



**FRIEDRICH NAUMANN
FOUNDATION** *For Freedom*
Greece



The Prespes Agreement Observatory

Friedrich Naumann Stiftung für die Freiheit - University of Macedonia - European Policy
Institute

A. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (Athens and Sofia), the Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies, School of Economic and Regional Studies of the University of Macedonia (Thessaloniki), and the European Policy Institute (Skopje) agree on establishing an observatory to wage research on the bilateral relation between Greece and North Macedonia in the aftermath of the Prespes Agreement (2018).

The Prespes Agreement is a landmark in the history of the Balkans and South East Europe. On the one hand, it is the legal document ending a long standing dispute between Greece and North Macedonia, it opens new channels of communication and cooperation between the two states, and it promotes peace and friendship between the two people. On the other hand, its consequences extend beyond bilateral relations. It provides a clear framework for North Macedonia to develop, strengthen its economy and political institutions and pursuing its EU accession on a sound basis, independent of malevolent foreign influences. However, the complete implementation of the Prespes Agreement is still in progress. Nationalism and populism in both countries could prove resilient undermining the values that the Agreement is destined to nurture. This danger becomes more potent especially because of the political swings that may occur and of any potential delay in the EU-North Macedonia negotiations. For this reason, three institutions are joining forces to monitor the process of implementation of the Prespes Agreement, extracting useful information about the situation in the region and its importance for the EU.



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B. AIMS

The aims of the Prespes Agreement Observatory are:

- 1) to watch the overall implementation of the Prespes Agreement in both Greece and North Macedonia;
- 2) to assess both political and social challenges that arise in both countries vis-a-vis the changes that the Agreement brings about;
- 3) to monitor identity issues and measure social endorsement;
- 4) to foster cooperation between relevant liberal-minded individuals and institutions of both countries and with the EU;
- 5) to study the effects of the implementation process on the EU's interests in East Europe and South-East Mediterranean;
- 6) to facilitate informed public debate on the progress of bilateral relations, via conferences, seminars, workshops and publications;

C. MEMBERS

The Observatory is an initiative of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (Athens and Sofia), the Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies of the University of Macedonia (Thessaloniki), and the European Policy Institute (Skopje). The members will assign one representative in a committee for the coordination of its efforts. The committee may be assisted by faculty students, researchers and active participants in both countries.

D. PLANNING FOR 2020

For the calendar year 2020 the following –non binding– projects are proposed:

- A. Organize a workshop for young individuals in Greece, following the 2019 workshop in Skopje;
- B. Organize a conference evaluating the progress in bilateral relations after the Prespes Agreement in Thessaloniki;
- C. Organize a keynote speech by a scholar from North Macedonia in the University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki;



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E. CALENDAR

The dates of the proposed projects will be defined by the committee.

F. BUDGET

Each party will contribute to the budget in cash and/or in kind. The share is determined by the committee and is independent for each project.

G. DURATION

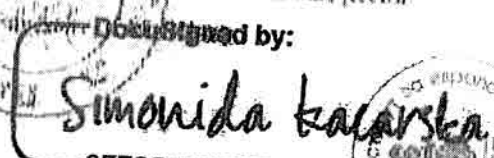
The duration must reflect the research project and its complexity. It should be determined by the committee and its cooperation and advice to the project. The duration should be determined by the committee.

Date of signature:


Martin Stoychev, Regional Sector, East and Southeast Europe
Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom


Perqashe Stymbo, Di. Karamilia, Rector

DocuSigned by:


Simonida Kacarska

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Dr. Simonida Kacarska

Director, European Policy Institute, Skopje