



*Center for Research and Policy Making*

*NEWSLETTER*  
*Spring 2009*

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WELCOME  
NOTE

This spring we had yet another election in Macedonia 2009, local and presidential. We, at the Center for Research and Policy Making (CRPM), in cooperation with OSCE, published the book “Perspectives of the domestic legal framework governing elections, from the viewpoint of the international election standards and good practices”. We produced an analysis and organized a campaign to increase citizen awareness about the importance of taking individual decisions and actions when casting a ballot. CRPM, from early February till the end of the elections, published survey results on the popularity of the presidential candidates. In line with our regular activities, CRPM prepared an analysis on Macedonia’s progress in fulfilling the benchmarks set in the Roadmap for visa liberalization. Since our founding we have advocated for the abolition of the EU visa regime. This winter we also published studies on gender representation in the agricultural sector, and on the current challenges faced by family owned businesses. CRPM experts wrote the 2008 Macedonian chapters of the Nations in Transit, Open Budget Index and the Global Integrity Reports. We also wrote reports for CEU CENS and Risk Monitor. CRPM produced a Manual for Policy and Situation Analysis. Working with BTD we are preparing an analysis of the higher education sector. In 2009 you can also expect from CRPM an awareness-raising campaign on the gender-sensitive approach to policy-making. Among other issues in the next six months CRPM, in partnership with UNIFEM, will work on the project “Responding to DRGs – Advocacy for reform of health and community based services to substitute unpaid care-work of women in Macedonia.”As you can expect in the upcoming period, we will remain at the forefront and hard at work in promoting democratic reforms and good governance in Macedonia.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Zhidas Daskalovski  
CRPM President

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## CRPM PUBLIC OPINION POLLS, ELECTIONS 2009

CRPM continuously followed the elections and the public opinion regarding the presidential candidates. The table below outlines the CRPM survey results done in February and March. The last CRPM survey, conducted a week before the elections predicted that Mr. Ivanov and Mr. Selmani will have a run-off on the 5<sup>th</sup> of April. However, due to very low turnout among ethnic Albanians, estimated at 41%, and a high turnout among Macedonians, estimated at 61%, Selmani came in third place after the first round of elections.

	Presidential Elections Results 22.3.2009	Presidential Elections Results % 22.03	CRPM Survey 15.03	CRPM Survey 07.03.	CRPM Survey 28.2	CRPM Survey 21.2	CRPM Survey 14.2
Ivanov	343,374	19,2	23	23,1	23.3	25.5	30.5
Frckoski	200,316	11,2	8,9	9,7	12.3	11.9	15.6
Selmani	146.795	8,2	13,8	13,3	13.6	17.7	18.8
Boshkovski	145,638	8,1	4,2	6,3	6	10.3	4.4
Buxhaku	73,567	4,1	8,7	8,1	7.6	5.8	10.9
Ruzin	39,645	2,2	2,9	3,9	1	5.4	5.6
Hoxha	30,281	1,7	2,3	1,9	1.5	3.2	2.7

## IMPROVING ELECTIONS IN MACEDONIA

In the period from March to December 2008, CRPM implemented the OSCE project **“Perspectives of the domestic legal framework governing elections, from the viewpoint of the international election standards and good practices”** – a guide towards accurate, reliable and consistent electoral legislation aimed at straightening of the overall integrity of the electoral processes. It aims to contribute to a more effective electoral process by offering systematic research and analysis in key areas regarding the legal, technical and practical aspects of the electoral process. The [research](#) was undertaken by renowned academic experts and practitioners who are experienced in the field of elections. In line with the research process CRPM in coordination with the OSCE team organized several consultative meetings in order to ensure the effectiveness of the ongoing process. In addition to this, the purpose of these meetings was to ensure the inclusiveness of the viewpoints of the relevant institutions responsible for the proper conduct of the electoral process. The final output of the overall project was a publication comprised of the above mentioned analyses. The publication offers a comprehensive overview of the shortcomings indentified in the electoral legal framework. The analyses include recommendations and practical instructions to be considered by the respective institutions during the process. Therefore, the publication will serve as a practical tool for the actors involved in the electoral process. The publication inspired a wider debate and contributed to a more transparent policy making process.



Перспективи на домашната правна рамка за спроведување на изборите, погледната од аголот на меѓународните изборни стандарди и добри практики – водич кон прецизно, сигурно и конзистентно изборно законодавство, насочено кон зајакнување на интегритетот на изборниот процес во целина.

## MY VOICE, MY DECISION!

Though the issue of proxy and family voting has been mentioned as an election irregularity during all election cycles in Macedonia, its roots were not thoroughly examined so far and the general public opinion relied mainly on misconceptions and stereotypes. CRPM sought to analyze it from a different perspective, by focusing on the opinions of people from areas which are mostly affected by this problem. Both, men and women from 7 municipalities where proxy and family voting was most pervasive during the previous electoral cycles participated in focus groups where they were encouraged to express their experiences and opinions regarding these issues. They openly discussed about the patriarchal values still dominant in their communities, which determine who is 'allowed' to discuss political issues and make political decisions; as well as the constant pressures they face from the political parties.



The [analysis](#) integrated the expressed opinions of citizens and the views of state electoral bodies and female parliamentarians. The local and national media embraced the findings and reported on them extensively. It was followed by a public campaign, based on the analysis' findings, to raise awareness about the importance of making individual decisions and casting a ballot individually. Three national and one local TV station and 2 newspapers agreed to air and publish the promotional posters and videos for free for a period of one month. In addition, about 4000 people from vulnerable groups were visited by local volunteers in their homes, advised on the dangers of proxy and family voting and received promotional materials (pens, calendars, cups). The ultimate impact of the campaign is yet to be assessed in the aftermath of the elections, and CRPM is closely following the affected areas.



## WHAT DELIVERS RESULTS: PARTY DISCIPLINE OR CAMPAIGNS?

...And what distinguishes our campaigns? Time, money and above all key capacities are lacking; therefore it is impossible to apply a sound methodological approach. The answer is reruns and improvisations. Usually all parties base their activities on the already well known rallies and canvassing, door-to-door in public parks etc. The bulk of the money is spent on political advertizing, billboards and distributing fliers to people's homes. In the end, there is no noticeable change, the desired effect on the public's opinion is lacking. During the course of the campaign the ratings of all the candidates, in all the polls, consistently drop, while the number of undecided voters consistently rises. Generally speaking, the volume of distributed advertising tools does have an effect. The billboards of the governing parties VMRO and DUI are clearly dominating the landscape with a 3 to 1 margin compared to any other rival party. In the application of other tools, internet based platforms for example, a rather limited approach is apparent. The Internet sites of the candidates have very limited content, and a lot of dead/empty links. Sadly they are only in the mother tongue of the majority of the party's membership; the links in the other languages are either completely empty or rudimentary. Finally, so what? It does not make a difference. The presidential candidate Ljubomir Frckoski has the most professional site with best content; however his rating has not moved from the 12% average during the entire month. No effects.

On the other hand, the message is too general...

Read the full text of the column of our associate Nikola Stalevski at [www.crpm.org.mk](http://www.crpm.org.mk)



## *CRPM CONTINUES TO WORK ON VISA LIBERALIZATION ISSUES*

The Center for Research and Policy Making CRPM conducted a [study](#) (part of the PASOS regional project led by the Bulgarian European Institute) of the Macedonian progress in regard to the benchmarks set in the Roadmap for visa liberalization. The project was conducted in the period from July to October 2008. The final product was a thorough analysis, which clearly demonstrated that Macedonia successfully implemented the associated technical requirements.

The CRPM team has placed the public focus on this issue and pointed out the main areas where additional work was expected, in order to secure a positive recommendation by the Commission in 2009. However, CRPM was aware that the debate should not be conducted only inside the country, but that it is also important to present the main findings and the story to the relevant institutions at the EU level. It is the Member States that have the final word and the final decision when the Macedonian citizens will travel visa free to the EU. CRPM has submitted its contribution together with its EU partners through the PASOS network to present the Macedonian story. Two meetings have been held for this purpose, one in Prague (October 2008) where the advocacy strategy was discussed and agreed on; and one meeting in Brussels where the issue was presented before the relevant stakeholders at EU level and the official representatives of the western Balkan countries.

Moreover, CRPM in partnership with ESI will continue to work on this issue until the decision on visa liberalization for Macedonia is reached. As part of the ESI's Schengen White List Project, we'll conduct an update of the analysis on the Macedonian progress and create a [web site containing the stories](#) of the western Balkan citizens who faced difficulties when applying for visas. In addition to this, a lobbying strategy will be built targeting the parties concerned at the EU level and at the level of Member States. By now CRPM successfully managed to promote the Macedonian progress in this area and continues to work together with its EU partners to set the Macedonian visa liberalization as a priority on the EU agenda for 2009.

## *CEU CENS published a new study on Macedonia*

The Centre for European Neighborhood Studies of the Central European University commissioned CRPM to produce a chapter on the economic transformation of Macedonia and European Integration. The study was published recently and can be obtained from the following web site: <http://web.ceu.hu/cens/macedonia.html>

Macedonia was the first country of the region to initiate the Stabilization and Association Process aiming for EU approximation. Currently it has a candidate status for the EU but has not been able to start accession negotiations. Hopes were high for receiving a starting date before the end of 2008, however the most recent European Commission progress report has not deemed the reform process sufficient. The paper provides a thorough examination of the political and economic transformation process of the country since its independence and thereby contributes to a better understanding of the current events and the process of consolidating reforms.

## OPEN BUDGET INDEX 2008

CRPM was the Macedonian partner in the International Budget Partnership that produced the Open Budget Index 2008 (OBI 2008). According to the [Open Budget Index 2008](#) eighty percent of the world's governments fail to provide adequate information for the public to hold them accountable for managing their money. Nearly 50 percent of 85 countries (whose access to budget information was carefully evaluated by the International Budget Partnership) provide such minimal information that they are able to hide unpopular, wasteful, and corrupt spending.

Macedonia's score (54%), on the **Open Budget Index** shows that the government provides the public with some, albeit incomplete, information regarding the central government's budget and financial activities during the course of the budget year. This makes it difficult for citizens to hold government accountable for its management of the public's money.



## THE GLOBAL INTEGRITY REPORT

The Global Integrity Report is a tool for understanding governance and anti-corruption mechanisms at the national level. Written by local researchers and journalists, the Report is characterized by an innovative, award-winning research methodology; a robust peer review process; and start-to-finish transparency. Each country assessment comprises two core elements: a qualitative Reporter's Notebook and a quantitative Integrity Indicators scorecard, the data from which is aggregated and used to generate the cross-country Global Integrity Index. This year the CRPM prepared the [scorecard](#) for Macedonia identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the Macedonian anti-corruption systems in the various sectors. The scorecard is an index that assesses the effectiveness, existence and access to key anti-corruption mechanisms in each of the sectors.

According to the analysis produced by the CRPM, out of the six categories covered by the analysis, Macedonia scored "strong" in two, that is, in the category of *Oversight & Regulation* and *Anti-Corruption & Rule of Law*. In three categories Macedonia scored "moderate": *Civil Society, Public Information & Media, Elections & Government Accountability*. Only in one category did Macedonia score "weak", and that is in *Administration & Civil Service*.



## *PUBLIC FINANCE TRANSPARENCY IN MACEDONIA*

The production of this [study](#) was commissioned by Risk Monitor Bulgaria and was produced with the support of the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* under the project “Transparency of the Public Finances” governance in five countries – Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Moldova and Romania.

The transparency of the budgetary process is usually evaluated on the basis of accessibility of information on budget-making and budget execution for ordinary citizens. Therefore in this study we consider the various tools for accessing budget data in Macedonia: using the free access to information procedure, evaluating the degree of implementation of IMF’s *Code of Good Practices on Fiscal Transparency* and the *Lima Declaration of Guidelines on Auditing Precepts*<sup>1</sup>. In this process the author used in-house secondary data sources (legislation, financial and narrative analytical reports and public expenditure and institutional reviews), as well as primary data (i.e. Macedonia relevant scores from the International Budget Transparency Index 2008). The analysis takes into consideration the legal aspects, the procedures and the implementation practices that make the budgetary process in Macedonia transparent and open to citizens.



## *NATIONS IN TRANSIT 2008*

Writing the *Nations in Transit 2008* report for Macedonia the senior CRPM analyst Zhidas Daskalovski points out that, although the Macedonian society is still split along ethnic lines, conflicts have been subdued and interethnic consolidation strengthened with the implementation of the Ohrid Agreement. In 2008, there has been further progress towards implementing the strategy for equitable representation of ethnic communities in the public sector, in particular as regards the Albanian community. The available data shows that the number of ethnic Albanian civil servants increased by 3.75% between January 2007 and January 2008. In a number of ministries the percentage of ethnic Albanian employees corresponds to the share of this population in the country in the census figure. In 2009 Macedonia will face increasing tensions in the functioning of the government coalition as the ethnic Albanian coalition partner will be under pressure to leave the government which is not able to further pursue Macedonia’s integration into NATO and the EU. Developments in Kosovo might negatively affect the interethnic relations in the country. The government will also be under pressure to continue economic reforms and achieve stronger growth levels. Democratic presidential and local elections, scheduled for the spring of 2009, will be crucial for the European perspectives of the country. Full, EU visa liberalization is expected for Macedonia in 2009.



## *SITUATION ANALYSIS MANUAL AND TRAININGS*

In order to assist the Macedonian Government in its effort to meet the criteria for joining the European Union, the Centre for Research and Policy Making together with DIFI in the course of this project produced a Guide/Manual for situation/policy analysis and developed and conducted trainings in policy analysis. The policy development/policy making capacity of the Macedonian ministries are particularly important as the country approaches the advanced stages of European Union accession. Improving the policy making apparatus is one of the priority areas for the Macedonian Government. During the course of 6 months, this capacity building effort was accomplished with the generous help of the Norwegian government and a joint effort of DIFI, CRPM, and the General Secretariat of the Government of Macedonia.

All together around 100 civil servants from all ministries of the Republic of Macedonia participated in the 4 trainings and 500 copies of the Manual are set to be distributed throughout the relevant positions in the ministries and agencies. Also the manual is set to be used by the state university institute as an educational tool for their master level courses. It was important to achieve the ultimate goal of reaching a broad and varied cross-section of civil servants who are engaged in researching and drafting policy on a daily basis. It will provide the civil servants both with the tools and the practical experience of structuring a Situation/Policy Analysis, and consequently improve the quality of the policies themselves and also the policy making process in Macedonia.

## *SAFEGUARDING THE CITIZENS PRIORITIES*

Based on the accumulated expertise and quality as a training provider for policy related matters, CRPM was very pleased to extend the collaborations in this area even further with the Veles NGO FOCUS. Working around the Veles region and the surrounding municipalities of Gradsko, Lozovo and Caska, this ISC supported project focuses on enhancing the capacity of the local NGOs in representing citizen interests in the processes of municipal policy making and budgeting. CRPM conducted a 3 day training regarding policy making and budgeting on the local level, highlighting the potential for participation of civil society in this process. Some of the key tools include: participative policy making, sectoral budgetary analysis, design and research methodology for social research and others. The last day of the training focused on defining and designing the methodology for the joint monitoring project that the participants will undertake in their municipalities, under the guidance of the CRPM trainer. In the following 6 months the participants will apply this methodology to monitor the inclusion of key citizen projects and execution of the associated action plans and budgetary lines in the 2009 budget. The enhancement of this capacity strengthens the representation of citizen interests and priorities in municipal policy and budgetary practices and also improves the level of collaboration between the municipality and the associated civil society sector.

## ANALYSIS OF GENDER BALANCE IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

This [analysis](#) was commissioned and financed by the SFARM 3 Project and developed by the Centre for Research and Policy Making – CRPM Skopje through the use of participatory policy research methodology in cooperation with the Federation of Farmers in R. Macedonia (FFRM) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water management and Forestry. To begin with, the study analyzes the policy context in Macedonia concerning gender equality and participation in general, while in the latter part it focuses on the state of affairs in the agricultural sector. Within this sector it particularly addresses the role of women, the problems they face in gaining access to land, bank loans, education and training services, as well as their participation in agricultural organizations, with a focus on women as leaders in the same. Besides a detailed SWOT analysis of the state of affairs in the agricultural sector, the analysis produces valuable conclusions and provides adequate policy recommendations that aim to improve the overall condition of women in society, and particularly in the agriculture sector. The recommendations are addressed to various stakeholders in the society, from government institutions to NGO's, policymakers and others.



## OVERVIEW OF FAMILY BUSINESS RELEVANT ISSUES COUNTRY FICHE MACEDONIA

The concept of family business became a topic in the public and policy discussions in Macedonia. The discussions are going in the direction that the development of family business is very important for the Macedonian economy, which will open the possibility for faster economic growth and employment. However, the scale and the scope of activities are still insufficient for creating more favorable conditions. Family business in Macedonia is not legally defined. It is also badly organized. Consequently, there is a weak differentiation between family and non-family business. This can be mainly explained by the fact that this issue has not been seriously treated in the past. However, the current state of affairs will be dramatically changed because of the increased awareness of the public as well as the policy makers about the family businesses' economic (overall growth potential of the country) and social importance (self-employment, alleviating poverty, etc.). Read more in our report [here](#).

## ANALYSIS FOCUSED ON HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

CRPM is working on two analyses focused on the higher education sector. One of them '**Improving education and labor market linkages**' – aims to analyze the mismatch between the knowledge and skills gained at universities and those required by the labor market. The activities include: content analysis of employment advertisements, interviews with stakeholders (companies, employment agencies, education authorities) and focus groups with students and teaching staff from several faculties. The second analysis is '**Private and public universities: Differences in quality or only in finances**', which focuses on the differences between the private and public universities through a qualitative and quantitative analysis of a sample of 2 private and 3 public universities. The aim is to clarify some of the stereotypes regarding the quality of education offered at the two types of universities.

## INTRODUCTION OF GENDER SENSITIVE APPROACH TO POLICY-MAKING

In 2009 the CRPM will implement a project that aims to improve the status of women in society in Macedonia. This is to be achieved through an awareness-raising campaign regarding the importance of the gender-sensitive approach to policy-making in the institutions responsible for developing programs and policies. The project will start by reviewing the most relevant public policies in several spheres: education, health, property rights, infrastructure, employment, crime and public participation. Thereafter, the team will conduct consultative meetings with key stakeholders from all societal sectors. Several trainings are also foreseen for government employees, NGO activists, women in key political positions and others. In addition, several round-tables are also planned. The project will result with seven policy studies in various sectors and adequate recommendations for key stakeholders. The project is financed by the European Commission through the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR).

## RESPONDING TO (DIAGNOSIS RELATED GROUPS (DRGs) ...

In the next six months, CRPM will start working on the project "Responding to DRGs – Advocacy for reform of health and community based services to substitute unpaid care-work of women in Macedonia" in partnership with UNIFEM. This project will be a follow-up of the previous research made on the subject. It aims at advocating for policy changes to institutionally respond to the growing need of care that emerges under the new DRGs payment system introduced in hospitals. It also aims to decrease the amount of unpaid care work of women which would eventually allow for greater gender equality, and provide an environment for growing economic emancipation of women.

Activities:

**Phase 1** Advocacy efforts targeting NGOs and national level policy makers

**Phase 2** Identification of examples/case studies of opened municipalities for community based care services

**Phase 3** Round table discussions

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Dear friends. CRPM have moved to new office. Here you can find our new address and telephone and fax number. Please update our contact in your data base with our new contact details.

Riste Zmejkoski edited the newsletter with the assistance of Zhidas Daskalovski, Marija Risteska, Ilija Talev and Nikola Stalevski. The content in this newsletter is prepared by the CRPM team. For more information's, news and updates visit our web page [www.crpm.org.mk](http://www.crpm.org.mk) or send us an e-mail at [crpm@crpm.org.mk](mailto:crpm@crpm.org.mk). Please send us your comments about the newsletter editions at [zmejkoski@crpm.org.mk](mailto:zmejkoski@crpm.org.mk). Thank you for your attention.

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