

CIVIL LENSES: MORE THAN A PROJECT

CITIZENS TAKE PART, OBSERVE, INFORM



CIVIL

NE National Endowment
for Democracy
Supporting the people of more than 80 countries



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Publishing of the project:

CIVIC LENSES - PROJECT FOR PROMOTION OF TRANSPARENCY AND RESPONSIBILITY IN
POLITICAL PROCESSES

CIVIL, 2018

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Citizen journalism for change. Victor Toshevski and his mother at the citizen journalism awards ceremony, April, 2018.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

THIS IS YOUR PROJECT!

BEFORE YOU IS ANOTHER PUBLICATION of the Civic Lenses project, dedicated to the promotion of transparency and responsibility in the political processes. CIVIL, with the support of National Endowment for Democracy, launched this project in October 2015. Soon, this project grew into something much more than a project. It became a part of the way the organization operates, and certainly it became an important component in the processes of creating the organization's methodologies and approaches overall.

The Civic Lenses project simply exceeded all the expectations of CIVIL's team. We started with the promotion of citizen journalism as an innovative and creative, and at the same time, simple way for participating in changes in society and in the role and functioning of the media.

WE DEVELOPED A BROAD AND NUMEROUS NETWORK OF ACTIVISTS WHO BECAME FAMILIAR WITH CITIZEN JOURNALISM – ACTIVISM AND MEDIA PRODUCTION FREE FROM CONSTRAINTS, FEAR AND CENSORSHIP.

We developed a broad and numerous network of activists who became familiar with citizen journalism – activism and media production free from constraints, fear and censorship. Through citizen activism and the technological benefits, we highlighted the opportunity for citizens to always be first on the “frontline” with accurate, objective and timely information.

Citizen journalists are aware and active citizens who want to bring about changes in their communities at the local and national level. The project brought citizen journalism closer to those who want to participate in the democratic transformation of society.

Civic Lenses grew from the very beginning into a space where, through photos, videos, texts and screenshots, contributions were published that represent the true image of our society, in a way that the mainstream media cannot or do not want to capture.

The skills and knowledge to have that effect in the public and media discourse were part of precisely the educational material lectured at the numerous seminars. CIVIL's team itself also learned quite a lot during the implementation of the project and the activities of the organization. In some way, this project became one of the most successful projects of the organization during its 20

CIVIC LENSES GREW FROM THE VERY BEGINNING INTO A SPACE WHERE, THROUGH PHOTOS, VIDEOS, TEXTS AND SCREENSHOTS, CONTRIBUTIONS WERE PUBLISHED THAT REPRESENT THE TRUE IMAGE OF OUR SOCIETY, IN A WAY THAT THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA CANNOT OR DO NOT WANT TO CAPTURE.

years of existence.

In this publication, we are publishing a selection of texts prepared by the project implementation team that refer to different project components and achievements. As we said at the beginning, and you will see this also as a title of this publication, this is much more than a project, as at the very beginning of its implementation, this became a space where one can say that the project belongs to all interested citizens who are ready to participate in democratic changes in our country. All that is needed to participate in this project is goodwill and readiness to defend human rights and freedoms. This is not a project of CIVIL, this is YOUR PROJECT.

CIVIC LENSES – MUCH MORE THAN A PROJECT

CIVIC LENSES is a project that promotes transparent and responsible political processes, through the strengthening of citizen journalism, activism and promotion of human rights and freedoms. At the same time, monitoring of election processes is conducted through this project in a very specific and comprehensive manner, as well as of political events and processes, policies and practices at the local and national level.

At the same time, one of project goals is to create a safe, interactive and influential space for citizens who will identify problems in their communities, such as violation of human rights and freedoms on any grounds, abuse and corruption, to report about these cases without fear and without censorship.

HOW IS CITIZEN JOURNALISM POPULARIZED?

CITIZENS WERE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO MORE EASILY IDENTIFY, OBSERVE AND INFORM ON ALL SOCIAL-POLITICAL SITUATIONS OF THEIR INTEREST AT THE LOCAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL.

Popularization of citizen journalism was performed through strengthening public awareness, civic education, activism, application of new technologies, media literacy, through interactive theoretical preparation and through practical, field work, where acquired knowledge was used. Citizens were given the opportunity to more easily identify, observe and inform on all social-political situations of their interest at the local and national level.

Gradually, the project, within which framework citizen journalism was developing, and in conditions of media darkness and a deep political crisis in which the country was at the time the project was starting, but also with limited media freedom in the period that followed, developed into a strong and influential tool in the hands of the citizens who advocated democratization of society and the state. The project simply penetrated where traditional media did not have the possibility or did not want to due to their relations with the centers of power.

WHAT COMES AFTER THE CHANGE OF THE SOCIAL-POLITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES?

With the change of the political and social climate, following the change of government in 2017, citizen journalists remained active. They boldly made a



Moments from seminars in Veles, 2018

WITH THE CHANGE OF THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CLIMATE, FOLLOWING THE CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN 2017, CITIZEN JOURNALISTS REMAINED ACTIVE.

step towards the first “battle lines” and directly participated in the transformation of the media space in the country.

Although social – political circumstances changed at the level of the government, the institutions started freeing themselves from party restraints, while the captured state began reforming itself, and all this took place slowly and with many problems. Hence, the need for strong and active civil society remained, which needs all possible tools to influence the democratic processes.

Primarily, it was necessary to maintain the strong pace of public pressure in order to ensure transparency and responsibility in the political processes in the country. This, at the same time, is also the greatest challenge for society, even while this text is being prepared.

WHAT DID WE LEARN AND HOW DID WE APPLY THIS KNOWLEDGE?

In these past four years, through the Civic Lenses project, CIVIL's team, primarily, provided all participants in seminars and workshops a space and a safe atmosphere in which they will feel encouraged, free, creative, innovative and important stakeholders in society. Most often, these seminars were announced as events for bold and courageous, which description over the years really was justified.

THEY ARE ALL EQUAL CITIZENS OF THIS COUNTRY AND HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE INFORMED OBJECTIVELY AND QUALITATIVELY.

At the beginning of every meeting and event, CIVIL's team points out the fact that everyone can be a citizen journalist, regardless of their social status, age, gender and sexual orientation, ethnic or other affiliation. They are all equal citizens of this country and have the right to be informed objectively and qualitatively.

Everyone also has the right to participate in the very process of informing, using the latest communication-technological benefits, as well as the right to citizen participation in social and political processes. And most often, all that is needed is a cell phone and willingness to oppose abuses, violation of human rights, misinformation and fake news.

HOW DID TECHNOLOGY AND THE INTERNET HELP US?

Having in consideration that the technological revolution and the Internet helped in the speed of transfer of information around the world, video and photography became more than an illustrative part of informing. They became direct and objective evidence. But while traditional media, or what is called professional journalism, go through many procedures and processing of video and photo materials, with heavy cameras and apparatus, editing and checks, within which framework there is room for manipulations and pressure, citizen

HAVING IN CONSIDERATION THAT THE TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION AND THE INTERNET HELPED IN THE SPEED OF TRANSFER OF INFORMATION AROUND THE WORLD, VIDEO AND PHOTOGRAPHY BECAME MORE THAN AN ILLUSTRATIVE PART OF INFORMING.

journalists just need to own a smart phone, record or take a picture of what they want to inform about, and to forward it to any social platform or by email to CIVIL.

WHAT HAPPENS AT CIVIL'S SEMINARS?

According to the program, every seminar or workshop that CIVIL implements within the Civic Lenses project, includes getting introduced, above all, with the theoretic foundations of human rights and with a series of practical aspects of journalistic writing and monitoring. These are tools that can help activists and citizen journalists recognize, and then also report cases of various categories of violation of human rights. Seminar participants also have the opportunity acquire practical knowledge on the use of technology and its application in video and photo activism. Their work is then a valuable resource in the monitoring of election processes and the situation of human rights and freedoms. Participants are also familiarized with the criteria for verification of provided information and on the manner of passing it on to the general public and the institutions, that is, to the competent bodies with whose intervention a certain problem or situation in society would be solved.

Every seminar also includes a practical part, where participants, usually on

EVERY SEMINAR OR WORKSHOP THAT CIVIL IMPLEMENTS WITHIN THE CIVIC LENSES PROJECT, INCLUDES GETTING INTRODUCED, ABOVE ALL, WITH THE THEORETIC FOUNDATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND WITH A SERIES OF PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF JOURNALISTIC WRITING AND MONITORING.

Sunday afternoon, go on the ground and try to immediately apply the theoretic knowledge they acquired. Their several hours of work on the ground is followed by an evaluation of video, audio and photo materials they bring from the ground.

Usually, the participants themselves give proposals on the topics they will work on, as follows: abuse of public resources, good governance, social justice, election irregularities, non-transparent work of the local self-government, ecology, health care, public administration and many other topics that are constantly pressing in the country. They choose different ways of processing the topics, but it seems that their favourite format during the practical exercises at the seminars is survey with citizens.

That additionally increased the visibility of the project, as through the surveys, the project reached an even greater number of people, while the information gathered during the survey was the basis for further processing of the topics and preparation of stories in cooperation with CIVIL's professional team.

A great part of the practical advices that citizen journalists received were on the five basic journalistic questions: who, what, where, when, why, the order of which can change depending on the news that is being told and the assess-



Info-stand/Seeking answer, Shkup, February 2019



Public presentation, Skopje, March 2019

PARTICIPANTS CHOOSE DIFFERENT WAYS OF PROCESSING THE TOPICS, BUT IT SEEMS THAT THEIR FAVOURITE FORMAT DURING THE PRACTICAL EXERCISES AT THE SEMINARS IS SURVEY WITH CITIZENS.

ment of the journalist who is reporting.

WHAT HAPPENS ON THE GROUND?

On the ground, citizen journalists grouped into several groups that jointly processed two to three topics through various forms of reporting. CIVIL's team was always at their disposal, who they could consult, request additional information or assistance from depending on the story they were working on.

Some of the contributions of participants at CIVIL's seminars were entirely suitable. With or often also without additional processing of the material, they also qualified to be part of the awarding cycles for citizen journalism that CIVIL organized over the past years.

WHO PARTICIPATES IN THE WORKSHOPS ON CITIZEN JOURNALISM?

The workshops were attended by all those who at the moment had been prevented from participating at the seminars. The participants, in a shortened form, acquired theoretic and practical knowledge. Certainly, with the help of CIVIL's team, they also went through part of the training on the ground that was followed by an evaluation of their contributions.

IN A TURBULENT SOCIAL POLITICAL PERIOD, AND WITH A DEEP POLITICAL, CONSTITUTIONAL AND EVEN SECURITY CRISIS THAT OUR COUNTRY FACED FROM 2015 AND ONWARDS, WITH A TOTAL COLLAPSE OF THE MEDIA AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, CIVIL WITH THE CIVIC LENSES PROJECT INCLUDED THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE.

WHAT ARE THE NUMBERS?

In a turbulent social political period, and with a deep political, constitutional and even security crisis that our country faced from 2015 and onwards, with a total collapse of the media and freedom of expression, CIVIL with the Civic Lenses project included thousands of people. From participants in seminars and workshops, to participation in public events, info stands, promotions, awarding prizes for the most successful among them, human rights festival...

In this period of almost four years, CIVIL held 28 regional seminars throughout the country. Apart from Skopje, seminars were held in Veles, Strumica, Skopje, Stip, Kumanovo, Prilep, Struga, Bitola, with participants from almost every city and the surrounding municipalities of these regional centers with about 750 participants.

CIVIL also held a total of 20 workshops in which about 180 participants took part from Veles, Bitola, Gostivar, Tetovo, Stip, Kavadarci, Skopje, Kumanovo, Strumica and other smaller municipalities or settlements gravitating towards the regional centers, such as Makedonska Kamenica, Negotino, Jegunovce, Lipkovo, Valandovo, Bogdanci, Brvenica, Caska, Lozovo, Valandovo...

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WHO LECTURED AND PRESENTED AT CIVIL'S SEMINARS?

In addition to the lectures and the workshops carried out by CIVIL's team (Xhabir Deralla, Sinisa Stankovic, Maja Ivanovska, Biljana Jordanovska, Dehran Muratov, Ermin Klimenta, Monika Taleska, Maria Tegovska and several others), previous participants in seminars and workshops, as well as winners of awards for most successful citizen journalists also appeared as lecturers. Hence, the following presenters were from among workshop participants: Simona Maneva Zivkova, Dejan Ristov, Sotir Gabeloski, Vulnet Mahmuti, Goran Trajkov, Damjan Temkov and others.

Eminent professional reporters, journalists, artists, professors, media experts, human rights experts and producers and even a priest conveyed their experience and knowledge to the participants in the areas that the Civic Lenses project covered. These include: Saso Ordanoski (University Professor, journalist and political analyst), Uranija Pirovska (Helsinki Committee for Human Rights), Robert Atanasovski (reported, AFP), Zlatko Origjanski (musician and activist), Tomislav Kezarovski (journalist, political prisoner), Gjorgji Kalajdziev (journalist), Petrit Saracini (multimedia artist, media expert), Pater Arsovski (actor and activist), Gjorgji Licoski (reporter, EPA), Sinolicka Trpkova (actress

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and activist), Boris Grdanovski (reporter, AP), Tomislav Georgiev (reporter, FOKUS, UNICEF, UNESCO), Martin Kocovski (director and activist), Ognen Teofilovski (reporter, Reuters), Suzana Miceva (journalist), Damjan Temkov (musician and activist), Dusko Gruevski (priest and activist), Vlado Krstevski (editor), Atanas Petrovski (cameraman) and others.

HOW DID THE PROJECT HELP CIVIL'S MONITORING?

Participants of seminars intended for monitoring of the election processes learned about citizen journalism in the context of CIVIL's monitoring, with a focus on the questions where and what is being observed and how reporting on election irregularities is performed.

During this time period of four years, CIVIL, the lecturers at the seminars and workshops, and later also the already experienced citizen journalists, provided participants space in which they were trained, but also encouraged to speak and publish about the most important topics. Very often they were the first to react objectively, timely and with facts as opposed to disinformation, false news and manipulations.

It must be outlined that the citizen journalists, from the first contact, through seminars and workshops, succeeded to open and deal with topics that even



Seminar in Shtip, March 2019



The 5 basic journalist questions...

PARTICIPANTS OF SEMINARS INTENDED FOR MONITORING OF THE ELECTION PROCESSES LEARNED ABOUT CITIZEN JOURNALISM IN THE CONTEXT OF CIVIL'S MONITORING, WITH A FOCUS ON THE QUESTIONS WHERE AND WHAT IS BEING OBSERVED AND HOW REPORTING ON ELECTION IRREGULARITIES IS PERFORMED.

traditional media, regardless of whether national or local, had no interest or were cautious not to include in their programs.

Within the framework of the projects for monitoring the early parliamentary elections in 2016, CIVIL trained 308 observers. In 2017, CIVIL trained 207 observers for the local elections, and a total of 272 observers for the Referendum in 2018.

All of CIVIL's observers, regardless of whether engaged through the Civic Lenses project or not, were introduced, without exception, to all aspects of the project, the methodologies and thematic focus of the project, directed towards the electoral context.

In the periods of the implementation of election processes, CIVIL regularly invites all participants and others who are interested in citizen journalism, to take part in the monitoring of the situation and events related to the election processes in the widest sense of the word.

The project makes available both the techniques and methodologies that are part of citizen journalism and citizen activism, which can also serve in the electoral context and in the defence of the right to vote, as well as for reporting election irregularities related to the Voters Register, election admin-

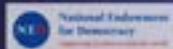
CITIZEN JOURNALISTS, FROM THE FIRST CONTACT, THROUGH SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS, SUCCEEDED TO OPEN AND DEAL WITH TOPICS THAT EVEN TRADITIONAL MEDIA, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER NATIONAL OR LOCAL, HAD NO INTEREST OR WERE CAUTIOUS NOT TO INCLUDE IN THEIR PROGRAMS.

istration, violation of election silence, vote-buying, as well as for any type of abuse, threats, blackmail and pressures.

And... There still remains a long way to go. However, everything is much easier when CIVIL and the citizens work together.



Seminar for citizen journalism and monitoring of the Referendum, September 2018



CIVIL FEST

INSPIRED AND POWERED BY CITIZEN JOURNALISM AND ACTIVISM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

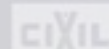
FREEDOM-JUSTICE-EQUALITY

video ★ workshops ★ awards ★ exhibitions ★ performances ★ **bands & DJs**

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY ★ 70 YEARS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ★ 19 YEARS CIVIL

МКЦ, SKOPJE, DEC. 10-11, 2018
experience the power of activism

CIVIL MEDIA



FREEDOM FESTIVAL

#CIVILfest 2018

Festival for human rights, activism and citizen journalist

МКЦ, 10-11 ДЕКЕМВРИ 2018
искуси ја моќта на активизмот

CIVIL MEDIA

During the second half of 2018, CIVIL worked intensively on organizing the multimedia event CIVIL Fest (#CIVILfest) that celebrated International Human Rights Day, December 10, the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and CIVIL's 19th anniversary, November 25.

The two-day event was held on December 10 and 11, in the Youth Cultural Center (MKC). Performances, exhibitions, awarding of prizes for citizen journalism, a workshop, video projections, presentations, dances, a kids corner, DJ sets, concerts, entertainment and many guests, supporters, members and interested citizens were part of CIVIL Fest, which had an excellent creative atmosphere. During the festival, the entire team of CIVIL and CIVIL Media's editorial office were relocated to MKC, from where they carried out their regular work obligations.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

CIVIL Fest started with the celebration of International Human Rights Day. The Head of the EU Delegation, Ambassador Samuel Zbogar, Urania Pirovska, Executive Director of the Helsinki Committee, Blagica Dimitrovska from the Association for Promotion and Development of Inclusive Society "Inkluziva", Koco Andonovski from the LGBTI Support Center, Petrit Saracini, journalist and human rights activist all gave their contribution to the topic of human rights in our country, while Dehran Muratov and Xhabir Deralla spoke on behalf of CIVIL.

At the opening of the festival, Ambassador Samuel Zbogar said that although a change in the political climate in the country can be felt, still there is much more work in the area of human rights and freedoms, freedom of expression, the media, the rights of the LGBTI community and many other areas. He congratulated CIVIL on, as he said, "the tireless efforts and work on promotion and protection of human rights and freedoms".

Uranija Pirovska stated that the fight for human rights will never stop, and it's the responsibility of all of us to continue that fight for a better tomorrow, for equality and freedom, aware and active in the demands for everyone to be equal in their dignity and equal before the law.

Blagica Dimitrovska as a leader of an organization that advocates for rights of persons with disabilities, appealed to the institutions to mandatorily include disabled persons when adopting laws or undertaking activities for disabled persons, adding that we must always have in mind that people with disabilities are people with the same rights as all others.

Multimedia artist, also notable as an activist, journalist and media expert, Petrit Saracini, highlighted that the culture of impunity is a big problem and that previously we had a culture where the state itself promoted and carried out discrimination and did not punish discriminatory practices of institutions.

He added that, despite the changes, the state, nevertheless, as accountable before its citizens, should create a real and functional mechanism that will protect the human rights of every citizen,



OPENING OF FESTIVAL
December 10, 2018

Xhabir Deralla, CIVIL: I am using my right to express myself freely and to urge: Take a stand today! Yell out: I am a human being! And I will never allow you to trample on my dignity or shorten or take away my life with your actions!"



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"WHEN WE NEED TO SPEAK ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS, THE FIRST THING I THINK OF IS THE RIGHT TO WATER... THAT IS WHY I DO NOT KNOW FOR WHAT KIND OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO TALK ABOUT WHEN THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO DO NOT HAVE THE BASIC HUMAN RIGHT TO WATER", DEHRAN MURATOV, CIVIL

sending out a message that protection of human rights is immanent in policies and practices and that violation is something that cannot and must not be tolerated.

Activist Koco Andonovski said that we must not stop the fight for human rights and that we must fight more fiercely for our rights. At the same time, Andonovski pointed out the continuous struggle of the LGBTI community in proving, primarily, its existence in society, and only afterwards that LGBTI people are also equal and deserve to enjoy equally the same rights and freedoms, which implies that the basic rights and identification in society are still not taken into consideration.

Xhabir Deralla, CIVIL, chose to read his column "Stand up for yourself and



Dehran Muratov, CIVIL

"WE HAD A DECADE WHERE WE WORKED ON THE BASIC RIGHT TO LIFE. OUR BASIC RIGHT TO LIFE WAS BASICALLY ENDANGERED...", KOCO ANDONOVSKI FROM THE LGBTI SUPPORT CENTER

others. Today!", written on International Human Rights Day, and in this way conveyed the message that it is never too late for any day to be the first day of the fight for human rights and freedoms.

"I am using my right to express myself freely and to urge: Take a stand today! Yell out: I am a human being! And I will never allow you to trample on my dignity and shorten or take away my life with your actions!", urged Deralla.

Deralla called on his readers, but also the audience at the opening of CIVILFest to get acquainted with their rights and freedoms, that little time is needed for this, but enough to bring a better and more dignified life for all.

"Yes! With solidarity, dedication and courage. With an everyday fight against



Koco Andonovski, LGBTI Centre for support

"THE FIGHT FOR A BETTER TOMORROW WILL NEVER STOP. THERE WILL ALWAYS BE SOMEONE WHO WILL BE VIOLATING HUMAN RIGHTS, BUT WE MUST OPPOSE SUCH PEOPLE", URANIA PIROVSKA, HELSINKI COMMITTEE

corruption of the mind, starting with oneself and ending with everyone who has the least bit of power to decide. May it be on the bus, at the counter, in a company or institutions (school, hospital, cadastre, court, municipality, government...).

Yes! With recognizing the rights and freedoms and recognizing their violation.

Uncompromisingly and without calculations, without politicizing, but directly and unambiguously. Without comparisons such as "this is nothing, there are so many worse things", but for every and even the slightest attempt to trample human dignity, in every situation", stated Deralla in his speech on the occasion of the opening of the festival dedicated to human rights and freedoms.

Dehran Muratov from CIVIL, illustratively presented the real situation of human



Uranija Pirovska, Helsinki Committee

"AS AN ADVOCATE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND OF AN ADULT SON WITH DISABILITIES, TODAY I ASK – WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS? IN THESE 70 YEARS OF THE DECLARATION, IF ONCE A YEAR WE HAD THOUGHT ABOUT THESE CATEGORIES TODAY WE WOULD HAVE BEEN UPGRADING THEM, AND NOT STARTING FROM ZERO", BLAGICA DIMITROVSKA, INKLUZIVA

rights and freedoms through a story that CIVIL's team, according to the cooperative journalism module, made with a citizen journalist about the settlement of Bair in Bitola, a settlement that provides itself with water through a single hose. Muratov emphasized that there are even people who do not even have drinking water, therefore we cannot talk about human rights.



Благоица Димитровска, Инклузива

DANCERS UNITED at CIVILFest

World champions, dancers with Down Syndrome from the dance studio Dancers United MK were part of the CIVILFest program.

PETRIT SARACINI, ARTIST, ACTIVIST AND JOURNALIST, HIGHLIGHTED THAT THE CULTURE OF IMPUNITY IS A BIG PROBLEM AND THAT PREVIOUSLY WE HAD A CULTURE WHERE THE STATE ITSELF PROMOTED AND CARRIED OUT DISCRIMINATION AND DID NOT PUNISH DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES OF INSTITUTIONS

Dancers Ana Bekjarska, Monika Bisovska, Hristijan Stojanov, Darko Eftimovski, Ena Mitrevska, Aleksandar Matovski and Oliver Blazevski led by Sara Kocan, Nermin Kocan and Violeta Balsevska for five years now have been break-

ing down barriers and winning European and world medals in various categories, holding European champions titles in Latin shows juniors (children with typical development) as well as European champions in several categories. With their excellent and entertaining dance, Dancers United MK marked the start of CIVIL's multimedia happening.



Dedicated to citizen journalism and activism, in the name of freedom, justice and equality, the multimedia exhibition of photographs titled "Freedom Photo" or #FreedomPhoto contained hundreds of photographs that have marked citizen journalism and human rights activism from the start of the "Civic Lenses" project until today.

The #FreedomPhoto exhibition opened immediately after the performance by Dancers United. Over 50 photos in various formats were part of the exhibition. Several hundreds of photos were part of the slide projections with photos of many different topics from many different events. Many visitors even recognized themselves in the photos, recalling what it has been like to be part of CIVIL's activities, or in the endless processions of people at protests in the past years.

The photos, primarily, displayed the activities of citizen journalists, the numerous events related to them and their stories, and the turbulent events noted by CIVIL's team and numerous activists over the past years. These photos are the work of a dozen citizen activists, as well as CIVIL's team.

CIVIL SOCIETY TOWERS

"Civil Society Towers" (#CivilSocietyTowers) was a specific, multimedia display of activism and civil society. The towers were enriched by many NGOs working on human rights. In this way, they had the opportunity to promote their activities and to communicate among themselves on topics of joint interest.



DANCERS UNITED AT CIVIL fest



EXHIBITION: FREEDOM PICTURES

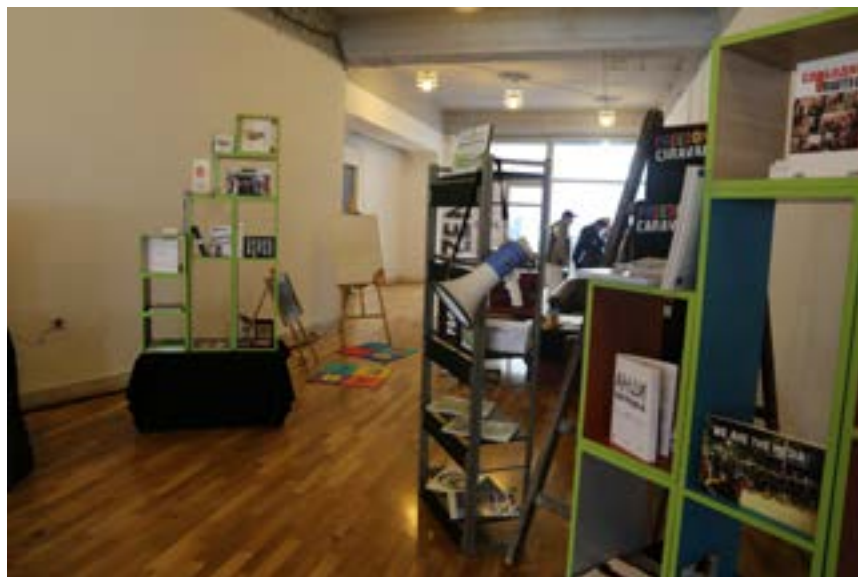
CREATIVE CHILDREN'S CORNER

CIVILFest provided a space where the youngest visitors could freely and in a care-free manner express their creativity.

Piles of paper, crayons, tripods were part of the supplies at the disposal of the children, for them to enjoy and to have fun, while their parents participated in the numerous activities that CIVIL's multimedia event offered.

CITIZEN JOURNALISM

Within the framework of the festival, CIVIL also included the Ceremony for awarding prizes for

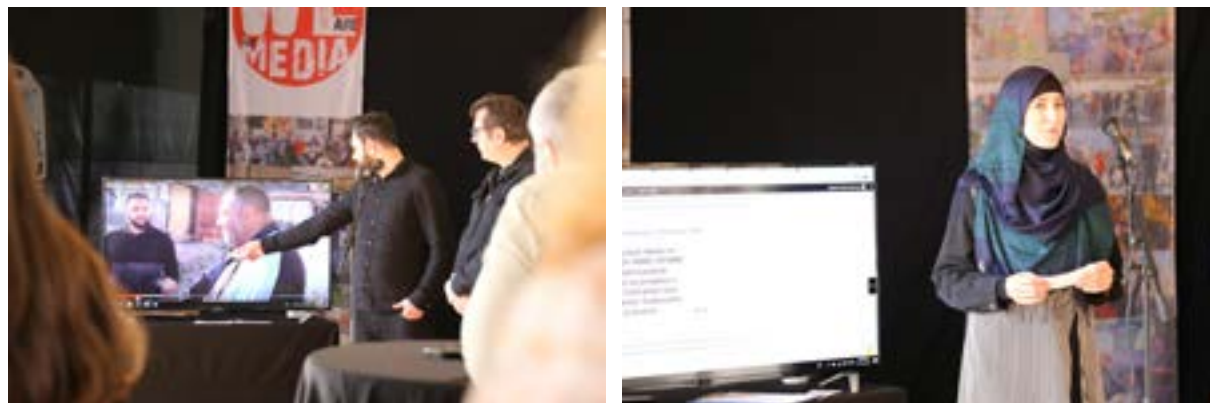


citizen journalism. CIVIL awarded six new prizes for citizen journalists who had sent photos and videos during that period.

Citizen journalists were awarded for stories on pressure during elections, donations of the good people of Cair for the homeless, the endless problem with waste, especially in state hospitals, protests in front of Parliament for the name of the country, the story about the settlement of Bair in Bitola where the residents do not have water...

Citizen journalist Simona Zivkova received a special prize for a video from the protest in Stip on the occasion of the teenager who lost his life on the streets of Stip, where his school friends were pro-





From the ceremony of giving prizes for citizen journalism

testing. Her story alerted the Municipality of Stip, which urgently engaged in regulating the traffic near the school.

Furthermore, 15 participants at the workshop that CIVIL organized within the framework of the festival had the opportunity to learn more about citizen journalism and activism, but to also be part of decision-making at the local and national level.

At the workshop, participants became familiar with the basics of recording, photographing and

reporting on all problems that are part of the everyday lives of people. They acquired primary skills they can use in reporting on human rights topics, freedom of expression, democracy, elections, as well as any other problem at the local and national level.

PROJECTIONS OF VIDEO STORIES

Citizen journalists are everywhere and are always first at the scene of events. They are the eyes of the real picture in which we live in. The videos

of citizen journalists are not pasted, cut or edited, they are real. It is precisely the amateur recordings of citizen journalists that are most powerful and most viewed contents that are changing



Concert

society.

CIVILFest offered its visitors a unique opportunity, through four monitors, to watch videos of citizen journalists on the bad conditions in Macedonian prisons, health care institutions, schools, kindergartens, dormitories, shelters for the homeless... Also, videos that spoke about the abuse of children for political campaigns, begging, religious rituals...videos that indicate election irregularities, abuse of the right to a peaceful protest...

Precisely through the recordings of the citizen journalists, the public has had the opportunity to see and hear hate speech at sports events or at party rallies and gatherings... In the past four years, during the implementation of the Civic Lenses project, CIVIL's team has also made many video stories together with citizen journalists from across the country.

The documentary film about the Freedom Caravan that CIVIL led in 2016 premiered at CIVILFest.

CONCERT: THREE HOURS OF EMOTIONS

Man In A Suit, Tonal and Basic Trio are alternative music bands that performed on the second day of CIVILFest. In the name of freedom, art and human rights, through a different tonality of what the youth experience in contemporary Macedonian society.

CIVILFest also included a DJ party under the slogan Music of Freedom.

ARTISTIC PERFORMANCES: YET AT THE END, WE ARE EVEN LAUGHING

The artistic performance of Mete Janakievski – a mummer from the Teatrosk production from Skopje, primarily was an act of civic activism, care for a better tomorrow, and most of all, maturity for a better society.

His concern, which he expresses through his mime, that is, through his body speech, left a strong shout in his professional silence through which he most authentically told all of his and our feelings that actually deeply pressure us every day to the last drop of pain in our soul, and yet at the end we are even laughing.

The festival lasted two days. The action continued...

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