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Representatives of institutions and civil society organizations from North Macedonia, Kosovo and Albania spoke about the placement and structure of the bodies for the prevention of violent extremism (SNE) and rehabilitation, resocialization and reintegration (RRR) that operate at the local level in the three countries, as well as the challenges, good practices and achieved results, during the Regional Forum organized by the Macedonian Center for International Cooperation (MCIC) on February 28 and March 1 in h. Holiday Inn in Skopje.



"Unlike institutions that are limited in acting by the administrative borders of their states, those who work to radicalize people do not know those borders. That's why regional cooperation is very important, and that's why it's important to coordinate with each other in this way," said Zlatko Apostoloski, the National Coordinator for the Prevention of Violent Extremism and Combating Terrorism (NCPVECT), in his welcoming address.

About the placement and structure of the PVE and RRR bodies at the local level, the speakers were Jaklina Prosaroska from the Bureau of Public Security at the Ministry of the Interior, Mensur Hoti, director of the Department of Public Security at the Ministry of the Interior in Kosovo, and Vilma Venkovska Milcev from The [Center for Common Ground](#) from Skopje. In addition to them, Mehmet Balaži, [mayor of Elez Han](#) from Kosovo and Lorena Cela from the municipality of Tirana also spoke about the role of municipalities.



From the introductory speeches and the discussion that followed, it was evident that in each of the countries there is a movement of activities from the central to the local level. The models are different, the structure of the bodies is not so different, that is, the profiles of those who work in those structures are very similar as well as the principles on which their work is based. The structures that work at the local level, as well as the municipalities themselves, need further strengthening of human, organizational and financial capacities, so that they can undertake activities related to rehabilitation, resocialization and reintegration of persons at risk. It is necessary to clarify the roles of the bodies working at the local level in Macedonia and to define the way of financing these activities. The results of the presented referral mechanism that is currently being tested in Kosovo can be useful for Macedonia and Albania in building comprehensive procedures that will address not only returnees and their families, but also persons at risk.



About the role of civil society organizations (CSOs) in RRR at the local level and their support to institutions, especially in the preparation and provision of guides, manuals and other materials for the daily field work of practitioners, spoke Armela Jaho, from the [Institute for Democracy](#)

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Tirana, Afrodita Musliu from Nexus - civic concept from Skopje, Fortesa Frangu from the [Resource Center for Advocacy and Training from Pristina](#) and Cindy Shahu from the Counseling Line for Women and Girls from Tirana. It was established that civil society organizations contribute to filling certain gaps, through manuals and trainings. What is a challenge in that cooperation are the changes that occur, mostly due to political reasons such as changes of authorities at the local or central level, etc. There is good communication between civil society organizations and institutions in the three countries. The institutions recognize the need for a broad social response to the issues of violent extremism as well as to the issues of rehabilitation, resocialization and reintegration and recognize civil society organizations as partners in that process.



Irena Mitrevska, psychologist, from the Center for Social Work - Skopje, Destemona Chelo - psychologist from Albania and Anila Bregu, from the State Agency for the Protection of Children's Rights - Albania spoke about the challenges of the practitioners. Both speakers and discussants agreed on the importance of direct work and individual approach practiced in all

countries. Lively discussion among practitioners, interest in the specifics of the approach in each of the countries imposes the need for further and more detailed communication on these issues. It was also emphasized that the expectations of the returnees are greater than the institutions. Their fair management can influence the further motivation to participate in the activities that are on a voluntary basis. Everyone agreed that education is a key factor in the process of rehabilitation, resocialization and reintegration, not only for children but also for adults.

Although during the Forum, the processes of reintegration, resocialization and rehabilitation were largely discussed, the participants addressed and pledged to pay attention to prevention activities. In that sense, it was pointed out that civil society organizations and institutions should work faster and in order to make the adjustments required by the use of new technologies by those who radicalize.



The national and local context in the three countries is similar, however, each country has its own particularities from which functioning can be learned and the effects improved. The regional forum made it possible for the participants to learn from the experiences of others. That is why the participants appealed to hold such meetings continuously.

The regional forum is part of the program "Path to resilience and reintegration of vulnerable families in the community" supported by GCERF, implemented by MCMS in partnership with Nexus - a civic concept, the Initiative for a European Perspective (IEP), the Association for Active and Healthy Development of women and children "Pleiades" and the Association for civic activism and encouragement of social responsibility "Horizon Civitas".