Public Scrutiny of Public Procurement:

Case Studies

Issue No. 2

01 In 5 years, citizens paid 73 million euros for personal documents based on a 21-year-old tender and contracts that are "confidential"

02 1 million euro tender without competition — how did the MFA choose the company for the evacuation flights and why were advances paid?

03 The school swimming pool in Cair, worth 890 thousand euros, for 6 months was completed only on paper

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Content

Introduction....4

In 5 years, citizens paid 73 million euros for personal documents based on a 21-year-old tender and contracts that are “confidential”....5

A tender for the production of personal documents has not been conducted since 2005....7

MIA classifies as “confidential” the contracts for the procurement of personal document forms for Macedonian citizens....8

Increase in costs for received forms and system maintenance....9

1 million euro tender without competition — how did the MFA choose the company for the evacuation flights and why were advances paid?....12

Competition preventeda....14

Advance payment for the flights wasnot provided for in the tender documentation and is not in accordance with the Public Procurement Law....18

The school swimming pool in Cair, worth 890 thousand euros, for 6 months was completed only on paper....21

The notification of a completed contract does not reflect reality....22

Chronology of the tender for the construction of a school indoor swimming pool....27

Introduction

Corruption in public procurement in North Macedonia continues to be a serious systemic problem that directly undermines the rule of law, reduces citizens' trust in institutions and leads to irrational spending of public funds and their misuse. Despite numerous declarative commitments to fight corruption, institutional practice still does not show sufficient systematic and continuous progress in detecting, prosecuting and sanctioning corrupt practices, especially in the area of public procurement, which remains the most vulnerable area according to national anti-corruption analyses.

Over the past few years, instead of consistently strengthening control and preventive mechanisms, processes have been observed that further reduce the possibilities for effective supervision and sanctioning of abuses in public procurement. Insufficient implementation of existing legal mechanisms creates an environment in which corruption can persist and spread. Of particular concern is the fact that, despite the existence of several competent bodies for preventing and sanctioning corruption, practice shows that reactions are often slow, selective or insufficiently effective to ensure real sanctioning of violations and effective prevention of future abuses. The importance of this issue arises from the fact that public procurement represents a significant part of the state budget and is used in all sectors of public spending, from health and education to infrastructure and energy.

Within the framework of the project "Public Scrutiny of Public Procurement", specific cases of potentially illegally conducted tender procedures are analyzed in which the care for public money was not primary. These cases are identified through the analysis of the findings of the red flags applied by the Public Procurement Bureau, through research based on publicly available information, as well as through consultations with citizens. The public presentation of these cases aims not only to inform the public, but also to create increased pressure on institutions to take appropriate steps towards sanctioning illegally conducted tenders, as well as consistent application of legal provisions and establishment of higher standards of transparency, accountability and responsibility.

The specific tender cases that will be published in the public and submitted to the competent institutions, should contribute to overcoming the persistent weaknesses in the institutional response, the insufficient proactivity in detecting abuses and the limited efficiency in implementing legal procedures in public procurement. This will contribute to strengthening the role of civil society, i.e. the media and citizens exercising active scrutiny over the spending of public funds, in order to reduce the possibilities for political influence, abuse of official position and corrupt practices in the public sector.

In 5 years,
citizens paid 73 million euros
for personal documents based
on a 21-year-old tender and
contracts that are “confidential”

- The production of passports, ID cards and driver's licenses in the last five years cost MIA 29 million euros, and to obtain these documents, citizens paid 73 million, or 44 million euros more.
- Most of the 73 million euros paid by citizens are for obtaining a passport, as much as 60 million euros over 5 years.
- The documents are prepared by a German company that won a tender 21 years ago. MIA does not disclose when and under what conditions the initial contract was extended until today.
- MIA does not even disclose the valid contracts for the production of personal documents, explaining that they are classified as "confidential".
- The Ministry believes that releasing data from concluded contracts would have consequences for their operations, without specifying what are these consequences.
- Even the number of personal documents (passports, ID cards and driver's licenses) that have been issued in recent years are protected from publication as "confidential". MIA only discloses total financial data.
- With this secrecy of the entire contract and its annexes, public insight into the financial and contractual aspects of this procurement is limited.
- It is unclear on the basis of which law this procurement, which is excluded from regular competitive procurement procedures, was carried out. Hence, the public cannot verify whether the exclusion from regular rules was legally justified, necessary and proportionate.
- The secrecy of the number of document forms purchased limits public control over the spending of budget funds. If it is not known how many forms have been purchased, it is not possible to assess whether the price is reasonable and whether the contract is economically justified.
- In the last five years, MIA has paid the supplier 29 million euros, which is more than the amount it paid for the first 11 years of the contract. This raises the question of whether the prices of the forms and technical support from the supplier company or their quantities have increased.
- The only publicly available contracts are the contracts for the technical support of the electronic personal document system, concluded in accordance with the Public Procurement Law through the negotiated procedure without publication of a notice with the company Veridos GmbH.
- In the period 2018-2020, MIA conducted five unsuccessful tenders for "consulting services for the preparation of project documentation to be used in the procurement of services for the preparation of biometric documents". All five were canceled due to the absence of acceptable bids.
- Instead of conducting a new public procurement procedure, through a feasibility study MIA is currently examining the possibilities for the entire process from production to issuance of personal documents to be carried out on the territory of the country.

A tender for the production of personal documents has not been conducted since 2005

The Public Procurement Law of the Republic of North Macedonia, which is aligned with the European Union directives, refers to a high level of accountability and transparency in public procurement, but for years Macedonian citizens have not known on the basis of which and what contracts and under what conditions the forms for personal documents (passports, ID cards and driving licenses) are procured. Back in 2005, the tender was awarded to the German company Giesecke + Devrient.

According to the company's own statement published on November 30, 2005, the contract was concluded for a period of 11 years: "The Government of the Republic of Macedonia has awarded the international technology group Giesecke & Devrient (G&D) a contract to provide the country with electronic passports, ID cards and driving licenses, as well as an appropriate, combined system for personalization of documents. Work on the project is scheduled to begin this year, and the project itself is expected to last a total of 11 years. The first electronic passports and ID cards should be issued to citizens of the Republic of Macedonia as early as 2006. The order includes the delivery of 1.5 million passport documents with integrated microchips, 1.8 million ID cards and 500,000 driving licenses. In addition to the documents, G&D will supply equipment for centralized personalization and decentralized data collection, as well as centralized data storage and preparation. The international smart card manufacturer will also take care of system integration and maintenance through a maintenance contract.[1]"

According to the same statement, the value of the entire 11-year contract is 23.5 million euros[2]

This suggests that the initially concluded contract for the delivery of personal document forms expired in 2016. Since then, MIA has not publicly announced the conditions under which the contracts were extended after their expiration.

Instead of conducting a new tender after the initial contracts expired, in the period 2018-2020 MIA published notices for a total of five procedures with the subject "Consulting services for the preparation of project documentation to be used in the procurement of services for the production of biometric documents". All five procedures were annulled on the grounds that not a single acceptable offer was submitted. After the annulment, MIA did not publish a new procedure for the procurement of personal document forms, but continued to work with the same supplier without a public announcement and without applying a competitive procedure.

Only the contracts for the technical support and maintenance of the single electronic system for personal documents, which are concluded with the company Veridos GmbH, founded by Giesecke+Devrient, are available to the public. The contracts were concluded through the

1 https://www.securetechalliance.org/electronic-passport-production-kicks-off-in-macedonia/#
2 https://www.securetechalliance.org/electronic-passport-production-kicks-off-in-macedonia/#

negotiated procedure without prior publication of a notice, with a duration of 36 months. The contracts concluded in 2021 and in 2024 are published on the Electronic Public Procurement System.

Meanwhile, there is no announcement of a new tender for the production of personal documents. In April 2025, the Ministry concluded an agreement with the consulting company Target Communications Skopje to examine the possibilities of the entire process from production to issuance of personal documents to be carried out on the territory of the country.

MIA classifies as "confidential" the contracts for the procurement of personal document forms for Macedonian citizens

On 6.4.2026, the Center for Civil Communications submitted a request to MIA for all relevant data regarding the procurement of personal documents. However, MIA declared the key 3 requests as classified information with an appropriate level of classification. This concerns the following information:

1. All contracts (main and annexes) that the Ministry of Interior Affairs has concluded with the economic operator Giesecke+Devrient for the procurement of personal document forms (passports, ID cards and driver's licenses);
2. On the basis of which Law were the contracts concluded with the economic operator Giesecke+Devrient for the procurement of personal document forms (passports, ID cards and driver's licenses)?
3. The number of personal document forms (passports, ID cards and driver's licenses) that were procured in the period 2021-2025, with data for each of the three separate types of personal documents, at the level of years.

The response from MIA states that: "Part of the requested information is information that, based on the Law, is classified information with an appropriate level of classification. Questions under ordinal numbers 1, 2 and 3 are classified as "confidential". The Ministry also informs that the mandatory "harm test" has been conducted, determining that providing part of the requested information will have consequences for the operation of the Ministry."

However, according to the Law on Free Access to Public Information, if a certain document or part of it contains confidential information, that information should be separated from the document and the requester should be provided with the content of the remaining part of the document.

Thus, if the concluded contracts contain technical specifications, security elements, protective features of the forms, methods of personalization or other sensitive details related to the security of personal documents, those specific parts may be protected. However, this does not

mean that the entire contract, including basic data on the subject of the procurement, value, duration, contracting parties, annexes, method of conclusion and obligations of the contracting authority, should automatically be inaccessible to the public.

It is particularly important to emphasize that this is not a matter of ordinary administrative information, but of procurement that directly affects all citizens. Citizens not only finance the operation of the contracting authorities through budgetary funds, but also directly pay for the issuance of personal documents from their own pockets. Therefore, they have a legitimate right to know how much is paid for the forms, how the contracts were concluded, on what legal basis the economic operator was selected and whether the procurement was carried out in a manner that ensures rational spending of public money.

Furthermore, if MIA decided to conduct this procurement in this way, then it is crucial to explain to citizens which law and which legal provision were applied. Otherwise, the public cannot verify whether the exclusion from the regular rules was legally justified, necessary and proportionate. The disclosure of this information can be done without revealing other sensitive details of the procedure.

Regarding the issue of the number of purchased forms for passports, ID cards and driving licenses by year, it is necessary to distinguish between sensitive operational information and statistical data. The request for information referred to the number of forms purchased by type of document and by year, not to specific security features, serial numbers, logistics, deliveries, storage locations or technical details of production. Therefore, it is not clear why the total number of forms purchased would constitute classified information, when their number was publicly disclosed in 2005. Without this data, the public cannot assess whether the quantities were realistically planned, whether there was excessive or insufficient procurement, and whether their money was spent economically. At the same time, quantity is a key parameter for determining the price and financial justification of the procurement.

Increase in costs for received forms and system maintenance

Based on the submitted request for access to public information, MIA submitted data on the value of money for the produced personal documents that MIA paid to the supplier and that citizens paid to MIA for the documents received.

A comparison of costs over the years shows a significant increase in financial outflow. The 2005 contract was worth 23.5 million euros for 11 years, which means that the costs were projected at an average of 2.1 million euros per year. In the last 5 years, MIA has paid a total of 29 million euros for forms and for system maintenance – that is an average of 5.8 million euros per year.

Amounts paid by MIA for the produced personal documents (in euros)

Year	For passports	For ID cards	For driving licenses	System support and maintenance	Total
2021	3,466,709	621,732	62,328	933,356	**5,084,125**
2022	4,611,687	394,470	344,515	1,231,618	**6,582,290**
2023	2,866,154	465,802	146,367	1,454,070	**4,932,394**
2024	6,748,837	670,957	267,773	1,477,000	**9,164,567**
2025	1,843,314	164,656	117,397	1,620,000	**3,745,367**
Total	**19,536,702**	**2,317,455**	**938,379**	**6,716,044**	**29,508,580**

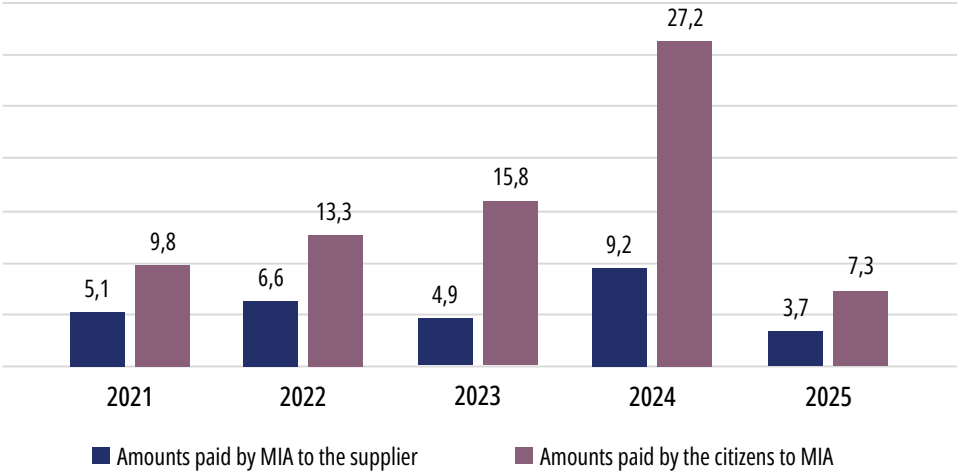
In addition to the increase in costs, what is even more problematic is that in the period 2021-2025, while the state paid a total of 29 million euros to the supplier, it collected as much as 73 million euros from citizens – that is 44 million euros more.

Amounts that MIA charged citizens for personal documents (in euros)

Year	For passports	For ID cards	For driving licenses	Total
2021	8,474,854	1,015,817	336,838	**9,827,509**
2022	10,710,114	1,206,719	1,413,490	**13,330,323**
2023	13,358,350	1,437,639	991,705	**15,787,694**
2024	22,241,293	3,005,628	1,950,519	**27,197,439**
2025	5,893,545	735,659	638,427	**7,267,630**
Total	**60,678,154**	**7,401,462**	**5,330,979**	**73,410,595**

On an annual basis, both the citizens and MIA had the highest costs for issuing personal documents in 2024. That year, the citizens paid 27 million euros, and MIA 9 million euros. The largest differences between MIA's costs and the money collected from the citizens are recorded for passports. The citizens paid as much as 60 million euros in the last 5 years (2021-2025), or 82% of the total costs they had for personal documents.

Amounts paid by MIA and the citizens for personal documents
(in millions of euros)



MIA regularly settled its obligations - as of December 31, 2025, MIA has no overdue but unpaid invoices for submitted forms and for support and maintenance of the personal document system to the supplier.

Evacuation flights for the citizens from the Middle East worth 1 million euros, paid in advance, above the legal limit

(Tender of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade for services for the lease of an airplane for the transport and evacuation of Macedonian citizens from the Middle East region affected by military operations through a negotiated procedure without prior publication of a notice)

- The evacuation flights from Dubai and Riyadh in March 2026 were paid in advance, which is contrary to the Public Procurement Law, which stipulates that the maximum amount of the advance can be up to 20% of the contract value.
- The advance payments were not secured by a bank guarantee as required by the Law and were not foreseen in advance in the tender documentation.
- One unsuccessful and one successful tender were conducted for the evacuation flights, after which the contract for the lease of the airplanes was concluded.
- The tenders were conducted within the framework of the Public Procurement Law, which allows for direct contact with companies in urgent situations. However, the documents reveal a series of decisions that, taken together, prevented real competition.
- In the first procedure, which began on March 4, 2026, bids were requested from nine companies. The request was sent to them after 4 p.m., to their general contact addresses, with a deadline for submitting bids by 11 a.m. the following morning.
- The criteria on the basis of which MFA selected these nine companies are not clear, given that none of them has a current contract for the provision of aviation services with any state institution. Additionally, it is not clear why the list of companies from which offers were requested did not include the most relevant operators for the crisis area – FlyDubai and FlyNas.
- After not receiving any bids, MFA annulled the procedure and started a new one on the same day (March 5). In the second procedure, the request for bid submission was sent to only one company – Avialog Skopje, which MFA claims to have learned is a representative of FlyDubai. As evidence of the connection between Avialog and FlyDubai, MFA submitted a card for engagement in FlyDubai, which belongs to a natural person – the founder of Avialog, but which does not prove a business or legal connection between the two companies.
- The company submitted a bid the next day, on March 6 at 2 p.m., followed by negotiations, conclusion of a contract, issuance of an invoice with dates for the first 2 flights, and payment of the invoice by MFA on the same day.
- The commission received by the company with which MFA concluded the contract is not publicly available data, because MFA deviated from the usual concept of contracts for public procurement of airline tickets and airplane rental. They usually state the agency commission that is charged above the price of the airline ticket or the rented airplane.
- Initially, MFA estimated that the evacuation of Macedonian citizens would cost 60 million denars. The only offer it received was 59,799,900 denars or only 0.33% lower.
- The cost of transportation per airplane was 211,000 euros per flight for the leased airplane from FlyDubai, model Boeing 738-MAX and 260,000 euros for the FlyNas airplane with model Airbus 320, including overnight accommodation and bus transportation.
- The evacuation costs in our country were fully covered by the state, and in most European Union countries, the transported passengers participated in the costs.
- The 590 passengers were transported on 4 flights – three from Dubai to Skopje and one from Riyadh to Pristina. It turns out that the cost of evacuation per passenger from Dubai was 1,548 euros and 1,960 euros from Riyadh.
- Although the public procurement contract provides for the evacuation of Macedonian citizens, 42 foreign citizens from neighboring countries were also transported.

Competition prevented

In accordance with the Government Conclusion of the 154th session of March 3, 2026, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade is required to conduct a negotiated procedure without publication of a notice for public procurement of services for the lease of an airplane for the transport and evacuation of Macedonian citizens from the region affected by military operations in accordance with Article 55, paragraph 1, item d) and Article 55, paragraph 6 of the Public Procurement Law. At the same time, the Ministry of Finance is required to provide financial resources in the Budget to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade for the implementation of this public procurement.

The estimated value of the public procurement of 60 million denars, according to information received from MFA, has been determined based on data from the diplomatic and consular representations of the Republic of Macedonia in Abu Dhabi and in Doha on the approximate number of Macedonian citizens (around 600 people) in need of evacuation from the Middle East region, data also published in the media at the time before the implementation of the public procurement, as well as the possible limited organization of available flights from the region (Dubai and Riyadh) and the prices for leasing airplanes from previously conducted flights from the listed destinations to Europe.

Based on the government's conclusion, the very next day, on March 4, 2026, MFA makes a decision on public procurement and sends an invitation to submit offers for renting an airplane to 9 economic operators with the following content: *In connection with the current situation in the Middle East, due to which a large number of Macedonian citizens are in countries that are under attack or in danger of further attacks by Iran, since the beginning of the conflict until now, about 500 Macedonian citizens have reported the need for evacuation from the region, i.e. from Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain, but at the moment there are no possibilities for evacuation by air. We invite you by tomorrow 5.3.2026, 10:59 a.m. the latest, to submit an offer for the procurement of airplane leasing services for the transport and evacuation of Macedonian citizens from the Middle East region affected by military operations, as indicated in the tender documentation and the technical specification. The offer and the Statement must be submitted scanned and certified with an archive number, stamp and signature of the person in charge or a person authorized by him or her by the specified deadline to e-mail addresses.*

The requests for submission of invitations were sent in the time period from 15:57 to 17:28 with a request to submit a bid the next morning by 11:00. It follows that the companies were supposed to submit a bid in less than a day and a half.

List and time of invitations sent

Date and time of invitation/ e-mail sent	Name of economic operator	Address of the invitation
04.03.2026 at 15:57	Aeronautical Regional Center Skopje	tamara@arcmk.com
04.03.2026 at 16:00	Turkish Airlines	costomer2@thy.com
04.03.2026 at 16:14	Croatia Airlines	contact@croatiaairlines.hr
04.03.2026 at 16:20	Wizz Air	info@wizzair.com
04.03.2026 at 16:25	PTSC Nova Travel-MS LLC Strumica	novatravel.ms@gmail.com, novatravel@t.mk
04.03.2026 at 16:30	Aurora Tours Skopje	info@aurora.com.mk
04.03.2026 at 16:33	Pegasus Airlines	info@flypgs.com
04.03.2026 at 16:35	TA Kondor Skopje	kondorturisticka@gmail.com
04.03.2026 at 17:28	TA Papillon Skopje	papillon@papillon.com.mk

The following instructions and requirements are given to the companies from which bids are requested:

- Lease of an airplane with a passenger capacity of at least 150 people, on the Dubai-Skopje route (expected quantity 3) and lease of an airplane with a passenger capacity of at least 150 people, on the Riyadh-Skopje route (expected quantity 1).
- Procurement of airplane leasing services for the transport and evacuation of Macedonian citizens from the Middle East region affected by military operations will be implemented immediately after securing a safe air corridor for take-off from the specified destinations.
- The contracting authority will make payment as soon as possible after the performance of the services and submission of an invoice to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of the Republic of North Macedonia.
- In order to prove their professional ability, companies should provide a Statement that should contain that the bidder is registered for the activity that the airline has approval for international flights in the name of the airline and that the seriousness of the offer is confirmed.
- The offered price should include all costs and discounts of the economic operator, be expressed without value added tax in denars which is expressed separately.
- The criterion for awarding the public procurement contract for the entire duration of the procedure is the most economically advantageous tender. The most economically advantageous tender should be determined on the basis of the lowest price.

MFA informs that no invited economic operator submitted a bid within the given deadline. In addition, from the submitted documentation, only the response submitted by the Papillon travel agency was visible, where they said that: *"We inform you that we are not able to submit an offer to you, according to your request. We recommend that you contact directly as a ministry airline companies that can provide appropriate permits for landing at risky airports."* There is no information that this recommendation has been implemented.

In this public procurement procedure, although several economic operators were formally invited, the selection of the bidders to whom an invitation to submit a bid was sent does not indicate a real provision of competition, taking into account that some of the invited entities do not have direct market capacity for the service in question, while relevant operators with direct market contact with the region were not invited.

On 5.3.2026, MFA adopted a decision to annul the procedure because it did not receive a single bid and adopted a new decision to conduct public procurement. This decision states: *"Considering that MFA conducted a previous public procurement procedure with negotiation without publication of a notice in which no bid was secured within the stipulated deadline, the Public Procurement Commission proposed to initiate a new procedure with negotiation without publication of a notice until an acceptable bid is found. Given the current difficulties in finding air transport for the purpose of the subject of the public procurement, bid(s) may be secured from an intermediary agency or directly from airline companies."*

The Decision does not state that a bid will be requested from only one company. However, according to the received documentation and the provided explanation, the request for submission of a bid with the same content was submitted only to Avialog Skopje on 5.3.2026 at 16:11 with a request to submit a bid by the next day (6.3.2026) by 14:00 and an indication that their representative should attend the opening of the bids for the purpose of negotiation.

The response received from MFA states: *An invitation was submitted to only one additional economic operator (Avialog DOOEL Skopje) representative of FLYDubai, because according to data from the Macedonian Embassy in Abu Dhabi, only FLYDubai has the ability to organize flights from Dubai to Europe, which also organizes flights from Riyadh to Europe.*

As evidence of the connection between Avialog and FlyDubai, MFA submitted a card for engagement in FlyDubai, which belongs to a natural person - the founder of Avialog, but which does not prove a business or legal connection between the two companies. Namely, according to the data in the Register of Beneficial Owners, the company holding the contract is 100% owned by a natural person from Macedonia. Moreover, both in the offer itself and in the issued invoices, the company holding the contract does not refer to any representation or connection with FLYDubai, especially since the services of the airline company FlyNas were also used for the evacuation flights.

The offer from the company Avialog offers what MFA is looking for almost perfectly, fitting into the estimated value of 60 million denars (975,610 euros). The offer received from Avialog is lower by only 200,000 denars (3,250 euros), or 0.33%.

Image of the bid received from the sole bidder

Дел II - Техничка и финансиска понуда

Ш.Согласни сме да ги понудиме следниве услуги: - Набавка за услуги за закуп на авион за превоз и евакуација на македонските државјани од регионот на Блискиот Исток зафатен со воени дејствија

Ред бр.	Опис	Вкупна цена без ДДВ за еден лет	ДДВ	Цена со ДДВ	Очекувана количина
1	**Закуп на авион со капацитет на патници од минимум 150 лица, на релација Дубаи-Скопје**	12.954.900 МКД	0	12.954.900	3 лета
2	**Закуп на авион со капацитет на патници од минимум 150 лица, на релација Ријад-Скопје**	16.000.000 МКД	0	16.000.000	1 лет
3	**Дополнително воено осигурување**	1.233.800	0	1.233.800	1 лет
ВКУПНО БЕЗ ДДВ:					59.799.900 МКД
ДДВ					0
Вкупно со ДДВ					59.799.900 МКД

On the same day that the offer was submitted (6.3.2026), MFA concluded the contract with Avialog Skopje. On the same day (6.3.2026), Avialog prepared the first invoice for the first 2 flights Dubai-Skopje, indicating the dates for their implementation: 8 and 11 March 2026. On the same day (6.3.2026), MFA paid the invoice. The second flight was implemented on 10 March, but the original date remains in the invoice.

As can be seen from the image of the offer, the price for the flights from Dubai to Skopje cost 12,954,900 denars (210,649 euros). The price for the airplane on the Riyadh-Skopje route cost 16,000,000 denars (260,163 euros). The flight, which was supposed to be on the Riyadh-Skopje route, but then landed in Pristina, included bus transportation from Doha, Kuwait and Bahrain to Riyadh, as well as 1 night in Riyadh.

Additional military insurance was used for the air transport in the amount of 1,233,800 denars (20,062 euros) per flight.

Advance payment for the flights was not provided for in the tender documentation and is not in accordance with the Public Procurement Law

The advance payment for the flights is foreseen in the concluded agreement (Article 4) which states: "Payment for the services will be made immediately before the realization of the services, due to the local conditions of offers from airlines in the Middle East and wider in the region and Europe which are characterized by the fact that all airline companies require payment immediately before agreeing on the departure dates."

However, this article of the agreement concluded between MFA and Avialog is not in accordance with the conditions stated in the tender documentation, where it was clearly stated that: "The contracting authority will make payment as soon as possible after the performance of the services and submission of an invoice to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of the Republic of North Macedonia."

Display of advance payments for evacuation flights

Date of invoice issued	Date of paid invoice	Route	Flight date	Payment value in denars	Payment value in euros
06.03.2026	06.03.2026	Dubai-Skopje 2 flights	8.3.2026 10.3.2026	28,377,400	461,421
09.03.2026	09.03.2026	Riyadh - Pristina	11.3.2026	17,233,800	280,224
13.03.2026	16.03.2026	Dubai-Skopje	17.3.2026	14,188,100	230,701
TOTAL		**4 лета**		**59,799,300**	**972,346**

According to Article 116 paragraph 2 of the Public Procurement Law, a public procurement contract is concluded in accordance with the conditions set out in the tender documentation and the offer. This means that payment after the service has been performed must also be specified in the contract. This would certainly not limit Avialog from paying for the flights from its own funds and then covering these costs after the invoice is paid. However, setting certain conditions in the tender documentation and then changing them in the contract is not in accordance with the PPL.

At the same time, the amendment also puts all those companies to which an invitation was sent in the annulled procedure in an unequal position. According to Article 7 of the PPL, the contracting authority ensures equal treatment of economic operators in all phases of the public procurement procedure and in relation to all elements of the offer, taking into account the mutual recognition and proportionality of the requirements in relation to the subject of the procurement. The contracting authority must ensure equal treatment of all bidders in the negotiations and must not provide information in a discriminatory manner, which would give some participants an advantage over others. Given that the tender documentation plays a key role in the public procurement procedure, it must contain all the information necessary for the specific subject of procurement in order for the economic operator to be able to prepare and submit its bid in a quality and timely manner. Hence, preparation of the tender documentation that is not in accordance with the law and has led or could have led to discrimination of economic operators or restriction of market competition constitutes a significant violation of the law.

The Public Procurement Law does not provide that in conditions of a negotiated procedure without publication of a notice in accordance with point d) of Article 55 paragraph 1, if the safety, life and health of people are directly threatened, a 100% advance payment can be given without any bank guarantee.

On the contrary, the Public Procurement Law limits the amount of the advance payment. According to Article 103 paragraph 2 of the PPL, for contracting authorities from the classical public sector, to which MFA belongs, the advance payment cannot exceed 20% of the value of the contract. At the same time, according to Article 103 paragraph 3, before paying the advance payment, the contracting authority must provide a bank guarantee from the procurement holder in the amount of the agreed advance payment. The contract concluded between the two parties does not provide for a bank guarantee.

Taking this into account, such an action can easily be assessed as disproportionate and contrary to the principle of protection of public funds, because the contracting authority, in this case MFA, assumes the entire risk in advance, without an instrument for reimbursement if the contract is not fulfilled. Urgency is not sufficient in itself to justify a 100% advance payment without security; urgency may influence the choice of procedure, but should not eliminate financial security. By paying the full price before the service is performed, the contracting authority is practically left without real protection if the economic operator is late, partially delivers or does not deliver at all. The principle of economical, efficient and effective use of public funds requires that the risk be reasonably managed.

With regard to the concluded contract, it is important to highlight the fact that MFA did not apply the standard model for the procurement of aviation services in which the commission charged by the economic operator is presented separately, as a percentage of the value of the airline ticket or the leased airplane. MFA concluded the contract in a total amount, without expressing the commission/margin that will be charged by the sole bidder with whom the contract was concluded, which makes it impossible to see the amount of the intermediary's commission.

While the evacuation costs in our country were fully covered by the state, in most European Union countries the transported passengers participated in the costs.

The 590 passengers were transported on 4 flights – three from Dubai to Skopje and one from Riyadh to Pristina. It turns out that the cost of evacuation per passenger from Dubai was 1,548 euros, and from Riyadh 1,960 euros, including overnight accommodation.

Of the total 590 passengers transported, 521 are Macedonian citizens, and 27 are foreign citizens whose evacuation, as MFA responded, was carried out in cooperation with the embassies of neighboring countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Kosovo, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Passengers on the realized flights

Flight date	Airplane model	Airline company	Total number of passengers	Macedonian citizens	Foreign citizens with family ties	Foreign citizens from the neighborhood
08.03.2026	Boeing 738-Max	FlyDubai	150	150	0	0
10.03.2026	Boeing 738-Max	FlyDubai	150	127	10	13
11.03.2026	Airbus 320	FlyNas	143	126	9	8
17.03.2026	Boeing 738-Max	FlyDubai	147	118	8	21
Total passengers			**590**	**521**	**27**	**42**

Although the public procurement contract provides for the evacuation of Macedonian citizens only, no compensation was requested for the airline services used by foreign citizens.

The school swimming pool in Chair, worth 890 thousand euros, for 6 months was completed only on paper

(Tender of the Municipality of Chair
for the construction of a school indoor swimming pool
with number 14694/2023)

Condition of the pool
on March 12, 2026,
almost 4 months
after "completion"

- Although the Municipality of Chair submitted a notification to the Electronic Public Procurement System on November 21, 2025 that the contract for the construction of an indoor swimming pool in the "Ismail Qemali" Primary School was 100% implemented, the facility was not officially launched until six months later.
- The Municipality declared the swimming pool completed on the same day it received a report from the supervision which listed unfinished work and still requires the connection of the electrical and water supply network in order to perform the final testing of the swimming pool.
- The Municipality of Chair refused to submit documentation confirming whether the contractor had removed the observations made by the supervision, nor whether a formal handover of the completed works had been made. The Municipality responded only partially to the request for access to public information, omitting precisely those documents that would show whether the contract had actually been implemented.
- The construction of the swimming pool was initially supposed to be completed in January 2025. Instead of activating the contractual penalty provided for in Articles 52 and 53 of the contract, the Municipality of Chair extended the deadline for implementation twice at the request of the contractor itself.
- The rush to present the contract as completed comes at a time when the company holding the contract, Eurovia from Zhelino, meanwhile renamed EAKOM from Tetovo, together with another company, applied for a new announcement for the construction of another indoor swimming pool in the Municipality of Chair, this time in the "7 Marsi" (7 March) school.
- Taking into account the above, the possibility cannot be ruled out that the swimming pool was only formally put into use on May 26, 2026 – 10 days before the end of the school year, in order to confirm that the public procurement contract was implemented and to minimize the consequences of the public announcement of this research, which the Municipality was aware was being prepared.

The notification of a completed contract does not reflect reality

On November 21, 2025, the Municipality of Chair submitted a notification to the Electronic Public Procurement System (EPPS) that the public procurement contract for the construction of a school indoor swimming pool worth 54,772,402 denars (890,608 euros) was 100% completed.

According to this notification, it becomes clear that the company holding the public procurement contract, Construction, Trade and Services Company EUROVIA DOOEL Zhelino, has changed its name to Construction, Trade and Services Company EAKOM DOOEL Tetovo. However, what is significant is that the notification of a completed contract does not reflect the actual situation on the ground. The site visit on March 12, 2026 by the CCC team, i.e. after almost 4 months of this notification, showed that the swimming pool is far from finished. Unfinished work was noted both inside and outside the swimming pool.

Hence, on April 6, 2026, a request for access to public information was submitted to the Municipality of Chair, in which it was requested to submit the following documents and information:

1. Public procurement decision;
2. Report on the conducted public procurement procedure;
3. Report on the conducted e-auction;
4. Date of introduction into operation of the procurement entity;
5. Dynamic plan for the performance of the works submitted by the procurement entity;
6. The notification you received from the procurement entity that the works subject to the contract have been completed by submitting documentation duly signed by the Supervisory Authority (obligation provided for in Article 31 of the Agreement);
7. Minutes of the handover of the performed works;
8. The final calculation of the value of the facility in accordance with the provisions of Article 6 of the agreement with the economic operator;
9. Has a contractual penalty been calculated and paid in accordance with Articles 52 and 53 of the contract and
10. Why has the pool not yet been put into operation even though a notification of the contract was submitted to the EPPS 4 months ago?

The Municipality of Chair did not submit the requested documents within the legal deadline of 20 days, after which an appeal was submitted to the Agency for the Protection of the Right to Free Access to Information on April 27. On May 4, the Municipality submitted the information from points 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 with the explanation that: "Regarding the contractual obligations, they have been implemented within the stipulated deadlines, without the need for additional interventions. Additionally, the facility has not yet been put into use, according to the findings of the Report of the supervising engineer for the performed technical inspection."

From the documents received, it appears that the company responsible for supervision URBAN STYLE ENGINEERING Skopje on September 30, 2025, informed the Municipality of Chair that the contractor EUROVIA had informed them that the construction works for the construction of a school indoor swimming pool had been completed and that a date would be set for the internal technical acceptance of the facility. This is not a random day. It was precisely on September 30 that the third consecutive, agreed deadline for the construction of the swimming pool expired. Namely, the construction contract was concluded on November 28, 2023 with a validity period of 14 months, i.e. until January 28, 2025. This was followed by 2 annexes to extend the deadline for the implementation of the contract, the first until May 31, 2025, and the second until September 30, 2025. During the construction of the swimming pool, the Municipality of Chair could have activated a contractual penalty provided for in Articles 52 and 53 for exceeding the agreed deadlines. However, instead, it extended the deadline for implementation twice at the request of the contractor itself. In addition, part of the listed reasons for the delay was the contractor's late introduction into operation. In this way, the Municipality first created the obstacle and then accepted it as an excuse not to apply the contractual penalty but to annex the public procurement contract.

Given that the contract was concluded on 28.11.2023, with a validity period of 14 months, i.e. until 28.01.2025, and the contractor was put into operation only on 17.05.2024, it follows that the actual start of execution of the contract was postponed by approximately six months from the date of conclusion of the contract. Such a delayed start of operation may indicate insufficient transparency in relation to the actual time dynamics of execution of the contract. The delayed start of operation, if not clearly stated in advance in the tender documentation or in the terms of the procedure, may be considered as a circumstance that potentially restricts competition. Thus, not all interested economic operators had complete and accurate information about the actual start of execution of the contract, which is contrary to the principle of transparency and may have an impact on equal access and competition in the public procurement procedure.

The report from the supervising engineer for the technical inspection of the pool was prepared almost 2 months after the notification that the pool had been built, i.e. as late as 21.11.2025. The supervision report contains the following observations, findings and instructions from the supervisory authority after the technical inspection:

On 18.11.2025, based on the Request of the contractor, in the presence of representatives of the Supervisory Authority, Investor and Contractor DGTU EUROVIA DOOEL Zelino, a Technical Review of the work performed in connection with the facility «Construction of a school indoor swimming pool, Municipality of Chair» was conducted and it was concluded that it was done in accordance with the Project Documentation, the requirements of the Investor, the Basic Agreement and its amendments, the approvals from the competent institutions and the applicable laws and standards.

During a detailed inspection of the construction, the Supervisory Authority noted the following observations that should be removed and implemented by the Contractor:

- *It is necessary to replace a cracked glass on the front door;*
- *To correct and level all the entrance doors in the building;*
- *To correct and level the interior doors of the toilets;*
- *To replace three broken suspended panes at the joints of the facade panel;*
- *To correct the partitions in front of the toilets;*
- *To correct the floor tiles around the pool grate by grouting them;*
- *To correct the thresholds on the wall of the entrance doors with bekaton;*
- *To perform final testing of the hydrotechnical installations and the pool bed after the construction of the water supply and sewage connection by the PE Water Supply and Sewerage Skopje;*
- *To perform final testing and calibration of the machinery equipment after the construction of the electrical installation connection by EVN;*
- *To perform final testing of the electrotechnical equipment after the construction of the electrical installation connection by EVN;*

The supervisory authority has determined the following works that have not yet been completed and should be completed as an obligation by the Investor, the Municipality of Chair, before performing the final technical acceptance of the facility:

- *To connect the facility to water and sewage installations – PE Water and Sewerage Skopje*
- *To connect the facility to electricity supply – EVN*

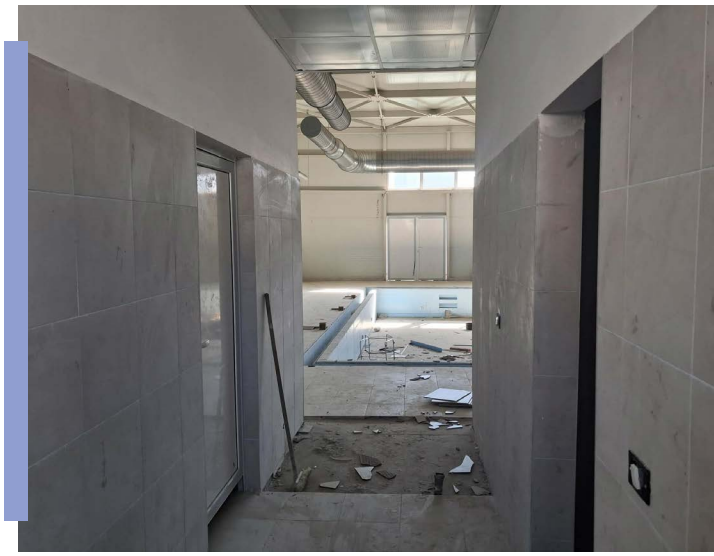
The supervisory authority ordered the Contractor to remove the identified remarks within 30 working days. The investor Municipality of Chair should make the above-mentioned connections in order to carry out the necessary tests that are relevant for the smooth and proper functioning of the facility as a whole.

Although this report from the supervisory authority contains many remarks, this did not prevent the Municipality of Chair on the day it received the report, i.e. on 21.11.2025, from submitting a notification to the EPPS that the contract for the construction of the pool has been fully implemented.

However, the pictures taken in the pool on 12 March 2026 by the CCC team show that the work is far from finished. In addition, it is more than obvious that the tasks given by the supervision have not been implemented even after almost 4 months, i.e. that no final testing has been carried out, which is the only relevant thing to determine whether the contractor has really implemented the contract in full and in accordance with the project.

Taking all this into account, additional attempts were made to obtain more detailed information from the Municipality of Chair as to why the pool is not being put into use. The Municipality was asked to submit the documents that were previously requested, as well as to provide evidence that the findings of the supervision had been acted upon.

The pool was not put into use and the activities surrounding it are still ongoing as of May 21, 2026, when the CCC team revisited the pool location. On this day, exactly 6 months have passed since the notification of the completed contract was submitted.



The pool on March 12, 2026

The pool on May 21, 2026

However, the pool was declared open on May 26, 2026. Taking into account the above, it cannot be ruled out that the pool was put into operation on May 26, 2026 – just 10 days before the end of the school year, only formally, in order to confirm that the public procurement contract was implemented.

The rush to present the contract as completed, a full 6 months before it actually happened, comes at a time when the company, the holder of the contract, Eurovia from Zhelino, with a changed name to EAKOM from Tetovo, together with another company, are preparing to apply for a new announcement for the construction of another indoor pool in the Municipality of Chair, this time, in the "7 March" school. The contract for the construction of the new swimming pool in the Municipality of Chair was concluded on January 27, 2026 with a group of bidders: Construction, Trade and Services Company NUM CONSTRUCTION LTD DOOEL Skopje and Construction, Trade and Services Company EACOM DOOEL-SKOPJE. This company tandem was the only bidder in the tender. The construction of the new swimming pool began on March 4, 2026. The value of the new swimming pool is 61,138,707 denars (994,125 euros).

Otherwise, entering data into the Electronic Public Procurement System that the contract has been implemented, in situations where it has not actually been implemented, constitutes providing false data and is contrary to the principles of transparency and integrity established by the Law on Public Procurement. Such action may lead to a misrepresentation of the level of contract execution, affect the accuracy of reports and create a risk of concealing irregularities. The responsibility for the accuracy of the entered data lies with the contracting authority, i.e. the authorized official who enters the data.

Chronology of the tender for the construction of a school indoor swimming pool

15.08.2023: The Municipality of Chair adopts the Decision for public procurement for the Construction of a school indoor swimming pool with the estimated value of 49,999,998 denars including VAT.

16.08.2023: The Municipality of Chair publishes the public procurement notice.

25.09.2023: 4 offers have been submitted: Company for construction, design, trade and services GONI LJINUKS DOOEL Skopje; Company for construction, trade and services EUROVIA DOOEL Zelino; Company for construction, production trade and services import-export BITEM DOOEL Skopje and Trade company for production trade and services INSTALLATION Import Export Ismail DOOEL V. D. Dol Zajas.

16.10.2023: An e-auction is conducted in which three of the four companies (EUROVIA, BITEM and INSTALLATION) participate. Only EUROVIA participates in the price reduction, reducing its already lowest price of 52,917,290 denars to 46,417,290 denars excluding VAT.

25.10.2023: The Municipality of Chair adopts a decision increasing the value of the procurement to 54,772,402 denars including VAT.

28.11.2023: The Municipality of Chair concludes a contract with the company EUROVIA Zelino with a validity period of 14 months, i.e. until 28.01.2025.

17.05.2024: Introduction of the contractor into operation.

28.01.2025: Signed annex to contract no. 1 for the extension of the deadline for the implementation of the contract until 31.05.2025.

01.06.2025: Signed annex to contract no. 2 for the extension of the deadline for the implementation of the contract until 30.09.2025.

30.09.2025: The supervisory authority - URBAN STYLE ENGINEERING Skopje submits to the Municipality of Chair a Notification from the contractor to the contracting authority that the works have been completed - request for technical acceptance.

18.11.2025: The supervisory authority submits the Report from the supervising engineer for performed technical inspection.

21.11.2025: The Municipality of Chair submits to the EPPP a Notification for the complete implementation of the contract.

26.05.2026: The swimming pool is officially declared open.

Kingdom of the Netherlands

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