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...and a half

NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN/ WINTER- 2009/2010



WELCOME NOTE

In 2009 the European Commission recommended opening negotiations for EU membership for Macedonia. Also this year, following intense reforms and lengthy European Union procedures, the Schengen wall was finally demolished and Macedonians can now freely travel to all EU countries except Great Britain and Ireland. Notwithstanding the importance of these developments Macedonian Europeanization occurs in many sectors and fields that are not so media attractive. We, at the Center for Research and Policy Making, are at the forefront promoting significant changes of the Macedonian society. Improving the rights of women, the quality of education, the primary care or patients are topics that we worked on in 2009. We also analyzed the impact of the world economic crisis on Macedonia's children, how to introduce gender sensitive budget, and did budget monitoring in the municipality of Veles. CRPM is also a partner of the Institute of Public administration of Ireland in the implementation of the EU project "Technical assistance to the Civil Servants Agency and strengthening the implementation of the National System for Training Coordination." You will find more about our activities in this newsletter.

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Prepared by the CRPM team. For more information, news and updates visit our web page www.crpm.org.mk or send us an e-mail at crpm@crpm.org.mk. Please send us your comments about the newsletter editions at zmejkoski@crpm.org.mk. Thank you for your attention.

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Promoting gender sensitive policy-making in Macedonia

CRPM is implementing the EU project "Introducing gender sensitive approach in the policy making in Republic of Macedonia" which has 7 analyses of the situation with particular aspect of gender discrimination and associated policies:

- Women's effective property and inheritance rights in the Republic of Macedonia
- Women representation in politics
- Women participation within the public administration
- The youth has a right to sexual education
- Girls in secondary education: How to increase the enrollment?
- The effects that physical infrastructure has on women's productive time in rural areas
- Formal employment and equal employment opportunities

Furthermore, three trainings were organised for NGO representatives, representatives from the local equal opportunities commissions and female parliamentarians with the aim of increasing their capacity and motivating them to further work on the integration of the gender sensitive approach in the policy-making process.

The publication "Achieving gender equality in Macedonia" was promoted at 16th of December in Skopje and soon it will be available at our web page: www.crpm.org.mk



Survey analysis for promoting Gender sensitive budgeting

This relatively short but very fruitful and dynamic project involved CRPM in its expert analytical capacity. Based on surveys that were conducted in two municipalities in Macedonia, Bitola and Tetovo, CRPM statistically processed and analysed these results. The questionnaires involved the in-depth assessment of the level of satisfaction, the awareness/information levels, and also further assessed the priorities of the inhabitants of these two municipalities.

Also, the CRPM team held a one-day training for the local civil society organisations from these municipalities, in order to enable them to design and engage in survey based analytical activities in the future. The resulting analyses, which will be published shortly by UNIFEM, will serve as a good basis for guidelines that the local municipalities can use in designing projects that will respond to the needs of all their inhabitants. Also it will provide a good opportunity to promote the streamlining of a gender sensitive approach in the process of designing and implementing municipal programmes and budgets.

More care in primary health! More care centres in the municipalities!

In the period 2007-2008, the Centre for Research and Policy and Making (CRPM), with technical support from United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and financial support from Austrian Development Agency (ADA) researched the implications of Diagnosis Related Groups (DRG), a new payment system of hospital services, on women. The research results reveal that the newly introduced DRG decrease the average length of hospital stays. The [analysis](#) further identifies that after the patient is discharged from the hospital, there is a transfer of care from the hospital to the patient's home. The existing primary health care, patronage service as well as home treatment are insufficient to fully provide for the patient, thus requiring additional work provided by family members). Using a time-use survey, CRPM's research team established that the burden of care is borne by mainly female family members (who spend 5 hours a day compared to men who take care of the ill family member for only two and a half hours a day). CRPM assessed that this care work provided by the family members has a value of 10,000 MKD a month.

The analysis used gender sensitive budgeting as a tool to assess the budgetary implications of the reform. The introduction of DRGs will generate savings in the health care system (34% of Ministry of Health budget), which will allow the secondary health care system to care for more patients.

Recognising such implications, CRPM started implementing another project in 2009 ([Responding to Diagnosis Related Groups](#) - Advocacy for reform of the health and community based services to substitute unpaid care work of women in Macedonia") which aimed at identifying policy measure which would substitute the unpaid care work of women. Within this Project, the CRPM team visited Slovenia and Croatia, and examined the mechanisms that prevent the effective transfer of burden of care from the hospital to the patient's family. These are good lessons learned that should be applied also in Macedonia. The mechanisms identified could be divided in two groups:

Institutional measures in the health care system

- Departments of post-acute care in hospitals (extended treatment),
- Daily hospitals,
- Hospices,
- Reorganised patronage service and home treatment.

Non-institutional measures at municipality level

- Community care centres,
- Daily clubs,
- Hospice service organised by non-government organizations,
- Telemedicine.



In the period April - November 2009, the CRPM project team organised 7 round tables: the first was dedicated to discussing the measures that can help increase the care in the primary health sector. It was attended by all stakeholders in the policy-making process in the health and social protection sectors. Other six round tables were organised in the regional centres: Skopje, Tetovo, Veles, Stip, Strumica and Ohrid. There, representatives from the municipalities and non-governmental discussed the measures that municipalities should take in order to provide home care services on their territory.



The impact of the world economic crisis on Macedonia's children

The close of the year saw the first collaboration of CRPM with another United Nation Agency, UNICEF. This 6 month project was divided in two parts. In the first portion, CRPM coordinated a team of local experts who answered a structured questionnaire on the impact of the financial crisis on the welfare and wellbeing of Macedonia's children. This was a brisk and exciting joint effort, executed under a stringent deadline of a month and a half. The report was consequently presented along with the other country reports in an UNICEF worldwide conference in Montreux in Switzerland, where it was exceptionally well received.

Building on the initial impetus of the answers provided in the questionnaire, UNICEF solicited a local expert to conduct a full study of the impact of the economic crisis on the wellbeing and welfare of the country's children. CRPM worked in close collaboration with the local expert in designing and executing the field research activities, which included a nationwide field survey and several focus groups with key vulnerable groups of stakeholders. The raw data was further processed and analysed by CRPM, which provided the basis for the deeper analysis conducted by the local expert. CRPM was also the recipient of a training in research methodology, which further enhanced the capacity of CRPM in this area. By the close of the year, the report will be finalised, where after and CRPM will organise a promotional conference that will disseminate the results of the study and raise awareness of this issue. Ultimately this fruitful collaboration will provide a good overview of the impact of the crisis on the welfare and wellbeing of children and the structural weaknesses that persist. Furthermore, it will assess the government's counter measures, and will provide additional policy advice and policy options that can mitigate the negative effects of the crisis on Macedonia's children.

Quality Tertiary Education: How to achieve it?

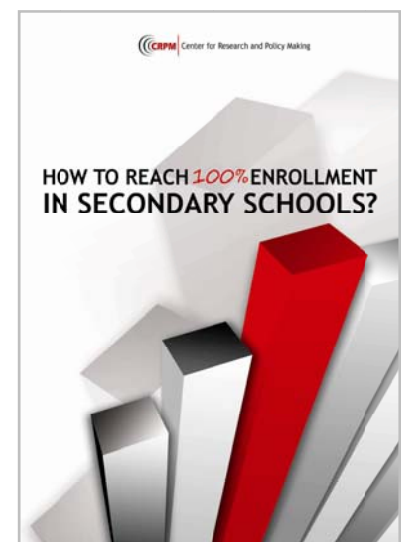
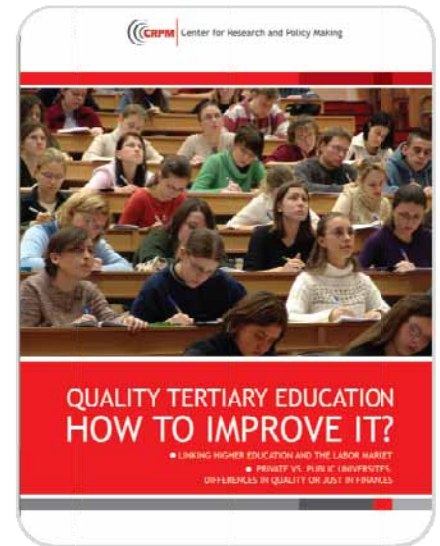
As the joint European higher education area is being created, higher education institutions are expected to become stronger, in order to be able to compete at the global higher education market. Bearing this in mind, the Center for Research and Policy Making conducted a research on two topics important for improving the overall quality of education: (1) *the links between higher education and the labour market* and (2) *the similarities and differences between public and private universities, assessed through several quality indicators*.

Among the many interesting findings, the analyses' suggest an existence of gap between the professional profiles offered at the universities and those needed on the labour market. Public universities are facing criticism concerning their slow adjustment towards the labour market, while the private universities are criticised for providing poor quality of knowledge and skills. The full research, along with recommendations for overcoming the main difficulties can be found on this [link](#).

The two analyses do not exhaust these topics, especially because of the fact that not all higher education institutions in the country were included in the research. Instead, they seek to provide a source of data and recommendations aimed at generating discussions and proposals for further research and activities, which will improve the quality of higher education. The publication was publically presented on November 25th 2009 to an audience of higher education representatives, students, representatives of international organizations, HR experts and media. The two analyses could not have been realized without the financial assistance and the provided research independence by the Balkan Trust for Democracy (Project of the German Marshall Fund of the United States).

How to achieve 100% enrollment in secondary schools?

Beginning with academic year 2008/09 enrollment in secondary education became compulsory. Implementation of this policy was accompanied by controversies and oversights. Nevertheless, the final outcome, according to the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) is that 95% of eighth-graders who completed elementary education enrolled in secondary education. The question is: which are the remaining 5% missing, and what will happen with the students who only enrolled in secondary/high school in order to avoid high penalties, without any plans to continue their education? The goal of the [analysis](#) is to investigate the main reasons for non-enrollment and dropouts from secondary schools, and the adequacy of policies implemented for eradication of these problems. At the same time, the analysis suggests ways of overcoming the problems and attaining bigger involvement in the education process.





Technical Assistance to the Civil Servants Agency and Strengthening of the National System for Training Coordination

CRPM as a partner of the Institute of Public administration of Ireland has recently launched the EU project "Technical assistance to the Civil Servants Agency and strengthening the implementation of the National System for Training Coordination". The project, with a budget of approximately €500,000 has two specific objectives:

- Strengthening the CSA's ability to support human resource development and improving and building its internal capability to manage training.
- Strengthening the CSA's capability to implement the National System for Training Coordination and establish co-ordination mechanisms with other Government sections relevant to the effective management of human resources

The project personnel will work closely with bodies and groups responsible for human resource development and training in the civil service. These will include: the Civil Servant Agency, the Training Council, the Expert Working Groups (Human Resources and Training) and State Secretaries. In partnership with these bodies, the project team will aim to ensure the successful delivery of the project's clearly defined outcomes. The work includes the review and, where necessary, the revision of specified plans, strategies and methodologies to strengthen their potential to deliver effective trainings thus greatly enhancing the capacity of the civil servants in Macedonia.

Budget monitoring in the Veles region

This autumn another fruitful collaboration came to a close between CRPM and the Veles NGO Foundation FOCUS. This ISC supported project was active in the Veles, Gradsko, Lozovo and Caska municipalities, where it sought to enhance the capacity of the local NGOs by having them engage in a facilitated budget monitoring activity. Their initial reports served as the basis CRPM's additional information gathering, key stakeholder interviews and the compilation of this information into a comprehensive report on the implementation of the municipal programmes and budgets. The evident benefit of this collaboration is the enhanced capacity of the local citizen organisations to engage in methodologically grounded budget monitoring. Furthermore, it will also improve the level of collaboration between the municipality and the associated civil society sector. The combination of these activities will greatly strengthen the representation of citizen interests and priorities in municipal policy-making and budgeting practices.

Celebrating Five and a Half Years of work the CRPM organized the Round Table “The Role of Think Tanks in Policy Making.”

In the last ten to fifteen years independent think tanks in Macedonia and the Balkans have made excellent analyses and have advocated and succeed in promoting necessary policy changes. Yet there are many obstacles in their work including non-cooperative or even hostile governments, problems with securing funding, attempts of party influences, as well as negative image of the civil society actors by the public. At our round table we discussed these and other issues with colleagues from CIRA (Macedonia), PER(Kosovo), Grupa 484 and Centre for Civil - Military Relations (Serbia), CEMI (Montenegro), and the European Institute (Bulgaria). Following the two panels, one on the state of affairs in Macedonia, the other on the regional experiences, everyone relaxed at our anniversary party.



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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year