which should overcome the obstacles in the performance of the competences and achievement of the strategic objectives and priorities in the local self-government.

Having in mind the policy for training and professional development at the local level, it is necessary to stimulate the processes of capacity building for independent and autonomous conducting of training needs assessments by the organizational forms in charge of human resources management in the LSGU. The training priorities defined within the assessment will present a basis to establish the annual national training priorities by the Trilateral Committee.

### **5.4. Planning and coordination of trainings and professional development**

The system for planning and coordination of trainings<sup>5</sup> for the local self-government in the Republic of Macedonia will be implemented in parallel at two levels: the local and the national level.

At **the local level**, the planning starts with the conducting of the training needs assessment, based on which, the LSGU prepare a draft-annual training programme. At the same time, the results of the assessment in a form of Report for priority training areas is submitted to the Trilateral Committee, which determines the national annual training priorities. The annual training priorities are feedback information to the LSGU in finalizing of their draft-annual training programmes, which are submitted to CSA for an opinion. After the obtained opinion from the CSA, the LSGU adopts the Annual Programme for training.

The planning of trainings at the **national level** is done by the Trilateral Committee and the National Committee<sup>6</sup>, the basic role of which is to establish the national annual training

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<sup>3</sup> Centralized system of training – the state, through its own state training intuitions provides for financing of training programmes to achieve its strategic goals and priorities, neglecting the training needs of the LSGU-s.

<sup>4</sup> Decentralized System - LSGU-s provide autonomous financing of trainings for their purposes and priorities, without taking into account the strategic priorities of the state.

<sup>5</sup> Annex 1 – A diagram of the System for planning and coordination of training for the LSG in RM

<sup>6</sup> National system for coordination of the training and professional development of CS in RM, page 21.

priorities (generic, as well as specialized training). They are based on the Reports about the Priority Training Needs, submitted by the LSGU to the Trilateral Committee, as well as on the strategic priorities of the Government of RM.

In the period until the establishment and operationalization of the Training System, the determination of the national annual training priorities by the Trilateral Committee will be held according to the current practice, which is based on a comprehensive training needs assessment<sup>7</sup> for the local self-government conducted by TSF. Based on the results from the assessment, the donor community harmonized and implemented its planned activities in the area of trainings on a quarterly basis.

In the transition stage of the implementation of the System for planning and coordination of trainings for the local self-government in the Republic of Macedonia, i.e., until the capacities of the LSGU are enhanced to autonomously conduct the training needs assessment, the TSF organizes and conducts the assessment for the local self-government as a whole. Until the System for Planning and Coordination becomes fully operational, the assessment is a basis for development of the Indicative National Annual Training Programme.

In this stage, the donor community will continue having the key role in the support and financing of the trainings. Through the increased coordination and active cooperation with the donor community, The Trilateral Committee will provide directions for allocation of funds, in accordance with the national priorities and the National Annual Training Programme.

### **5.5. Implementing of trainings and professional development**

In the current period, the trainings and professional development of civil servants and elected representatives in RM are conducted in accordance with the National Annual Training Programme through quarterly plans. The quarterly plans are adopted by the Trilateral Committee with technical support by the TSF, and in close cooperation with the donor community and the local training providers.

National Annual Training Programme determined by the Trilateral Committee is based on the National Annual Priorities for training of civil servants and elected representatives from the LSGU. For the generic and induction trainings for the newly employed CS, financed from the Budget of RM, development of standardized curricula is foreseen.

CSA is in charge of keeping records of individual data for each CS, about the trainings attended, through filling of forms. Civil servants submit the filled forms to the Register of civil servants<sup>8</sup>. Additionally, the records of the data on trainings implemented in the local self-government is provided by TSF through the Database of implemented trainings and the Databases of training providers.

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<sup>7</sup> Assessment of the training needs for civil servants in the LSGU-s - TCF, June 2005

<sup>8</sup> Rulebook on the format and contents of the forms for recording of the data on civil servants – (Official Gazette of RM, No. 8/06)



In order to provide for easier access to the available programmes, manuals, materials, publications from other trainings, TSF will maintain a library accessible to all interested parties.

Aiming at successful implementation of the system for training and professional development it is necessary to develop the capacities of the local training providers. Through the efforts of the international community in cooperation with the key local players, mechanism for capacity strengthening of the training providers will be developed, organization of "train the trainers" programmes and provision of other technical assistance.

#### **5.6. Quality assurance and measuring the impact of the training and professional development**

Quality assurance should be present in all segments of the training, starting with the identification of the training needs, planning, implementation, evaluation of the training and measuring of the training impact.

The process of quality assurance of the trainings is composed of the following elements:

- *Defining of standards for the curricula*

The curricula will be developed on the basis of a previously established methodology and standards for the mandatory induction training, the generic, as well as essential specialized trainings for CS and elected representatives in the local self-government.

The curricula will be developed by the TSF, adopted by the Trilateral Committee, and implemented by the training providers.

- *Development and establishment of standards for trainers/training providing organizations*

The standards for trainers/training providing organizations are an important instrument for the quality assurance in the delivery of the trainings to be developed by the TSF, and to be adopted by the Trilateral Committee. The individual trainers and the training providing organizations should meet the criteria in accordance with the established standards.

- *Certification and accreditation of curricula and trainers/training providing organizations*

A key element in the process of quality assurance of training is the accreditation of the curricula, as well as the certification and accreditation of trainers/training providing organizations. In accordance with the legislation in RM<sup>9</sup> the Institute for Accreditation of RM operates as a public institution in charge of performing tasks and activities in the area of accreditation. In this sense, in the area of trainings, there is a need to establish a body that will perform the accreditation of the curricula for the mandatory induction training, the generic and

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<sup>9</sup> Law on Accreditation, ("Official Gazette of RM " No. 54/02)

the essential specialized trainings, as well as certification and accreditation of the trainers/training providing organizations. The body should be composed of independent competent experts in the respective areas.

- *Evaluation of the effects and impact of the training*

The process of quality assurance of the trainings encompasses also the measurement of the results and the effects from the trainings. The effectiveness of the trainings will be monitored through the evaluation of the short-term effects and the evaluation of the long-term impact of the trainings.

Evaluation of the effects and the impact of training will be implemented at two levels, the national and the local.

On the national level, there is a need to evaluate the effects of the trainings financed from the Budget of RM and other sources of financing of the mandatory induction and the generic trainings in order to improve the quality of the trainings and the effectiveness of the overall training system. This evaluation should be conducted periodically by the TSF.

At the local level, in the LSGU there is a need to perform evaluation of the trainings by the organizational unit for human resources development, through feedback from the CS and the elected representatives who underwent the respective trainings.

## **6. FINANCING OF TRAININGS**

### **6.1. Combined system of financing**

Trainings of CS and elected representatives are financed from the Budget of RM, budgets of the municipalities and funds from donors, through the following stages:

- Initial stage (2006 - 2008) - predominant financing from donor funds and initial participation of the state in the financing of the generic training from the Budget of RM
- Mid-term stage (2008 - 2010) – a combination of financing from donor funds, budgets of the municipalities and gradual increase of the participation of the state in the financing of the generic trainings from the Budget of RM
- Long-term stage (from 2010) – a combination of financing from the budgets of municipalities, the Budget of RM and other funds (such as, for instance, pre-accession and accession funds of the EU).

The combined system of financing of trainings in the local self-government is based on the shared responsibilities of the Government of RM and LSGU in the implementation of the strategic priorities based on the reform processes, the process of decentralization of power and the processes of European integration.

The financing of the generic trainings is provided from the Budget of RM to achieve the strategic objectives of the Government in the process of decentralization and European integration, in conformity with the national annual training priorities, established by the Trilateral Committee for the National Annual Training Programme.

The earmarked funds from the Budget of RM and the donors interested to support the development and implementation of the priority training programmes will be channeled and administered through the Training Fund. The Fund will be managed by a Steering Board comprised of representatives of the three institutions-members in the Trilateral Committee, as well as representatives of donors who will participate with their funds. The Fund will be administered by the TSF based on the principles of transparency and purposeful spending of funds.

The financing of the specialized trainings of CS and elected representatives should progressively move from one dominantly financed from donor funds to an almost complete financing of the trainings from the budgets of the municipalities.

A basis for the budget allocation for the generic trainings from the Budget of RM and for the specialized trainings from the budgets of municipalities is the projected percentage of annual expenditures for the salaries of CS (0,3% for 2005, 1% for 2006 and 1,5% for the year 2007)<sup>10</sup>.

The system of financing of the trainings should provide full transparency and clarity of the financing procedures, as well as purposeful spending of the training funds.

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<sup>10</sup> "National system for coordination of training and professional development of civil servants in the Republic of Macedonia " – page. 23.

## **7. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY**

The Trilateral Committee coordinates and monitors the implementation of the Strategy and manages the Fund for Training.

For implementation of the Strategy, the Trilateral Committee will adopt an Action Plan which will be prepared by the Working Group, nominated by the Committee, within 60 days from the date of adoption of the Strategy.

The Strategy might be revised on the mid-term, depending on the dynamics of the development of the training system and the global reform processes in RM.

The transformation of the Training Support Facility in Training Center for Local Self-government will be conducted through stages. In the first stage, until the establishment of a sustainable training system, the Center will operate on a project-basis, supported by donor funds. In the second stage, the Center will acquire an institutional form, for which a special project elaboration will be prepared.

The Center will be managed by the Trilateral Committee.

## 8. ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Diagram of the System for Planning and Coordination of trainings for the local self-government in the Republic of Macedonia.

