

CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICIES



General Information

The Center for Development Policies IDEAS DePo (IDEAS DePo) is a non-profit association established on January 16, 2015 as a legacy organization arising from USAID's Investment Development and Export Advancement Support (IDEAS) Project, whose main objective is to provide reliable and competent expertise in the processes of design and implementation of economic and regulatory reforms in Macedonia and the region.

Its founders are professionals with extensive experience in designing and implementing economic and legal reforms in Macedonia, aimed at providing smooth transition from planned to market economy, creating sound business and regulatory environment, improving the efficiency and transparency of the policy-making process and strengthening the dialogue among all reform stakeholders.

IDEAS DePo draws its expertise and experience from several USAID development projects successfully implemented in Macedonia, that assisted the country accede to the World Trade Organization and comply with the complex WTO rules and principles; enhance regional trade integration and facilitation efforts; improve business environment and investment climate, including inspection services; increase export competitiveness of the private sector; create mechanisms for sustainable and inclusive public-private dialogue in context of economic reforms; and implement considerable number of e-government solutions for transparent and efficient public services.

Mission, Vision and Objectives

IDEAS DePo works on strengthening the capacity of the government and private sector institutions for implementation of the necessary reforms, establishing mechanisms for transparent and efficient governance and creating policies for intensive, sustainable and inclusive economic and social development.

IDEAS DePo acts as a competent and trusted partner that provides the necessary expertise and assistance to all stakeholders participating in the process of economic and regulatory reforms.

IDEAS DePo strives to: Create institutional and regulatory environment that positively contributes to the competitiveness and productivity of business entities thus encouraging them to generate new investments and employments; Promote transparency, efficiency and accountability as the main principles for sound economic governance; Strengthen the capacity of the government, private and civil sectors to engage in informed and inclusive dialogue key

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for efficient, sound and sustainable process of creation and implementation of development policies; Promote rule of law at all levels of society; Enhance regional cooperation among countries in the region through exchange of experiences and good practices, and generation of synergies in the process of economic and trade integration.

Expertise

IDEAS DePo was founded by professionals that have long-year experience working on and implementing USAID Projects, focused on economic growth and enabling business environment, especially with expertise in the Public Private Dialogue area, Inspection Reforms, Trade Facilitation, Export Promotion, Legal and Regulatory Framework streamlining, Public Procurement, Corporate Governance, Labor, Corporate Social Responsibility, etc.

More specifically, some of the most notable expertise that current IDEAS DePo team members own, based on previous experience and engagements are:

Trade Facilitation and Industrial Policy

- WTO accession and compliance, legal and regulatory streamlining to adhere to WTO principles and standards.
- Introduction of a single-window at the Customs Administration (CA) for Export and Import licenses (EXIM), focusing on reforming the legal framework to allow this one-stop-shop concept to succeed. The Single Window concept helped increase the competitiveness of the Macedonian business community by reducing time and cost for export-import formalities and cross-border transactions. The World Bank's Doing Business Report 2010 on Macedonia registered progress in its Trading Across Borders indicator.
- Industrial Policy Implementation, development of Action Plans and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework for industrial policy implementation, providing capacity building for Inter-Ministerial Groups, designing specialized web portals (www.konkurentnost.mk), implementing grant schemes for improving the productivity and the efficiency of Macedonian companies.
- Strengthening capacity of transit coordinators within CA.

Labor

- Introduction of the Third Pillar within the Pension system, based on voluntary contributions. The BEA Project conducted public debates, provided language to amend 66 legislative acts, and helped design the pillar's processes.
- Work with the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies to develop the Strategy for Development of Local Social Dialogue, with emphasis on local economic development. Building social partners' awareness, launching a campaign to fight gray economy, and

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promote registration of illegal workers by their employers. Partnering with municipalities such as Kumanovo to create an operational Local Social Dialogue Council.

- Experience in reform of key labor laws and introducing e-registration and de-registration of the unemployed, a reform welcomed by the World Bank Doing Business team in 2009. Working with the Employment Service Agency to transform the institution into a modern organization that is able to implement innovative labor market measures in the areas of lifelong learning and entrepreneurship.

Public – Private Dialogue

- Institutionalization of comprehensive platforms for PPD, as mechanisms for joint policy creation
- Capacity building of Chambers of Commerce and Business Associations for policy paper creation and advocacy of policies to the Government
- Providing trainings, guidelines and capacity building on Regulatory Impact Assessment for both public and private sector representatives

Export Promotion

- Providing extensive support in export promotion support to Macedonian companies with a set of activities aimed at increasing export readiness, export analysis, export leads and export education for companies, but for the public sector as well, through activities undertaken with Invest Macedonia.

Public Procurement

- Drafting of new Law, support in its implementation and subsequent drafting of secondary legislation
Establishment of a training center on Public Procurement

Inspection Reforms

- Supporting legal drafting of the new Law on Inspection Supervision (LIS) and drafting of by-laws deriving from the new LIS
- Conducting horizontal Functional Analysis of the inspection system and providing recommendations for optimization of the system and providing Functional Analysis for specific inspection authorities with recommendations of organizational changes and systematization of work posts
- Development of a Methodology for risk-based planning of inspections, Guideline for preparation of checklists for inspection supervision and Guideline for conducting inspection supervision
- Development and delivery of general and specific training programs for inspectors and Development and delivery of a training and mentoring program for senior inspectors (Training of Trainers)

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- Development of a Strategy for professional development and trainings 2020-2024, Action Plan for its implementation and Business plan for sustainable professional development system for inspectors
- Preparation of a Methodology for training curricula development
- Development of a Concept Design for inspection management software and preparation of detailed technical specification and development of pilot software on inspection management
- Development of a Communication Strategy for the Inspections Council

IDEAS DePo Projects

Booz Allen Hamilton Subcontract

In the early stages of its operations, during 2015, IDEAS DePo was subcontracted by Booz Allen Hamilton to implement a part of USAID's IDEAS Project program activities, in the area of Public Private Dialogue (PPD) and Inspection Reforms. The main beneficiary of the implemented activities and the support provided was the Government of Macedonia and the relevant institutions in the specified areas (among which: Ministry of Information Society and Administration, Inspections Council - IC, National Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness Council – NECC, State Market Inspectorate, State Labor Inspectorate, Chambers of Commerce and Business Associations, etc.).

The main achievements were:

Public Private Dialogue

- Support to the NECC (National Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness Council) - Assistance to the NECC in operational issues; Education assistance for NECC staff and the NECC members; Support to NECC committees in performing their operational mandate.
- Support to the implementation of the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) and ENER as a PPD instrument - Assistance to MISA to improve the RIA system and the ENER PPD mechanism; campaign to improve public awareness about the ENER in the business and civil community; Improvement of knowledge of the public sector on ENER use.
- Strengthening capacities of CoCs and BAs to engage in PPD – Improve their capacities and approach to dialogue, moving from a passive to an active position commensurate with the position of a contributing party to the process, to make them a completely relevant counterpart of the GoM in offering solutions to problems, based on facts and systematic research and reports.

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Inspection Reforms

- Assisted in creation of methodologies and techniques for conducting inspection supervision – Developed an Inspection Methodology Manual for conducting inspection supervision, defining necessary technical instruments and sources of information and institutional linkage of relevant inspection authorities.
- Capacity Building of the Inspections Council (IC) and relevant Inspectorates - Designed and conducted general and specific trainings and educational programs; Organized a study visit in Austria for exchange of knowledge and experience; Creation of a comprehensive web-site for IC, which encompasses all relevant data in regard to IC legal mandate, as well as all inspection authorities.

SEGURA Subcontracts

IDEAS DePo was also implementing two subcontractor agreements signed with SEGURA Consulting LLC, primary implementer of USAID's Regional Economic Growth (REG) Project. The first subcontractor agreement was in the area of Public Private Dialogue/Regulatory Impact Assessment (PPD/RIA) and was successfully implemented, while the second subcontractor agreement is ongoing and is focused on B-REDI Trade Facilitation in Macedonia, also in the frames of USAID's Regional Economic Growth (REG) Project.

Public-Private Dialogue

Following successful closure of the PPD subcontract, IDEAS DePo delivered a report on PPD in Macedonia, which can be found at the following link: <https://goo.gl/LHeity> and a short web-page info at: http://ideasdepo.mk/home/?re_projects=assessment-of-public-private-dialogue-in-macedonia

Trade Facilitation

The overall objective of this initiative is to support trade facilitation reforms in the Republic of Macedonia in line with its national priorities and international commitments under the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (WTO TFA) and the CEFTA Agreement.

More specifically, the initiative aims at:

Increasing the awareness of public and private sector institutions on the goals and main requirements of WTO TFA and strengthening their capacity for implementation of trade facilitation reforms in line with the Agreement.

Supporting the process of establishment and operation of mechanisms for enabling inclusive public-private dialogue and increasing transparency for more efficient and effective implementation of Macedonia's trade facilitation agenda.

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Assisting key institutions with implementation of specific trade facilitation activities and measures.

The assistance is provided through a combination of activities designed in close coordination with beneficiary institutions from the public and the private sector, including but not limited to: National workshops and seminars treating specific trade facilitation subjects. Participation of representatives of Macedonia's government and private sector at regional events organized by the REG Project and its international partners with a goal of exchanging experiences and coordinating activities for the advancement of the regional trade facilitation agenda.

Technical assistance and advice regarding implementation of specific measures for facilitating and simplifying cross-border procedures.

Drafting of documents and procedures aimed at strengthening the mechanisms for dialogue and improving private sector access to relevant information.

Assistance activities are designed in a flexible manner, in close cooperation with the beneficiary institutions and wherever necessary, in coordination with other donors and international organizations active in the field of trade facilitation – the World Bank Group, CEFTA, WTO, WCO, UNECE and GIZ.

USAID Modernizing Inspection Authorities Project

In September 2016, IDEAS DePo signed a **Cooperative Agreement** with USAID for implementation of USAID's Modernizing Inspection Authorities Project. It has a four-year Project lifetime, until September 2020.

MIA Project objective

The overall objective of the Modernizing the Inspection Authorities Project is to introduce a modern, business friendly and predictable inspection system that will seek to achieve enhanced efficiency of inspection authorities, as well as voluntary compliance by implementing best practices and principles into the inspection process.

Component I - Streamlined Legal Framework of the Inspection System

The main objective of this Component is to achieve streamlined legal framework for governing the inspection system, an effort that is expected to produce multiple beneficial effects on the overall inspection system, by increasing the inspection authorities' efficiency, clearly defining their roles and responsibilities, reducing costs for conducting inspection supervision, setting up a clear system for compliance, decrease the burden for the private sector that is subject to supervision, introducing risk management principles in the process of inspection supervision and implementing standards and procedures that will enhance the inspection process.

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Component 2 - Improved Knowledge of Inspectors in Specific Areas

The main objective of this Component is to strengthen inspector competencies, maintain and enhance their knowledge and skills, and increase their efficiency during conducting inspection supervision and implementing and enforcing legislation, through setting up regular and sustainable training programs and modalities that will advance the level of the overall inspection system.

Component 3 - Improved Effectiveness of the Inspection Bodies

The main objective of this Component is to improve the efficiency and transparency of the overall inspection system through introduction of new, modern technologies and methods that will facilitate inspection authorities' performance and contribute to better allocation of resources.

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) – Project for Support to Improve the Effectiveness of Inspections in North Macedonia

In November, 2019 IDEAS DePo signed a one-year **Contract** with EBRD for implementation of Support to Improve the Effectiveness of Inspections in North Macedonia – Assignment 1: Completing and Improving Regulatory Framework and Assignment 3: Capacity Building for Inspectors.

The overall objective of the project is to improve efficiency and coordination of the Inspectorates under the Inspection Council of North Macedonia, with the final goal of reducing burden and costs to businesses through finalizing the new legal framework for inspection supervision.

IDEAS DePo Staff

Aleksandar Shahov

Mr. Aleksandar Shahov has more than 20 years of experience in advisory and managerial role to projects' implementing partners in the area of business enabling environment, regulatory reform and formulation of trade, economic and legal policy.

Aleksandar is knowledgeable of the content and experienced in the application of domestic and international law, especially business, trade, commercial, and IT & telecommunications law; and has a substantive expertise in multilateral trade regulations covered by the Agreements of the World Trade Organization (WTO), especially in areas of trade in services and intellectual property. In the last 15 years he implemented several highly

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visible and recognized reforms in the areas such as business enabling environment, trade facilitation, public procurement policy, bankruptcy, corporate governance, labor and pension policy, inspections, attracting foreign investments and investors' aftercare services, supply chain management, public private partnerships, fiscal decentralization, promotion of exports, industrial policy, Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA), Regulatory Guillotine and Public – Private Dialogue (PPD). Aleksandar also has sound experience and understanding of several eGov solutions such as those related to export import licensing, e-procurements, electronic register of regulations, inspections surveillance, etc.

Aleksandar is proficient in legal research and analysis including the interaction between international trade law and domestic legal system to assess compatibility and enable implementation actions; highly committed to working directly with domestic and foreign experts, law-drafters and policy-makers in understanding and employing the multilateral trading systems as tools to support development strategies and pursue domestic policies.

Most of his career, from 1999 through 2015, Aleksandar worked for the internationally recognized consulting company Booz Allen Hamilton. Namely, he served as a Director of the two latest USAID financed projects implemented by Booz Allen Hamilton in Macedonia, in the areas of business enabling environment and investments, exports, inspections and public-private dialogue. In the period from 2015 through 2020, Aleksandar was managing a comprehensive inspections projects in Macedonia financed by USAID and EBRD and implemented by the local organization IDEAS DePo, and was a Team Leader and Key Expert of a complex EU business environment project implemented by the consulting company NIRAS in Serbia. In his earlier career days, he served as a senior legal advisor under the USAID projects that helped Macedonia to accede to the WTO and consequently to comply with the WTO rules and obligations. He started his career in 1996 working as a legal advisor for the US based company Center for Financial Engineering in Development that implemented USAID project dealing with commercial law reform.

Aleksandar holds a Master of Science Degree in Management and a Bachelor Degree in Law, both from the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje, Macedonia. He also attended numerous programs and trainings such as those of London School of Economics, Business School of the University of Portsmouth, Luiss University in Rome, World Bank, EU, USAID, etc.

Gordana Tosheva

Gordana Tosheva is a lawyer with master degree and PhD in International Economics. Her professional experience includes more than two decades of work in the area of international economic development in North Macedonia and the region.

During her career, Ms. Tosheva provided technical advice and assistance to the government on the institutional and legislative reforms aimed at strengthening the capacity and improving the policy-making in the areas of multilateral and regional trade integration, business and regulatory environment, investments and competitiveness, development of e-government solutions and commercial law.

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Ms. Tosheva acted as Senior Advisor on several projects funded by the US Agency for International Development – USAID that were instrumental in assisting the Republic of North Macedonia to accede to the World Trade Organization and comply with the WTO rules and principles, increase the competitiveness of the Macedonian economy by enhancing the business and investment climate, advance the trade facilitation regime in line with international and EU standards and requirements and implement legislative reforms in the areas of company, bankruptcy and collateral law. In the period 2008 – 2009, Ms. Tosheva was also a Director of the USAID-funded project that developed some of the most comprehensive and sustainable e-government applications in North Macedonia: Single Window for Export and Import Licenses – EXIM, e-Tax, e-Procurement, e-Budgeting and e-Employment.

In the course of her development work, Ms. Tosheva carried out and participated in many research projects and wrote various reports, scientific articles and implementation manuals, including a book on Foundations and Development of e-Government.

Goran Lazarevski

After graduating economics in Zurich, Goran started his career in air travel/tourism, to continue as Regional officer of the Swiss trade union, working on challenges of collective bargaining, advocacy, lobbying and regulatory efforts by strengthening Public-private dialogue. Following a continuous effort at different managerial positions in retail-, wholesale- and production business at Interkam/KAM/Dr. Oetker Skopje, he was Deputy-General-Director of the prestigious Institute for earthquake engineering and seismology (IZIIS) Skopje, focusing on operational management, Human resources, finance, planning, regulation implementation and legal compliance.

At his positions as COO, CEO and Management Board President as well as Director of the office in Kosovo for a leading ICT system-integrator, he had the opportunity to work on corporate governance principles and introduction of best practices in the field of operational management, sales, marketing and research/development in the ICT business. As member and President of the National CSR Coordinating Committee, he was able to build expertise in the field of sustainability, corporate social responsibility and act as expert, providing assistance to different sector in this area. He is UN GlobalCompact Country representative, Author and Co-Author of CSR publications, Coordinator of the National CSR strategy.

After four years as Senior Advisor at the USAID' Investment Development and Export Advancement Project, in charge of the Public-Private Dialogue (PPD) Component, working with a wide range of stakeholders from the public, private and civil sector to 1) improve existent forms of PPD (business associations, clusters, chambers of commerce etc.), 2) introduce new mechanisms for a national-level PPD (National Entrepreneurship and Competitiveness Council-NECC www.necc.mk) and 3) work on the review and improving of the national public consultation platform ENER (www.ener.gov.mk) to strengthen an inclusive approach in the regulatory legislation process. As Senior Advisor, he continued his work in the field of PPD, Sustainable business, CSR the Center for Development Policies IDEAS DePo Skopje.

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Goran Lazarevski holds a Master of Science in Economy Degree in International Management and a Bachelor Degree in Economy, both from the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje.

Specializes in Management, PPD, Policy creation, lobbying, advocacy, Business enabling environment, Regulatory Impact Assessment/Inclusive Legislation drafting, CSR/Sustainable business, legal reforms, public-private partnerships, industrial policy, Regulatory Guillotine and E-Society and E-Government solutions in different areas.

Speaks German, English, Serbian, Croatian, Bulgarian, learning Greek.

Branka Markovska

Branka Markovska is an experienced professional with economic and financial background. A big portion of her career, from 1999 through 2015, Branka worked for the internationally recognized consulting company Booz Allen Hamilton. Namely, she served as Finance and Office Manager on four USAID funded projects implemented by Booz Allen Hamilton in Macedonia, in the areas of business enabling environment; investments, exports, inspections and public-private dialogue; WTO accession and WTO compliance. Ms. Markovska has an invaluable experience in administering and financial management of big projects and compliance with international procedures.

Voislav Ilievski

Voislav Ilievski is an experienced professional that was continuously working on USAID funded Projects for almost 15 years. He has legal background and practice in commercial legislation areas and business enabling activities. He has worked with Ministry-level counterparts to design and implement legal changes and transparent, sustainable reforms.

He was also included in performing regulatory assessments for USAID, CLIR and BIZCLIR in the Republic of Macedonia. His particular strengths are in business environment reform, regulatory reform, inspection supervision, export promotion and institutional capacity building.

Voislav Ilievski is an action-oriented professional with strong ability to communicate effectively with business, state and non-governmental audiences.

Irena Petkova

Irena Petkova is a professional with legal background and an accumulated experience of almost 15 years working on implementing donor/USAID funded projects, especially in the area of business enabling environment. She also has extensive expertise in Public Private Dialogue issues and also worked as an information and communication officer throughout her career. Irena Petkova is a devoted, creative employee with strong ability to manage and communicate activities.