

**External Review of the Project „Support to the Establishment and
Development of the Parliamentary Institute “
and
Assessment for a potential new project with the Assembly of the
Republic of Macedonia**

May 2017

Brussels, Bern, Skopje

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Disclaimer

The report *External Review of the Project „Support to the Establishment and Development of the Parliamentary Institute“ and Assessment for a potential new project with the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia* has been prepared by Franklin De Vrieze, Marija Tegovska and Nicole Töpperwien. It was drafted upon the request of the Embassy of Switzerland in Macedonia, following the interviews conducted in Skopje between 3 and 10 February 2017. The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the Parliament of Macedonia, the Parliamentary Institute, nor the Embassy of Switzerland in Macedonia.

List of Abbreviations

| | |
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| CEPPS | Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| DCAF | Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces |
| DUI | Democratic Union for Integration |
| EAC | European Affairs Committee |
| EIDHR | European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights |
| EU | European Union |
| FOI | Freedom of Information |
| GOPAC | Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption |
| GRECO | Group of States against Corruption |
| IDSCS | Institute for Democracy Societas Civilis Skopje |
| IFES | International Foundation for Electoral Systems |
| IPA | Instrument for Pre-Assessment Assistance |
| IT | Information Technology |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MP | Member of Parliament |
| NDI | National Democratic Institute for International Affairs |
| ODIHR | Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights |
| OECD | Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| OGP | Open Government Partnership |
| PI | Parliamentary Institute |
| RIA | Regulatory Impact Assessment |
| RoP | Rules of Procedure |
| SAO | State Audit Institution |
| SC | Steering Council |
| SDC | Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation |
| SDSM | Social Democratic Union of Macedonia |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |
| UK | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland |
| US | United States of America |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| XML | Extensible Markup Language |
| VAT | Value-Added Tax |
| VMRO-DPME | Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party for National Unity |
| WFD | Westminster Foundation for Democracy |

Executive Summary

SDC mandated two international and one national expert (Nicole Töpperwien, Franklin De Vrieze, and Marija Tegovska) to conduct an external review of the current phase of the project “Support to the Establishment and Development of the Parliamentary Institute” (Parliamentary Institute Project) and to provide ideas for possible future support to the Assembly, based on a desk study and interviews conducted in February 2017. The following are the key findings and conclusions:

Review of the Parliamentary Institute Project

The Parliamentary Institute and with it the Parliamentary Institute project can be considered as a **successful contribution** to rendering the parliament more effective, in particular for improving the legislative process by making research capacities and training available as well by rendering parliament more open towards the public. The Parliamentary Institute added value to Parliament.

In respect to **research**, in particular research upon the request of MPs, the gradual improvement of quality of the research products is generally acknowledged. While there has been isolated inquiries in respect to the impartiality of one or another research product, the PI can rely on the generally positive perceptions about usefulness, quality and impartiality. The PI is now at a stage of its development where it can be more analytical in its outputs. Research upon the request of MPs is the core of PI business. Pro-active research has developed into a good tool for networking and building the reputation of the PI. The research can be strategically used for raising issues or for preparing staff and MPs of upcoming agenda items and reforms.

Education and training activities are generally appreciated. Workshops that bring together staff from different units have contributed to developing sound and coordinated approaches and to build relations. In respect to the **archive and library**, some issues still need to be resolved before the end of the current project phase. Work of the PI related to the public and **openness of parliament**— in line with its work plan — has mainly focused on raising awareness and knowledge about parliament. These activities provide a start for having a more open parliament. Better accessibility of information on such activities and facilitated registration procedures can further improve attractiveness and lower the resource intensiveness of the management of such events. Parliament’s ownership of these activities still needs to increase.

The PI faces similar challenges like other units and Departments of the Parliament Secretariat. Approval procedures and funding decisions can potentially be used to assert political pressure on the PI. Putting on hold the external support to the PI will make it more vulnerable to political pressures and might lead to a slow down-grading of infrastructure and equipment. For most interlocutors, the **Steering Council** is viewed as an important guarantor of the PI. The **Advisory Board** provides for information sharing and new impetus from the outside. **NDI** plays a useful role by navigating in the politically challenging context and by further developing methodologies and services. Parliamentary Watch of **IDSCS** provided data for monitoring the work of parliament. The **PI** managed to build its capacities and promote its services within the Assembly. It can still improve accessibility and visibility. Cooperation with other parliaments provide opportunities for peer learning. Management processes within the PI can still be improved. Staff retention remains a concern. Promotion of existing staff and the hiring of new ones will be important steps for maintaining the PI operational at the current level.

Recommendations:

- For the PI, to further work on the format of the research reports in response to research requests. Test research reports that include more analysis and impact assessments of options.
- For the PI, to continue with the activities related to the openness of parliament that have already been launched. It is recommended not to start a visitor center during the current phase. For the PI, to work on raising ownership within the Parliament of outreach activities and on making outreach activities more visible on the main webpage of the Parliament.
- For PI, if needed with support of NDI, to initiate discussions on a Calendar for Parliament
- For NDI and PI, to focus on resolving last remaining issues connected to the management of the archive and the library.
- For NDI and PI, to discuss management issues within PI, move towards more participatory management as a motivating factor, improve communication within and communication between NDI-PI and staff. Continue working towards filling of vacancies and develop staff retention policies.

- For NDI and SDC, continue supporting the PI through political backstopping and promote the role of the Steering Council. Discuss with the new Parliamentary Leadership on the PI.
- For SDC, to carefully assess the PI as one of the entry-points and integrate support to the PI in the next phase/programme. To ensure that the PI continues to have political backing until substantive reforms of the overall parliament take place and become effective.

Possible future support to the Assembly

Through the support of the PI, SDC contributed to the start of a change process within Parliament. It is recommended that SDC launches a **new programme/project that targets the Assembly** as such.

Parliaments can be powerful agents of change, particularly during and after times of crisis. MPs from all political parties argued that they want to see reforms of Parliament that will lead to an uplifting of the institution so that it can impact on legislation, hold government and independent institutions accountable and represent the aspirations of their constituencies.

SDC's dedication to continue **long-term cooperation** with the Assembly as well as its previous cooperation with the PI renders it well suited to contribute to a longer-term, substantive reform process of parliament for the next decade. There are several potential **entry-points**, including the Parliamentary Institute, the Leadership of Parliament and the Secretary General, the Committees of Parliament, Parliamentary groups as well as Parliament in relation to independent institutions and regulatory bodies. The importance of entry points will vary based on the overall political climate and the area of support. We are proposing **four potential programming areas** for future SDC support to the Macedonian Parliament: (1) parliamentary oversight, (2) parliamentary openness and open data policy, (3) legislative process and (4) institutional development of the parliament of Macedonia. For achieving the outcomes, programming will require some flexibility to seize opportunities when and wherever they arise.

It is proposed that the SDC programme in Macedonia will build on a **triple-edged strategy** of policy-dialogue, capacity / knowledge building, and reforming structures and processes. The reform measures directed towards structures and processes of parliament aim to institutionalize the change by approaching parliament as a system of relationships and resources. A system-like approach to the Parliament of Macedonia is proposed because capacity building by itself does not generate sustainable change in the institution. Capacity building needs to be accompanied by addressing the structures and processes in parliament. Policy-dialogue can establish an environment that is conducive to reforms.

Recommendations:

A **potential goal for the new Parliament programme** can be as follows:

The **general objective** is to support Macedonia's reform process towards consolidating its democracy and to promote inclusiveness of national policy and decision-making processes, leading to a stronger democratic and tolerant political culture.

The **specific objective** is to strengthen the functioning of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia (Sobranie) in exercising its core parliamentary functions in a professional, accountable and transparent manner.

We are suggesting up to four potential **Outcomes** for the future programme:

1. **Strengthened oversight role of the Parliament of Macedonia:** An outcome focusing on strengthening the oversight role of parliament in respect to government, independent institutions and regulatory bodies with qualified staff supporting committees, clear methodologies, pro-active follow-up on reports and more automated access to information.
2. **Enhanced accountability and empowering citizens' participation through parliamentary openness and open-data policies.** An outcome focusing on enhanced interaction between parliament and citizens/civil society including based on the use of new IT technology, improved open data policies and effective opportunities for citizens to participate in parliamentary proceedings.
3. **A more in-depth legislative review process in Macedonia.** An outcome focusing on further strengthening the legislative process through fostering open, informed debate with continued availability of research and information, a strengthened legal department, strengthened regulatory impact assessments, improved drafting skills and a predictable agenda.

4. **Strengthening the institutional role of the Parliament of Macedonia.** An outcome focusing on overall reforms of the Parliament Secretariat based on a functional analysis, a strategic plan, review of the rules of procedure and parliamentary processes as well as interlinked capacity-building through peer learning and coaching backed by political dialogue.

It is highly recommended to provide for a **programming mission** that will narrow down programming options and define further details to the Terms of Reference of the new programme. Such a programming mission should also propose detailed implementation modalities.

Introduction

Since 2010, SDC has supported the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia in setting up and developing a Parliamentary Institute (PI) in the frame of the project “Support to the Establishment and Development of the Parliamentary Institute” (Parliamentary Institute Project). The overall goal of the project is to contribute to the mission of the PI ‘to strengthen the legislative and oversight function of the Assembly of Macedonia through securing timely, unbiased, objective and accessible services to the legislature’ by supporting the PI Strategic Plan. The current project phase will last until the end of 2017. SDC is considering to launch a new programme that continues support to the Macedonian Parliament.

SDC mandated two international and one national expert (Nicole Töpperwien, Franklin De Vrieze, and Marija Tegovska) to conduct an external review of the current project phase of the Parliamentary Institute Project and to provide ideas for possible future support to the Assembly.

In a briefing meeting in early February 2017, SDC clarified that about 1/3 of the focus of the mission should be backward looking and 2/3 forward looking.

For the review/assessment the team has studied available documents (see annex 3) and conducted semi-structured interviews - based on an interview guide - from February 3 to February 10 in Skopje (see annex 4). Interviews have been conducted in the language of choice of the interviewee (Macedonian, Albanian, English) with consecutive translation, whenever needed. Attention was paid to have a good mix of interviewees, with Members of Parliament from all the main parties, Macedonian and Albanian-speakers, former members of the Steering Council, with key staff of the Parliament, including the Secretary General and of the Parliamentary Institute, representatives from the Ministry of Finance, experts, representatives of civil society organisations and representatives of the international community. Furthermore, meetings were conducted with the current external back-stopper (NDI) as well as the Swiss Ambassador and staff of SDC in Skopje. After the mission, an additional meeting took place with a representative of the Swiss parliamentary services as well as the SDC desk officer in Bern. In addition, the staff of the PI participated in a short multiple-choice survey (see annex 9).

In the report, the terms ‘Parliament’ and ‘Assembly’ are used interchangeably.

The desk study, meetings and the survey provided sufficient input for reviewing key achievements of the Parliamentary Institute Project and to develop some entry points for a potential new programme. However, it is strongly recommended to conduct a programming mission for more detailed planning.

At this point we want to thank the Swiss Ambassador in Skopje and the involved SDC staff, in particular Biljana Georgievska, for their support before, during and after the mission.

1. Context

1.1. Political context

The Republic of Macedonia is confronted with a political crisis. The 2015 “Wire-tapping Affair” brought to the limelight widespread government endorsed corruption, instances of intimidation and even indications for murder. In reaction, the European Commission recruited a group of independent experts to carry out a rapid analysis¹ and issued “Urgent Reform Priorities for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia²”. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2016 Report of the European Commission provides further assessments and recommendations³. The Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia established an Inquiry Committee on the wiretapping and its revelations. The committee did not achieve presenting a report and was generally deemed unsuccessful.

Early parliamentary elections in November 2016 - that were called as part of an agreement brokered by the European Union - brought some changes in party strength. However, the former government parties, VMRO-DPMNE and DUI remain the strongest parties among ethnic Macedonian, respectively the ethnic

¹ The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Recommendations of the Senior Experts Group on systemic Rule of Law issues relating to the communications interception revealed in Spring 2015 (Brussels, 8 June 2015).

² Urgent Reform Priorities for the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (June 2015). European Commission.

³ European Commission, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2016 Report (November 2016).

Albanian voters. At the time of the mission in early February 2017, government formation was still pending. At the end of February, SDSM together with three Albanian parties announced being able to form a majority government, however on 1st of March, the President of the Republic of Macedonia declined providing them with the mandate to form a government, based on arguments of national interests. On 27 April 2017, the Macedonian parliament elected its first ethnic Albanian as Speaker of the Parliament. This decision was met by violent protests, including the breaching of the parliament premises by protesters. Any government coalition at this point of time is likely to be contested. The recent events have increased the enmity between political parties and politicians resorting from the parties.

After a period of relative stability, interethnic relations in Macedonia are currently put to a test. The above mentioned disputes related to government formation have created serious tensions within the ethnic Macedonian community and between ethnic communities.

Once a new government is in place, Macedonia has a stony path in front of it. It will have to conduct fundamental reforms, including of the parliament, in a context in which citizens have very limited confidence in political institutions and politicians, with fragile majorities, deep divisions between political parties, and a politicized administration.

1.2. Parliament of Macedonia

The Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia (Sobranie) is composed of 123 MPs, elected for a mandate of four years. The legal framework foresees that 120 MPs are elected according to the proportional representation model, in six electoral districts each electing 20 MPs, and three MPs are elected from the diaspora. The December 2016 elections saw the election of 120 MPs (the threshold for the diaspora MPs was not met), and all parties accepted the result of the elections. With 33.3% women MPs (40 women MPs out of 120 MPs), Macedonia is among the leading countries in the world in terms of women participation in parliaments.

The Assembly's role and responsibilities are defined in the country's Constitution (1991), the Law on Parliament (2009) and the Parliamentary Rules and Procedures (2010). The Assembly is responsible for passing legislation, elects the government and exercises oversight over the government, approve the budget, represent the interests of the citizens, take position and adopt resolutions on issues of general importance to the citizens and the country.

However, the *de facto* role assumed by the Assembly is weaker than the one envisaged within these legal acts. This is due partly to political factors and partly to lack of capacities. Political factors include the still unfinished transition to a full-fledged democratic system, resistance of political elites against full separation of the legislative, judiciary and executive branch, the electoral system based on closed lists leading to greater allegiance of MPs to party leaders than to the citizens they represent and a highly polarised political sphere, leading to parliamentary and political debates which are focused on accusations of the other party instead of on quality of laws and reforms. In the past years, these factors have resulted into multiple boycotts and early parliamentary elections which paralysed or diminished the Assembly's work for prolonged periods of time.

The Macedonian parliament does not have a calendar of the work of the plenary meetings and committees. A Code of Ethics for parliamentarians remains to be adopted. In recent years, progress has been observed in relation to the use of the Albanian language in parliament.⁴ Plenary sessions are marked by a restriction of "one speech per MP per agenda item."

1.2.1. Committees of parliament

The Assembly is made up of standing committees and ad hoc or interim committees. The standing committees are established at the beginning of the mandate of the Assembly and operate throughout the whole mandate. There are 21 standing committees, composed proportionally to the number of MPs in the parliamentary groups.

⁴ Draft laws and all material used in the parliamentary procedure are translated into Albanian. Albanian can be used in oral procedure in committees and hearings. The parliamentary television channel is interpreted into Albanian and since July 2011, all officials elected or appointed by the parliament may use Albanian when addressing the parliament and its bodies.

Several issues restrain the proper functioning of the Committees. Committee staff provide administrative support to the Committees but seem to lack the capacity to provide analytical inputs and policy advice to the chair and members of the committees. These inputs are currently expected to be provided by the Parliamentary Institute or the personal assistants of MPs or parliamentary groups. In the absence of a parliamentary calendar, the sitting days of Committees are not widely known. From time to time, committees organize hearings and public debates but there are no resources allocated in the parliamentary budget for reimbursement of costs of experts participating in committee hearings, commissioning or purchasing of studies, organization of on-site (field) committee meetings or organization of seminars. There is no standardized format for the staff's reporting on Committee meetings, and the timing of publishing Committee notes on the parliament's website is uneven. There is no formalized process in place through which civic society representatives or general public can apply to participate in committee meetings. In practice, very few citizens are present during regular committee meetings. Committee public hearings are regulated more explicitly in the Rules of Procedure. Not all committees have specific committee rooms assigned.

EU affairs has an important role in the parliament's structures. The Assembly has its European Affairs Committee (EAC), which is authorised to examine all issues relevant for the process of the country's European integration process and to give opinions on harmonising draft legislation with the EU *acquis*. The staff of the Committee has to check whether EU law is implemented in domestic legislation. The RoP of the Assembly (article 79) stipulate that no draft law can be put on the agenda of the plenary session unless the EAC gives a positive opinion about the draft law. In addition, there is the National European Integration Council, bringing together parliamentary, governmental and non-governmental officials. Its main goal is keeping up a high-level political support and dialogue for the country's European integration process. Also the Parliamentary Institute directly supports the EU integration process, through comparative analyses of laws in EU countries; taking into account the experience of how Parliamentary Institutes in the Czech Republic and Slovakia played an important role in the EU pre-accession of these countries.

1.2.2. Legislation role of parliament

The Assembly is the only state body with the competence to adopt laws. The required majority for the adoption of laws is stipulated by the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia and by law. According to the Constitution, the Assembly can make decisions if the session is attended by a majority of the total number of MPs (quorum). The Assembly reaches the decisions with majority votes from the attending MPs and at least one third of the total number of MPs (simple or relative majority) unless the Constitution stipulates a special majority (absolute or qualified majority). The decision-making about laws that directly impact the culture, language use, education, personal documentation, and use of symbols requires the majority votes from the attending MPs that belong to the non-majority communities in the Republic of Macedonia (double majority).

According to the Rules of Procedure, the regular legislative procedure has three readings of the draft law. Beyond the regular procedure, in certain cases, laws can be adopted in a shortened procedure or in an emergency procedure in exceptional cases. The right to propose a law is given to every MP, the Government of Republic of Macedonia and at least 10,000 voters. These are authorized proposers of laws. Every citizen, institution or association can give an initiative to pass a certain law.

One of the issues of contention between the political parties is the way how above provisions have been applied. In recent years, members of the opposition parties complained about the lack of parliamentary debates on draft legislation, the adoption of many laws under urgent or shortened procedure (in 2016 this was up to 70 % of the laws adopted), and the rejection of amendments proposed by the then opposition. The adoption of laws through the expedited procedure, which is decided by simple majority (instead of 2/3 majority), hampers the possibility for in-depth examination of the draft legislation or conduct public consultations on the document or policy. The Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) which is compiled by the government and is supposed to provide an insight into the impact of the proposed legislation has limited information and is often not longer than half a page. The Parliament has very little information on draft laws under preparation by the government, which does not share a legislative agenda or work plan with the parliament.

Unlike in other countries, there is no comprehensive anti-corruption proofing of draft legislation, by for instance the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption, to be considered by the Parliament prior to adoption of draft legislation.

Another area of concern is related to the Legislative Department of the Secretariat. It is responsible for preparation and drafting of texts of laws and other acts and amendments proposed by the MPs, proof-reading of texts of laws and other acts and amendments proposed by the MPs, and also preparation of the laws and other acts for publishing in the Official Gazette. The department assists in drafting of amendments before the second reading, which have to be submitted at least 2 days before the committee session. However, the department lacks its head for several years. Currently it has 7 employees from whom only one has a law degree. Practice in other parliaments advises that legislative opinions be stored in the internal parliamentary database and made available to all MPs and parliamentary staff members through the intranet, though that is not the case in the Macedonian parliament. It is also advisable that a legislative expert be present during each committee's review of a bill to provide expert advice (if required), explain legislative–technical comments included in the legislative opinion, and answer additional questions.

1.2.3. Oversight role of parliament

The political control and oversight over the Government and other holders of public office, which are responsible in front of the Assembly, is one of the constitutionally defined competencies of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia. The most important mechanisms to perform the control and oversight function of the Assembly are the following: parliamentary questions, interpellation, inquiry committees, vote of confidence in the Government, and oversight hearings.

- Questions are posed verbally or in writing. Every last Thursday of a month, a special session of the Assembly is convened for parliamentary questions. An MP can pose three questions at the most during one session. The order of asking parliamentary questions is set by the President of the Assembly. However, one opportunity per month to ask questions is very limiting, unlike other parliaments in Europe where there is a weekly question time.
- Interpellation is a more complex procedure and instrument of political control over the Government, or over concrete holders of public office, which can result in jeopardizing the survival of the Government or loss of confidence in the Government. An interpellation can be initiated by at least five MPs with regard to the work of a particular holder of public office, the Government or any of the members individually, as well as with regard to matters related to the work of state bodies. In practice, interpellations are very rarely conducted.
- Inquiry committee is a mechanism that ensures an ex-post control over the Government and other institutions which are held responsible in front of the Assembly. It can be established by a decision of the Assembly in order to undertake the function of political control in all areas and all matters of public interest. Proposal for establishment of an inquiry committee can be submitted by at least 20 MPs. The ToR of the Inquiry Committees are decided by a majority of MPs of the Assembly; and the President of an inquiry Committee is from among the MPs from the opposition parliamentary groups. However, there is no legal provision regulating the mandatory presence of witnesses at inquiry committees, nor an oath for witnesses. There is also need to define the relationship between parliamentary inquiries and the judiciary. So far, inquiry committees in the Macedonian parliament have not generated recommendations which were thoroughly followed-up and implemented.
- Question on confidence in the Government is the most powerful instrument of the Assembly to control the executive branch of power. It can be initiated by at least 20 MPs in writing.
- Oversight hearings are a recent control mechanism which was introduced for the first time in the Law on the Assembly of Republic of Macedonia, which was adopted in August 2009. Oversight hearings are held in order to obtain information and expert opinion with regard to the creation and implementation of new policies, enforcement of laws and other activities of the Government and the state administration bodies. An oversight hearing is carried out by the respective Committee of the Assembly that includes the subject of the oversight hearing in the scope of its work. The Committee decides about the oversight hearing with a majority of votes of the present members, and at least one third of the total number of members. During the past years, Committees organized oversight hearings on increasingly regular basis.

- An important area of oversight is the oversight over independent institutions and regulatory agencies. A total of 19 reports are submitted to the Parliament. Very few of these reports are examined and debated in the plenary session of parliament. There is no practice of requesting an extraordinary report from independent regulatory and oversight bodies tasking them to look into specific issues of concern emerging in the public debate. There is no established practice to invite external stakeholders to contribute to oversight hearings on the performance of independent institutions and regulatory agencies.

1.2.4. Representation and outreach

In Macedonia, the parliament pays for 75 constituency offices and 75 MPs constituency assistants. The constituency offices are publicly advertised venues where MPs meet with their constituents. In addition, there are MPs offices for all MPs in the main parliamentary building. Individual office space allows MPs to meet with the public and improve their working abilities.

The Macedonian parliament has made good progress in civic engagement through public hearings, open parliament days, parliamentary tours, seminars and other civic and educational activities managed by the Parliamentary Institute. The sessions of the Assembly are public and the live broadcast can be watched on the Parliamentary Channel of the Macedonian Radio and Television.

The replays of all recorded sessions through the parliamentary web-site is not possible yet. The presence of citizens during plenary sessions is difficult due to procedural issues around prior registration. More can be done to ensure the participation of stakeholders in the early phases of the legislative process through regular legislative hearings with all relevant stakeholders. Some further progress with the organization of the parliamentary tours is possible by creating the possibility for on-line registration and preparing thematic tours.

1.2.5. New technologies and parliamentary transparency

Macedonia is a member of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) and the Assembly has taken steps to enhance its transparency. However, there are structural impediments.

The parliament's intranet (e-parliament system) is not fully connected to the parliament's website, which is built as a separate system. Updates on the website are inserted manually, rather than generated from the parliament's intranet. Databases are not interconnected, and - for instance - information on MP's committee membership from different parliamentary periods are not accessible in one place. Because the plenary hall voting system is not connected to any other system, the voting records are added to the website later and manually, and information on voting records of individual MPs is not processed or stored.

There is no practice yet to share all parliamentary work with the public, including the schedule for sessions, agenda and materials as well as MPs activities. An archive of streaming of plenary session is not available through the parliamentary website. The Macedonian parliament offers plenary session transcripts in the Word-format with several days delay. However, most documents available on the parliamentary website are not in a machine-readable format and can't be reused or visualized.

Best practice requires that information stored should be dynamic and updated in all databases automatically (e.g. when info on one MP changes it should change in all databases where the MP is listed). There is need to develop parliamentary MP website/profile that would offer information on committee representation, voting records, interpellations and questions submitted, private initiatives, amendments, absence/excused, foreign trips, assistants, offices, contact information, and other information. In this way, the public could easily follow the work of their MPs as well as the topics they have been discussing in Parliament during their mandate.

Information on the sessions (plenary and Committee) should be posted on the internet right after they are conducted so that citizens can have timely view into the work of the Parliament.

1.2.5. Secretariat of parliament

The Organizational Chart of the Secretariat reflects the structure of the Secretariat, composed of twelve regular Departments and two Departments within the Parliamentary Institute. The regular Departments are the Cabinet of the Speaker, Department of the Secretary General, Legislative Department, Assembly Sitzings Department, Working Bodies (Committees) Department, Research and Analysis, Library and Documentation Department, International Cooperation Department, Department for Support to the

national EU integration council, ICT Department, Finance Department, Department for Professional and Administrative Operations, Translation Department and the Department for the parliamentary TV-channel. Within the Parliamentary Institute, there is the Department on General Analysis and European Integration, and the Department on Education and Communication, Research, Library and Legislative Archive.

The Secretary General is the head of the Administration of the Parliament. There are about 280 parliamentary staff, including 20 staff in the Parliamentary Institute.

The two Departments of the Parliamentary Institute conduct the following functions: (1.) Research and analysis for the needs of the president of the Assembly, MPs, working bodies, the councils of the Assembly and the parliamentary groups, including confidential analyses and comparative reports on topics requested by lawmakers, independent summaries, assessments on the effects of proposed laws, as well as information relating to the exercise of the oversight and control function of the Assembly; (2.) Activities and forms of education and information for Members of Parliament, employees in the Services of the Assembly, the Assembly interns, assistants in the constituency offices, external associates of the parliamentary groups and other associates, including induction programs to work, training in the use of information and communication technologies, training for legislative and budgetary procedures, informational meetings for constitutional law and other areas.

In annex 8 to the report, there is the overview of the development of the budget of the Macedonian Parliament during the last six years. As the national budget of the country increases on annual basis, the budget of the parliament decreases, in amounts and in percentage of the national budget. The budget of the Parliamentary Institute remained stable throughout this period, except for the year 2017 when it was sharply reduced.

The annex also includes the overview of the number of employees of the Parliament of Macedonia during the last six years. Based upon the figures, one can make an accurate comparison between Macedonia and several other countries in Central and Eastern Europe, in terms of the ratio of number of staff to number of MPs, and the percentage of the parliament budget within the state budget.

1.4. SDC in Macedonia

Switzerland has been supporting Macedonia's political, social and economic transition processes since 1992. Today Switzerland ranks among Macedonia's largest bilateral cooperation partners. Switzerland is focussing on three thematic domains: Democratic governance, Employment and Economic Development, and Infrastructure and Environment. Democratic governance and decentralization is the longest-standing domain of cooperation in Macedonia. Despite considerable contextual challenges, Switzerland was able to strengthen democratic values and processes at local and central levels. As part of its Governance portfolio, SDC has supported the Assembly already substantially. It supported the establishment of constituency offices for MPs as well as the here reviewed Parliamentary Institute. As part of Parliament Institute project, it also finances "Parliament watch" implemented by the Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis". Main purpose of the project is monitoring the quality of parliamentary debate⁵.

There are several SDC programs/initiatives that also relate to Parliament and that can create synergies.

- SDC supports municipal councils in increasing their effectiveness and autonomy by assuming their oversight, representation and legislative role effectively, at all stages of the budget cycle.
- Furthermore, related to parliament a project is planned focusing on election reform for free, democratic and fair election processes.
- In addition, SDC also engages in Security Sector Reforms, implemented by DCAF. Some of the activities target committees of Parliament.

1.5. Support to Parliament by other donors

There are relatively few donor projects focusing on the Assembly.

European Union/European Commission:

⁵ For 2017 – 2020, SDC is planning to supporting a critical mass of 100 CSOs, that are able to initiate positive social changes resulting in stronger institutions receptive for citizens' needs, free media and progress in the rule of law.

- The European Union through parliamentary twinning as part of IPA 2013 is implementing a project aimed at improving existing audit methodologies, establishing mechanism for a pro-active role of Parliament in understanding and discussion of audit reports and strengthening the institutional capacity for audit in areas of IT and communications.
- The Westminster Foundation for Democracy is implementing an EU-funded project “Citizens in the Assembly”. The aim of the project is connecting the Assembly and the civil society organizations in Macedonia to improve the human rights legislation in the country.
- The Institute for Democracy is implementing an additional EU-funded project focused on strengthening the role of Parliament in the process of aligning of the Macedonian legislation with the EU legislation, and by promoting inclusion of the civil sector in the work of the Parliament.

United Kingdom:

- Five organization (Westminster Foundation for Democracy, Center for Change Management, Analytica Think Tank, EuroThink and Citizens Association “Institute for Human Rights”) are implementing projects funded by the British Embassy. The aim of the projects is to enhance the capacity of civil society to monitor and publicise the work of state oversight and regulatory bodies, and through enhanced public scrutiny contribute to improvement of the performance, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of these institutions. As part of the projects, WFD is working towards financial accountability and transparency in Macedonia through the State Audit Office, the Parliament, media, and civil society.
- “Macedonian constituency engaged in ensuring accountability and transparency of Parliament” is the name of the project implemented by Citizens Association MOST. The aim of the project is to build public pressure for improved performance of the Parliament and relevant stakeholders by engaging constituency in informed debate on electoral reform and role of Parliament.

US

Under the USAID’s program “Increased Political Competition and Accountability” there are two projects.

- CEPPS/National Democratic Institute (NDI) is implementing a project aimed at enhancing parliament’s technical capacity and procedural operations to perform its legislative and oversight functions more effectively. The program will ensure that the Parliamentary Committee members and staff learn how to conduct effective and efficient oversight hearings and follow up on the recommendations and conclusions.
- CEPPS/ The National Democratic Institute, the International Republican Institute and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems is implementing a project for promoting greater citizen participation in political institutions and processes. This program works closely with the State Election Commission.

More information about the projects, donors, implementers and budgets are available in Annex 5.

2. Review of the Parliamentary Institute Project

2.1. Overall

The main implementer of the Parliamentary Institute Project is the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia. The modalities are outlined in the SDC Credit Proposal⁶ and a Memorandum of Understanding between SDC and the Parliament⁷. Furthermore, the Strategic Plan 2014-2017 of the Parliamentary Institute provides an overview with objectives and activities including indicators (see also Annex 10, which additionally includes a colour code on the fulfilment of the plan as well comments by the assessment team). SDC provides on-budget support to Parliament. By early 2017, Parliament is providing 62% of overall costs of the PI, including 80% of the salaries. SDC provides the remaining funding. By the end of 2017, SDC will have

⁶ Credit Proposal. Macedonia: Support to the Establishment and Development of the Parliamentary Institute, Skopje, 22.08.2014.

⁷ Amendment 4 to the Memorandum of Understanding between The Swiss Federal Council Represented by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, acting through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Swiss Cooperation Office Macedonia (hereinafter SDC) and the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia (hereinafter Assembly) concerning the cooperation in the project "Support to the Establishment and Development of the Parliamentary Institute" signed by the parties on 17.05.2010 in Skopje, amended by the parties on 05.12.2011, 06.12.2012 and 31.07.2013 in Skopje.

contributed approximately CHF 7.5 Mio. From 2018 onwards, parliament is expected to cover all costs. Also, funded by SDC, NDI is providing back-stopping support to the PI⁸ and IDSCS monitors the work of Parliament.

The Parliamentary Institute Project is operating in difficult circumstances (see political context above). Considering the context, the achievements of the PI and with it of the Project are impressive. Almost all stakeholders had high praise for the PI. Some argued that the PI has developed into the leading institution of its kind in the Western Balkans, and that it has been highly useful to the Parliament and the Parliament Secretariat in general. As one of the interlocutors termed it: “The PI is here to stay”. Staff from other units in Parliament underlined that the PI has developed into a “motor for reforms within Parliament”. In April 2016, Brima Gallup conducted a survey among the Members of Parliament on their experience and satisfaction. Based on the survey, 93% of MPs, irrespective of party membership had a positive opinion of the PI. Because the PI is viewed as a capable and dynamic institution within the Parliament Secretariat it has also been given many tasks, officially and unofficially. Today it functions as a research service, a research library and archive, a think-tank, a training institution as well as an outreach and communication department. In addition, we received an impressive number of suggestions how the tasks of the PI could still be further extended or further intensified, e.g. as a bridge to Civil Society Organizations or Universities, for providing training to persons outside of Parliament, by proactively and systematically providing information on upcoming agenda items, by supporting budget monitoring or including a stronger focus on the security sector. These suggestions show the trust in the quality of the PI.

The PI is a young institution. It is still facing some challenges of institution-building. Today it is not only on paper but also based on perceptions a part of the Parliament Secretariat. Still, it maintained some independence mainly because it has access to donor funding. Concerns of the optimal degree of dependence and autonomy within parliament as well as issues linked to the independence of parliament (or the lack thereof) were raised in several of the discussions.

Criticism pointed to the vulnerability of the PI. Actions of the PI are sometimes (mis-)understood as taking sides politically or as abiding to politically influenced instructions. For instance, the hiring process of interns, and - at the time of the evaluation mission - a dispute on whether to conduct an induction training for MPs from SDSM put the PI at the cross-hair of political infighting. Potential politicization, staff retention challenges, and the gap in development between the PI and the rest of the parliamentary services were deemed the most serious risks to sustainability.

The Parliamentary Institute Project has three anticipated outcomes, two of them concern the services of the PI, a third concerns institution-building: 1/ Adding value to the legislative process in the Assembly, 2/ Increasing public awareness of the role of the legislature, and 3/ Building the reputation and the capacities of the Parliamentary Institute. These will be looked at in more detail below.

2.2 Adding value to the legislative process

The Parliamentary Institute aims at adding value to the legislative process through several means, including providing research to MPs for more informed debates, preparing pro-active research, cooperating with other parliament research services in the Western Balkans and the EU, providing training to MPs, their assistants and staff of the Parliament Secretariat, as well as maintaining a research library and archive.

2.2.1. Research

The core business of the Parliamentary Institute is to provide research to MPs and a selected group of others within parliament. Between May 2014 and December 2016, the PI prepared 235 research papers on request of MPs as well as 35 research papers based on PI's own initiative. Furthermore, the PI replied to 131 external requests, mainly from the European Center for Parliamentary Research and Documentation.

Based on the above mentioned Brima Gallup survey, 69% of MPs indicate that they have used the research service provided by the PI. With this the PI meets the target that it set in its Strategic Plan. Also, MPs who have not themselves requested research acknowledge have read or seen research papers requested by their colleagues. Several MPs commissioned papers more than once. Data collected by PI and NDI show some fluctuation in the number of research requests per month, which can amongst others be explained by

⁸ Terms of References. Coaching and backstopping mandate for the Parliamentary Institute, 01. January 2015 –31. December 2017.

the political context. As is to be expected, unless at times when the opposition was boycotting parliament, they commissioned the largest amount of research papers. An impediment in commissioning research papers has been the absence of an agenda of parliament which made it difficult for MPs to submit requests for research well in advance. PI research was mentioned in Parliament sessions, MPs used and use the information provided. The impact of the research can still grow. As most legislation has been fast-tracked through parliament there is limited room for informed debate in parliament. Furthermore, as IDSCS notes in its monitoring, there is a high occurrence of position based, polarized debate.

Based on the survey, 93% of MPs who have made use of the research service believed that MPs have equal access to the service and 80% of users deemed the research output as impartial. Non-users rated the services slightly lower with 88% believing in equal access and 61% in the impartiality of the research. Based on information from the PI, all research papers were prepared within the agreed deadline.

In our interviews, we received generally positive but slightly more critical feedback. It cannot be excluded that part of the criticism is due to the current political positioning of parties.

- MPs noted an improvement of quality of research reports over time. They also argued that reports for which the PI had more time to prepare were of better quality and more useful than reports with shorter deadlines. Some of the interviewees suggested to make the template for requesting research more flexible and to allow for more direct interaction between the requester and staff working on the request. The vast majority of MPs wished for reports with more analysis, options and argumentation of impact.
- In general terms, research was regarded as impartial. Two MPs expressed concern about the impartiality of the research suggesting that answers might have been pre-discussed with members of the government party before being submitted to the opposition-MP and that, on the occasion highlighted by the MP, only the government favoured options might have been included. Also, two members of PI staff suggested in the survey that they did not consider the research as completely impartial whereupon all other staff were convinced of impartiality.
- In particular, at the time when the opposition boycotted parliament, the PI focused on pro-active research, sometimes in cooperation with similar institutions of other countries. The pro-active research helps to increase the knowhow of staff and build relations. It seems that the proactive research papers receive less attention of the MPs. Some of the interviewed MPs did not know of the proactive research.
- In general, it was suggested to make research (pro-active and on request) easier accessible, e.g. through the website. Members of Parliament receive the research papers via email. In addition, all MPs will receive soft copies of previous research papers at the start of the parliamentary mandate. Also, members of Civil Society expressed interest in getting access to the research papers – even if with a certain delay. Currently it depends on the Members of Parliament whether the research becomes public. MPs are free to post or otherwise distribute the report or parts of it.

2.2.2. Education and training

Between May 2014 and December 2016, the PI has provided 8 trainings to MPs, their assistants and external associates as well as 16 workshops for the Parliamentary Services.

In the Brima Gallup Survey, 20% of MPs indicated that they had participated in education and training, provided by the PI. As the PI had been conducting an induction training for MPs for the last incoming parliament, this number is surprisingly low. In the interviews, one MP stated that she does not know about trainings provided by PI, others were familiar at least with the induction training. In the interviews, staff from the PI pointed to the reluctance of MPs to participate in trainings.

The February 2017 dispute between the PI and the leadership of SDSM on conducting the induction training for their MPs has been damaging to the PI. SDSM had requested the PI to conduct the planned induction training, however, the PI did not get the green light from the Secretary General of Parliament who argued that the induction training should take place at the same time for all MPs. An official letter from SDSM to the PI was left unanswered because the PI has no authority to sign formal letters. In the end, NDI provided training to SDSM MPs in the framework of its USAID programme with political parties.

In addition to the MPs, the PI is also providing training to staff of the Parliament Secretariat as well as to the assistants of MPs. Next to PI staff and persons from outside, also other staff from the Parliament Secretariat served as resource person. Workshops were used to develop joined methodologies and build

relations among the PI and other staff of the Parliament Secretariat (e.g. for managing the libraries). These trainings and workshops have been important tools to valorise work of other sectors of the Parliament Secretariat and to build perceptions that the PI is a useful part of the Parliament Secretariat.

According to the interviewees, the trainings have generally been of satisfactory quality. In particular, staff from the Parliament Secretariat appreciated the trainings. Some interviewees wish for more discussion with the target group when identifying and designing the trainings, trainings that focus on skills, e.g. policy analysis, and that are oriented at their realities using resource persons who operate in the same or a similar context. Several interviewees suggested to provide English language training. The British Council might be better equipped to do so.

2.2.3. Library, archive and other sources of information

Between May 2014 and December 2016, the PI purchased 5,000 books, catalogued more than 300 items from parliamentary sessions and prepared 31 brochures and information leaflets for the parliamentary process. In addition, they prepared quarterly newsletters for MPs.

Also, the library and the archive contribute to improving the legislative process. Both activities are resource intensive. The PI has its own research library that is also accessible to MPs. Furthermore, it is developing an archive of documents related to parliament procedures. For both the library and the archive there have been extensive discussions and in the beginning some rivalries with other units of the Parliament Secretariat.

- The Department of Administrative Affairs was full of praise because of the support in archiving and cataloguing documents, stating that they could achieve within one month what they had not achieved for long because of the external backing and political support that the PI receives as well as the resources of the PI. Some of the documents that the PI archives are also included in the e-parliament to which however the PI has only limited access. Some unresolved issues remain with the status of the archive and relations to the State Archive which officially has the exclusive right and duty to keep and scan documents. The State Archive just received a donation for speeding up the scanning of documents.
- The library of the PI includes about 5,000 books which are indexed based on the EuroVoc system. Books are purchased after consultation with other units of the parliament. At the same time, there is an Assembly library with approximately 32,000 books. In order to come to common understanding about the fate of the two libraries, a workshop of heads of units took place that developed an inter-sectoral action plan, based on which also the 32,000 books shall be catalogued with the help of PI staff. While the PI brought impetus to improving the overall library services of the Parliament, as a consequence the PI's workload increased with limited direct benefit for the PI.
- Staff of the PI is arguing for more electronic books as this facilitates access. Also journal subscriptions are mainly in electronic form. Some of the electronic journal subscriptions have expired. The PI had tried to purchase them through Parliament funds and was not successful. The EBSCO subscription, providing access to different journals, would have cost approximately US\$30,000. --, an amount that exceeds the possibilities of parliament.
- Data from Ministries can be an important source of information. Receiving information from Ministries and their offices remain difficult. There is no automated access to data. The PI is mainly researching open source material on the Ministries' websites.

Interviewees suggested the deepening of **links between the PI and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)** as well as **universities**, for opening sources to additional information as well as for strengthening the relations between the Parliament, CSOs and the Universities.

2.2.4 Summary of findings:

In respect to **research**, in particular research on request of MPs, the PI is on the right track. The improvement of quality of the research products is generally acknowledged. At the same time, the research output can still be improved. The PI can use the generally positive perceptions about usefulness, quality and impartiality and can start to dare being more analytical without being prescriptive. Research on request of MPs is the core of PI business.

Pro-active research is a good tool for networking and building the reputation of the PI. The papers can be strategically used for raising issues or for preparing staff and MPs of upcoming agenda items and reforms.

Education and training activities are generally appreciated. At one point in time, discussions might be merited whether the PI should function as a training institution for general issues, e.g. language training or should focus on providing trainings connected to the core themes it is working on. Workshops that bring together staff from different units have contributed to developing sound and coordinated approaches and to build relations.

In respect to the **archive and library**, some issues should still be resolved until the end of the current project phase. While it is laudable that the PI shares its staff and technologies for upgrading the overall infrastructure of Parliament, attention has to be paid that the burden on the staff is within acceptable limits.

Recommendations:

- For the PI, to further work on the format of the research reports in response to research requests. Test research reports that include more analysis and impact assessments of options.
- For NDI and PI, to focus on resolving last remaining issues connected to the management of the archive and the library. For PI, to ensure to assume only long-term tasks that contribute to its core functions and are important for the sustainability of the quality of its work.
- For the Steering Council, NDI and the PI, to work towards more automatic access to information from Ministries.

Tentative suggestions:

- In a next phase/programme, as already done in some instances, to use the **pro-active research** strategically to prepare for reforms of parliament or to initiate good practices, e.g. on RIA, methodologies of oversight.
- To continue providing **trainings** to staff of the Parliament Secretariat to disseminate knowhow and skills available within the PI as well as a tool for coordination and strengthened cooperation. To explore how to increase the attractiveness of trainings to MPs and how to be best able to respond to MPs' needs.
- To further analyse in how far the management of the **library** (e.g. cataloguing of books) and **archive** (e.g. scanning of documents) can be done jointly (or by using the same databases, IT programs) with existing services of parliament, to work towards PI having full access to the e-parliament, as well as to promote PI's access to databases of the State Archive).

2.3 Increase public awareness for the role of the legislature

2.3.1. Interaction with the public

The PI worked on the organization of initial visitor services and various events to inform the public. The PI introduced an Open Parliament Day which takes place every last Friday of the month. Citizens can register by phone or email. From May 2014 to December 2016, 7192 persons visited the Parliament. Almost 400 pupils from primary and secondary schools participated in one-day workshops on Parliament. The PI developed brochures for the general public on parliament and its work that are available on the internet. We did not have the means to measure the impact of these activities as we do not have data on differences in public awareness and did not meet participants in the programs. One MP mentioned the positive impact on the atmosphere in parliament, in particular when school children visit the premises.

In November 2016, staff from the PI and NDI visited the Swiss parliament in Bern to get inspiration and explore potential further cooperation for improving public awareness for the role of the legislature as well as the functioning of the library of Parliament⁹. Proposed activities for 2017 and beyond of the Swiss Parliamentary Service to the Macedonian Assembly include support for the internet appearance and web-

⁹ Participants in the visit particularly emphasized the management and variety of tours of parliament, the targeted and easy to access information available through the website as well as the Politforum as a joined initiative of parliament and government to foster political debate and awareness. Some further activities have been planned for the current project phase including a joined research paper cum workshop.

content targeted at citizens, including youth, support for the preparation of information material and the organization of open days, e.g. for online registration of visitors.

In several documents and some interviews, the idea of a visitor center was raised. The PI demonstrated interest however also cautioned about practical challenges (where should such a center be located, how shall it be staffed, what will be offered by the center, will it be sustainable?). From the side of the management of the Parliament and the MPs such a visitor center does not seem to be very high in priority.

With their activities, the PI is currently the main unit within the Parliament Secretariat that is reaching out to the public. The PI achieved a first, still limited opening of parliament to the public. Otherwise the Parliament remains closed with limited possibilities for the public to access information or to participate in parliamentary proceedings.

1.3.2. Summary of findings

Work of the PI related to the public mainly focused on raising awareness and knowledge about parliament. These activities provide a start for having a more open parliament. Better accessibility of information on such activities and facilitated registration procedures can further improve attractiveness and lower the resource intensiveness of the management of such events. Parliament's ownership of these activities still needs to increase. In the future, through the PI or otherwise, efforts should be continued to enhance access to data and opportunities for participation in parliament proceedings.

Recommendations:

- For the PI, for the current phase of the project, continue with the activities that have already been launched. It is recommended not to start a visitor center during the current phase
- For the PI, work on raising ownership within the Parliament of outreach activities and on making outreach activities more visible on the main webpage of the Parliament.

Tentative suggestions:

- To maintain activities on raising awareness and to add a focus on promoting participation of citizens as well as open data policies.
- Based on a functional analysis (see below) to explore whether all public education and outreach should be attributed to the PI or how a division of labor could look like.

2.4 Building the reputation and capacities of the Parliamentary Institute

2.4.1. The PI as part of the Parliament Secretariat.

It had been a strategic decision, part of the theory of change, to establish the PI as part of the Parliament Secretariat to ensure that the PI is sustainable and directly contributes to institution-building of Parliament. A 2014 evaluation showed still limited acceptance of the PI within the Parliament Secretariat, doubts about the capabilities of the staff, and reluctance to cooperate. By 2017, the PI has become part of the Parliament Secretariat, not only on paper but also in the perception of others. As also described above, with some exceptions, the PI managed to gain the trust and respect of MPs, the management of Parliament, and their staff colleagues. For this it helped that roles and responsibilities are now by and large clarified so that the PI is not any longer perceived as endangering the positions of others.

It can be regarded as a big achievement that the PI managed to integrate into the Parliament Secretariat. Being part of the Parliament Secretariat also creates some challenges:

- For many decisions, the PI depends on the Secretary General. For instance, the PI cannot sign formal letters. If the Secretary General decides not to sign, letters to the PI remain unanswered, as was the case with the induction training as well as a proposal for a joined training with an outside organization.
- Whenever Parliament funding is involved it needs approval. As the PI is considered as very well equipped and its infrastructure exceeds the average conditions in Parliament, there is the chance that funding of Parliament will be used for more urgent needs of Parliament or specific requests of MPs. For instance, it is unlikely that Parliament will pay for an expensive though useful resource like the subscription to EBSCO. It is therefore doubtful that the PI can maintain the resources standards, with potential negative consequences on the quality of work.

- Despite of being part of the Parliament Secretariat, the PI has not access to all databases of Parliament. For instance, its access to the e-parliament is limited, e.g. it cannot access the documentation for committee meetings.
- For staffing decisions, the PI needs the support of the Parliament Secretariat and the Ministry of Finance even if the funds are available. For more than a year 5 of the 25 staff positions remain vacant.

Currently, the functioning and independence of the PI is still protected through two mechanisms:

- The Memorandum of Understanding between the Parliament and SDC and related donor funding provide the PI with some autonomy and flexibility.
- The Steering Council and the backstopping role of NDI provide (political) protection to the PI.

Two MPs suggested that it would be better to delink the Parliamentary Institute from the Parliament Secretariat in order to provide it with the needed independence and protect it from undue political influence. For the sake of strengthening the institution of parliament we recommend to instead explore possibilities to strengthen the autonomy of parliament as such as well as to further work towards professionalizing parliament and to maintain protective mechanisms until such reforms are implemented and effective.

2.4.2. Steering Council

With one prominent exception, all interviewees underlined the importance of the **Steering Council**. The Steering Council has been the only platform within Parliament that brings together representatives from the different parties for steering the business of Parliament. A staff member of another unit of Parliament pointed out that the PI could function as a promoter of change because it had the backing of political parties. The Steering Council was also seen as a protection against one-sided political influence and as a platform to navigate and address challenges. Currently, as of April 2017, there is no Steering Council as the Parliament did not yet decide on the vice-presidents of Parliament who are ex officio members of the Steering Council. The PI felt the absence of the Steering Council in the dispute on the induction training. They could not call on the Steering Council so they depended on the decision of the Secretary General. While the Steering Council was deemed useful as protector, arbiter and balancing mechanism, it provided less support for implementing decisions. For instance, the Steering Council made decisions in favour of the filling of vacancies however did not take a firm stand towards the Ministry of Finance.

2.4.3. Advisory Council

The **Advisory Council** was seen as a useful addition to the project structure. Its impact was mainly seen in keeping others informed about and invested in the PI. Advisory Council members can provide clout and a fresh view on things. According to interviewees, the impact of the Advisory Council was somewhat hampered because meetings did not take place regularly.

2.4.4. The Backstoppers

Initially **NDI** was a project implementer. For the current project phase its role was revised and NDI became a backstopper to the PI and SDC. Their hands-on support is still needed in many instances. Their contract was amended to increase available resources. In particular, NDI's support for navigating political issues and creating political good-will was highly appreciated. In addition, it was deemed useful to have NDI's support for the identification of new technologies or methodologies. Also for the hiring process, the PI still sees an important role for an external back-stopper (and SDC) as a guarantor of the process. Otherwise, the PI staff is of the opinion, that they can conduct their day to day work without support by NDI.

Cooperation with other parliaments also provide back-stopping and peer learning. The cooperation with other parliaments added credibility, helped to build capacities and increased reputation internationally, in particular within the Western Balkans. For instance, in 2015, a delegation from Serbia visited Macedonia to learn about the PI.

2.4.5. The Monitor

SDC started funding **IDSCS' „Parliament Watch“** project in September 2015. The project has produced quarterly reports on the quality of parliamentary debate, quarterly reports on media coverage of the work of the parliament and two public opinion surveys on public perceptions of the work of the MPs and the Parliament. The project assesses the way decisions are made and measures the level of deliberation and the usage of arguments in the debate. IDSCS analyzed more than 6,000 speeches of the MPs. Reports show

that still much of the debate in parliament is position-based with little engagement with arguments of others. The publication of reports and the dissemination of findings through the media and directly to the MPs can improve the understanding of the functioning of the Parliament and sensitize for the importance of an informed and engaged debate. Hence, they also reconfirm the need for the PI. The findings from the monitoring can also highlight the functioning of parliament during times of crisis as well as ordinary sessions of parliament and thus also have some historic value. They outline the context factors that impact on the effectiveness of the PI's work. The findings from the monitoring so far were used by CSOs in advocacy activities for improving the role and independence of the Parliament in the political system and as a base for developing recommendations for democratic reforms of the Parliament.

2.4.6. Internal management processes

Management processes within the PI still merit some strengthening. NDI organized a workshop on internal communication, implemented by the Center for Change Management. There are no regular staff meetings that would allow for general information sharing and coordination. Because of this, some decisions remain non-transparent to PI staff, e.g. on selection criteria for the participation in international conferences. Staff would also appreciate more direct contact with NDI which is currently mainly channelled through the director of the PI and the Heads of Sectors. Several MPs pointed out that PI's staff qualifications and achievements would merit higher salaries. The staff sees limited career opportunities within the PI. As a counterbalance, there have been discussions to create other development opportunities, e.g. through the possibility to pursue further university studies. These opportunities have not materialized yet and might not address the core of the problem. Better communication, more appreciation, as well as more contacts between staff and MPs might also increase satisfaction of staff.

The staffs' workload increased because of vacancies within the team. Currently, the vacancies cannot be filled. The Ministry of Finance stated that they will not provide approval as long as there is no new government. The opening up of the employment process with the formation of the government is a new opportunity to fill the positions, however, poses also the risk that existing staff will look for new opportunities throughout the administration. High staff turn-over and the loss of experienced staff will negatively impact on the work of the PI.

Hiring processes remain sensitive. Several of the interviewees referred to the challenges encountered in the hiring of PI staff which had led to a freeze of project by SDC. One MP expressed her concern about the hiring of interns which based on her information was published in a newspaper close to government with application deadlines that were too short to apply, unless when having information in advance. It is likely that the hiring for higher positions within the PI will again cause some scrutiny of whether it is done in a fair, transparent, and merit-based way.

In the survey, 75% of PI staff stated that they spend about 70% of their time on core tasks and 30% on other things. **Procurements** have been a major part of the work of some of the staff. Based on the interviewees with the PI staff, the finance section and the IT section, procurement processes are time intensive, follow specific rules because the PI does not need to pay VAT and require a lot of coordination. PI staff would prefer to hand over the operational tasks of the procurement process to the finance section of the Parliament Secretariat.

2.4.7. Promotion of PI services within the Assembly

Overall, the PI has successfully **promoted the PI services within the Assembly**. The PI has informed all incoming MPs on their services. The induction training is a further possibility to show knowhow, inform and network. All MPs that we met were relatively well informed about the PI. The PI has developed information material in four languages that was distributed to the MPs and beyond. In addition, it publishes an e-newsletter that is sent to the MPs via email. It seems however, that not all MPs read their emails. Since recently, the PI has its own webpage as part of the Parliament's website. Some general publications prepared by the PI are available through the website. Still the visibility of the PI is relatively limited. The link to the PI webpage is on the first page of the Parliament website but cannot be found in the main menus. For finding information on the Open Days of Parliament, one must open the page of the Parliament Institute. There is no direct link to the Open Days or other activities of Parliament directed at citizens. The PI cannot update information directly and needs approval for the materials that are to be uploaded.

The premises of the PI are also difficult to find. There are no signs within Parliament leading to the PI. Few MPs have been to the PI. Attendance of PI staff in committee meetings would be another opportunity to make known the capacity and knowhow of the PI as well as to interact directly with MPs. We got contradictory information whether or how often PI staff attends committee meetings. In general, MPs as well as the research assistance of the MPs stated that they would appreciate more direct contact with the PI and its staff.

2.4.8. Summary of findings

Being part of the Parliament Secretariat has the consequence that the PI must deal with similar challenges like other units of the Parliament Secretariat. Approval procedures and funding decisions can potentially be used to assert political pressure on the PI. Stopping support to the PI will make it more vulnerable to political pressures and will in all likelihood lead to a slow down-grading of infrastructure and equipment to the level of the overall parliament. On the long-run, only an upgrading of the infrastructure of the overall parliament will be able to ensure that the PI can maintain its level of infrastructure. SDC funding provided the PI with a certain level of autonomy. By most, the Steering Council is viewed as an important guarantor of the PI. The Advisory Board provides for information sharing and new impetus from the outside. NDI is useful to navigate in the politically challenging context and to further develop methodologies and services. The PI managed to build its capacities and promote its services within the Assembly. It can still improve accessibility and visibility. Cooperation with other parliaments provide opportunities for peer learning and added credibility. Management processes within the PI can still be improved. Staff retention and motivation remains a concern. Promotion of existing staff and the hiring of new one will be important steps for maintaining the PI operational at the current level.

Recommendations:

- For SDC, to integrate support to the PI in the next phase/programme. Ensure that the PI continues to have political backing. The vulnerability of the PI will continue until substantive reforms of the overall parliament take place and become effective.
- For PI, SDC and NDI, further explore sustainable incentives to maintain staff.
- For the PI, introduce a more participatory management style and introduce regular meetings for all staff. Inform proactively. Use available resources like cooperation with other parliaments, conferences and trainings to show appreciation to staff members. Allow for more direct interaction between staff and MPs.

Tentative suggestions:

- For a new phase/programme, consider working towards the establishment of a mechanism like the Steering Council for the new programme or – in the form of a parliament bureau or business committee for the Parliament Secretariat as such.
- Upgrading the infrastructure of the overall parliament will also benefit the PI. Consider investing in the infrastructure of parliament to ensure a minimum level of infrastructure (in particular, work infrastructure (e.g. printers) and IT connectivity with individual email addresses for all office staff of the Parliament Secretariat) in order to minimize the gap in infrastructure related working conditions between the PI and the rest of the Secretariat.
- Guarantees for the autonomy of Parliament, e.g. in respect to its budget and staffing, as well as a further professionalization of the management of Parliament will also benefit the PI. Consider exploring the possibility to start political dialogue on the autonomy of parliament, either still during the current phase or within a new phase/programme.
- Consider continuing supporting the monitoring of parliament, for assessing the impact of the PI as well as for providing reliable data that can give further impetus for reforms of parliament and related advocacy.

2.5 Conclusions

The Parliamentary Institute and with it the Parliamentary Institute project can be considered as a successful contribution to rendering the parliament more effective, in particular by improving the legislative process by making research capacities and training available as well by rendering parliament more open towards the public. The Parliamentary Institute project is on track. The Parliamentary Institute added value to Parliament.

The following measures could be priority within the remaining time of the current phase of the project:

- Continue safeguarding the independence of PI through political backstopping and promoting the role of the Steering Council with a multi-party composition. Discuss with the new Parliamentary Leadership on the PI. Protection will be needed irrespective of who forms the government
- Discuss management issues within PI, move towards more participatory management as a motivating factor, improve communication within and communication between NDI-PI and staff. Continue working towards filling of vacancies and develop staff retention policies.
- Develop and test methodologies for research papers on MPs' request that include options and arguments
- Clarify remaining issues in respect to archive and library.
- Further promote the visibility of the PI in particular towards MPs. Make information on Open Days more visible on the website and introduce IT tools that reduce the resource needs for the management of Open Day registration.
- Continue and extent cooperation (University and Civil Society) as far as resources allow.
- Initiate discussions on a Calendar for Parliament (proposed by PI, pushed by NDI)

The Parliamentary Institute is still a young organization but already established itself as a trusted and respected institution. The PI provides a mix of services that in other parliaments are provided by several separate units. This shows that the PI is considered as a valuable and reliable entry point for reforms and service delivery. Its core business remains the provision of research to Parliament. The Parliamentary Institute will have to pay attention that it does not become the victim of its success and that more and more tasks are attributed to it without additional allocation of resources. The functional and structural analysis that is proposed further below as part of the new project/program might want to look once more at the tasks of the PI in relation to other units of the Parliament Secretariat. The PI successfully assumed many tasks and has proven analytical and research capacities. The question will be how to make best use of these capacities and how to ensure that these capacities continue to benefit parliament and help turn parliament into a professional and effective institution.

Despite of its success and because of the political context, the Parliamentary Institute remains vulnerable and will require continued support.

| Risks for Sustainability | Level of Risk |
|---|---|
| The Parliament will not assume the costs for staffing and running costs of the PI | low The management of Parliament ensured that the Parliament is able and willing to start covering all costs from 2018 onwards. |
| The PI is not able to retain its staff. | medium There is the risk of damaging staff turn-over if management is not improved and a staff retention policy introduced. |
| The PI is not able to maintain an appropriate level of infrastructure and financial resources for its activities, resources | high It is likely the PI infrastructure will not be maintained unless the infrastructure of Parliament is upgraded as well. |
| The Secretary General will use its decision-making power to exert political pressure | high to medium How much influence will be exerted will depend on the Secretary General. On the longer run, only overall reforms and professionalization of the Parliament can prevent undue influence. |
| The political support towards the PI will decrease decisively | medium At least for the years to come it will needed continued political backstopping and space for political dialogue as provided in the Steering |

3. Design options for a new programme in support of the Assembly of Macedonia

3.1. Rationale for SDC involvement

Parliaments are pillars of democratic governance. They can be powerful agents of change, particularly during and after times of crisis. Viable democracy and open society depend on effective lawmaking, oversight and representation — the three core functions of parliaments. Our interviewees deplored that, in Macedonia, the government dominates parliament and parliament has turned into a body rubber-stamping decisions of government. There is limited debate on legislation and little interaction with civil society. Several MPs and outside stakeholders described attempts at oversight as ineffective. Also, the 2016 European Commission Report on Macedonia emphasized the need for parliamentary reforms: “The ongoing crisis underlined once again parliament’s weak legislative and oversight functions and the need to substantially improve its performance as a forum of constructive political dialogue and representation. The focus needs to be on active participation of all parliamentary parties, proper consultation and impact assessment prior to the enactment of legislation, credible financial oversight of the work of government and the intelligence services, establishing political accountability for the illegal wiretaps, and the capacity to monitor the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the country¹⁰.”

MPs from all political parties argued that they want to see reforms of Parliament that will lead to an uplifting of the institution so that it can impact on legislation, hold government and independent institutions accountable and represent the aspirations of their constituencies.

SDC’s dedication to continue long-term cooperation with the Assembly as well as its previous cooperation with Parliament, in particular its contribution to establishing the Parliamentary Institute renders it well suited to contribute to a long-term, substantive and comprehensive reform process of parliament. Additional projects of SDC, in particular projects focused on election reform as well as on security sector reform can create synergies.

The SDC governance domain has the goal of “Strengthened democratic governance at central and local levels”. A **potential goal for the new Parliament program** can be:

- Strengthened institutional functioning, democratic accountability and citizens engagement of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia.

3.2. Entry points and foci

The mission helped to identify several potential entry points for the support to the Assembly. The following will be regarded more in detail: Parliamentary Institute, the Leadership of Parliament and the Secretary General, the Committees, Parliamentary groups as well as independent institutions.

3.2.1. Parliamentary Institute

In the current project, the Parliamentary Institute has been the main entry point for contributing to a better functioning of the Parliament. It is suggested that the PI remains an important entry point, also in a new programme/project.

The PI is the place in parliament where there is research and analytical capacity. The PI has proven that it is willing and able to quickly assume new tasks and provide services of good quality. As experience shows, the PI is even a valid an entry point if the leadership of parliament is not fully dedicated to reforms. Maintaining the PI as an entry point provides consistency of Swiss support and provides also the possibility to extent to the PI the protection that it still requires for its sustainability.

If the PI is used as a main entry point this will have consequences for its human and financial resource needs and potentially also for the overall organization of the PI (need for more departments, e.g. to include a Parliamentary Budget Office).

¹⁰ European Commission, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2016 Report (November 2016) p. 7.

3.2.2. Leadership of Parliament and Secretary General

Comprehensive reforms that include substantial change and structural adjustments need the involvement of the political leadership as well as of the leadership of the Parliament Secretariat. Most MPs and the Secretary General in office at the time of the mission iterated their support for comprehensive reforms. For instance, the Secretary General pointed out that he would welcome support for a functional analysis and strategic plan for the Parliament Secretariat. MPs emphasized the need to review the Rules of Procedure and to implement the agreements following the December 24 incidents in parliament. Some interviewees proposed a Parliament Bureau or Business Committee, including representatives of the major parties that can serve as a platform for jointly steering the business of parliament.

3.2.3. Committees

The committees are the space where in-depths discussions on legislation are supposed to take place and opinions are built, they are the driving force of oversight activities. Committees organize consultations and public hearings. Committee heads can decide on the presence of civil society representatives during committee meetings. Currently, committees have only limited, mainly administrative support. There are only few standardized methodologies. While the PI, based on the rule book, could provide regular support to committees, currently it does not have the resources to do so. Improving the quality and professionalism of committee work can impact on the quality of legislation and oversight and it can foster opportunities to increase transparency of parliamentary decision-making as well as increase the participation of citizens and CSOs.

3.2.4. Parliamentary factions / groups

The anchoring of change will require work with parliamentary factions and groups in particular if there is no official representative, multi-party steering body as part of the Parliamentary leadership. Work with parliamentary factions and groups is an opportunity to maintain dialogue space. Dialogue space can also be useful for other SDC initiatives, e.g. electoral reforms or security sector reforms, and can be used to create synergies between different projects. Sufficient consensus of reforms is required if reforms shall survive a change of government.

3.2.5. Independent Institutions and Regulatory Bodies

Independent institutions and regulatory bodies are not proposed as a separate entry point but it is suggested that the relations between Parliament and independent institutions and regulatory bodies will form a special focus of the future programme. The Priebe report had identified several independent institutions that are under-performing and would benefit from reforms and closer scrutiny by Parliament. Several interviewees suggested a focus on independent institutions or regulatory bodies, either in general or targeted at specific institutions. For instance, a high-ranking member from the coalition partner of the VMRO-led government suggested to focus on Parliament's role in respect to intelligence bodies. The media agency and the anti-corruption commission were mentioned several times. A focus on the relation between parliament and such institutions can also contribute that more discussions on burning issues are conducted within parliament instead of resorting to negotiations outside of parliament. Such a focus can complement activities of other donors (EU, UK and US) in their attempt to support the performance of institutions as well as to create synergies with other SDC projects, for instance DCAF or synergies with potential anti-corruption programming.

3.3. Programming areas for SDC support to the Macedonian Parliament

One of the strategic questions about further SDC engagement in the sector of parliamentary development in Macedonia, is the question on the programming areas. We are proposing four potential programming areas for future SDC support to the Macedonian Parliament: parliamentary oversight, parliamentary openness and open data policy, legislative process and institutional development of the parliament of Macedonia¹¹.

¹¹ These four areas are deriving from the interviews with the relevant stakeholders inside and outside of the Parliament and the review of key documents, such as the recommendations agreed among political parties following the events from 24 December 2012 and the European Commission urgent reform areas of June 2015.

3.3.1. Parliamentary oversight

A first programming area aims at strengthening the oversight role of the Parliament of Macedonia. During the past years, the parliamentary oversight over the government has been weak, though Committees have started to organize oversight hearings. Improvements can include procedural reforms, standardized methodologies and enhanced Committee work, financial scrutiny, revised interaction with independent institutions and regulatory agencies, and overseeing the government's work in combating corruption.

Procedural reforms are a priority to achieve more effective oversight. The revision of the RoP may address the following issues:

- The introduction of a weekly question time for the Prime Minister and Ministers of the Government, instead of the current monthly question time;
- A lower threshold to initiate an oversight hearing, through a request signed by 10 MPs (instead of 15);
- Removing the restriction “one speech per MP per agenda item”;
- Establishing a legal provision regulating the mandatory presence of witnesses at inquiry committees, and an oath for witnesses;
- Requesting the government to submit gender impact assessment and environmental impact assessment for proposed policies and legislation;
- Exploring modalities for parliamentary oversight on law implementation, by holding public hearings, collecting evidence and conducting in-house research by staff of the Parliament.

Standardized methodologies can avoid conflict on the actual procedure of an oversight event, for instance disputes about the talking time allocated to different committee members or the selection of witnesses.

Strengthening the role of Committees in the Macedonian parliament will enable SDC to provide technical advice on specific thematic areas relevant to the SDC overall strategy for Macedonia, and offer procedural advice on the Committee work, based upon the proceedings in the Swiss parliament or other parliaments. This will increase the knowledge base in the parliament, and hopefully upgrade the quality of debate in the plenary session. Since the SDC programme will not be able to work with all committees, a selection of Committees eligible for SDC support will be required.

Financial oversight is one of the core responsibilities of any democratic parliament. Based upon the system established by the SDC-supported project in the Serbian parliament, a similar system may be developed for the Macedonian parliament, enabling the Committee on Budget and Finance to get real-time information on expenditures of the government and the execution of the state budget. In addition, the new SDC programme may look at how the Macedonian parliament can better make use of the audit reports of the State Audit Institution (SAO). This will require a more regular interaction between the SAO and the Parliament, the Committee following the strategic planning process of audits, reviewing reports and conducting follow up of recommendations of regular audits and performance audits. (OR PI) Capacities can either be built in staff allocated to the respective committees or by establishing a Parliamentary Budget office within the PI.

The governance system in many countries, including in Macedonia, foresees in several **independent institutions**, mostly in the governance area, as well as **regulatory agencies**, mostly in the economic area. The parliament's interaction with independent institutions and regulatory agencies is a key component of the parliament's oversight role. If there is an interest by the Macedonian Assembly to work with SDC on this issue, questions to be addressed are: how do Macedonia's independent and regulatory agencies exercise their role and responsibilities and interact with parliament? How can the independence and the accountability of the agencies be strengthened simultaneously? What initiatives can parliament undertake to optimize its interaction with the agencies? [See annex 7 with the list of all agencies reporting to the Parliament of Macedonia.]

Some agencies regulate several economic sectors with network characteristics where technical specialization and prudential oversight are essential, such as civil aviation, energy and telecommunications. The effectiveness of these regulatory agencies is primarily a function of the degree to which their mandate strikes a balance between their ‘independence’ from industry and the government, and their ‘accountability’ towards the public. A key driver of this balance lies in the interaction between the agencies and parliament.

Parliament's interaction with independent institutions and regulatory agencies can be identified around three areas: the agencies' reports and their follow-up by parliament, appointments to the Boards or leadership of the agencies, and the agencies' budget and financial responsibilities. As mentioned by the European Commission in its June 2015 recommendations for Macedonia, ensuring sufficient autonomy of independent regulatory bodies requires not only pro-active efforts from the bodies themselves but the political will of all other actors to allow them to carry out their functions as intended by law, including through allocation of sufficient financial means, and selecting staff and persons in leadership positions based on professional competence, professional experience relevant to the field and comparative merit.¹²

The SDC parliamentary programme in Macedonia can substantially contribute by: (1.) commissioning / conducting research on the current policy framework governing the independent institutions and regulatory agencies in Macedonia, e.g. through the PI (2.) facilitating a policy dialogue with MPs from European and other countries on the parliament's interaction with the independent institutions and regulatory agencies, (3) developing recommendations in the area of legal framework, resourcing and consistency aimed at strengthening accountability while safeguarding the independence of the agencies, in line with policies of OECD, (4.) encouraging consensus within the Macedonian parliament on the policies and legal changes required to implement the recommendations, (5.) developing practical guidance and methodological instruments for MPs and staff on developing enhanced Committee interaction with the independent institutions and regulatory agencies in Macedonia.

Finally, the role of the parliament in **overseeing government's action in combating corruption** and in taking a leadership role in anti-corruption can be considered by the SDC programme as well. One way how a future SDC programme can approach this issue is by encouraging MPs to join the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) and to form a national chapter of GOPAC, as a network of current and former Members of the Parliament of Macedonia committed to anti-corruption. Establishing a GOPAC Macedonia national chapter will contribute to strengthening the oversight capacity of the Parliament and its Members in areas relevant to anti-corruption, encourage MPs to enact legislation that promotes transparency, accountability and good governance, contribute to raising general awareness on the issue of corruption at all levels of society, work with other national chapters, the regional chapter and the global organization GOPAC, and foster the exchange of information and best practices among national chapters. The SDC programme may assist in awareness raising on the possibilities of the GOPAC network, advise on the 'founding charter' of the GOPAC Macedonia national chapter and provide suggestions for its first annual work plan.

3.3.2. Parliamentary Openness and Open Data policies

A second programming area aims at enhanced **accountability and empowering citizens' participation** through parliamentary openness and open-data policies.

As mentioned above, the Macedonian parliament has made important steps in making parliamentary information available through its website. Areas of growth are connecting the plenary hall voting system, an archive of streaming of plenary sessions, strengthening of the programme scheme of the Parliamentary Channel, and developing parliamentary MP website/profile. While these activities need to be followed through, under this programming area it is proposed to take the issue of parliamentary openness to a substantially higher level via a comprehensive policy on open data.

Faced with challenges of a democratic deficit and public scepticism on the role of Parliament in many European countries including in Macedonia, it is vital that parliament strengthens accountability in the governance system and enhances citizens' involvement. To achieve this goal, this programming area will prioritize on the **innovative use of new technologies** to support parliament committees in making use of open data from governmental agencies. At the same time, this programming area will assist the Macedonian parliament in developing inter-active electronic tools to better communicate with citizens and find ways for citizens' contribution and input to the work of Parliament.

¹² One example is the policy area of media regulation and media freedom. The European Commission [DG Enlargement Guidelines for EU support to media freedom and media integrity in enlargement countries, 2014-2020](#) envisage cooperation with the Parliament with regard enabling legal, regulatory and policy environment (Parliament is expected to conduct periodic assessments of the state of media freedoms, revise media laws).

The area of '**transparency and open data**' is a rapidly evolving field in many countries¹³. While most parliaments in Europe have adopted legislation on freedom of information (FOI), the pro-active publication of data by ministries and agencies is uneven and the availability and publication varies greatly across different parts of the government. It means that, generally, some data are made available, but only upon individual requests, not in open formats, while to access entire datasets or bulk data, one has to pay for the services. Sometimes CSOs take government data and provide it in more accessible and open formats to the general public. In many countries, parliaments are not making use of the data at hand yet. Data on e.g. procurement, environment, inflation, economic and trade are used in the proceedings of the parliamentary Committees to a very limited extent only. Often, MPs and staff lack the skills and tools to analyze and work with the available data.

Making parliamentary information transparent requires policies that ensure proactive publication of parliamentary information, including of its membership, functional bodies, work schedule, legislative and parliamentary documents, budget of the parliament, and structure and staff of the administration, transcripts, presence and voting records.

Easing access to parliamentary information requires ensuring that information is available through various channels of communication, free of charge, in several languages (if applicable per relevant legislation) and in understandable language to a broad range of citizens¹⁴.

The SDC parliamentary programme in Macedonia can consider exploring this programming area through a **parliamentary openness and open-data self-assessment** in the Macedonia parliament, followed by the development of a **roadmap** on parliamentary openness and open-data. The content of the Roadmap will provide tools to support MPs in the execution of their core tasks, such as:

- **Openness on the legislative process:** parliament publishes legislative proposals and initiatives electronically, publishes the process of the approval of bills (including calendar), parliament foresees in the possibility to comment on draft bills. The project can assist in facilitating citizens' input to public hearings or comments on the draft law through new technologies tools, such as an app to get citizens' opinions on legislation under review. The tools can be developed specifically to the Macedonian national context, for instance an app to solicit input for a hearing on education reform legislation under discussion in parliament, or an app to facilitate e-petitions to parliament and get citizens' opinions on legislation under review. The collaborative design of the apps in cooperation with CSOs will affect and ensure their usage to a large extent.
- **Openness on the budget:** the Macedonian parliament publishes draft budget bills. The project can assist MPs in the Budget Committee with an electronic tool for monitoring budgetary expenditures, involving the parliament budget committee, Ministry of Finance and the Treasury, and provide the public easily understandable summaries on the budget during the entire budget review and approval process.
- **Openness on the parliamentary oversight:** the Macedonian parliament ensures openness of committee sessions, publishes agenda and reports, publish MPs' attendance and voting records, parliament allows people to comment on hearings, reports, visits etc. The project can assist MPs and parliament by providing electronic tools to assist in receiving citizens' opinions and questions during a public hearing and to enable citizens to comment on-line on the reports published or on the issues debated.
- **Openness in institutional outreach of parliament:** parliament publishes electronic information that is interesting and relevant to citizens, and receives electronic feedback. The project can assist in making the parliament web-site more inter-active, strengthen the social media tools, advise in broadening the communication strategy of parliament, conducting live-streaming of plenary sessions and Committee meetings. While usage of ICT and social media in the activities of MPs increases, so do questions on

¹³ Open Data Barometer website, <http://barometer.opendataresearch.org/report/analysis/rankings.html>

¹⁴ Enabling electronic communication of parliamentary information requires ensuring the release online in open and structured formats that enable use and re-use of the information, such as structured XML, that can be read and processed by computers, so that parliamentary information can be easily reused and analyzed by citizens, civil society, the private sector and government. It is advised that the information is searchable and downloadable, provided in non-proprietary formats in free and open-source software.

privacy and confidentiality of information. These issues can be addressed in legislation and in the Code of Conduct and Ethics of the Macedonian parliament.

One of the requirements to make this programming area fully functional is the **availability of technical expertise** on, for instance, providing information in open and structured formats, ensuring technological usability and using non-proprietary formats and open-source software, building capacity among parliamentary staff in the fields of data analysis. MPs will need to advocate for greater access to (open) government data necessary for parliamentary work, and assist in applying the data to the regular parliamentary work, for instance in terms of demographic data, financial and audit data, trade related data, cross-linking state audit reports data with other databases, public procurement data, data on networks (schools, courts, public health centres), ... Finally, the project can look at developing and piloting new technology tools such as a mobile phone application to access information on the national parliament, including voting records of MPs, mobile phone application to access legislation and comment on draft legislation, etc.

To achieve the full potential of this programming area, the project will need to purchase the **software and tools** and, where needed, the specific hardware required to implement Open Data strategies.

3.3.3. Legislative process

A third programming area aims at a more in-depth legislative review process in Macedonia. The country's legislative process is faced with several considerable challenges, such as: (1.) The Government's policy assessment and policy setting prior to drafting laws are weak. (2.) Financial, economic or environmental impact assessments of draft laws are often incomplete or sometimes non-existent. (3) Due to the adoption of laws under shortened or emergency procedure, there is lack of parliamentary debates on draft legislation. (4) There is no comprehensive anti-corruption proofing of draft legislation, by for instance the Anti-corruption Agency. (5) The Parliaments Legal Department is under-resourced.

Important conditions for quality implementation of the competencies of the Parliament of Macedonia are an efficient legislative process, adequate resources and skills, good organization and good planning. To exercise the legislative function of parliament, MPs need to be able to rely on the support of experts and on the input of relevant stakeholders and civil society. A quality review of draft laws needs to result in a quality report, outlining comments, proposed changes and an overall assessment and quality judgment for consideration by the plenary session.

This programming area aims to enhance the Parliament's efficiency by improving the quality of legislation and by fostering more procedural clarity in the legislative process. This purpose is about revising the legislative procedures; upgrading and making operational the legislative tracking mechanism; establishing a functional legal department; and improving the technical and administrative support to selected parliamentary committees.

Based upon a **baseline study on the legislative process in Macedonia**, with flow charts to establish structural bottlenecks in the legislative process (within parliament and between government and parliament), this programming area proposes to conduct a **comprehensive review of the Rules of Procedure** to overcome the above mentioned weaknesses in the legislative review process and to strengthen the emerging practice of public hearings on draft laws, taking into account the current forms of interactions with civil society in the legislative process. It is suggested to establish a **Legislative Tracking Mechanism** to identify the state of affairs of all pending legislation. In addition, this programme component can advise the parliament leadership in establishing a **well-resourced Legal Department** which may provide expert guidance on the drafting and reviewing of legislation. While the services of a legal department ought to be available for all MPs, such a department is likely to be used mostly by chairs of Parliamentary committees. As an alternative, the PI as a specialized service could assume more tasks for reviewing legislation and providing guidance there-on. This would require additional human resources within the PI. This programme component will also advise the parliament leadership in its communication with the government on the need to establish a **legislative plan** on annual or semi-annual basis, this enabling Committees and Departments in parliament to improve their work planning and expert review of legislation in a timely manner. In this way, the coordination and cooperation between the Government and the Parliament in the early phases of law preparation will be strengthened to provide as early as possible information to the MPs on the Government's proposals.

Unlike in other countries, there is no comprehensive **anti-corruption proofing of draft legislation**, by for instance the Anti-corruption Agency, to be considered by the Parliament prior to adoption of draft legislation. This programme component can provide policy advice and facilitate interaction with best practices in other countries with the aim to ensure that all draft legislation considered by the Macedonian parliament will be checked against corruptibility chances.

3.3.4. Institutional role of the Parliament of Macedonia

The fourth programming area aims at strengthening the institutional role of the Parliament of Macedonia. In recent years, the Parliament of Macedonia has taken some significant steps on the road towards becoming an efficient and modernised legislature, in particular through the establishment of the Parliamentary Institute. At the same time, the political and institutional context in which the parliament functions changes regularly. Hence, a review to what extent the functions, working processes, responsibilities and activities of the Secretariat and the various Departments and Sections in particular are still fit for purpose would be useful. The scope of analysis would be to evaluate currently performed functions, including the interaction with the Parliamentary Institute, and to provide a basis for the identification of possibly required structural changes. Conducting a '**Functional and Institutional Analysis of the Secretariat of Parliament**' can generate findings and recommendations which will guide the improvement of the administrative mechanisms of the parliament. The comparative data on budget and staffing of the Secretariat of Parliament (annex 8) enables to conduct a Functional Analysis in comparative perspective, in particular against current trends in other countries in Central, South East and East Europe.

The Functional and Institutional Analysis of the Secretariat of Parliament can form the **basis for a multi-year Strategic Plan of the Parliament of Macedonia**, implementing the recommendations deriving from the Analysis. The Strategic Plan will then create an opportunity for the Parliament and its Secretariat to improve and modernize its operations and to strengthen its accountability to the people of Macedonia.

As part of the institutional development programming area, it is proposed to re-launch the debate on the **Code of Conduct and Ethics for MPs** of the Macedonian Parliament. Events in April this year demonstrate once more the need for such a Code of Conduct. Following the events from 24th of December 2012, parties had agreed to the recommendation to draft such Code of Conduct. A working group was established, but did not generate a final report. It is proposed that the SDC-funded programme takes this discussion forward, based upon a comparative study on parliamentary Codes of Conduct, followed by expert roundtables. Cooperation can be established with ODIHR in Warsaw and GRECO/ Council of Europe in Strasbourg. The latest GRECO Report on Macedonia has detailed recommendations on the content of such Code of Conduct for the Macedonian MPs.¹⁵

3.4. Methodologies of the new SDC programme

To implement the above-mentioned programming areas, many methodologies can be applied. Following is a short summary.

- **Technical advice** on parliamentary reforms, such as revision of Rules of Procedure, the establishment of a parliamentary calendar, the functioning of parliamentary Committees and the Strategic Plan of parliament;
- **Thematic workshops** and seminars for MPs and/or parliamentary staff on issues on the parliamentary agenda;
- **Comparative analysis** report on issues of parliamentary reform, such as the Code of Conduct and Ethics for MPs;
- Developing a **Guidebook** on legislative drafting in line with best legislative practices;
- Thematic expertise on draft laws on the agenda of the Committees;
- **Drafting of legal or policy proposals**, such as the 'Founding Charter' to establish a national chapter of GOPAC in Macedonia;
- **Study visit** abroad and liaison with counterpart committee in other parliaments;
- Facilitating **national expertise** to the Committees, based upon a mapping of nationally available expertise by academics, think-tanks, CSOs;

¹⁵ <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=09000016806c9b18>

- **Outsourced research on specialized topics**, such as on independent institutions and regulatory agencies and their relationship with the parliament of Macedonia based on OECD policies;
- **Legal advice on amendments to existing legislation** (for instance: the legal framework on independent institutions and regulatory agencies);
- **Mentoring and coaching** of Committee staff and Committee chairpersons;
- Purchasing the **software and new IT tools** for parliament, for instance a new parliament "app" or the Legislative Tracking Mechanism;
- Drafting **Standing Operating Procedures** for uploading, maintaining and evaluating the Legislative Tracking Mechanism; and training for Committee, ICT and research staff;
- **Translation** into Macedonian and Albanian language of relevant international reports on issues relevant to the Committees or parliament as a whole.

The SDC programme in Macedonia will be required to build on a **triple-edged strategy** of policy-dialogue, capacity / knowledge building, and reforming structures and processes. The reform measures directed towards structures and processes of parliament aim to institutionalize the change by approaching parliament as a system of relationships and resources. A **system-like approach** to the Parliament of Macedonia is proposed because capacity building by itself does not generate sustainable change in the institution. Capacity building needs to be accompanied by addressing the structures and processes in parliament. Policy-dialogue can establish an environment that is conducive of the reforms.

A first example of this systemic approach is the intervention logic applied on the Secretariat of the Parliament. The project will start with conducting a Functional and Institutional Analysis of the Secretariat. Its recommendations will be the basis for the Strategic Plan. The priorities of the Strategic Plan will be reflected in the Annual Departmental programs, and the latter as well as the Strategic Plan will inform the design of the parliament budget. In this way, there will be a clear change logic between the Functional Analysis, Strategic Plan, parliament's budget and the work planning of the Departments. Discussion on the strategy in a multi-party parliament bureau can provide for the needed political backing.

A second example of systemic approach is related to the parliamentary committees. Four inter-twined interventions are suggested. Firstly, at the level of the MPs, the project offers technical institutional advice on the role of the Committee chairperson and deputy chairperson. Secondly, at the level of the staff, the project offers coaching and on-the-job training, advanced training on thematic sectors of expertise, and specific tools such as a Glossary of Parliamentary and Legal Terms. Thirdly, the project offers external thematic experts to conduct analysis on specific draft legislation and policies. Fourthly, the project provides technological assistance via an on-line legislative tracking mechanism. These four interventions together will provide a strong incentive to better quality in the work of the Committees. The Team Leader of the new project will then advise the leadership of parliament on how to bring the improved Committee work into the proceedings of the plenary session.

The knowledge building intervention logic will foresee the delivery of specific studies either focused on Macedonia or focused on a comparative perspective. The first example includes a study on the legislative process and oversight practices in the parliament of Macedonia. One of the comparative studies will bring together analysis on independent institutions and regulatory agencies.

This systemic approach will allow for gradual in-house institutional capacity strengthening in parliament. Advanced trainings, workshops and a limited number of staff placements are also foreseen. In addition, the Programme includes a supplies part on a legislative tracking mechanism.

As **Committees** are an important entry point for the SDC programme, it is important to carefully select which Committees to provide technical assistance and on which policy areas. One might identify the following seven criteria for the selection process: (1) mandate and day-to-day functioning of the Committees; (2) support Committees are receiving from other development partners; (3) the policy relevance of the Committees to Switzerland and/or to other international partners; (4) the interest of the Committee Chair and Secretary to receive SDC support; (5) possibilities to link Macedonian Committees with sister committees in other parliaments of the region and/or Switzerland; (6) nature of relationship between the Committee and the line-ministry; (7) specific recommendations by the Speaker or Secretary General of Parliament.

One specific methodological proposal for working with Committees is to provide long-term, ongoing mentoring and technical inputs to the chairperson of a selected number of committees by a former Member of Parliament from a European country. To deliver on the technical and thematic support to the Committees through mentoring, it is proposed to look for a former Chairperson or Member of a Committee, who has served one or more terms in a European parliament. If this methodological proposal is endorsed, the SDC team can then draft a more detailed ToR, outlining tasks of the mentors, required skills and competencies, the engagement with the Macedonian Parliament, and the organization of the mentorship, including the selection of mentors, coordination and coaching, reporting and finances.

Cooperation with other Parliaments can be used as a further methodology. Partnerships between parliaments can be an effective form of peer learning. This was clearly acknowledged by staff of the Parliament. Politicians were slightly divided, not so much about cooperation as such but more on the question which parliaments would be most valuable to cooperate with. Most of the MPs argued that they prefer to cooperate with Parliaments from the region, so that there is exchange on eye-level (all face similar challenges) while others suggested cooperation with European Parliaments that are further advanced than the Macedonian parliament.

The Swiss Parliamentary Services are willing to continue the cooperation with the Parliamentary Institute and the Parliament in general. The possibility for SDC – Parliamentary Services joint projects¹⁶ is an excellent opportunity to continue and formalize such a partnership. Based on rough estimates from the side of the Swiss Parliamentary Services they could invest about 20-30 staff days per year. The emphasis of the cooperation should be in line with the overall focus of the new parliament support project. Based on the feedback from Members of Parliament it is suggested to primarily focus on cooperation at the level of the managerial leadership and professional staff (of the PI and beyond) of the Macedonian Parliament. This focus does not exclude that on request in addition activities with MPs are included to sensitize and provide usefulness directly to MPs. In view of the proposed focus of a new project, particularly worthwhile could be the partnering of committee staff e.g. of oversight and legislative committees, to improve support to committees. In case a focus is put on strengthening drafting capacities, further cooperation with the Swiss Office of Justice and the secretariat of the Federal Assembly's drafting committee could be sought. Potentially there are also other fields in which the cooperation could be of added value, for instance for the review of the Rules of Procedure.

The Swiss Parliamentary Services are willing to conduct a fact-finding mission to Skopje to interact directly with the leadership of Parliament and to further determine the fields of cooperation.

3.5. Programme Implementation:

It is highly recommended to provide for a programming mission that will narrow down programming options and define further details. Such a programming mission should also propose detailed implementation modalities. The programming mission could also conduct or identify needed background studies (e.g. on independent bodies and regulatory agencies as basis for targeted strengthening of oversight capacities, or on basic infrastructure needs of parliament as well as compatible IT tools to improve the openness of parliament as well as the legislative process).

Comprehensive support requires long-term engagement even if some programme activities can show effect quickly. Therefore, a programme duration of 10 years is highly recommended, with phases of 4, 4, and 2 years. While evaluations should take place at the end of the first two phases, the third phase should be used for a more intensive assessment of achievements and sustainability with suggestions for a solid exit strategy or proposals for a continuation of support.

The programme would benefit from a multiparty steering mechanism, like the Steering Council as for the current project. At a later point in time, the Parliament Bureau or Business Committee – if created – can form the basis of such steering mechanism. Until and unless there is a Strategic Plan by Parliament based on a functional analysis and backed by the different political parties it will be difficult to provide major parts of the funds through on-budget support. Budget support might be an option for later phases of the programme. The implementation of the programme can be entrusted to one or preferably several national

¹⁶ See, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs & Parliamentary Services, Information sheet: parliamentary technical expertise, not dated.

or international organizations, working together in a consortium. Ownership of reforms however should remain with the Parliament. Any implementer should put a focus on coordinating, backstopping and facilitating, providing resources to the Parliament when and as needed. In the ideal case, a national or international expert is located in the Office of the President or of the Secretary General of Parliament. Cooperation with other Parliaments, including the Swiss Parliament can further enrich the Programme.

3.6. Conclusion and recommendations for next programme

Through the support of the PI, SDC supported the start of a change process within Parliament. For consolidating the effect and for bringing further impetus for change it is recommended that SDC launches a new programme/project that targets the Assembly as such.

A **potential goal for the Parliament programme** can be as follows:

The **general objective** is to support Macedonia's reform process towards consolidating its democracy and to promote inclusiveness of national policy and decision making processes, leading to a stronger democratic and tolerant political culture.

The **specific objective** is to strengthen the functioning of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia (Sobranie) in exercising its core parliamentary functions in a professional, accountable and transparent manner.

In line with above suggested programming areas we are suggesting four **Outcomes** for the future programme:

1. **Strengthened oversight role of the Parliament of Macedonia:** An outcome focusing on strengthening the oversight role of parliament in respect to government, independent institutions and regulatory bodies with qualified staff supporting committees, clear methodologies, pro-active follow-up on reports and more automated access to information.
2. **Enhanced accountability and empowering citizens' participation through parliamentary openness and open-data policies.** An outcome focusing on enhanced interaction between parliament and citizens/civil society including based on the use of new IT technology, improved open data policies and effective opportunities for citizens to participate in parliamentary proceedings.
3. **A more in-depth legislative review process in Macedonia.** An outcome focusing on further strengthening the legislative process through fostering open, informed debate with continued availability of research and information, a strengthened legal department, strengthened regulatory impact assessments, improved drafting skills and a predictable agenda.
4. **Strengthening the institutional role of the Parliament of Macedonia.** An outcome focusing on overall reforms of the Parliament Secretariat based on a functional analysis, a strategic plan, review of the rules of procedure and parliamentary processes as well as interlinked capacity-building through peer learning and coaching backed by political dialogue.

For achieving the outcomes, a combination of entry-points can be used. The importance of entry points will vary based on the overall political climate and the area of support. For instance, when the political climate is conducive with a supportive and effective leadership of parliament a major focus can be out on the Leadership of parliament and overall reforms of parliament. At other times, the Parliamentary Institute and dialogue with political groups might be more effective entry points. The PI proved that it can achieve outcomes even in polarized political settings. Programming must allow for some flexibility in order to seize opportunities when and wherever they arise.

3.7. Risks and assumptions of the new programme

| | Risk area | Description of the risk | Likelihood | Impact | Mitigating strategies & management response |
|--|-----------|-------------------------|------------|--------|---|
|--|-----------|-------------------------|------------|--------|---|

| | Risk area | Description of the risk | Likelihood | Impact | Mitigating strategies & management response |
|----|-------------|--|------------|--------|---|
| 1. | Political | The political polarization in Macedonia deepens and there are less resources and will to implement political and parliamentary reform. The Steering Committee loses its cross-party composition or becomes overly polarized. | Medium | High | Project team and SDC will regularly interact with the Parliament leadership, PI, Secretariat and Committee chairpersons to ensure that the project can make a smooth start and that the benefits to the proceedings of parliament are discussed with all stakeholders whenever needed. The PI remains as main entry point as it can operate even in a polarized climate with limited political will for reforms. |
| 2. | Policy | Inability of the Macedonian Government to clarify its legislative & policy agenda will negatively affect project support to parliamentary reform, in particular for a detailed parliamentary calendar. | Medium | Medium | Engagement with the Government at high levels, in order to ensure continued support for the parliamentary reform process, including on the legislative agenda and parliamentary calendar. |
| 3. | Operational | Lack of financial resources to upgrade the IT and infrastructure of the entire Secretariat risks creating a downward spiral of reducing equipment for the P.I. | Low | Low | Project team holds consultations with the Parliament leadership; and SDC explores with other donors and the Ministry of Finance on required investments in parliament infrastructure and ICT. |
| 4. | Policy | The Macedonian Parliament remains reluctant to adopt a Code of Conduct and ensure mechanisms to enforce it. | Medium | Medium | Work on Code of Conduct will include consultations with parliamentarians and other stakeholders outside parliament, in particular GRECO, the Council of Europe, the European Commission and European Parliament. |
| 5. | Policy | Research reports including more analysis receive criticism for perceived bias | Low | Medium | Quality control of the research products ensure that different options with impact assessments for each option are presented |
| 6. | Policy | Reluctance of parliament and some parliamentarians to use comparative policies and evidence-based approaches | Low | Medium | Politicians are often more interested in 'real' issues and outcomes, not processes. Evidence-based approaches and comparative studies will provide policy options in light of national interests and will facilitate contact with other branches of government and drive institutional reform. |
| 7. | Management | Availability of Staff and MPs to participate in the project given the likely schedule of conflicting demands. | Low | High | Ensure the understanding of MPs and staff that the project directly benefits their work so that they see the immediate benefits of the project. |

| | Risk area | Description of the risk | Likelihood | Impact | Mitigating strategies & management response |
|--|------------|--|------------|--------|---|
| 8. | Political | Government policies curtail CSOs activities, reducing traction for the project's interaction with CSOs and parliament outreach | Medium | High | Political dialogue is pursued to ensure that more opportunities are created for CSOs to contribute to the parliamentary process. |
| 9. | Management | Failure to recruit international and national project staff with the necessary skills, knowledge and management experience will delay the start of the new project | Low | High | Direct recruitment outreach towards potential candidates who have the required mix of technical knowledge of parliamentary institutions and change management skills. |
| 10. | Policy | Proposed staff retention policies at the P.I. and Secretariat of Parliament run into legal and financial obstacles | Medium | Medium | Project team and SDC will interact with the Parliament leadership and Ministry of Finance, as necessary, to develop incentives for staff retention. |
| Assumptions | | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After a period of high polarization, political polarization and political tensions will gradually reduce, creating the space for political and parliamentary reform - A majority of newly elected parliamentarians are keen to pursue gradual, steady political reform. - Government contributes to the implementation of institutional and political reforms. - Macedonian civil society organisations are keen and able to push public institutions for continued political reform and are allowed to gather and function freely. | | | | | |

Annex 1: Terms of Reference

The Embassy of Switzerland in the Republic of Macedonia requested the services of experienced consultants to conduct external review of Support to the Establishment and Development of the Parliamentary Institute” project and assessment for potential new project of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) with the Assembly of Republic of Macedonia (Assembly). These Terms of Reference (ToR) outline the framework upon which the prospective consultant(s) shall provide their services to the Embassy of Switzerland.

SDC has been supporting the Assembly of Republic of Macedonia in setting up and developing a Parliamentary Institute (PI) since 2010 in the frame of the project “Support to the Establishment and Development of the Parliamentary Institute” (Parliamentary Institute Project). The overall goal of the project is to contribute to the mission of the PI ‘to strengthen the legislative and oversight function of the Assembly of Macedonia through securing timely, unbiased, objective and accessible services to the legislature’ by supporting the PI Strategic Plan.

The anticipated **outcomes** of the current phase are:

- Adding value to the legislative process in the Assembly
- Building the reputation and the capacities of the Parliamentary Institute
- Increasing public awareness for the role of the legislature

The PI became operational in the middle of 2014 as a Special organizational unit within the Parliamentary Services of the Macedonian Assembly, comprised of 25 civil servants. It provides research and information services to members of parliament and the Assembly’s Secretary General, as well as internal training, research archive and research library services to all MPs and members of the Parliamentary Service and outreach to the public. Until end of the current project phase (end of 2017), the research, archive and library functions of the PI should be fully developed and sustainable, contributing thereby to the overall goal of the project.

The objective of the mandate is to evaluate how the currency phase of the Parliamentary Institute Project is implemented and what has been achieved so far and provide ideas for possible future interventions with the Assembly.

The mandate shall in particular:

1. Review the achievements of the Parliamentary Institute Project to date and assess if there is a need for a continuous support by SDC in order to secure PI’s impartiality and sustainably, and
2. Assess the rationale for possible future intervention with the Assembly and provide ideas for future entry points with a focus on parliamentary oversight function, openness, public relations and parliamentary outreach services to citizens.

Annex 2: Profile of the team

Franklin De Vrieze (international expert), Marija Tegovska (Macedonian expert, local consultant), and Nicole Töpperwien (international expert and team leader).

Franklin De Vrieze - International advisor and consultant in parliamentary development and good governance. He provides advisory services to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), European Union Delegations, Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD), Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) and other institutions. Franklin De Vrieze has worked on governance issues for 20 years. He has conducted functional review and institutional capacities assessments of parliament. He has been working on policy issues relevant to the legislative, oversight and representative functions of parliament.

Marija Tegovska- Holds Bachelor and Master of Arts in Political Science degrees. In the last 10 years, she is active member in different non-formal organizations in Macedonia, working in the field of political system, human rights, media, public opinion research, policy making and elections. She was part of the ODIHR mission for the parliamentary elections in 2016 and she is a local assistant for BBC journalist reporting for Macedonia. She is a co-founder of the Macedonian NGO Dialog. For more than 3 years she is also working as a journalist.

Nicole Töpperwien- Expert consultant with experience advising on constitution-making and a range of power-sharing issues, with a focus on conflict and post-conflict situations. She had the opportunity to work on and in different peace and constitution making processes and to experience the challenges of post-agreement implementation. Highlights of her career have been working on the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement as an adviser within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in Macedonia and accompanying the constitution-making process in Nepal. She is a co-founder of the Swiss think tank and consultancy company Ximpulse. In this capacity, she supports constitution-making and legislative processes, conducts political analysis, assessments and evaluations, and provides trainings and policy-oriented research.

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Annex 4: Agenda

Friday, February 03rd 2017

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|-----------------|---|
| 11:00 – 12:00 | Briefing in Swiss Embassy |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | Interview with backstopper - NDI Mrs. Aleksandra Cvetkovska NDI Programme Manager Mrs. Lidija Stojkova Zafirovska NDI Programme Manager |
| 13: 45 – 14:45 | Mr. Tibor Varadi Political Adviser in Delegation of the EU Mrs. Marina Kurte Advisor on EU Integration and Legal Issues- Political Section |
| 16: 00 – 17: 00 | Mr. Joshua A. Lewis Political Officer in U.S. Embassy |

Monday, February 06th 2017

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|---------------|---|
| 08:30 – 09:30 | Mr. Zarko Denkovski Secretary General |
| 10:00 – 11:00 | Mr. Mane Necev Head of Department of Information and Communication Technologies |
| 11:15 – 12:15 | Mr. Arso Sinadinov Assistant Head of the Department of Administrative Affairs Mrs. Jasmina Kotorcevikj Assistant Head of Department for Financial Affairs |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | Mrs. Verica Prokovikj Head of Department of Budget and Funds, Ministry of Finance |
| 13:30 – 14:15 | Lunch break |
| 14:15 – 15:30 | Mr. Zlatko Atanasov Head of Parliamentary Institute |
| 15:30 – 17:00 | Parliamentary Institute Staff Mrs. Arita Jashari-Bislimi- Head of Department for legislative research library and archive Mr. Daniel Stojanov- Head of Department for common analyzes and investigates Mrs. Fani Koroveshovska - Head of Department for Legal Analysis and Research Mr. Petar Trajkov-Advisor for Economic Systems Mrs. Bijlana Doncevska- ICT Advisor (education and communication) |

Tuesday, February 07th 2017

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| 09:30 – 10:30 | Mr. Damir Neziri, Project Coordinator in Westminster Foundation Mrs. Ivana Petkukjeska, Project Coordinator in Westminster Foundation |
| 11:00 – 12:00 | Mr. Antonio Miloshovski, MPs from VMRO-DPMNE |
| 12:00 – 13:00 | Mr. Afrim Gazi, MPs from BESA Mr. Zekirija Ibrahim, MPs from BESA |
| 13:00 – 14:00 | Mrs. Radmila Sekerinska, MPs from SDSM |
| 14:15 – 15:30 | Lunch break |
| 16:00 – 17:15 | Mrs. Sanja Frkovikj-Gelevska Program Manager in EIDHR |

Wednesday, February 08th 201

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| 08:30 – 09:30 | Mrs. Maja Ermilova – Levkova Head of working bodies of the Parliament Mr. Danco Janevski Head of the Department of relevant working bodies in the field of agriculture, forestry and water management |
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10:00 – 11:00 Mrs. Jagoda Sahpaska, MPs from SDSM
11:00 – 12:00 Mrs. Emilija Tudzarovska-Gjorgjievska Project Manager in British Embassy
12:00 – 13:00 Mrs. Renata Deskoska, MPs from SDSM
13:00– 13:45 Lunch break
14:00 – 15:00 Mrs. Marija Angeleva, ex. MPs from VMRO-DPMNE

Thursday, February 09th 2017

09.00 – 10:00 Mr. Artan Grubi, MPs from DUI
11:00 – 12:00 Mr. Daniel Gjokeski Assistant to the parliamentary group VMRO-DPMNE
12:00 – 13:00 Mr. Talat Xhaferi, MPs from DUI
14:00 – 15:00 Mr. Edward Gonzales Director General Development Office in USAID
Mrs. Slagjana Srbinska Project Management Specialist in USAID
15:30 – 17:00 Mr. Chris Henshaw Senior Resident Director in NDI
18:00 – 19:00 Mr. Robert Scott Heaslet, NDI via skype

Friday, February 10th 2017

09:00 – 10:00 Mr. Jane Dimeski NGO Institute for Democracy-IDSCS
10:30 – 11:30 Mr. Andrea Bogdanovski NGO Analitika
Mrs. Kalina Medarovska NGO Brima Gallup Senior Project Manager
Mr. Slobodan Medarovski Data Analysis Advisor
12:00 – 13:00 Mr. Zlatko Atanasov Head of the Parliamentary Institute
13:15 – 14:00 Lunch break
14:30 – 16:00 Debriefing at Swiss Embassy

Annex 5: Donor mapping related to Parliamentary Support

| Donor | Implementer | Project details | Budget |
|---|---|---|---|
| European Union Funding until December 2017 | Westminster Foundation for Democracy- Western Balkans program and School of Journalism and Public Relations (SJPR) | Connecting the Assembly and the civil society organizations in Macedonia to improve the human rights legislative in the country. Providing small grants for CSOs to conduct their own research and gather data on the issue they advocate for. Writing and preparation of evidence-based policy papers. Advocacy training and advocacy campaign for the changes in legislative as proposed in the public policy documents. Activities that facilitate parliamentary outreach, such as: CSO Open Day in the Parliament of Macedonia; a joint meeting between CSOs and MPs from the committees relevant to the legislative initiatives proposed and a study visit to Scotland Parliament to share good practices with UK MPs. | € 169.440 |
| British Embassy Funding until March 2018 | Westminster Foundation for Democracy-Western Balkans program and partners: Center for Economic Analysis (CEA) and Institute for Communication Studies (ICS) | The purpose of the project is to improve financial accountability and transparency in the Republic of Macedonia through better oversight and enhanced cooperation among the State Audit Office, the Parliament, media, and civil society. | £71,968 (FY 2016/17 - £ 29,848 & FY 2017/18 - £ 42,121) |
| Swiss agency for development and cooperation Funding until December 2017 | Institute for Democracy “Societas Civilis” | PROJECT “PARLIAMENT WATCH” Monitoring of the quality of parliamentary debate. Monitoring of how media report about the Parliament. Yearly field public opinion surveys about the perceptions of the citizens for the work of the Parliament. | € 86.226 |
| Macedonian Center for European Training and European Commission in the period Funding until February 2017 | Institute for Democracy “Societas Civilis” | Strengthening the role of the Parliament in the process of compliance of the Macedonian legislation with the EU legislation, and by promoting inclusion of the civil sector in the work of the | € 122.451 |

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| | | Parliament. | |
| British Embassy Funding until March 2018 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Westminster Foundation for Democracy, (State Audit Office (SAO)) 2. Center for Change Management, (Ministry of Information Society and Administration, The State Commission for Administrative Procedures and Employment in the Second Degree & State Administrative Inspectorate); 3. Analytica Think Tank, (Commission for Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information and Directorate for Personal Data Protection) 4. EuroThink, (Agency for Audiovisual and Media Services and Agency for Electronic Communications); 5. Citizens Association "Institute for Human Rights" – Skopje, (Judicial Council & Council for determining facts and raising procedure for establishing responsibility of a judge) | <p>To enhance the capacity of civil society to monitor and publicise the work of state oversight and regulatory bodies, and through enhanced public scrutiny contribute to improvement of the performance, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of these institutions.</p> <p>Up to 4 CSOs will be provided with a grant to monitor and publicise the work of up to 4 of the following, not excluding others, independent, regulatory, supervisory and advisory bodies in the country.</p> <p>The project would contribute to increased transparency and accountability of selected state institutions through improved CSO's engagement in monitoring and publicising of the work of independent regulatory, supervisory and advisory bodies in the country.</p> | Annual Budget for up to 4 grants £ 130,000 |
| European Union- EU-twinning project (IPA 2013) Funding until January 2019 | | The purpose of this project is to contribute to the overall horizontal coordination of the modernization processes in the Public administration, to enhance public funds management and to ensure accountability and transparency in the use of public funds through | Total budget: € 1 400 000 IPA budget: € 1.330.000 |

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| | | improvement of the regularity (financial) and performance audit of SAO in line with ISSAI and SAO's Strategies. The project is also aimed at improvement of existing audit methodologies, establishing mechanism for pro-active role in understanding and discussion of audit reports by the Parliament and strengthening the institutional capacity for audit in areas of IT and communications. | |
| British Embassy Funding until June 2018 | Citizens Association MOST | Macedonian constituency engaged in ensuring accountability and transparency of Parliament. Publicise the performance and competences of the Parliament: plenary sessions, MPs, committees' sessions, participation of the CSOs in the decision making. These regular reports will inform the public, media and civil society on the performance of the MPs they have voted for and on the practices of the Parliament in executing its constitutional role. | £107.876,00 |
| USAID Funding until September 2017 | CEPPS/International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) | USAID's "Increased Political Competition and Accountability" program aims to promote greater citizen participation in political institutions and processes. The program is implemented by a consortium of three U.S. organizations: The National Democratic Institute (NDI); the International Republican Institute (IRI); and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). This program works closely with the State Election Commission (SEC) to review the process for compiling and maintaining voters list, make sure it is conducted in a clear, transparent and coordinated procedure, including all institutions involved in the update. | \$ 1,576,155 |
| USAID Funding until September 2020 | CEPPS/National Democratic Institute (NDI) | To increase political parties' ability to engage members, political supporters and the public at-large on public policy and accountability. | \$4,368,934 |

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| | | <p>To improve CSO capacity for policy engagement and legislative advocacy.</p> <p>To enhance parliament's technical capacity and procedural operations to perform its legislative and oversight functions more effectively. The program works with the Parliament to improve its oversight of the executive branch through strengthened committee hearing procedures. The program will ensure that the Parliamentary Committee members and staff learn how to conduct effective and efficient oversight hearings and follow up on the recommendations and conclusions.</p> | |
|--|--|--|--|

Annex 6: Committees in the Assembly of Republic of Macedonia

1. Constitutional Committee
2. Legislative Committee
3. Committee on Defence and Security
4. Committee on Political System and Inter-Ethnic Relations
5. Committee on Foreign Affairs
6. Commission for Election and Appointment
7. Standing Inquiry Committee for Protection of Freedoms and Rights of Citizens
8. Committee for Supervising the work of the Directorate for Security and Counter Intelligence
9. Committee on Finance and Budget
10. Committee on Economy
11. Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management
12. Committee on Transport, Communications and Environment
13. Committee on Education, Science and Sport
14. Committee for Culture
15. Committee of Health
16. Committee on Labour and Social Policy
17. Committee on Rules of Procedure and Mandatory-Immunity Issues
18. Committee on European Affairs
19. Committee on equal opportunities for women and men

Annex 7: Independent Institutions and Regulatory Agencies in Macedonia

| | | назив | назив - англиски | веб страна |
|---|----|---|--|---|
| I. Регулаторни тела | 1 | РЕГУЛАТОРНА КОМИСИЈА ЗА ДОМУВАЊЕ | Regulatory commission for housing | http://www.rkd.gov.mk/ |
| | 2 | РЕГУЛАТОРНА КОМИСИЈА ЗА ЕНЕРГЕТИКА НА РМ | Energy Regulatory Commission | http://www.erc.org.mk/ |
| | 3 | АГЕНЦИЈА ЗА ЦИВИЛНО ВОЗДУХОПЛОВСТВО | Civil Aviation Agency CAA | http://www.caa.gov.mk/ |
| | 4 | АГЕНЦИЈАТА ЗА АУДИО И АУДИОВИЗУЕЛНИ МЕДИУМСКИ УСЛУГИ | Agency for Audio and Audio-visual Media Services | http://avmu.mk |
| | 5 | АГЕНЦИЈА ЗА ПОШТИ | Postal Agency | http://www.ap.mk/ |
| | 6 | КОМИСИЈА ЗА ХАРТИИ ОД ВРЕДНОСТ | Securities and Exchange Commission | http://www.sec.gov.mk/Pages/Home.aspx |
| | 7 | АГЕНЦИЈА ЗА СУПЕРВИЗИЈА НА КАПИТАЛНО ФИНАНСИРАНО ПЕНЗИСКО ОСИГУРУВАЊЕ | Agency for supervision of fully funded pension insurance | http://www.mapas.gov.mk/ |
| | 8 | АГЕНЦИЈА ЗА СУПЕРВИЗИЈА НА ОСИГУРУВАЊЕТО | Insurance Supervision Agency | http://www.aso.mk/ |
| | 9 | АГЕНЦИЈА ЗА ЕЛЕКТРОНСКИ КОМУНИКАЦИИ | Agency For Electronic Communications | http://www.aek.mk/mk/ |
| | 10 | АГЕНЦИЈАТА ЗА РЕГУЛИРАЊЕ НА ЖЕЛЕЗНИЧКИОТ СЕКТОР | Agency for regulation of the rail sector | http://www.arpz.mk/ |
| II. Органи на државна управа основани од страна на Собранието на РМ | 1 | ДРЖАВЕН ЗАВОД ЗА РЕВИЗИЈА | State Audit office | http://dzt.mk/ |
| | 2 | ДРЖАВНА КОМИСИЈА ЗА СПРЕЧУВАЊЕ НА КОРУПЦИЈА | State Commission for Prevention of Corruption | http://www.dksk.org.mk/ |
| | 3 | ДРЖАВНА ИЗБОРНА КОМИСИЈА | State election commission | http://www.sec.mk/ |
| | 4 | КОМИСИЈА ЗА ЗАШТИТА НА КОНКУРЕНЦИЈА | Commission for Protection of Competition | kzk.gov.mk |

| | | | |
|----|--|--|---|
| 5 | ДИРЕКЦИЈА ЗА ЗАШТИТА НА ЛИЧНИ ПОДАТОЦИ | Directorate for personal data protection | http://www.dzlp.mk/ |
| 6 | ДРЖАВНА КОМИСИЈА ЗА ЖАЛБИ ПО ЈАВНИ НАБАВКИ | State appeals commission for public procurement | http://dkzin.mk/ |
| 7 | КОМИСИЈА ЗА ВЕРИФИКАЦИЈА НА ФАКТИТЕ | Data verification commission | http://www.kvf.org.mk/ |
| 8 | СОВЕТ ЗА УНАПРЕДУВАЊЕ И НАДЗОР НА РЕВИЗИЈАТА | Council for Advancement and Oversight of the audit of the Republic of Macedonia | http://www.sunr.mk |
| 9 | КОМИСИЈА ЗА ЗАШТИТА ОД ДИСКРИМИНАЦИЈА | Commission for protection against discrimination | http://www.kzd.mk/ |
| 10 | ДРЖАВНА КОМИСИЈА ЗА ОДЛУЧУВАЊЕ ВО УПРАВНА ПОСТАПКА И ПОСТАПКА ОД РАБОТЕН ОДНОС ВО ВТОР СТЕПЕН | State Commission for administrative procedures and employment | http://www.dkz.mk |
| 11 | РЕВИЗОРСКО ТЕЛО ЗА РЕВИЗИЈА НА ИНСТРУМЕНТОТ ЗА ПРЕТПРИСТАПНА ПОМОШ | Authority for audit of the European Union pre-accession assistance in the Republic of Macedonia. | http://www.aaip.a.mk/index.php?lang=mk |
| 12 | ДРЖАВНА КОМИСИЈА ЗА ОДЛУЧУВАЊЕ ВО ВТОР СТЕПЕН ВО ОБЛАСТА НА ИНСПЕКЦИСКИОТ НАДЗОР И ПРЕКРШОЧНАТА ПОСТАПКА | State Commission for Deciding amongst Second Degree in the Field of Inspection Offense Proceeding. | |
| 13 | КОМИСИЈАТА ЗА ЗАШТИТА НА ПРАВОТО ЗА СЛОБОДЕН ПРИСТАП ДО ИНФОРМАЦИИТЕ ОД ЈАВЕН КАРАКТЕР | Commission for Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information | http://www.komspi.mk/ |

Annex 8: Comparative data on the budget and staffing of the Parliament of Macedonia

8.1. Budget of the Parliament of Macedonia

| <i>Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia</i> | <i>2012</i> | <i>2013</i> | <i>2014</i> | <i>2015</i> | <i>2016</i> | <i>2017</i> |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Total National Budget Revenue's (in denars)</i> | <i>169 198 000,00</i> | <i>165 652 000,00</i> | <i>176 514 000,00</i> | <i>181 777 000,00</i> | <i>196 276 000,00</i> | <i>206 219 000,00</i> |
| <i>Total Budget of Sobranie (in denars)</i> | <i>817 615,00</i> | <i>704 010,00</i> | <i>688 353,00</i> | <i>689 110,00</i> | <i>686 032,00</i> | <i>601 887,00</i> |
| <i>Percentage of parliament budget vs. state budget</i> | <i>0,48%</i> | <i>0,42%</i> | <i>0,39%</i> | <i>0,38%</i> | <i>0,35%</i> | <i>0,29%</i> |
| <i>Total Budget of the Parliamentary Institute</i> | <i>22 768,00</i> | <i>22 465,00</i> | <i>22 724,00</i> | <i>24 328,00</i> | <i>26 400,00</i> | <i>15 501,00</i> |
| <i>Percentage of PI budget vs. total Sobranie budget</i> | <i>2,78%</i> | <i>3,19%</i> | <i>3,30%</i> | <i>3,53%</i> | <i>3,85%</i> | <i>2,58%</i> |

8.2. Overview of the number of employees of the Parliament of Macedonia during the last six years.

| <i>Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia</i> | <i>2012</i> | <i>2013</i> | <i>2014</i> | <i>2015</i> | <i>2016</i> | <i>2017</i> |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <i>Total number of employees in Sobranie (including MPs)</i> | <i>435</i> | <i>389</i> | <i>415</i> | <i>459</i> | <i>404</i> | <i>404</i> |
| <i>Number of employees in the parliamentary service</i> | <i>260</i> | <i>283</i> | <i>275</i> | <i>280</i> | <i>282</i> | <i>282</i> |
| <i>Number of employees in Parliamentary Institute</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>25</i> | <i>23</i> | <i>21</i> | <i>20</i> | <i>20</i> |
| <i>Number of assistants in MP constituent office</i> | <i>75</i> | <i>75</i> | <i>75</i> | <i>75</i> | <i>75</i> | <i>75</i> |
| <i>Number of MP assistants</i> | | | <i>24</i> | <i>24</i> | <i>24</i> | <i>22</i> |
| <i>All staff (without MPs)</i> | <i>336</i> | <i>383</i> | <i>397</i> | <i>400</i> | <i>401</i> | <i>399</i> |

8.3. Comparison between Macedonia and several other countries in Central and Eastern Europe, in terms of the ratio of number of staff to number of MPs, and the percentage of the parliament budget within the state budget.

| <i>Comparison number of MPs to number of staff</i> | | | | | |
|--|----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Parliament</i> | <i>Number of MPs</i> | <i>Total Number of staff</i> | <i>Non-partisan staff</i> | <i>Political staff</i> | <i>Number of staff per MP</i> |
| <i>Austria</i> | <i>244</i> | <i>380</i> | <i>380</i> | <i>N/A</i> | <i>1.55</i> |
| <i>Czech Republic</i> | <i>200</i> | <i>371</i> | <i>354</i> | <i>17</i> | <i>1.85</i> |
| <i>Estonia</i> | <i>101</i> | <i>224</i> | <i>192</i> | <i>32</i> | <i>2.21</i> |
| <i>Georgia</i> | <i>150</i> | <i>1300</i> | <i>840</i> | <i>460</i> | <i>8.66</i> |

| | | | | | |
|------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-------------|
| Kosovo | 120 | 201 | 168 | 33 | 1.67 |
| Latvia | 100 | 430 | 291 | 139 | 4.30 |
| Lithuania | 141 | 586 | 499 | 87 | 4.16 |
| Serbia | 250 | 410 | 400 | 10 | 1.64 |
| Slovakia | 150 | 407 | 385 | 22 | 2.71 |
| Moldova | 101 | 503 | 375 | 128 | 5 |
| Macedonia | 120 | 399 | 302 | 97 | 3.32 |

8.4. Percentage of the Parliament budget within the state budget

| <i>Percentage of parliament budget within state budget</i> | |
|--|--------------|
| Austria | No info |
| Czech Republic | 0.09 % |
| Estonia | 0.31 % |
| Georgia | 0.07 % |
| Kosovo | 0.52 % |
| Latvia | 0.34 % |
| Lithuania | 0.34 % |
| Serbia | 0.02 % |
| Slovakia | 0.01 % |
| Moldova | 0.35 % |
| Macedonia | 0,29% |

Annex 9: Survey on the Parliamentary Institute

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Date of submitting this survey | 18.01.2017 |
|--------------------------------|------------|

Following is an on-line survey on the Parliamentary Institute of Macedonia. The survey has been drafted by the expert-team of Swiss Development Cooperation; the survey includes some questions developed by NDI. The survey is aimed at the staff of the Parliamentary Institute.

The purpose of the on-line survey is to gain quantitative data on staffs' assessment on the PI that amongst others can be compared to assessments in earlier surveys and can serve as a basis for further discussions with the staff.

To ease the analysis of the replies, the survey includes mostly multiple-choice questions. For the first 9 questions, please choose one answer only per question. For the next 7 questions, tick all that apply.

Your answers to the survey will be kept confidentially.

I. Personal information

1. How long are you a staff member of the Parliamentary Institute?

| Answer Choices | Responses |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| – Less than 1 year | 0.00% 0 |
| – Between 1 and 2 years | 0.00% 0 |
| – More than 2 years | 100.00% 20 |
| Total | 20 |

2. What was your professional position prior to joining the Parliamentary Institute?

| Answer Choices | Responses |
|--|-------------|
| – Other position in the Secretariat of Parliament | 15.00% 3 |
| – Other position as civil servant of Macedonia | 40.00% 8 |
| – Position outside the civil service | 40.00% 8 |
| – This is my first professional position | 5.00% 1 |
| Total | 20 |

3. What is your current age?

| Answer Choices | Responses |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| – Between 20-30 y. | 15.00% 3 |
| – Between 31-40 y. | 75.00% 15 |
| – Between 41-50 y. | 10.00% 2 |
| – Older than 51 y. | 0.00% 0 |
| Total | 20 |

II. Work organization

4. To what extent is your Job Description a clear reflection of your roles, responsibilities and tasks in the Parliamentary Institute?

| Answer Choices | Responses |
|---------------------|--------------|
| – very clear | 15.00% 3 |
| – clear | 65.00% 13 |
| – Medium | 20.00% 4 |
| – rather unclear | 0.00% 0 |
| – very unclear | 0.00% 0 |
| Total | 20 |

5. To what extent is the division of tasks with your colleagues a good practice for work planning and work management?

| Answer Choices | Responses |
|----------------|-------------|
| – Very much | 30.00% 6 |

| Answer Choices | Responses |
|---------------------|--------------|
| – sufficient | 65.00% 13 |
| – Don't know | 0.00% 0 |
| – Rather limited | 5.00% 1 |
| – Not at all | 0.00% 0 |
| Total | 20 |

6. What is the percentage of time you allocate to your core-tasks and time required for other, corporate or unexpected tasks ?

| Answer Choices | Responses |
|--|--------------|
| – 90 (core tasks)- 10 (other tasks) % | 0.00% 0 |
| – 70 - 30 % | 75.00% 15 |
| – 50 - 50 % | 20.00% 4 |
| – 30 - 70 % | 0.00% 0 |
| – 10 - 90 % | 5.00% 1 |
| Total | 20 |

7. To what extent do the available trainings provide you with sufficient and accurate opportunities for professional development and further growth in your job?

| Answer Choices | Responses |
|---------------------|--------------|
| – Very much | 5.00% 1 |
| – sufficient | 50.00% 10 |
| – Don't know | 15.00% 3 |
| – Rather limited | 30.00% 6 |
| – | 0.00% |

| Answer Choices | Responses |
|----------------|-----------|
| Not at all | 0 |
| Total | 20 |

8. How often do you come across the need to consult documentation in foreign languages (for instance English) ?

| Answer Choices | Responses |
|--------------------|--------------|
| – weekly | 70.00% 14 |
| – monthly | 5.00% 1 |
| – once in 3 months | 10.00% 2 |
| – exceptionally | 15.00% 3 |
| – never | 0.00% 0 |
| Total | 20 |

9. How often do you consult with other research institutes, universities, think-tanks or stakeholders?

| Answer Choices | Responses |
|--------------------|-------------|
| – weekly | 35.00% 7 |
| – monthly | 30.00% 6 |
| – once in 3 months | 10.00% 2 |
| – exceptionally | 25.00% 5 |
| – never | 0.00% 0 |
| Total | 20 |

III. Collaboration within the Secretariat of the Parliament of Macedonia

10. To provide services, which of the following parliamentary services do you currently collaborate? (tick all that apply)

| Answer Choices | 2017 | 2015 |
|---|--------------|-------------|
| – Legislation Sector | 25.00% 5 | 20.00% 4 |
| – Working Bodies Sector | 50.00% 10 | 30.00% 6 |
| – International Cooperation Sector | 20.00% 4 | 25.00% 5 |
| – Research and Analysis, Library and Documentation Sector | 35.00% 7 | 35.00% 7 |
| – Support of the National EU Integration Council Sector | 25.00% 5 | 25.00% 5 |
| – Support of the Parliamentary TV Channel Sector | 15.00% 3 | 5.00% 1 |
| – Translation Sector | 20.00% 4 | 15.00% 3 |
| – Information Technology Sector | 55.00% 11 | 35.00% 7 |
| – Professional and Administrative Operations Sector | 35.00% 7 | 20.00% 4 |
| – Assembly Sitings Sector | 5.00% 1 | 10.00% 2 |
| – Special Organization Unit Human Resource Management Unit | 40.00% 8 | 40.00% 8 |
| – Finance Sector | 40.00% 8 | 45.00% 9 |
| – Secretary General Sector | 80.00% 16 | 40.00% 8 |
| – Parliamentary Groups | 40.00% 8 | 30.00% 6 |
| – Cabinet of the President of Parliament | 45.00% 9 | 20.00% 4 |
| – None of the Above | 0.00% 0 | 10.00% 2 |
| – Other | 0.00% 0 | 5.00% 1 |

Total Respondents: 20

11. To improve service delivery, with which of the following parliamentary services should you collaborate?

| Answer Choices | 2017 | 2015 |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| – Legislation Sector | 50.00% 10 | 45.00% 9 |
| – Working Bodies Sector | 70.00% 14 | 45.00% 9 |
| – International Cooperation Sector | 30.00% 6 | 50.00% 10 |
| – Research and Analysis, Library and Documentation Sector | 40.00% 8 | 60.00% 12 |
| – Support of the National EU Integration Council Sector | 40.00% 8 | 35.00% 7 |
| – Support of the Parliamentary TV Channel Sector | 15.00% 3 | 0.00% |
| – Translation Sector | 30.00% 6 | 30.00% 6 |
| – Information Technology Sector | 60.00% 12 | 40.00% 8 |
| – Professional and Administrative Operations Sector | 20.00% 4 | 25.00% 5 |
| – Special Organization Unit/Human Resource Management Unit | 25.00% 5 | 50.00% 10 |
| – Assembly Sitings Sector | 20.00% 4 | 25.00% 5 |
| – Finance Sector | 35.00% 7 | 30.00% 6 |
| – Secretary General Sector | 65.00% 13 | 55.00% 11 |
| – Cabinet of the President of Parliament | 45.00% 9 | 30.00% 6 |
| – Parliamentary Groups | 65.00% 13 | 75.00% 15 |
| Total Respondents: 20 | | |

12. To improve service delivery, which of the following are ways to improve closer cooperation with other parliamentary services?

| Answer Choices | 2017 | 2015 |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| – Meetings with parliamentary heads of sector | 40.00% 8 | 45.00% 9 |
| – Encouragement to the Secretary General | 30.00% 6 | 30.00% 6 |
| – Online information sharing | 50.00% 10 | 50.00% 10 |
| – Trainings on Human Resources Management | 35.00% 7 | 45.00% 9 |
| – Trainings on staff development | 65.00% 13 | 80.00% 16 |
| – Team building activities | 85.00% 17 | 75.00% 15 |
| – Networking opportunities | 50.00% 10 | 50.00% 10 |
| – Revisions to the internal act and systemization | 25.00% 5 | 25.00% 5 |
| – None of the Above | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 |
| – Don't Know | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 |
| – Other | 10.00% 2 | 0.00% 0 |

Total Respondents: 20

IV. Impartiality and sustainability

13. Do you consider that the products and services produced by the Parliamentary Institute are impartial?

| Answer Choices | 2017 | 2015 |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| – Completely Partial | 10.00% 2 | 0.00% 0 |
| – Partially Partial | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 |
| – Neither | 0.00% 0 | 0.00% 0 |
| – Partially Impartial | 5.00% 1 | 30.00% 6 |
| – | 85.00% | 70.00% |

| Answer Choices | 2017 | 2015 |
|----------------------|------|------|
| Completely Impartial | 17 | 14 |
| Total | 20 | |

14. What are ways to safeguard the impartiality of the services and products produced by the Parliamentary Institute?

| Answer Choices | 2017 | 2015 |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| Properly negotiated research question | 45.00% 9 | 65.00% 13 |
| Access to varied sources of information | 90.00% 18 | 85.00% 17 |
| Balanced presentation of information, using varied sources | 55.00% 11 | 80.00% 16 |
| Proper peer review process | 40.00% 8 | 50.00% 10 |
| No recommendations/opinions in research and analysis | 25.00% 5 | 45.00% 9 |
| Balanced language in all publications | 25.00% 5 | 55.00% 11 |
| Little to no interference from parliamentary leadership | 15.00% 3 | 60.00% 12 |
| Well-functioning Steering Council | 45.00% 9 | 60.00% 12 |
| Availability of services to all members of parliament | 50.00% 10 | 70.00% 14 |
| Total Respondents: 20 | | |

15. What are ways to ensure the sustainability of the Parliamentary Institute as a parliamentary research and information service?

| Answer Choices | 2017 | 2015 |
|--|-------------|--------------|
| Closer cooperation with other parliamentary services | 35.00% 7 | 70.00% 14 |
| Well-functioning Steering Council | 40.00% 8 | 75.00% 15 |

| Answer Choices | 2017 | 2015 |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| – Staff development opportunities | 80.00% 16 | 85.00% 17 |
| – Recognized credible and impartial services and products | 60.00% 12 | 65.00% 13 |
| – Budgetary support for salaries and operational costs | 75.00% 15 | 85.00% 17 |
| – Effective Parliamentary Institute management | 90.00% 18 | 85.00% 17 |
| – Excellent teamwork within the Parliamentary Institute | 75.00% 15 | 75.00% 15 |
| Total Respondents: 20 | | |

16. Do you believe that the sustainability of the Parliamentary Institute is assured?

| Answer Choices | 2017 | 2015 |
|------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| – Unsustainable | 5.00% 1 | 5.00% 1 |
| – Partially Unsustainable | 15.00% 3 | 10.00% 2 |
| – Neither | 15.00% 3 | 20.00% 4 |
| – Partially Sustainable | 50.00% 10 | 45.00% 9 |
| – Sustainable | 15.00% 3 | 20.00% 4 |
| Total | 20 | |

Please complete your answers to the survey by 30 January 2017 (latest)

Send the completed form to: marija.tegovska@gmail.com

Annex 10 Strategic Plan with comments

Tabular Overview of the Objectives and Activities of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017

| | GOALS AND ACTIVITIES | SUCCESS INDICATORS | | | | | INDICATOR VALUES as provided by the PI | Comments by assessment team |
|------------|--|---|---|----------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| | | Indicator | Basic indicator (base year 2014) | Basic indicator (base year 2015) | Objective to be achieved in 2016 | Objective to be achieved in 2017 | | |
| 1. | Building the reputation and the capacities of the Parliamentary Institute | Percentage of beneficiaries that use the services | 21,95% | 36,5% | 70% | 80% | 69% of MPs have actively or passively used the services of the PI (according the report of Brima Galup) 28.3% of the total number of MP's demanded only research (according our own statistics) | |
| 1.1 | Provision of timely, objective and impartial services by the Parliamentary Institute | Number of delivered services in the deadline | 90% of requested services were provided within the deadline | 90% | 90 % of services to be delivered within the deadline | 90% | 100% of the services were within the negotiated deadline with the requester | |

Strategic Plan 2014-2017

Parliamentary Institute

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Number of formal comments about the services | 1 informal comment by a beneficiary | 3 informal comments by a beneficiary | Minimum negative comments about the objectivity of services from the beneficiaries | Minimum negative comments about the objectivity of services from the beneficiaries | No negative remarks in 2016 | |
| | | Level of satisfaction with the services (timely, objective and impartial) | 20 requestors for second time or more | 13 requestors for second time or more Software has been purchased to measure users satisfaction that is to be installed in the next period | 90% of the requestors to be satisfied with the delivered services 25 of beneficiaries that made second request or more in the year | 90% of the requestors to be satisfied with the delivered services 30 of beneficiaries that made second request or more in the year | -91% of users are satisfied with the services -10 deputies demanded services for the second time from PI | Minor criticism that services have been partial can be due to the overall polarized context |
| 1.2 | Arranging and adopting the legal framework for the implementation of the responsibilities of the Parliamentary Institute | Adoption of changes and amendments to the Rulebook on the work and organization | Adopted: 1.Changes and amendments to the Rulebook on work and organization 2.Rulebook on the manner of acting with the | Not applicable | N/A | N/A | There were no changes to the legal framework in 2016. | |

Strategic Plan 2014-2017

Parliamentary Institute

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|--|------------------|-----------------|------------------|--|---|
| | | and other acts | legislative archive 3. Rulebook on the competencies of PI | | | | | |
| 1.3 | Preparation, printing and distribution of the Guide for the users of the services of the Parliamentary Institute | Number of printed guides | Printed: 650 | Printed: 500 | Printed: 500 | Printed: 350 | Printed 500 copies | |
| | | Number of distributed guides | Distributed: 462 | Distributed: 305 | Distributed 500 | Distributed: 350 | Distributed 500 copies | |
| 1.4 | Networking with the research services of the Regional Parliaments and those of the European Union | Number of joint research with related institutions from the region; | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 1 joint research with the Poland parliament 1 joint research with the parliaments in the region Total: 2 | Considering the limited amount of staff, PI put the emphasis rightly on other services. |
| | | Number of parliaments with which meetings were held/established cooperation | 5 | 3 | 10 | 10 | 10- (established direct contacts and cooperation with Switzerland, Sweden, Poland, Slovenia, Bosnia | |

Strategic Plan 2014-2017

Parliamentary Institute

| | | | | | | | | |
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| | | ; | | | | | and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Albania, Serbia, Croatia) | |
| 1.5 | Study visits, trainings, seminars and conferences, workshops for the Parliamentary Institute staff, visits of foreign and domestic experts | Number of study visits, trainings, seminars and conferences , workshops for the staff. | Trainings and study visits abroad: 15, where 13 PI staff participated Trainings in the country: 27, where 25 PI staff participated. | Trainings and study visits: 11 abroad with participation of 14 staff Trainings in the country: 11, with participation of 21 staff. | Trainings and study visits: 10 abroad with participation of 21 staff Trainings in the country: 27, with participation of 25 staff. | Trainings and study visits: 10 abroad with participation of 21 staff Trainings in the country: 27, with participation of 25 staff. | Training and study visits: 15 abroad where participated 33 employees Training in the country: 26 trainings in the country, where participated 157 employees | |
| 1.6 | Networking with scientific institutions from the country and abroad from the field of social and natural sciences | Number of established contacts and exchanged information with academic institutions | - National and university library in Skopje, -Vienna international institute of economics -Institute for socio-political research -Faculty of economy | - National and university library in Skopje, -Vienna international institute of economics | Links with 4 more institutions | Links with 5 more institutions | Connected with 2 new institutions 1. Swiss contact (cooperation in research on the specific subject) 2. State Statistical Office (Exchange of databases) | |

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| 1.7 | Cooperation with non-governmental organizations from the country and abroad for the needs of the research and analysis of the Parliamentary Institute | Participation at seminars, conferences, trainings, round tables. | Realized round table with NGOs from the country | Realized round table with NGOs from the country on March 27 on which 28 participants from 23 CSOs participated | Realized 2 round tables with NGOs from the country | Realized 2 round tables with NGOs from the country | Not implemented | In the currently polarized context and considering the approval procedures (Secretary General) such events seem to be difficult to organize. |
| 1.8 | Facilitate and encourage further academic training of employees for acquiring higher academic and professional titles | Number and type of acquired degrees of the PI staff | 1 employee passed the bar exam | Envisaged in 2016 to be covered by the donor | Adoption of the program for professional development Scholarships for at least 8 staff for master and PhD degrees Language certificates for 21 staff | Scholarships for additional 8 staff for master and PhD degrees | A framework for professional development is not adopted. Conducted procurement for obtaining certificates of proficiency in foreign languages. Testing in 2017. | Scholarships were not realized might however also not be the most adequate tool as staff retention policy |
| 1.9 | Providing timely, objective and impartial services of the Parliamentary Institute | Number of services within the deadline; number of formal | 90% of services delivered within the requested deadline | 90% of services delivered within the requested deadline | 90 % of the services to be within the deadline | 90% of the services were conducted within the deadline | 100% within the agreed time | |

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| | | comments about services; measuring the level of satisfaction from services | | | | | | |
| 1.10 | Preparation of quarterly newsletter of the Parliamentary Institute | Number of issued newsletters | Prepared 1 newsletter | Prepared and distributed 3 electronic newsletters | Preparation of 4 newsletters and electronic distribution to the beneficiaries | Preparation of 4 newsletters and electronic distribution to the beneficiaries | Developed and distributed 4 bulletins | Task was fulfilled but not all interviewed MPs have been aware of the newsletters. Might need different form of distribution. |
| 1.11 | Preparation of research publications and analyzes | Number of publications on annual level | Prepared 1 publication | 0 | Preparation of 1 publication | Preparation of 2 publications | Developed 1 publication | |
| 1.12 | Completion of the internship program for 4 interns in Parliamentary Institute | Adopted and realized Internship program at the PI | Adopted Internship program | Not implemented | Implemented program for 4 interns | Implemented program for 6 interns | Conducted announcement and established selection. Because the Ministry of finance did not provide the necessary consent they did | Intern hiring process was not concluded. In the interviews the hiring process was criticized. |

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| | | | | | | | not started the interns program. | |
| 1.13 | Improving the organizational structure of the Parliamentary Institute | Established systems and procedures for the work of PI | Established systems of cooperation and coordination in PI with the Service of the Assembly of RM | No changes | Preparation of analysis for improvement of the organizational setup | Changes of 1 rulebook/law in accordance with the findings of the analysis | The analyse is not prepared | This could become part of a functional analysis as proposed for the new project. It would however be good if the developed its own vision and proposals. |
| 2 | Adding value to the legislative process in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia | Increased productivity and efficiency of the beneficiaries of services in their work | Not applicable | 36.5% used the services to use in the legislative process | 70% of the beneficiaries to use the services in the legislative process | 70% of the beneficiaries to use the services in the legislative process | We are not able to measure the actual use of services. | Contract with IDSCS could/should be used to provide the needed data. |
| 2.1 | Conducting quality, objective, professional, impartial, professional and timely research and analysis, proactive and on-demand | Number of prepared research and analyses on request by MPs; | 77 prepared analyses 1 formal comment | 104 prepared analyses 6 proactive papers 3 joint studies | 90% response on the requests for analyses Minimal number of formal | 90% response on the requests for analyses Minimal number of formal comments about the analyses | 56 prepared 14 proactive 2 joint studies 100% of the | According to our interviews MPs were not well informed about the pro-active research. |

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| | service | Percentage of comments; | | | comments about the analyses 90% of the requests to be delivered with the requested deadline | 90% of the requests to be delivered with the requested deadline | requests were answered within the required deadline There was no formal comments on the texts. | |
| 2.2 | Creating a custom software for research, archive and library and its connection with the e-Parliament system | Designed software for researches, archive and library and links with e-parliament | Designed software for request management, e-library and e- archive -put in function and enabled access for the staff | The software solutions are implemented and regularly used | / | 3 functional software solutions Direct link with users through 123 tablets | Softwares are operational and regularly filled | PI still has no full access to the e-parliament. We got contradictory statements of the compatibility of software. |
| 2.3 | Measuring the degree of satisfaction of the users of the Parliamentary Institute | Established system for measuring the level of satisfaction | Not realized | Users satisfaction software purchased and installed | 1 questionnaire sent to measure the satisfaction from services | 1 questionnaire sent to measure the satisfaction from services | Prepared and sent a questionnaire. Because of the problems with e-Parliament system, the measurement | The Brima Gallup survey seems to have been an adequate way to measure. |

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| | | | | | | | was unable. Because of that is conducted the Brima Gallup report. | |
| 2.4 | Developing training standards | Developed standards for training | Not applicable | The expert has been transferred to the donor by a proposal of the audit | Preparation and adoption of training standards | Implementation of training standards in the Annual Training Program | Prepared training standards | |
| 2.5 | Analysis of training needs for MPs, parliamentary staff, external associates for parliamentary groups and constituency office assistants | Prepared training needs analysis | Prepared training needs analysis | A training needs assessment questionnaire was prepared The questionnaire data was analyzed | A training needs assessment questionnaire to be conducted The questionnaire data to be analyzed | A training needs assessment questionnaire to be conducted The questionnaire data to be analyzed | Prepared an analyse about the training needs Prepared an analyse from the trainings questionnaires | |
| 2.6 | Preparation and adoption of a yearly training plan for the needs of MPs, parliamentary staff, external associates for parliamentary groups and constituency office assistants | Prepared and adopted Annual training plan | Adopted annual plan for trainings by the PI | Adopted annual training plan in February 2015 57% realization of the training | Adopted annual training plan 80% realization of the training plan | Adopted annual training plan 80% realization of the training plan | Prepared is an annual training plan and adopted by the Stearing Council. Conducted the planned trainings from | |

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| | | | | plan (8 trainings) | | | the annual plan. | |
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| 2.7 | Continued implementation of the annual training plan for MPs, parliamentary staff, external associates for parliamentary groups and constituency office assistants | Realized trainings, records about participants at trainings, analysis of evaluation questionnaires about the success of the trainings | 7 implemented trainings for the Service 1 introductory session for MPs | 5 trainings conducted for the Assembly service 2 trainings conducted for the constituency office assistants 2 trainings for students | 80 % of the activities from the training plan to be realized | 80 % of the activities from the training plan to be realized | Realized 80% of the activities from the Plan. | |
| 2.8 | Preparation and printing of Orientation Handbook for newly elected MPs | Prepared and printed new Manual for newly elected MPs | Not realized | Not realized | Preparation and printing of 123 copies of the publication for the newly elected MPs | This activity is condition with new parliamentary mandate | Prepared Manual, printed in 300 copies in Macedonian language and 150 copies in Albanian language, distributed in the constitutive session in December 2016. | |

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| 2.9 | Conducting an orientation (introduction) for newly elected MPs (only for MPs that have been elected for the first time to perform the legislators function-planned according to the time of holding regular elections) | Implemented orientation session, analysis of the evaluation questionnaire for the success of the orientation session | organized introductory session participation of 45 MPs | organized 1 orientation session participation of at least 50% of the newly elected MPs that became MPs for the first time | participation of at least 50% of the newly elected MPs that became MPs for the first time | This activity is condition with new parliamentary mandate | It is not conducted due to the holding of the elections until December 2016. | Disputes connected to the conduction of the induction training negatively impacted on the PI. |
| 2.10 | Equipping and putting into operation of the research library reading room | Reading room at the research library put in function; | Reading room- Equipped and put in function | The research library reading room is in function and is being used Book shelves to equip this room purchased | Putting into function another room for the needs of the research library | 3 rooms to be functional (reading room, archive room and library room) | It was not given another room. But based to the inter sectoral action plan was given space in the building for the entire stock of books of the Assembly. | For the future, the use of the library rooms and e-access might be the more adequate indicators. |
| 2.11 | Maintaining the legislative archive | Equipped depo, adopted rulebook, functional legislative archive | Adopted rulebook for the work of the archive, equipped archive depo | 236 agenda items out of 20 sessions have been indexed | Entered, registered and indexed 50% of the documents from the last mandate of the MPs in the e-archive | Entered, registered and indexed 50% of the documents from the last mandate of the MPs in the e-archive | In 2016 are indexed 4 sessions with 127 items in the e-archive system. We did not achieve the target of 50% of all items of the mandate 2014- | The only partial achievement of the planned activities merits posing a question-mark in how far it will be sustainable that the PI maintains an archive. Only |

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| | | | | | | | 2016. | selected archiving and better access to existing documents on e-parliament and archives might be a better option. |
| 2.12 | Purchase of books, subscriptions for electronic magazines and databases | Established modern and easily accessible library, completed library fund, subscription for databases and publications | <p>Procured 3600 books</p> <p>Registered and indexed 1700</p> <p>Subscriptions for 9 daily newspapers, 9 weekly and 8 periodic magazines and newspapers</p> <p>Subscriptions for 4 databases</p> | <p>Procured 400 books</p> <p>Registered and indexed 3243 books</p> <p>Subscriptions for 9 daily newspapers, 9 weekly and 9 periodic magazines and newspapers</p> <p>Subscriptions for 4 databases</p> | <p>Procurement of 400 books</p> <p>Indexed 90% of procured books so far</p> <p>Subscriptions for 9 daily newspapers, 9 weekly and 8 periodic magazines and newspapers</p> <p>Subscriptions for 4 databases</p> | <p>Procurement of 400 books</p> <p>Indexed 90% of procured books so far</p> <p>Subscriptions for 9 daily newspapers, 9 weekly and 8 periodic magazines and newspapers</p> <p>Subscriptions for 4 databases</p> | <p>purchased 400 books</p> <p>Indexed 100% of the purchased books</p> <p>Subscribed 9 daily newspapers, nine weeklies and 8 periodicals</p> <p>4 subscribed databases (official gazette, Academica, Stratford and EBSCO)</p> | <p>According to information we received, it was not possible to continue EBSCO because of financial constraints. To us it seems unlikely that the PI will be able to maintain a state of the art library of funds for it have to come from parliament</p> |

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| 2.13 | Obtaining information and reference services for the users of the Parliamentary Institute | Provided informative and referential services for the users of the research library | Prepared 5 thematic analyses Provided services to 15% of all beneficiaries | Prepared 6 thematic analyses These have been sent to 123 MPs via e-mail | Preparation of 12 thematic analyses Provision services to 20 % of all service beneficiaries | Preparation of 12 thematic analyses Provision services to 20 % of all service beneficiaries | Prepared 12 thematic analysis 12 thematic analyzes promoted in the RMS system There was no request for reference services from the MP's | We did not assess why MPs did not use the service. |
| 3 | Increasing public awareness on the role of the legislature | | | | | | | |
| 3.1 | Establishing and maintaining cooperation with civil society organization , academic and scientific institutions | Organization of events for networking and establishing contacts | 2 events held | 2 events held - Exhibition on the World Book Day and Copyright (April 2015) - Roundtable with CSOs (March 2015) events | 3 held events | 3 held events | 1 event held World Book and Copyright day. No events were held with NGOs. | See comment of work with NGOs/CSOs above. As part of a new project work will be needed to create a more conducive environment. |
| 3.2 | Creating a menu – link of the Parliamentary | Created link | Created Face book page of | - regular information | -information about events | PI subdomain maintenance on | Created the banner with | A link was create but the PI is not included |

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| | <p>Institute on the parliamentary website</p> | | <p>PI</p> | <p>about events and activities of PI on the Facebook page of PI and the Assembly website</p> | <p>and activities of PI on the Facebook page of PI; - Creation of icon of PI on the website of the Assembly.</p> | <p>the Assembly website</p> | <p>under domain of PI http://www.sobranie.mk/parlamentaren-institut-baner.nspix</p> | <p>in the menu.</p> |
| <p>3.3</p> | <p>Adoption and implementation of the annual education plan and specific communication with the public (educational activities for students, teachers and students of History of Parliamentarism, the role of the legislature and the like; organizing regular visits for the citizens, preparing publications and other marketing materials)</p> | <p>Adopted plan for education and specific communication with the public</p> | <p>Adopted Annual plan</p> | <p>2890 citizens have visited the Assembly on the Open Assembly Days</p> | <p>4000 citizens visit the Assembly on the Open Assembly Days</p> | <p>5000 citizens visit the Assembly on the Open Assembly Days</p> | <p>Drafted but not adopted by the Steering Council At the Open Days in 2016 a total of 4331 people visited the Parliament</p> | <p>Parliament leadership seems to have limited interest in these activities. In a new project, a more conducive environment will have to be promoted.</p> |

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| <p>3.4</p> | <p>Development of curricula for educating the public on the History of Parliamentarism, the role of the legislature in the political system and other educational topics</p> | <p>Preparation of curricula for education</p> | <p>Prepared curricula</p> | <p>Four session organized for high school and primary school student: 131 students participated.</p> | <p>Realization of curricula Organization of 4 sessions for primary schools Organization of 4 sessions for secondary schools Organization of 1 session for students Organization of 2 sessions for MPs Organization of 2 sessions for the Service and assistants at constituency offices</p> | <p>Realization of curricula Organization of 4 sessions for primary schools Organization of 4 sessions for secondary schools Organization of 1 session for students Organization of 2 sessions for MPs Organization of 2 sessions for the Service and assistants at constituency offices</p> | <p>Developed all predicted curricula Realized 4 sessions for primary schools Realized 4 sessions for secondary schools Completed 2 sessions for MPs There were 6 workshops for the office assistants and assistants for communication with the citizens Unrealized for students.</p> | <p>This is an enormous task for a PI. Can this be sustainable?</p> |
| <p>3.5</p> | <p>Preparation and putting in function the Information Center of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia (contact point for the citizens/public)</p> | <p>Functional and accessible center for the Assembly of the Republic of</p> | <p>Not realized</p> | <p>Planned</p> | <p>Planned</p> | <p>Planned</p> | <p>Unrealized in 2016. See activity 2.4 from the Activity Plan for 2017.</p> | <p>We recommend not to start an information center within this project phase and to carefully assess whether such a center should really be operated by the PI</p> |

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| | | Macedonia | | | | | | in the framework of a next project. |
| 3.6 | Promotion of the library material in a written and electronic form | Promoted library material in hard copy and electronically, on monthly level (brochures, flyers, with new titles) exhibition of publications and research papers | Prepared 1 flyer for newspapers and magazines Published titles of the electronic system once a month | Prepared flyer in 200 copies 6 promotions of the library material by e-mail Event to mark the World Day of the book | Prepared flyer for the library and legislative archive and distributed to the beneficiaries in 200 copies; 12 promotions of the library material by e-mail Event to mark the World Day of the book | Prepared flyer for the library and legislative archive and distributed to the beneficiaries in 200 copies; 12 promotions of the library material by e-mail Event to mark the World Day of the book | Flyer was printed in 400 copies. 6 sent emails with notifications of literature available to users Celebrating World Book Day on 22.04.2016 year | |