

HANDBOOK

HOW TO REPORT ON SECURITY- RELATED ISSUES?



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H A N D B O O K

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Introduction

Today's media play multiple roles in regards to the security sector – not only they inform and educate the public, but through enhanced scrutiny they can contribute towards better accountability of the security sector institutions, policies and practices.

However, a prerequisite for fulfilling those roles is enhanced professionalism among the journalists as well as proficiency on the topic that is subject of reporting. Very often the unfamiliarity with the field acts as a barrier for investigating the story further hence leaving the reader with partial information that is lacking of an analysis and substance and relying exclusively on information from the press departments of the relevant ministry/agency. Therefore, we have developed a specially designed Handbook for journalists interested in covering security relevant topics within the Macedonian context.

The Handbook starts by discussing different aspects of state centric and human security, encouraging the reader to think beyond the traditional concepts and focus on various security threats such as environmental or community security. The second section innovatively explains Macedonia's security architecture in order to provide timely and accurate information on its actors, creation of policies, chain of command etc.

Furthermore, the Handbook provides guidance for collecting information for security related topics. In the form of practical tools on data collection, the third section contains useful techniques for conducting interviews, using the Free Access to Information Act and cooperation with civil society organizations. Given that working with classified information is a special feature of the security sector, the Handbook addresses possible dilemmas that journalists might have when faced with such obstacles. Speaking about working with sensitive information, there is also a special section providing guidelines on protecting personal data when reporting in media in line with the current legislation and journalism ethics and standards.

The next section is dedicated to the role of the Parliament in the security sector with a special emphasis on its oversight function and key dates and deadlines to be followed by the media workers. Security sector budgeting is another important aspect in the work of the security sector institutions. Based on the current legislation, this Handbook provides information regarding security sector budgeting in all phases of the budget cycle and how to monitor them as a journalist.. Related to the financial issues, corruption is another phenomenon where media attention is especially needed. Oftentimes, it is difficult to make a distinction between corruption and other improper behavior. This Handbook equips the reader with the necessary knowledge to recognize different types of corruption, especially those found within the police.

Lastly, the Handbook deals with international security and discusses the work of the main security relevant international organizations. The section also includes ideas and tips for writing articles.

The Handbook is not exhaustive in terms of explaining the role of all relevant actors or aspects of the security sector; still, it focuses on the most pertaining issues relevant for the Macedonian context. Primary target audience are journalists working with security issues, but the Handbook is also intended for journalism students, editors, bloggers and other media affiliated workers interested into the topic.

1. What does it mean to be secure?

The Oxford Dictionary defines security as a core value of human life, meaning that to be secure is to be untroubled by danger or fear.¹ This goes hand in hand with the Latin meaning of the English word for security; its origins may be traced in the Latin name “securitas/securus” while it has received its political connotation from the phrase “securitas publica” meant to depict the protection of the empire.² Barry Buzan, an eminent scholar defines security as “...pursuit of freedom from threat and

the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent identity and their functional integrity against forces of change, which they see as hostile. The bottom line of security is survival, but it also reasonably includes a substantial range of concerns about the conditions of existence.³

Few dilemmas about security:

- What is security?
- Why security matters?
- What types of security there are?
- Who/What do we want to secure?
- Who/What do we want to secure it from?
- How do we provide that security?

As practitioners in the field, you are faced with security related news almost every day. Security as a concept is multidimensional and as such there are few questions that deserve greater attention.

1 The Concise Oxford Dictionary (*Oxford: Clarendon Press, eighth edition 1990*), p.1093. http://www.londoninternational.ac.uk/sites/default/files/programme_resources/lse/lse_pdf/subject_guides/ir3140_ch1-3.pdf 1

2 Walters, W. (2010) ‘Migration and Security’, in J. Peter Burgess (ed.) *The Handbook of New Security Studies*, London: Routledge, 217-228.

3 Barry Buzan, “New Patterns of Global Security in the Twenty-first Century” *International Affairs*, 67.3 (1991), pp. 432-433.

The region where the Republic of Macedonia is situated, the Balkans has witnessed number of devastating wars and conflicts making it one of Europe's most conflict prone regions. From the Ottoman rule, Balkans wars, First and Second World Wars up to the most recent inter state wars in the 1990s and the last one of 2001 being the armed conflict in Macedonia. The region has ultimately witnessed lots of distress, because of the conflict inheritance and much of it being very recent, journalists can still tap into this legacy by investigating many topics that echo even today.

Types of security: state centric vs. human security

When we discuss about the types of security we can differentiate them by the subject of whose security is concerned. Depending where the focus falls, whether it falls on the state or on the people we can then choose how to develop the stories. The traditional security refers to the model where the state is the primary research/reporting object and focuses on protecting more the political and physical integrity of sovereign states.⁴ The human centric approach of security is more people-centered and many scholars would advocate that it addresses insecurities that have not been considered as state security threats.⁵

It is important to understand these main concepts of security mainly because there are oftentimes questions which could be easily seen through the prism of human security but might be overlooked, which might be result of the primary focus towards the state and the state apparatus. For example, access to energy is slowly becoming part of this human security because it is directly related to the actual survival of the people. Usually many journalists would focus primarily on topics including the work of the Police, Army, Intelligence Services overlooking these human centric issues. Yet, there can be found many good examples of good media coverage when human centric approach is taken in the analysis.

4 Christine Chinkin, "Human Security vs. State Security" - London School of Economics, World Tribunal of Iraq Istanbul, Turkey 25 June 2005, Sixth Session / Global Security Environment and Future Alternatives: <http://www.global-sisterhood-network.org/content/view/352/76/>

5 Ibid.

Example of human centric security story

Health security, considered to be part of the human security approach in the last several years has proven many times how important tackling pandemics such as the Bird flu or ebola is. Here is an example of an article by the BBC discussing the plans for UK wide National exercise for preventing and treating ebola.

Ebola: National exercise tests UK's plans for virus: <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-29578804>

Human security as a concept became interesting as a topic in the mid 90s with the launch of UNDP's Human Development Report which pioneered the "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want" concepts relevant to human security⁶. The end of the Cold War where the state was at focus gave a momentum to this view of the security. The original 1994 document has outlined two categories: safety from chronic threats such as hunger, diseases and repression and b) protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life.⁷

Examples of Human Security Threats

Type of Security	Examples of Main Threats
Economic security	Persistent poverty, unemployment
Food security	Hunger, famine
Health security	Deadly infectious diseases, unsafe food, malnutrition, lack of access to basic health care
Environmental security	Environmental degradation, resource depletion, natural disasters, pollution
Personal security	Physical violence, crime, terrorism, domestic violence, child labor
Community security	Inter-ethnic, religious and other identity based tensions
Political security	Political repression, human rights abuses

Table 1⁸

6 UNDP, Human Development Report. http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/reports/255/hdr_1994_en_complete_nostats.pdf p.24.

7 UNDP Human Development Report (1994) cited in Hasan Mahmud at all. "Human Security or National Security: the Problems and Prospects of the Norm of Human Security". *Journal of Politics and Law*. December 2008.

8 *ibid.*

The need for making a distinction between human and state centric security could be seen in the notion that the state sometimes is not in position or unwilling to provide security.⁹ In this context human centric approach is especially relevant for post communist, post conflict transitioning societies because the state in its function is usually vulnerable to issues like corruption, weak health system, discrimination etc.

When it comes to state centric security this handbook defines it by the ability of the state to directly or indirectly protect the viability of the state from external threats as well as show some track record of protecting the population living in the state from threats affecting their personal security. This handbook draws from both perspectives mainly because state on one hand is central in the conventional understanding of security studies where national security is “usually understood to be physical survival, territorial integrity, and the continuation of the political regime and economic system.”¹⁰ At the same time one cannot expect to be talking about external security when some of the conflicts and insecurity can be traced in the policies of the state.¹¹

Example of state centric security

Classic example of state-centric security can be seen by looking into the announcement of the Tunisian government to build a fence alongside its border with Libya in order to protect itself from illegal terrorist crossings. The Telegraph explains the urgency for building the fence against the backdrop of the terrorist attack in June 2015 leaving more than 30 tourists dead.

Tunisia building wall to prevent travel to Libyan jihad camps :<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/tunisia/11727080/Tunisia-building-wall-to-prevent-travel-to-Libyan-jihad-camps.html>

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2. Macedonia's Security Sector

Even though a relatively small country, Macedonia over the years has been working on consolidation of its security sector through increasing the capacities of the existing institutions as well as building new ones like the Financial Police. Several of the well-established institutions like the police have their foundations rooted from the previous system, though many reforms have followed ever since Macedonia became an independent state in 1991. In every country the security sector is organic, meaning that due to various reasons it evolves. Macedonia's security sector is

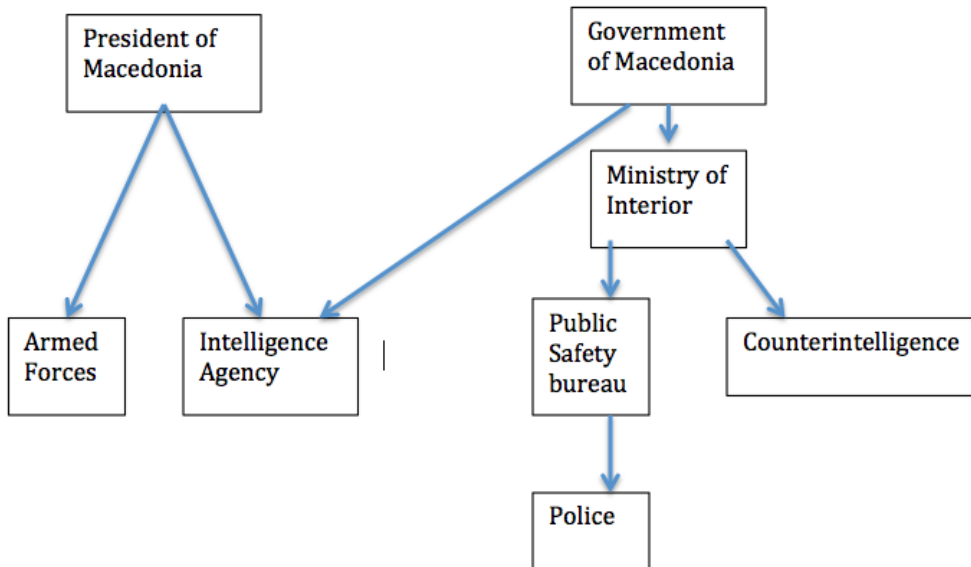
9 ibid. p70

10 Maria Brons, *Society, security, sovereignty and the state in Somalia: from statelessness to statelessness?*, (International Books, 2001), 27,28

11 ibid.

no exception to this and most of the reforms are either externally driven under EU/NATO integrations umbrella or security incidents like 2001 internal armed conflict which prompted range of reforms. That being said Macedonia's security sector can be analysed from three points in time: 1991-2001 (independence to 2001 ethnic conflict, 2001-2008 (post conflict pre NATO) 2008-now (post- NATO veto) nationalism.¹² All these periods have contributed to various reforms across the security sector. For example the 2001 internal armed conflict and the Ohrid Framework agreement pushed forward the idea of increased representatives of the non-majority communities which is an area that can prompt great interest among the readers.

Diagram of Macedonia's security sector



12 Cvete Koneska, *Context Analysis of the Security Sector Reform in Macedonia*, Analytica http://www.analyticamk.org/images/stories/files/cassrm_mk.pdf pg1.

2.1. Ministry of Interior

Context

Macedonian police has often times been perceived as one of the protectors of Macedonia's independence in the early 90s. Because of the lack of Armed forces on its own¹³ the police took over many of the tasks that are usually seen as applicable to the Armed Forces when the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) left the country. This included among others keeping the territorial integrity of the country especially in challenging times with the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 90s.

Roles, responsibilities and legal framework

The police by default are associated with the Ministry of Internal Affairs while in Macedonia's case the Ministry of Internal Affairs also hosts the Department for Security and Counterintelligence. Macedonian authorities have decided that the Counterintelligence department should stay within the Ministry. In other countries this is regulated differently where this institution functions separately from the Ministry of Interior.¹⁴ The work of the Ministry is regulated by two main laws: 1) the Law on Internal Affairs and 2) Law on Police. There is no special law outlining the work of the counterintelligence service. Its work and profile are stipulated into both laws and accompanied by number of rulebooks.

The Bureau for Public Safety together with the Directorate for Security and Counterintelligence are the main units within the Ministry. Apart from these two there is a special sector tasked to perform internal oversight, called Sector for Internal Control and Professional Standards. The work of the Ministry of Interior (including the Police and the Counterintelligence Service) is also a subject to external oversight and control.

13 As a republic being part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the external borders of Yugoslavia (towards Greece, Albania and Bulgaria) were kept by the Yugoslav People's Army.

14 "Slovenia separated the intelligence security agency from the Ministry of Interior in the early 1990's but this was not fully implemented till 1999 when the Slovene State Assembly adopted the Act on Intelligence and Security Agencies which finally regulated as government security service"- Drago Ferš, *From Security and Intelligence Service to Slovene Intelligence and Security Agency* – National Security and the Future 1-2/3, pg.80

Organization of the Police Forces in Macedonia:

- **Border Police** - is a Police unit that monitors and protects the borders of Macedonia. It is organised in four Sectors: North, South, East, West totaling of 1750 police officers.

- **Lake Patrol Police** - is a part of the border police of the Republic of Macedonia operating in Ohrid and Prespa lakes.

- **Traffic Police** – handles daily traffic offences.

- **Helicopter Unit** - is an air support unit of the Macedonian Ministry of Internal Affairs. Its purpose it to provide aerial surveillance, border monitoring, VIP transport, search and rescue operations and aerial firefighting.

Special Police Forces

· **Special Operations Unit – Tigers** are tasked to perform difficult operations in the fight against terrorism and protection of the security of the Republic of Macedonia in times of deteriorated security situation as well as helping civilian population in natural disasters. More specifically they deal with hostage situations, arresting dangerous criminal groups, providing support to high at risk VIP persons, rescue operations etc.

· **Rapid Deployment Unit (EBR)** - is special unit of the Macedonian police tasked to perform operations in high mountain and rural areas, restore public law and order, provide assistance to other units and state institutions, anti-terrorist activities, high risk operations, helping civilian population in times of natural disasters etc.

Special Support Unit (PEP) - are special unit run under the Ministry of Interior. Members of PEP are ordinary police officers who if needed, assist other special units. Upon their need they are involved in activities related to maintaining public law and order, protests, arrests etc.

Maintenance of public order, security and interventions Unit is a recently established unit formed to preserve law and order in public gatherings including different types of protests. Most of its work is focused in the capital Skopje.

Alfa police Units – Is a special police unit for first response and interventions when it comes to serious crime. The unit operates in urban areas in the city of Skopje.

Transparency of the Ministry of Interior

All adopted laws and changes to the laws, as well suggested draft-laws regarding to the work of the MoI and the police could be also found at the official website of the Ministry of Interior at: “<http://www.mvr.gov.mk/zakoni>”. More details about the adoption of certain laws could be also found at Parliament’s website (<http://www.sobranie.mk>) but dispersed through dates of adoption on different plenary sessions. For that reason is advisable to firstly consult the MoI website.¹⁵

It is worth mentioning that MoI’s web page for the time being is available only in Macedonian language. Certain safety materials with the purpose of educating tourists on safety measures or security risks could be found in English language.

- Information about the daily work of the police are regularly published at the MoI website, it has a dedicated section named “dnevni bilteni”¹⁶ (daily newsletter) that represents a short summary of criminal offences, violations of public order, police actions etc. This section is always on the front page of MoI website, alongside with news section. The daily reports of crime could be used by the journalists to confirm certain events such as arrests, traffic accidents that are relevant to their respective stories that they cover.

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For example: If a journalist is covering a story for a traffic accident, the official facts, such as information on casualties, type of vehicles involved, accident specifics (e.g. use of alcohol) etc. will be available in this section.

*It is advisable for fact checking of daily news stories to consult first this section available online, contacting the PR official at the MoI should come as second option only when information are not yet publicly available.

¹⁵ Ministry of Internal Affairs launched its new re-designed web page on 20.06.2015 - <http://mk.mkdnews.com/macedonia/3166-nova-veb-strana-na-mvr.html> however the old web page still could be checked at the section “Archive” (Архива) - or at the following link: <http://62.162.77.57/> but remains unclear for how long the old version would be available online at the provided link.

¹⁶ “Dnevni bilteni” (Daily newsletter) could be accessed at the following link: <http://www.mvr.gov.mk/dnevni-bilteni>

However police actions of a bigger scale, such as “Kumanovo clashes”¹⁷, or arrests that follow after long investigations for tackling organized crime, or any kind of police action taken from the Rapid Deployment Unit¹⁸ are usually followed with press conferences either by the Minister itself or its spokesperson depending on the seriousness of the committed crime. When covering such events rigorous checking of reliability of the sources should be done by the journalists since any unverified information could additionally contribute to inflame the fragile security situation that might be present at that moment.

The Ministry of Interior has also developed guideline for its employees on communicating with the media at situation of crisis. With this guideline all journalists who aspire to cover security issues should get familiarized because it explains how inter-sectoral communications at MoI is organized. It is important for the journalist to understand this scheme of communication in order to be able to more effectively know where and how to address the requests for information at moment of crisis.¹⁹

The Ministry of Interior has public channel on YouTube²⁰, which uses to publish videos of the police actions and promotional videos about their work. This channel is widely used by journalists and all media outlets. The current Minister of Interior does not hold any page on social media. As for interacting on personal capacities on social media, it is not very spread among the politicians or stakeholders in Macedonia, the same could be identified at most institutions social media pages. They are usually used for promotional and informative purposes, interaction with citizens is minimal and very technical.

17 MoI: Action in Kumanovo ended, biggest terrorist group in the Balkans eliminated - <http://plusinfo.mk/vest/25324/mvr-akcijata-vo-kumanovo-zavrshi-razbiena-najsilna-teroristicka-grupana-balkanot-%28video%29>

18 The Rapid Deployment Unit is special unit of the Macedonian police formed in 2006, at large part is transformation of the previous special unit “Lavovi” (Lions) with the purpose of handling more massive security threats such as riots, or support major operative actions - <http://star.utrinski.com.mk/?pBroj=1253&stID=3526&pR=2>

19 Scheme of communication at situation of conflicts and crisis is available at page 17 of the guideline: http://www.mvr.gov.mk/Upload/Editor_Upload/publikacii%20pdf/Upatstvo%20za%20krizna%20kounikacija_FINAL.pdf

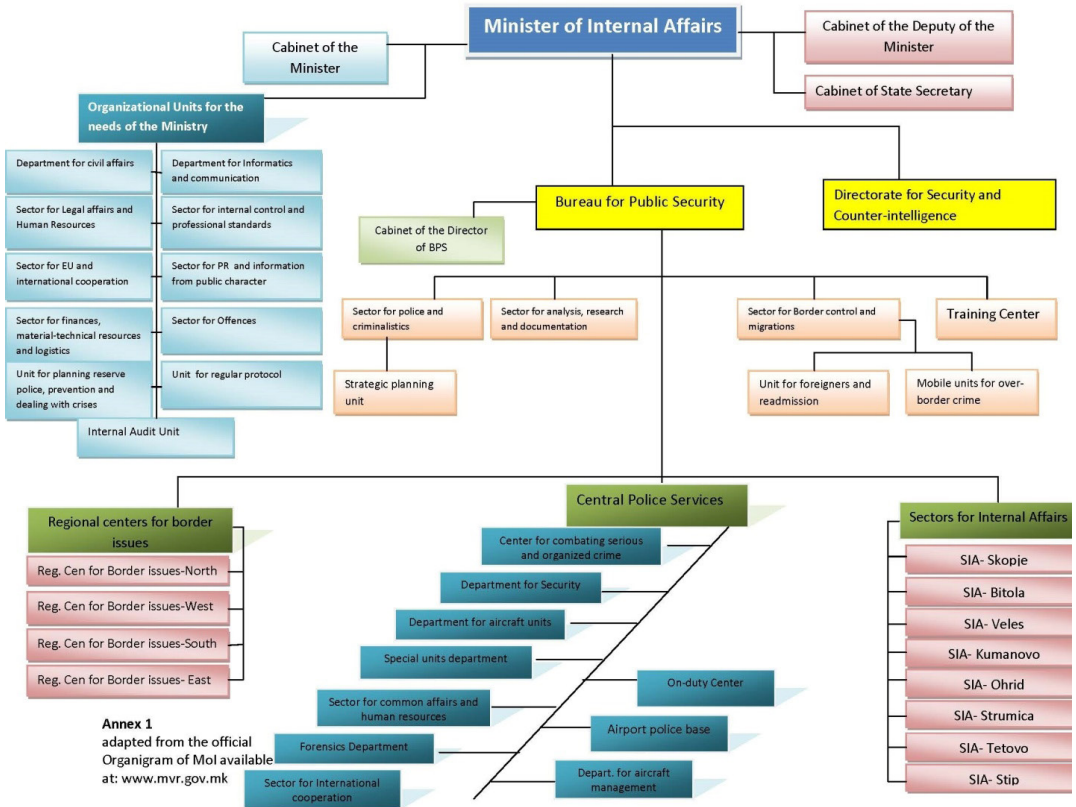
20 MoI on Youtube <https://www.youtube.com/user/MVRMacedonia1231>

Idea for news article

The Ministry of Interior is one of the biggest employer in Macedonia's public sector the budget for 2014 lists 10859 employees as well one of the biggest public finance spenders. As such it might be exposed to possible mismanagement of public funds.

- The State Audit Office reports on the Ministry of Interior could serve as a starting position for further investigation.
- Checking the Electronic Procurement System online (www.e-nabavki.gov.mk) which is a web form for publishing Contract award notices for finalized contracts. Here could be found all documents around the call for tenders, bids made, who was awarded, what sum and on what conditions was agreed the tender. The information could be browsed by institutions, dates and phases of application. According to the Macedonian legislation for Public Procurement all public payments exceeding 5000 euros should be followed by a public call for tenders, where all companies would have equal rights in making bids, which after that are evaluated based on specific conditions previously agreed.
- All information for payments made by institutions that are lesser than 5000 euros could be obtained through the FOI Act, by filing request for access to public information to the respective institution. In this case "The Ministry of Interior".

Organogram of the Ministry of Interior



Annex 1 adapted from the official Organigram of Mol available at: www.mvr.gov.mk

2.2. Armed Forces

Context

It could be said that Macedonian Armed Forces ever since their establishment in 1992 have undergone number of reforms that have resulted in many changes of the structure of the army in order to echo NATO's profile of what modern armed forces should look like. Notably the biggest transformation occurred with scrapping the need for compulsory service in the Armed Forces in 2006. Apart from the visible changes this decision has produced there was also a mental string attached to it by basically seeing it as a detachment from the legacy of the previous communist system.

Roles, responsibilities and legal framework

The Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia prescribes the police and the armed forces as statutory security sector actors. The chain of command when referring to the Armed Forces in Macedonia is vertically organised with the President of Macedonia being the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. In such capacity the President can appoint or dismiss the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces as well as generals. Moreover the President is authorised to declare a war (with certain limitations)²¹. The Chief of the General Staff in Macedonia is responsible for command of army units and is accountable to the president as well as to the minister of defence.

Key documents regarding Macedonia's national strategy touching upon the work of the Armed Forces are the National Security and Defence Concept, The Strategic Defence Review, National Security Strategy, Defence Strategy, The White Paper on Defence²² etc. These documents are relevant to the work of journalists, researchers who would want to analyze what are the National Defence Priorities and by the same get to know what our state considers as national threats to Macedonia's security. Apart from these, having in mind that Macedonia is a NATO candidate country and part of NATO's Membership Action Plan process, there are action plans developed each year serving as guidelines for the reform of the Armed Forces which the journalists could obtain them for analysis through sending requests to the Ministry of Defence using Law on free access to information from public character.

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Additional in depth information about ongoing developments related to the Armed Forces and can be found in the magazine Stit (Shield) published by the Ministry of Defence. Current issue and archive since 2008 is available on the Ministry of Defence website, under the section "publications" or at the following link:

http://www.morm.gov.mk/?page_id=2640&lang=mk.

21 For details about the procedure please consult on: <http://president.mk/en/president/rights-and-duties.html>

22 This White Paper presents an overview of Macedonian national security and defense policy in 2012, it also presents and overview of the previous mentioned documents (National Security and Defence Concept, The Strategic Defence Review, National Security Strategy, Defence Strategy) : <http://www.morm.gov.mk/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/BELA-KNIGA-NA-ODBRANATA.pdf>

The Ministry of Defense is also active on social media.

Official Facebook page: “Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Macedonia” - <https://www.facebook.com/modrmacedonia>

Official Twitter account: MoD R.Macedonia - @MoDMacedonia
<https://twitter.com/MoDMacedonia>

YouTube channel: “MoDRMacedonia” <https://www.youtube.com/user/MoDRMacedonia>

Twitter account of the Minister of Defense Zoran Jolevski: @ZJolevski <https://twitter.com/ZJolevski>

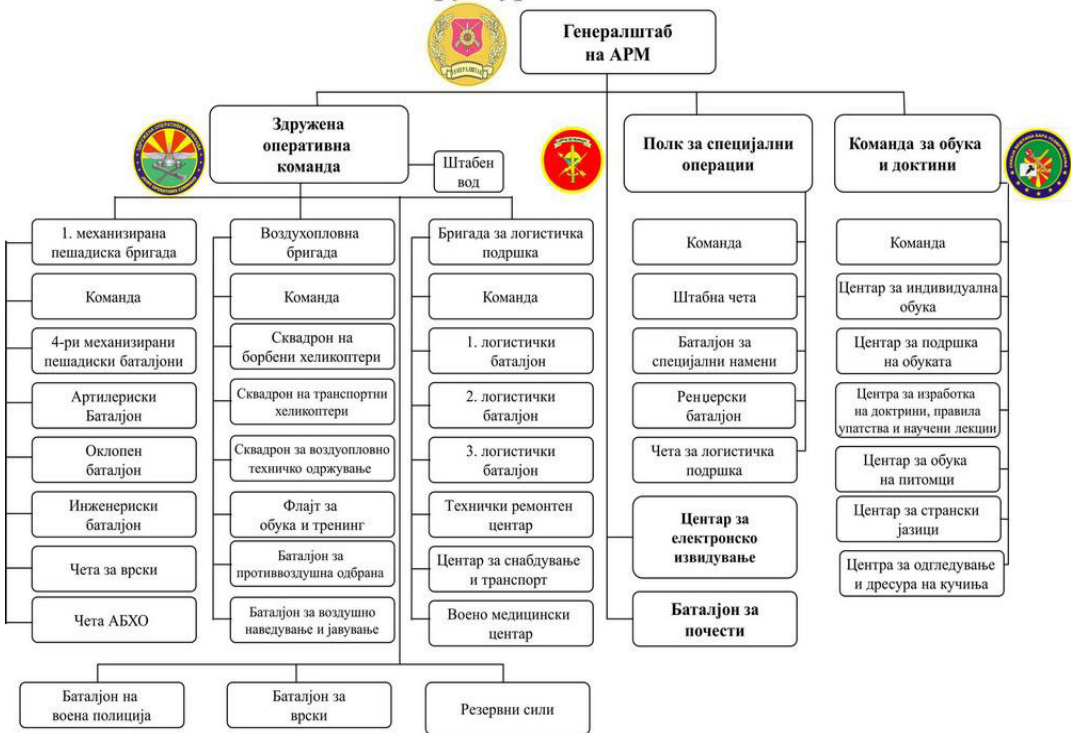
Since 2005, at the initiative of Macedonia’s Ministry of Defence and supported by the Norwegian government, the country has been hosting the Public Affairs Regional Centre which offers training in media and communications. Even though the centre has a military character, meaning that its end users are intended to be primarily military structures, it also has significant civilian potential. As of 2013 it became the 26th accredited NATO Partnership for Cooperation and education centre tasked with providing education for the personnel of the ministries of defence, as well as the armed forces on communicating military-related affairs to the public. The Regional centre can be of interest for journalist being integral part of the communication chain when it comes to security related news. Possible involvement of journalists in the training course can provide added value to the centre’s work, while journalist would be able to interact with military personnel.

More information relates to the work of this centre could be found at the official website:

<http://www.parc.morm.gov.mk/> And the facebook profile account: <https://www.facebook.com/RTCCMK>

Organogram of the Macedonian Armed Forces

Нова структура на сили на АРМ



Source: Ministry of Defence

2.3. Macedonian Intelligence Sector

Context

Macedonia's intelligence sector has not undergone a major overhaul since the early 1990s, although a few alterations were made shortly after the country's 1991 declaration of independence and following the armed conflict in 2001. This stalemate stands in contrast to the threats and challenges to Macedonian national security, which have evolved considerably during the past twenty years. Only limited numbers of reforms have been present in this sector, compared to police or the armed forces.

The work of the Directorate for Security and Counterintelligence should not be mixed with the work of the Intelligence Agency which treats issues outside

the country while the Counterintelligence service treats only domestic issues. Apart from the Intelligence Agency and Counterintelligence Service there is also a Military Intelligence and Counterintelligence Service. Additionally there is a financial intelligence which is related to the work of the Financial Intelligence Unit functioning under the Ministry of Finance. It primarily deals with money laundering and financing terrorism issues.

The Intelligence Agency in the chain of command is under the President of the country who appoints and can dissolve the Director of this branch of the intelligence. Also the intelligence agency reports first for its work to the President and afterwards to the others from the executive branch. Even though on the onset the Intelligence Agency is subjected primarily to the President of the country, still the government has significant powers such as having a say on its budget, means and methods of its work etc.

The work of the intelligence Agency comes from the 1995 Law on the Intelligence Agency without major changes following its implementation. The task of this institution is to conduct intelligence work outside the territory of Macedonia as well as to analyse information regarding Macedonia's national and economic interests. On the other hand the Directorate for Security and Counterintelligence is tasked to perform tasks needed for safeguarding Macedonia's internal threats.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Directorate for Security and Counterintelligence is functionally an independent institution but situated under the Ministry of Interior where the Government appoints the Head of this sector. Moreover its tasks stretch to the following areas:

- Terrorism
- Counterintelligence
- Activities endangering the country's democratic institutions or promoting their forceful overthrow
- Organised crime that originates within or targets the country's democratic institutions

To a large extent the work of the Directorate for Security and Counterintelligence is dependent on the use of special investigative measures, which include wiretapping and other secret surveillance measures.

Apart from these two the Armed Forces also have at their disposal their own military intelligence and counterintelligence unit, within the Ministry of Defence. Its work is focused around these fields:

- Collecting, documenting, and analysing intelligence data relevant to national defence
- Detecting and preventing subversive activities originating with foreign intelligence agencies or other international groups (such as terrorist organisations) relevant to national defence
- Protecting the armed forces
- Protecting classified defence information

Intelligence and media

The intelligence services in Macedonia have always been of a great interest to the media community, mainly because of the secrecy of its work as well as the few wiretapping scandals such as those of Big Ear²³, their role during the 2001 internal armed conflict etc. The most recent and probably the biggest wiretapping scandal with codename Puc where allegedly more than 20000 citizens were illegally wiretapped was a good enough reason for the media to write extensively on this topic.

The article published by Utrinski Vesnik immediately after the Puc wiretapping scandal titled “The Big Ear listens to everything through our mobile phones”²⁴ can be seen as a solid article providing:

- Informative analysis on the types of interception of communications and institutions allowed to intercept communications and
- Connects very well the content of the article with the wiretapping scandal itself
- Goes in-depth with the story by providing an interview with former military intelligence officer
- Surfaces problems and raises questions about the length of the wiretapping and possible abuse by state authorities

23 Every 10 year with one “Big Ear” (Секои десетина години по едно ‘Големо Уво’), Utrinski Vesnik, 10.02.2015, available at: <http://www.utrinski.mk/?ItemID=E0931A4D07E8A447BD395C767259FF43>

24 Big Ear listens to everything through the mobile phones [„Големото уво“ слуша преку мобилките], Utrinski Vesnik 10.02.2015 <http://www.utrinski.mk/?ItemID=954139118140EB47B27CB63573EB0960>

The article would have benefitted even more if for example the journalist interviewed someone from the intelligence services so that there is official response about the questions raised. The segment of the article explaining the ways how to recognize whether someone's communications are intercepted by simply checking the temperature of the phone, listening to phone echo etc. without citing a source are counterproductive to the overall positive impression of the text. Unconfirmed information like this can be misinformative and confusing to the readers.

Macedonian intelligence services do not exhibit great deal of transparency in their work. For example the Intelligence Agency does not have special Public Relations Officer. The Counterintelligence service and the military one do not have specially designated web sites, while the one of the Intelligence Agency has launched redesigned website offering more information to the public.

Intelligence Agency: www.ia.gov.mk

2.4. Use of special investigative measures

Whenever there is a story about eavesdropping from the state institutions the case is usually connected with the use of the so-called special investigative measures. Wiretapping is just one of them. Others include: secret surveillance, use of false identity, searches of private properties etc. These measures up until 2014 could be employed only by Directorate for Security and Counterintelligence and the Army Intelligence and Counterintelligence Unit within the Ministry of Defence. The amendments that the Criminal Code brought also gave the possibility to the Customs and the Financial Police to utilise the special investigative measures, mainly aiming at suspicions criminal cases. So far however both institutions do not have the required technology and know-how and have not started with operations. The Counterintelligence Directorate also has the possibility to employ special investigative measures both when it comes to organised crime as well as possible security threats to the state such as terrorism for example.

The use of special investigative measures is an imperative when it comes to resolving heavier forms of organised crime or acts that may endanger national security. Because of their intrusiveness, the uses of special investigative measures need to be implemented strictly in accordance with the law and the constitution. Proper oversight and scrutiny over their use is therefore essential. There are several laws regulating the use of these measures including the Law on Criminal Procedure²⁵, Law on electronic communications, Law on communications interception²⁶ etc.

25 Law on electronic communications, Official gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no. 39/2014, with amendments O.G. 188/2014

26 Law on communications interception, Official gazette of the Republic of Macedonia no.

Who can order the use of special investigative measures?

These measures and the procedure are clearly prescribed in the Law on Criminal Procedure where either a judge or a Public Prosecutor can issue orders for initiating special investigative measures. Institutions that can intercept communications in Macedonia are:

- Public Prosecutor
- Ministry of Internal Affairs
- Financial police Office
- Customs Office
- Ministry of Defence but only in the following (High Frequency –HF, Very High Frequency – VHF and Ultra High Frequency UHF) radio waves.

The request for issuing an order for communications interceptions is submitted to the competent judge by public prosecutor on his/her initiative or on the recommendation of police officer of the Ministry of Interior, financial police office or the customs office.²⁷

3. How to gather information?

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The journalists have right to free access to all sources of information that are of public interest. The journalists shall publish correct, verified information and will not conceal essential information or forge documents. If given information cannot be confirmed or if it is a matter of assumption, i.e. speculation, that should be noted and published. Correctness of the information ought to be verified as much as possible.

Code of journalists of Macedonia

121/2006, with amendments O.G. 110/2008, 116/2012

27 Art 9, Law on interception of communications <http://www.mvr.gov.mk/Uploads/Zakon%20za%20sledenje%20na%20komunikacii%20precisten%20so%20usvoeni%20amandmani%2014.09.2012.pdf>

3.1. Media and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Given the closed nature of the security sector, media in many cases rely exclusively on information provided by the state institutions. However, in their efforts for contribution towards more transparent and accountable security sector and better access to information, you could find your allies within the civil society organizations. Such cooperation is mutually beneficial - the civil society organizations need the media to promote their work especially in regards to their advocacy activities trying to convey their messages to broader audience, while the media could benefit from it by enriching their offer.

According to current legislation, civil society organizations are registered as citizen's associations or foundations. However, there are various types of CSOs, and the most relevant ones when it comes to the security sector are as follows:

- *Think tanks* – these are organizations that conduct research and policy analysis and their aim is to influence the policy making process. People who work in this type of organizations are equipped with appropriate expertise and usually have their own views on the reform processes, proposals of laws or the work of the state institutions in general. In most of the cases, their publications are available online at their websites.
- *Community-oriented organizations* - this type of organizations are oriented toward awareness raising, problem solving and empowerment of their target group, mainly marginalized groups. People that work there are usually activists and their activities include campaigns to raise awareness, working directly with citizens through educative projects, social protection etc. These organizations could be used for finding targeted groups of people relevant to the journalists' stories. Example: If you are working on an irregular migration story, and want to interview a migrant, organizations that provide help to these groups of people could be useful and provide the connection.
- *Protection of Human Rights and/or providing free legal aid* - organizations with such specialization usually work in the field of awareness raising, improving the legislation that regulates the area and strengthening the position of the oversight and controlling structures. They perform monitoring of the consistent respect of procedural guarantees for protection of human rights by the law-enforcement agencies. Some of them provide free legal aid to citizens.
- *Foundations* - Foundations fund research and other activities of the associations of citizens. Besides the role of donors, many foundations also implement activities such as research, publishing papers, organizing events and implementation of various community oriented projects.

How you can cooperate with CSOs?

- Given the expertise that think tank organizations possess, their employees could be a good choice to invite them for an interview, statement on particular subject or comments on various security relevant topics. In order to present different perspectives to the citizens on particular issue, despite official sources (such as the Department of Public Relations within the Ministry), you can ask representatives of CSOs also to comment on the topic.
- Policy papers and other products of CSOs could be valuable source of information. Researchers usually spend from couple of months to several years researching specific issue so you can find substantial findings that are worth sharing with the wider public. Nevertheless, make sure that the organization you quote is a credible one.
- Cooperation with civil society organizations can take place through reporting on their activities, as well as media coverage of their events, including conferences, round tables, press releases, training etc.

3.2. Interviews

Interviews with representatives of the security services always cause great public attention. Given that representatives of this sector mostly communicate with the public on a strict and formal manner, not always sharing the desired information, conducting an interview is a great opportunity for the citizens to get to know them and their views on important security issues.

The interview process consists of several stages, starting from scheduling the interview, undergoing preparations, conducting the interview and publication.

The approach of identifying the appropriate person for an interview can have two directions depending on whether the emphasis is placed on the person or the topic. If you want to conduct an interview with a high-profile representative (Minister, Director of Intelligence, etc.), you should plan early and approach them in advance. Be prepared that scheduling an interview might take some time, given the activities and the nature of their work. On the other hand, if you want an elaboration on a specific topic, then you can find a good interlocutor among not so known and publicly exposed persons. You might want to check whether some CSOs or academia (university professors and assistants) have conducted some research or published an analysis of the topic. This way, you can significantly enrich the programme of your media house and offer the viewers or readers access to relevant findings and different perspectives.

When approaching the person you want to interview, always introduce yourself,

explain the purpose of the interview and point out the key questions to be addressed during the conversation. Do not forget to specify how much time commitment is needed from the interviewee (whether it is a comprehensive in-depth interview or just few questions, if you need to take photos or not, etc.). In addition, make it clear whether you would send the questions by e-mail and for how long you expect an answer (this provides better flexibility for the correspondent) or you are asking for a face to face interview.

Except the cases when you are hosting a TV show that must be recorded in a studio, the best place to conduct the interview might be the workplace of the interviewee. Such atmosphere would contribute for humanization of their profession and would enable the citizens to get familiar with his/her work. In general, viewers are interested to see how does the Minister's office look like, what kind of computer he/she uses, are there any personal items (such as photographs) on the desk etc. Besides, people usually feel more comfortable to speak when they are in a familiar and well-known place which would allow easier flow of the conversation.

Good preparation for the interview is a key for its success. First and foremost, research the topic of conversation - make sure you understand all the technical terms, recent developments and responsibilities of the institutions in question. Make sure that the Minister could not tell you about something that is not within his/her jurisdiction when in fact it is. Same applies in reverse; do not insist on answers to questions that are intended for another institution or person. Having solid knowledge of the topic would help you to come up easier with follow-up or additional questions if you think something is unclear or there is an opportunity for a more comprehensive elaboration on the question. At the same time, be aware that security interesting topics may contain sensitive data that cannot be disclosed to the public.

As much as it is important to have solid knowledge of the subject, it is also of greatest importance to be informed about the profile of the interviewee. Get ready for the possible course that the conversation might take - whether the interlocutor speaks clearly, concisely or gives vague answers that are not always associated with the particular question, whether he/she is a restrained or friendly person, what are his/her qualifications and competencies, etc.

Depending on the topic and the profile of the person, you should prepare a plan for the interview. If it is for a written media, you might want to send the questions by e-mail and expect answers in the same form. This will allow the interviewee convenience to think deeply about the topic and you can avoid misunderstandings or mistakes when reporting the statements. In the case of a face to face interview, you might want to have strictly defined questions or just a few points of discussion, again depending on the profile of the person, the topic and the time available.

At the end of the interview thank the interviewee for their time and the answers. Make sure you have all necessary contact information from the interviewee including full name, exact title and job position. Also, ask whether authorization before publishing it will be needed or not. Provide the interviewee your contact information and encourage the person to contact you in case he/she wants to clarify something regarding the interview or for any future cooperation on the same or another topic. Also if you feel that you might still need to research the subject further, you can always ask the interviewee to suggest you other experts on the field for interviews, or suggest you additional literature or publications since they might be more informed on the subject.

3.3. Free Access to Information Act

Since 2006, when the Law on free access to information from public character was introduced, state institutions are obliged to share information with the public, if they come to such request.

Required to provide access to information held (public information) are all public authorities, other bodies and organizations established by law, municipal authorities, the City of Skopje and municipalities in Skopje, other institutions and public services, contacting companies and legal and natural persons exercising public authorizations.

The request for information may be submitted by a legal or a natural person, and institutions are obliged to provide the same treatment to everyone. This means that you can send the request as an individual or on behalf of the media outlet you work for. Moreover, you are not required to specify why you need the information. The request could be submitted in oral, written or electronic form, while access to information can be provided via an insight, copy, photocopy or electronically.

In case the request is oral, the information holder is obliged to respond within 10 days. When there is a written request, information holders have 30 days to respond. In case of a more extensive document, the deadline could be extended for another 10 days, 40 days after the request was received in total. In that case, they are obliged to inform you on the extension of the deadline, at least 3 days prior to the expiration of the initial period of 30 days. The advantage of written request is the possibility for track record - just bring two copies with you when you submit the request and ask for verification of the sample that stays with you. Then you can refer to this sample in further communication if you are not provided an answer.

The nature of journalism is dynamic and journalists prefer receiving the information immediately. Taking into consideration that one has to wait up to a month to get the information, many journalists give up this approach and orient towards covering daily news, relying on press conferences and information obtained in the field.

However, use of the right of free access to public information enables a more comprehensive approach that is very suitable for investigative journalism. Plan the topics you want to write about in advance and while waiting for the answers you may focus on daily events. For example, if there is an important upcoming event that you can connect to a specific topic (like NATO summit, day of the Army), plan your story and send your requests for access to information at least six weeks in advance.

If the information holders do not respond to your request within the specified timeframe, or you are not satisfied with the response, you can submit a complaint to the Commission for Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information. This Commission is an independent body and has 15 days to decide on your complaint. If you are not satisfied with the decision of the Commission there is an opportunity to initiate a lawsuit to the competent court.

Keep always in mind that if you are not able to access the information, you have the right to inform the public about it.

Contact information of the Commission for Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information:

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Web page: www.komspi.mk

Address: Blvd. Goce Delcev, no.18 Skopje (MRTV building – 14th floor)

Tel./Fax: +389 2 3118 038, +389 2 3114 695

e-mail: komspi@komspi.mk

3.4. Classification of documentation

The right of access to information is not an absolute right. Information holders may refuse a request for access. For the security sector, refusal usually happens on the grounds that it is classified information with certain degree of secrecy. Grounds for refusal may be the possibility of disclosure of personal data and the disclosure of information can have harmful effects on an ongoing investigation, criminal or misdemeanor proceedings.

According to the national legislation there are four levels of classification of information, based on the degree of the damage that would result for the country case of their unauthorized disclosure.

The highest degree of classification is TOP SECRET. The number of people who have access to top secret information is strictly limited because their unauthorized disclosure could result in exceptionally serious damage to the vital interests of the Republic of Macedonia. State secret can declare only holders of the highest offices in the state, as the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, the Presidents of the Constitutional and the Supreme Court, ministers etc. The disclosure of information classified as SECRET could result in exceptionally serious damage to the vital interests of the Republic of Macedonia, while the classification level CONFIDENTIAL means possible serious damage to the interests of importance for the Republic. The lowest classification degree is RESTRICTED and it means information the unauthorized disclosure of which would result in damage of the work of state bodies and other institutions.

Access to classified information could be provided only for persons that hold appropriate security clearance (which is issued on the basis of previously conducted vetting process). It should be borne in mind that persons whose security certificate have expired they keep the obligation to protect the confidentiality of any classified information that they have come in contact with. Consequently, these people cannot be used as a source of information for journalists no matter how much time has elapsed since the termination their function.

Classification of information is particularly important for the security sector. The Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff of the Army as well as the Intelligence Agency have sensitive information whose disclosure could have serious consequences for the operation of these institutions and the security interests of the state. Accustomed for dealing with secret information, these institutions are not likely to share information even when there is no danger of security risks. The Law on Free Access to Public Information provides an opportunity for institutions to refuse access to any information in case it is a classified information.

On the other hand, the institutions do not have the right to instantly refuse your request for access to information on any of these grounds. Firstly, if such information can be separated from the document without jeopardizing its safety, then the holder of the information is obliged to do so. Moreover, even in case of a top secret institutions are required to conduct a “damage test”²⁸ that would evaluate the effects on interest protected compared to the public interest that would be achieved with publishing the information. This means that if it is determined that the public interest is greater than the interest protected, the information holder is obliged to provide access to it.

28 The damage test was introduced with the Law amending the Law on Free Access to Public Information no.6/2010

Unfortunately, the institutions do not always respect the principle of implementing a damage test. If you suspect that the test was not made at all, you can submit a complaint to the Commission for Protection of the Right to Free Access to Public Information.

The release of classified information entails criminal liability. Under the Criminal Code, the person that would tell, hand over or makes available to the public or authorized person information or documents known to be top secret, and which he acquired in an unlawful manner, shall be punished with imprisonment of one to five years. Obtaining information that is professional secret with an intention to be disclosed to the public also entails liability.

4. Protection of personal data

Protection of personal data is part of the fundamental human rights and freedoms. As part of the right to privacy, it is guaranteed with all relevant international conventions signed by the Republic of Macedonia, as well as with the domestic legislation. Therefore, it is very important to understand the boundaries when reporting on various subjects, topics or persons.

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The Law on Protection of Personal Data is the basic legislation that regulates the area on a precise manner. According to it, personal data shall be any information pertaining to an identified or identifiable natural person, the identifiable entity being an entity whose identity can be determined directly or indirectly, especially as according to the personal identification number of the citizen or on the basis of one or more characteristics, specific for his/her physical, mental, economic, cultural or social identity.²⁹ Oftentimes, there is misperception that personal data are only those referring to the biometric data (name, date of birth etc.). However, personal data are categorized in the following way:

- Racial or ethnic origin;
- Political, religious, philosophical or other beliefs;
- Membership in a trade union;
- Data in person's health including genetic data;
- Biometric data;
- Data concerning sex life.

Processing of special categories of personal data is forbidden. In fact, through these data one could get deeply into person's privacy and this involve violation of other fundamental rights and freedoms, such as the right to protection from discrimination, the right to freedom of association, freedom of belief etc.

²⁹ Law on Personal Data Protection, article 2

The Law on protection of personal data envisages exception from the application of several provisions for the purpose of professional journalism, but only in the case when the public interest prevails over the private interest of the subject of personal data. In addition, the law prescribes that processing the personal data shall be performed in accordance with the ethical rules of the profession. In addition to this, processing of personal data is allowed on the basis of an explicit consent by the personal data subject or if he/she has publicly disclosed the data.

According to the Code of Journalists of Macedonia³⁰, “the journalist shall respect the privacy of every person, except in cases when that is on the contrary with the public interest. The journalist is obliged to respect the personal pain and grief.” This is very important to remember when reporting on tragic events. Moreover, the journalist must not interview or photograph children that are less than 16 years of age without consent from the parents or legal guardians, unless that is in accordance with the rights of the child. The same applies to people with special needs, who are not able to decide rationally.

Therefore, it is of greatest importance to understand what the public interest represents. You, as a journalist, must be able to recognize the public interest and to make sure that it prevails over the possible damage that could be done to the person with publishing his/her personal data (see textbox below).

Directorate for protection of personal data

Key institution responsible for protection of personal data is the Directorate for Protection of Personal Data, established by the Law on Protection of Personal Data for the purpose of supervising the lawfulness of the undertaken activities while processing and protecting personal data. The Directorate is an independent state institution with the capacity of legal entity headed by a Director appointed by the Parliament. Apart from the other competences (preparation or adoption of by-laws, policy development, providing opinions on draft regulations, keeping Central Register etc.), the Directorate conducts inspections as well as misdemeanor proceedings.

³⁰ The Code of Journalists of Macedonia is available at: <http://www.znm.org.mk/drupal-7.7/mk/node/440>

PUBLIC INTEREST

- information that might contribute to detection of: crime, abuse of position by a public official, threat to democracy, corruption, injustice, violation of human rights, discrimination, endangering the health and safety of people, negligence and/or incompetence of the public official;
- information that helps people make decisions from public character and prevent manipulation of people with statements or actions of individuals or organizations.

Toolkit on Journalism Ethics

It is important to note that the Directorate conducts training and provides technical assistance to interested parties. Your media house may contact the Directorate for possible training or any questions or dilemmas regarding the data protection.

Contact information:

Website: www.dzlp.mk

Address: Blvd. “Goce Delcev” 18
(Building of the MRTV - 14th floor)

Tel. +389 (2)3230 635; +389 (2)3230 617; +389 (2)3230 790; +389 (2)3230 413

e-mail: info@dzlp.mk; info@privacy.mk

Presumption of innocence

Presumption of innocence is also a fundamental human right guaranteed with the Universal declaration of human rights.³¹ Almost identically, the Constitution of Macedonia prescribes that a person indicated for an offence shall be considered innocent until his/her guilt is established by a legally valid court verdict. This rule is also a legal obligation defined with the Law on Criminal Procedure where it is said that state institutions, media and other persons are obliged to adhere to this rule, and with their public statement on an ongoing procedure must not violate the rights of the defendant and the damaged party, as well as the judicial independence and impartiality.

Unfortunately, violation of the right to presumption of innocence is one of the most common mistakes of the journalists when reporting on police arrests and judicial trials. Oftentimes, this right is violated by the law enforcement agencies i.e. the police. However, the journalists have to highlight that they are reporting about a suspect, and shall not condemn he/she as guilty in advance.

³¹ Article 11: everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guaranteed necessary for his defence.

Protected witnesses

The Law on protection of witnesses envisages prison sentences for revealing the identity of a protected witness, his/her home or residence and other information that could lead to his/her identification. More precisely, in case of disclosure of identity there is imprisonment of minimum 4 years envisaged, while in case there is causation of serious body injury to the person, the offender will be sentenced to at least eight years. If the deed leads to death, the imprisonment for the one who revealed the identity of the protected witness is minimum 15 years or life imprisonment.

5. Parliamentary oversight of the security sector

In established democracies, parliaments have three core functions: representative, legislative and oversight. The oversight function is one of the cornerstones of democracy and the MPs have the tools and means to hold the Government accountable. MPs are elected by the citizens on direct elections, thus have the legitimacy to counterbalance the executive and not be only a rubberstamp for endorsing the Government's policies.

Article 68 from the Constitutions says that inter alia, the Parliament carries out political control and oversight of the Government and other holders of public office responsible to the Parliament. Overseeing the security sector could be a real challenge. Security is one of the most non-transparent areas given the fact the many of the institutions' documents are classified. The public have limited access to the information regarding the security affairs, but the MPs as representatives of the citizens have the tools and means to exercise such oversight on both plenary and committee level. You as a journalist have an obligation to inform the public regarding the work of the Parliament in the area and in the same time should encourage the Parliament to perform its oversight function.

5.1. What could Macedonian Parliament do?

5.1.1. Legislation and role in formulation of security policy

Legislative and oversight function are two different responsibilities of the Parliament. However, given that the parliaments serve as an arena for opposing opinions, when discussing the proposed legislation the MPs should make sure that the final solution is in the best interest of the citizens and that the policies will be properly implemented as proclaimed.

5.1.2. The power of the purse

Having the final word in adoption of the budget, the parliament has the authority to determine the amount of money to be spent for each security sector institution. Although the proposed budget is prepared by the Government, the MPs discuss and amend the proposal in a way that they could cut or award additional resources. The budgeting process is explained in Chapter 6.

5.1.3. Parliamentary questions

Parliamentary questions are an important tool for monitoring whether the policies are properly implemented as well as to promote transparency and accountability of the state institutions. Every last Thursday of the month a separate session for parliamentary questions is convened. The prime minister and the members of the Government are obliged to be present at the session and the same applies to the public officials for whom there were prior announcements for questions. Besides asking verbally during the reserved plenary session, written questions could be also submitted in between through the President of the Parliament.

Given the secret nature of the security affairs, answers to the question could happen to be confidential. In such situation, the Government .e. the public official may propose that the answer be given at a parliament session without the presence of the public. The parliament shall decide upon that proposal in accordance with the provisions of the rules of procedure. Also, there is an opportunity for the MP to receive an answer in written form.

Parliamentary questions and answers could be an important source of information for media workers. A list of all questions from the MPs and their answers could be found at the parliament's website (<http://sobranie.mk/pratenicki-prashanja.nspj>).

5.1.4. Interpellation

Interpellation is constitutionally envisaged mechanism that enables the MPs to examine the work of any public office-holder, the Government and any of its members individually, as well as for issues concerning the performance of state bodies. Five MPs are enough to raise an interpellation. This mechanism is further regulated in the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament. The interpellation motion should be submitted in written form to the President of the Parliament, who forwards it to the person in is addressed to and to the other MPs. The person who is subject of interpellation should submit a written answer and then has the opportunity to elaborate it at a plenary session or to provide a verbal answer. The MPs should

decide on the interpellation within one working day, until the exhaustion of the applicants for the floor, and it should be decided at latest at 24:00h. The debate on the interpellation could be interrupted only in the following cases:

- A question of confidence in the Government is raised;
- The Government resigns;
- The Prime Minister proposes to dismiss the Government member who is subject of the interpellation;
- The public official resigns.

Ever since Macedonian independence in 1991, a minister has never left the function because of motion of censure. MP's from the ruling parties regularly show trust in the ministers who face interpellations. However, it is an important mechanism as it allows whole day discussion about the work in a particular sector and is valuable source of information.

5.1.5. Oversight hearings

The Law on the Parliament envisages holding oversight hearings conducted by the committees in order to obtain information and experts' opinions in relation to the establishment and the implementation of the policies, the implementation of the laws and the other activities of the Government and the state institutions. Each working body within the Parliament could organize an oversight hearing for the area of its competence where could invite authorized representatives from the Government and other state bodies to provide information and clarifications regarding the subject of the oversight hearing. The invited representatives have an obligation to be present at the meeting and the Committee could also invite other persons that can give information regarding the subject.

Oversight hearings are an important tool for the Parliament for performing oversight and holding the executive accountable, but also valuable source of information for the journalists that have interest in that particular subject.

5.1.6. Inquiry committees – ad hoc

An inquiry committee is an ad hoc (temporary) committee that could be established on any domain or any matter of public interest. The findings of the inquiry committee are basis for initiating a procedure for determination of responsibility of the public office-holders. Inquiry committees are established with a decision of the Parliament and the Parliament should also determine the number of members of the committee. According to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament, the chairpersons of the inquiry committees should be from the MPs of the opposition parliamentary groups.

5.2. Parliamentary committees

Parliamentary committees are permanent working bodies established by a decision of the Parliament where all parliamentary groups are represented. There are three committees within the Macedonian Parliament that have a role in regards to the security sector especially regarding the oversight of the security sector actors.

5.2.1. Committee on security and defense

This Committee is the parent committee for all security related matters. This Committee looks upon all issues related with the security and defense of the country, including protection of the order stipulated by the Constitution, protection of life, personal security and property of the citizens, citizenship, weapons, border issues, protection against natural and epidemic disasters, Euro-Atlantic integration and other issues related with the security and defence. On the Parliament's website, it is stated that this Committee is performing control in the field of defense and security. Practice shows that its activity is mainly related with discussing the legislation proposed by the relevant ministers or ministries (MoD or MoI). In addition to this, the Committee regularly discuss sending troops in peacekeeping operations.

The Committee on Defense and Security has a Chairperson, twelve members and their deputies.

5.2.2 Committee for supervising the work of the Security and Counter-Intelligence Directorate and the Intelligence Agency

The Committee considers issues regarding the work of the intelligence services in terms of respecting the freedoms and rights of citizens, companies and other legal entities; compliance of actions with the law, methods and means used by the DSCI and IA; financial, personnel and technical facilities of the DSCI and IA and other questions regarding the services. It was established in 1995 with the reorganization of the intelligence services where the DSCI and IA were created.

The Committee has a Chairperson, eight members and their deputies. The Committee's Chairman is always coming from the opposition. The MPs that are part of this Committee have security clearance which means that they have access to all information, regardless of the level of classification. The Intelligence Agency and the Directorate for Security and Counter-Intelligence have an obligation to submit their annual reports (until end of February for the previous year) and annual programs (until the end of January for the current year). They are also supposed to enable the Committee perform its oversight function and allow access to the needed documentation and information. As a journalist, keep in mind these dates especially because practice showed that the services rarely respect the deadlines for report submission.

According to its Rules of Procedures (which are not published online), the Committee can ask the state institutions and other organizations for information and documents relevant for its work. It can also establish working groups for examining specific issues.

The Committee adopts its decisions by majority vote of those in session, but at least one third of the overall members.

5.2.3. Committee on oversight of the implementation of the special investigative measure interception of the communication by the Ministry of Interior, the Financial Police Management, Customs Management and the Ministry of Defence

The Committee was established with the adoption of the Law on Communication Interception adopted in 2006. With the law amending the Law on Communication Interception from mid 2012³², two new state institutions were given mandates to use communication interception techniques- the Customs Administration and the Financial Police and as such the Committee received competences for their oversight. With the amendments, it is stated that “the decision for oversight the Committee adopts with majority of votes” (article 36-a). However, it is not stated which are the mechanisms that are available for the Committee to perform oversight and what is understood under the term “oversight” (for example – field visits, compulsory attendance of the officials at Committee meeting, etc.).

35

The Committee has a Chairperson (coming from the opposition), four members and their deputies. It reports to the Parliament on an annual basis, within two months from the end of the previous year. Just like their colleagues from the Committee overseeing the work of the both intelligence services, the Committee members enjoy full access to classified information. Besides, this is the only parliamentary committee where the opposition have the majority.

The Committee could also request necessary information from the state institutions and form working groups. The Committee adopts its decisions by majority vote of those in session, but at least one third of the overall members (two MPs).

6. Financial aspects of the security sector

Democratic principles entail transparent and accountable budget allocation and budget spending. Taxpayers have the right to know how their money is spent and media are the most important source of information for most of the citizens. Reporting on budget spending is important not only for informative purposes, but media have a role also to monitor the budget cycle and to inform the public on possible misuse of public money. The security sector should not be an exception from the rules and procedures. Therefore, it is of great importance to deeply analyze various aspects of the functioning of the security system, especially in regards to the oversight, control and transparency in dealing with the finances of these structures.

6.1. Corruption in the security sector

Corruption is one of the biggest challenges of modern society which undermines the trust in the public in institutions. The Law on prevention of corruption defines the corruption as “misuse of office, public authorization, official duty and position for the purpose of gaining any benefit for oneself or others.” Although oftentimes the first association of corruption is “bribery” or receiving and giving bribes, in practice corruption takes many forms and is often difficult to recognize. In fact, any abuse of power could mean corruption. Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that apart from corruption by taking certain actions, the deed could occur through failure to take actions (for instance: failing to submit criminal charges, the officer would not write a ticket although the driver exceeded the speed etc.).

Corruption in the security sector can be considered to be one of the most serious forms of corruption. Security sector institutions such as the police and intelligence services are obliged to enforce the law and protect the citizens, but if they fail to work according to the law then significantly affect citizens’ trust in the system. The closedness of the security sector often allows the parties in power to easily abuse their positions in these sectors. A specific of this sector is the ability to classify, which provides an opportunity for various abuses. In addition, organizational culture among police carries a high risk of solidarity among police officers to the extent of covering up corrupt practices of colleagues, despite being aware about the case.

Different authors developed different typology of police corruption; it seems that the widely accepted is that one developed by Roebuck and Barker (1947). They recognized the following types:

- Corruption of Authority (When an officer receives something due to their position but is not actually breaking the law),
- ‘Kickbacks’ (When an officer receives things for referring business to others),
- Opportunistic Theft (Stealing from arrestees),
- Shakedown’s (When an officer accepts a bribe in return for not following

- through a criminal violation),
- Protection of Illegal Activity (police protection of illegal activity which allows it to continue),
- ‘The Fix’ (Undermining criminal investigations),
- Direct Criminal Activities (when a police officer commits an actual crime),
- Internal Payoffs (privileges within the police force are bartered with e.g. shifts, holidays),
- ‘Flaking’ or ‘Padding’ (planting or adding to evidence).

DCAF in its Toolkit on Police Integrity³³ pays great attention to the police corruption, listing eleven types of police corruption and inappropriate behavior:

- Police disregard for the law – when the police disobey the rules (ex. does not respect rights, driving contrary to the legal regulations etc.)
- Police circumvention of the law – police officers consciously circumventing the law by outsourcing tasks to private companies
- Deception – knowingly making untrue statements, misreporting crime statistics etc.
- Denial – refusing to accept criticism, independent investigations or citizen surveys.
- Bullying within the police service – bullying police recruits by older officers. The Toolkit states that this is not a corruption by most definitions, but it still sets a bad example.
- Excessive and inappropriate police violence – using more than the minimum amount of violence required to deal an issue.
- Prejudice and Racism – different treatment of different groups, usually: racisms, sexism, homophobia and discrimination based on age.
- Inappropriate selection and promotion procedures – based on personal contacts, nepotism, cronyism etc.
- Moonlighting – running own businesses when off duty, contrary to the police profession.
- Off duty behavior – police officers should serve as a role model in any time.
- Affiliation with criminals – this is one of the greatest security risks and difficult to prove at the same time.

Sometimes, it is difficult to make a distinction between a corruption or simply improper behavior. However, in most of the cases of misuse of position, a corruption also takes place. In Macedonia, key role in combating police corruption has the Sector for internal control and professional standards within the Ministry of Interior.³⁴ In addition, an important role is given to the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption.

6.2. Security sector budgeting

The security budget is the amount of money spent over one fiscal year for the internal and external security of the country.³⁵ The state budget is a comprehensive document that includes the figures allocated for each state institution, including the ones dealing with security. In Macedonia, the fiscal year corresponds with the calendar year, meaning that it starts on 1st of January and ends on 31st of December.

Budget cycle

Budget cycle refers to the entire budgeting process – starting from its planning and formulation to the final phase of review and evaluation. Each stage involves numerous actors including the executive, the parliament and independent state institutions. While some of the stages are very transparent and open for the public, a large part of the budgeting cycle takes place behind closed doors. Media have a task to oversee the budget cycle, but also to inform the citizens on the way their money is spent.

The budget cycle is consisted of four phases: formulation, enactment, execution and evaluation.

1. Formulation

Institutions' budget preparation is based on the strategic priorities of the government, the Fiscal Strategy and the proposed strategic plans that each ministry prepares on annual basis. The Government determines its strategic priorities for the next year by 15th of April the latest, while the budget users (Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defense and Intelligence Agency) submit their proposed budgets to the Ministry of Finance by 1st of September. In case the budget users do not submit their proposed budgets within the foreseen deadline, this will be done by the Ministry of Finance. This phase is performed far from the eyes of the public and information regarding the phase could be gathered using the Law on free access to information from public

34 the Sector for Internal Control and Professional Standards is the internal controlling mechanism within the Ministry of Interior. You can find more information about its work at: <http://mvr.gov.mk/page/sektor-za-vnatreshna-kontrola>

35 Fuior, T. Budget Analysis in Cole E., Eppert K. & Kinezelbach (eds.) Public Oversight of the Security Sector

character. Using various tools, one of the journalistic approaches could be assessing the transparency of the planning process and correlation between the planned budget and the strategic documents.

2. Enactment

The Ministry of Finance submits the budget proposal to the Government not later than 1st of November. The Government has a deadline until 15th of November to submit the draft-budget to the Parliament. With the purpose of providing enough time for analyzing the draft budget and more substantial debate, the legislators have prescribed that the Parliament adopts the budget by 31st of December the latest, but the discussion for it cannot begin within 20 days from the day the draft budget has been submitted to the Parliament. The procedure for adoption of the state budget is the same as the regular procedure for adoption of any law. Parent committee for discussing the budget is the Committee on Finances and Budget. From security perspective, there is practice of discussing the budget of the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Defense by the Committee on Security and Defense. Contrary to the best practices from the region and the EU member-states, the budgets of the intelligence services are not discussed by the parliamentary committees. The budgets of the military intelligence and the counter-intelligence are portions from the budgets of their parent ministries (Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior, respectively).³⁶The MPs could intervene on the draft budgets with proposing amendments.

Comparison of budget items throughout the years could be valuable source of information. The journalists should pay attention to severe budget cuts or dramatic increases within the budget especially when such changes are not appropriately justified.

3. Execution

Executing the budget is a function of the executive. The strategic plans of the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defense and the Intelligence Agency are either classified documents or they are not specific enough about the financial implications of the envisaged programmes and tasks. This complicates the work of the journalists if they want to follow the budget spending and examine whether the budget line comply with the planned activities throughout the year. However, limited information could be gathered using the Law on free access to information from public character. In addition, the journalists could investigate and report on the public procurements (instructions given below). In addition, journalists should closely follow any rebalances of the state budget throughout the year especially in

³⁶ Annual budgets are available at the website of the Ministry of Finance: www.finance.gov.mk

regards to the explanations provided. There had been cases in the past when some of the security sector institutions received additional amounts during the budget rebalance without proper explanation.

4. Evaluation and Audit

The final phase of the budget cycle refers to the ex-post control i.e. controlling how the budget was spent. Key role plays the State Audit Office which is a supreme audit institution in Macedonia. The reports of the State Audit Office are valuable resources providing information on systematic deficiencies and possible irregularities. All of them are available online on the website of the State Audit Office www.dzr.mk. Apart from the reports, the State Audit Office also publishes annual programs so you can follow in advance the institutions that are going to be audited in the year that follows.

6.3. Public procurement

One way for monitoring the spending of public money during the year, i.e. during the phase of implementation is monitoring the public procurement. The way the institutions spend their resources should comply with the economic principle of efficiency, meaning getting the best possible product or service for a given amount. However, the procedure for public procurements is lengthy and complex, and no matter how transparent it is, it is difficult for the citizens to regularly follow how the institutions spend the money of the tax-payers. Therefore, the CSOs and the media should be actively involved in monitoring these processes and providing regular information and analysis for the public.

First, we must distinguish between the terms “public procurement” and “tender” that are oftentimes used as synonyms. In addition, the terms “concession” and “public-private partnership” could also be found denoting some kind of interaction between public authorities and private businesses.

The term “public procurement” is not defined in the national legislation, but can be derived from the definition of “public procurement contract” under which it is “a contract of financial interest, which includes utilities contracts, concluded in writing between one or more contracting authorities on one side and one or more economic operators on the other side, the subject of which is the execution of works, delivery of goods or provision of services under the law.” Apparently it is a complex definition; however, we can break it down to its constituents so we are getting the following:

1. There is a contract between two parties. On one side are the contracting authorities or state authorities, local self-government and the City of Skopje, Macedonian Government or public enterprises and legal entities operating activities of public interest. In fact, in most of the cases contracting parties are the state institutions. On the other side of the contract are the economic operators, where an “economic operator” is just a term used to denote the companies that provide goods, services or works.

Principles

- ✓ competition among economic operators
- ✓ equal treatment and non-discrimination
- ✓ transparency and integrity in the process
- ✓ rational and efficient use of funds

2 The contract is about execution of works, delivery of goods or provision of services under the law. Hence, this is the notion of public procurement.

On the other hand, a concession is granting a right to use the goods of general interest for the Republic of Macedonia, performing construction of public interest or delivering public services, obliging the concessionaire to build and /or operate, use and maintain the object of concession with or without payment by the grantor. In other words, the concession is very similar to public procurement, but the difference is that the economic operator reserves the right to exploit those works, goods or services together with payment. Contractually regulated long-term cooperation between the public and the private partner is a public private partnership.

Finally, the term “tender” is used to define the public announcement and competition between firms. The tender may relate to both public procurement and concession and therefore should be used cautiously.

In Macedonia, for each purchase that exceeds the amount of 500 EUR excluding VAT there must be a procurement procedure.

Financial limit	Method of procurement
Up to 500 Euro excluding VAT	No procedure for public procurement
From 500 to 5000 Euro excluding VAT	Collection of three offers without public announcement
From 5000 to 20 000 Euro excluding VAT for goods and services and up to 50 000 Euro for works	Collection of offers upon public announcement
From 20 000 to 500 000 for goods and services and from 50 000 to 2 000 000 Euro excluding VAT for works	One of the types of contract award procedures (open, restricted, negotiated procedure or competitive dialogue) takes place
More than 500 000 Euro excluding VAT for goods and services and more than 2 000 000 Euro excluding VAT for works	The Public announcement is also published in the official gazette of the EU or other appropriate publication

Table: Financial limits for the public procurements³⁷

While each procurement exceeding the amount of 500 Euro must be preceded by a procedure for public procurement, there are exceptions from this provisions that are especially relevant for the security sector. Hence, among other cases when the law on public procurement shall not be applied, the following cases are listed:

- it can lead to disclosure of information, which is contrary to the essential security interest of the country;
- it endangers the essential security interest of the country, connected with manufacture or trade in weapons, ammunition and military materials and systems in accordance with law.

With regard to the procurement in the field of defense, the contracting authority shall be obliged to inform the Government, by the end of January of the ongoing year at the latest, regarding its annual procurement plans in the ongoing year.

Key role in the public procurement procedure has the Bureau for public procurement as an entity under the Ministry of Finance. This body is responsible to ensure that public procurement procedure is conducted in a rational, efficient and transparent way. Its webpage is www.bjn.gov.mk. A State Commission for complaint on public procurement procedure has also been established in order for the firms to seek legal protection against decisions, actions and absence of action by the contracting authority in the procedure for awarding a contract for public procurement. An

37 Source: Center for Civil Communications: Toolkit for journalists for reporting public procurement

important source of information could be found in the complaints submitted by the firms who took part in the tender but had not been selected. Through examining the reasons for their dissatisfaction and why they believe there is misconduct by any state authority you can obtain findings or indications that the procedure have been inappropriately implemented. Also, this could mean that the main principles of equal treatment, non-discrimination, integrity, rational and efficient use of funds have been violated.

Public procurement can be easily monitored using the electronic system of public procurement. It is a web system that allows the implementation of public procurement procedure in electronic form and is available at www.e-nabavki.gov.mk. On an easy, quick and simple way, this electronic system provides important information on announcements, canceled procedures, records, notices of contracts etc.

7. International organizations

Ever since Macedonia proclaimed independence in the early 1990s, international organisations have been playing very important role in country's political life. Having in mind that international organisations are plenty and diverse in terms of function, structure and geographic area they operate in it is important to make a distinction and point to the ones relevant to Macedonia. Due to the length and depth of their involvement arguably the most prominent organisations are the OSCE, EU, NATO and the UN.

The international community in various capacities has been involved in many security related questions in Macedonia. From soft security related questions such as support of the reform of the security system to questions that fall under the hard security scope such as disarmament of the ethnic-Albanian rebels of 2001 and sending military (NATO) and police (EU) missions in the aftermath of the conflict. Macedonia's attempts to join NATO and the EU have opened up new platform for even deeper cooperation. For example, Macedonia today participates in EU Battle Groups together with other EU member states and has been transformed from security importer to security exporter.

The following text provides a glimpse on the activities of the international organisations present in Macedonia providing tips on possible reporting topics.

7.1. United Nations

The UN in Macedonia has been actively engaged in the aftermath of the dissolution of Yugoslavia when Macedonia's leadership invited a UN preventive mission in order to monitor the developments on the northern and western borders with Yugoslavia/Kosovo and Albania. For the UN this was its first mission of this kind.

The mission aimed to prevent from any possible crisis stemming from the war in Kosovo. However the mission had to be terminated due to the blockade of the Chinese authorities at the UNSC.³⁸ This decision proved to be shortsighted because just two years later an armed conflict in Macedonia erupted and the border with Kosovo at that point was very fragile.

Ever since, the UN has not had any vast military or security related presence in Macedonia. The relationship with the UN has been reformed and Macedonia from importing its peace services becomes exporter. Even though very low in numbers the country participates to UN peace operations abroad. So far Macedonia has participated only to one UN mission in Lebanon. It started participating in 2007 having one staff officer in the Joint Operational Centre in Naqoura.

Ideas for news articles

It can be observed that Macedonia's contribution to UN operations has been minimal and as such this could be potential story of interest for journalism coverage.

What are the factors that contribute to such a small and rather symbolic contribution to UN operations, having in mind that the UN as an organisation provides lump sum to the participating states for each peacekeeper?

Additionally, media can feature a story on the experiences of those Macedonian peacekeepers in the mission in Lebanon combining it with the experience stemming from participation in other missions abroad (such as NATO's ISAF etc).

Apart from UN's well-known peacekeeping portfolio this international organisation is also present in Macedonia through number of its (UN) agencies tackling various issues which can be related to the human security dimension such as: poverty, social inclusion, environment, health etc.

List of UN agencies present in Macedonia that can be relevant to human security dimension:

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
 UNHCR –United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
 WHO - World Health Organization
 IOM – International organisation for migration
 UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme

38 Read more about the reason on the following website. <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/1999/19990225.sc6648.html>

Ideas for news article

What level of support does the UN provide to Macedonia through the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in relation to the increased migrants activity coming from war affected areas such as Syria?
How does the UNHCR assess Macedonia's authorities dealing with the migrant situation?

UN Macedonia website- www.un.org.mk

7.2. European Union

EU's role in maintaining peace and security has been acknowledged many times across the globe. Unlike other more robust organisations like NATO for example, the EU is well known for its soft power. As such the EU does not have its own standing army, but is drawing from the capacities of the member states. The EU is directly involved in international operations by contributing to civilian and military operations. Currently the EU has 16 operations abroad stretching from the Balkans and South Caucasus across the African Continent. Predominantly the operations are with civilian character (11 out of 16).³⁹ Out of the 16 abroad, two are based in the Balkans, one is of a civilian character and is in Kosovo named EULEX and the other one is military dispatched to Bosnia and Herzegovina named ALTHEA.

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The Balkans is not unknown field to the European Union. The first ever civilian and military operations were started exactly in this region. Bosnia and Herzegovina has been hosting EU's ALTHEA mission since 2004 when the EU took over from NATO's role in the implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords. Apart from EU member states there are also third countries participating with their own personnel. For example, Macedonia participates in Bosnia and Herzegovina's ALTHEA mission with a medical unit.

Macedonia on the other hand hosted EU's first ever military operation, Concordia. This mission also similar to the case in Bosnia overtook from NATO's military mission in Macedonia called Allied Harmony. The aim of the mission was to create conditions after the signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, a power sharing deal which halted the internal armed conflict in Macedonia. Apart from Concordia, Macedonia also hosted EU's civilian police mission Proxima, which was its second

³⁹ Full list of the operations and mandates is available on the following link <http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/>

mission of this kind. The mission aimed at supporting the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement as well as supporting the major police sector overhaul. The mission ended with its mandate in 2005.

The pillar of EU's role in international security affairs is to be found in the Common Security and Defence Policy of the Union. Even the title of the policy, common suggests that the positions on international (security) questions should be aligned in order to bring the positions of member states in sync. Major (legal) boost of EU's role in the security field happened with the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty (effective since January 2009). The treaty enables group of EU states to launch common actions under the close eye of EU's High Representative. However this possibility so far remains to be fully used. Also the new High Representative with the Lisbon Treaty has the possibility to suggest new civilian and military missions. The Lisbon Treaty also brings a feature similar to the one of NATO's famous Article 5 of mutual assistance. In the case the EU the mutual assistance clause is applicable to terrorist attacks, man made or natural disasters.

Reporting on EU security related topics and reporting from Macedonia could cover various elements of EU's common foreign and security policy. Being a global actor, the EU acts in various places across the world. Having in mind that EU's biggest civilian operation is operating in Macedonia's next door neighbor, Kosovo provides possibilities to explore first hand EU's crisis management role.

EU in the wider security sector reforms process

Throughout the years the EU in Macedonia has been also involved deeply in wider security sector reforms such as border management, police reforms etc. To a large extent these reforms are a result of Macedonia's EU aspirations and as Macedonia progresses with EU's accession, the EU would be more involved in assessing and helping to reform some aspects of its security system. Special attention the EU puts on issues such as: migration, asylum, borders, fight against organised crime, terrorism, drugs, judicial cooperation etc. These areas are well incorporated in EU's Chapters 23 & 24 of the *acquis communautaire* (EU's body of law) which is especially important during the accession process of a candidate country.

Ideas for news article

A surge in migrants' crossings is evident in Macedonia mainly from Syria and the Middle East since 2013. The current conditions of the Centres for Foreigners and the Centre for Asylum in Skopje are far from sufficient to respond to the actual need. Readers might be interested to know more about the ways in which the EU is helping Macedonian authorities deal with the situation. Moreover, whether the EU has already supported for instance modernisation of the Centres for Asylum and Foreigners etc.

Key faces of the EU security related policies

Official Twitter Account of Federica Mogherini (EU's HR of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/VP of the Commission) <https://twitter.com/FedericaMog>

Spokesperson Maja Kocijančič: <https://twitter.com/MajaEUspox>

EU Delegation in Macedonia:

http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia/index_en.htm

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7.3. NATO

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) established in 1949 was originally set up as a collective and defence organisation. Throughout the years it has maintained this profile but also has become increasingly political organisation as well. In its military capacity (launching operations) NATO acts unanimously, upon the agreement of all member states. Currently NATO has five missions and operations. In the Balkans NATO is still active with approximately 5000 troops situated in Kosovo. The other four missions where NATO is currently deployed are in Afghanistan, the Mediterranean Sea, Horn of Africa as well as supporting the African Union. As a collective defence organisation NATO has only once employed Article 5 of NATO's Charter after the 9/11 terrorist bombing of the twin towers in New York. Some of its noticeable operations include the 1999 NATO intervention in Yugoslavia which could be seen as a turning point when discussing humanitarian actions, because it was for the first time that international organisation used military

means without the approval of the United Nations Security Council.

Macedonia's relations with NATO are multi-layered. The country has made accession to NATO a clear strategic goal, which has support across all political parties as well as vast majority of the population. The latest opinion poll on the questions of Macedonia's membership to NATO was supported by 81% of those involved in the poll.⁴⁰

At the moment there are three possible venues regarding NATO that Macedonia's journalists can explore in their daily jobs.

- Accession of Macedonia to NATO and other enlargements
- NATO in international operations (e.g. ISAF)
- NATO in geopolitical context (Ukraine crisis.etc.)

Accession of Macedonia to NATO and other enlargements

The accession of Macedonia to NATO over time morphed from being to a large extent a technical process into a political process due to the Greek veto of Macedonia's accession in this organisation in 2008 Bucharest Summit. Therefore most of the discussions around Macedonia's entry to NATO in the last few years have been focused and dependent on the resolution of the name issue with Greece. One of the conclusions at NATO's Bucharest summit was that Macedonia has fulfilled all the necessary criteria for membership and the moment the authorities of the two countries Macedonia and Greece find mutually acceptable solution to the name dispute NATO will send invitation for Macedonia to join the Alliance.

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Therefore when writing on this issue and in particular Macedonia, taking into account the developments over the UN mediated talks on the name issue with Greece are vital. The Alliance has repeatedly said that there are no shortcuts to accession and that the only remaining issue is the disagreement between Skopje and Athens. Following Greek press on this issue would add weight to your story. Some of the well known Greek media include: [Eleftherotypia](#), [Ta Nea](#), [Kathimerini](#), [Athens News Agency](#) (English version available) etc.

Apart from the political process with the name dispute, Macedonia as a NATO Candidate country is intertwined in the Membership Action Plan process, specially

⁴⁰ MIA. Poll shows 81 percent of Macedonians support NATO and 68 percent – EU membership. November 18 2014. <http://www.mia.mk/en/Inside/RenderSingleNews/92/132380335#>

designed for candidate countries with number of tasks related to the military and other political processes the candidate country should fulfil in that particular year. So far Macedonia has been involved in 14 MAP cycles. These documents are not publically available on the website of the Ministry of Defence, therefore one should ask directly to the spokesperson or use the law on free access to information of public character.

NATO enlargement

After the major NATO expansion in Central and Eastern Europe the enlargement process is slowing down. Currently NATO's enlargement vision is shared with the countries from the Western Balkans. The most recent member states that joined NATO in 2008 were Albania and Croatia. Currently, candidates for membership are Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina. All three have clear perspectives to join the Alliance.

When writing a story on NATO's enlargement in the Balkans it is useful to consider the

- Public support towards it. Major obstacle in the process of Montenegro joining NATO is the contrast of those supporting NATO accession and those that do not.
- Political support across different political platforms. In Bosnia and Herzegovina there is no consensus among political leaders that the country should join NATO. The leadership of Republika Srpska publicly disagrees with it.
- Role of the Western Balkans in the current geopolitical developments. What events have the potential to alter or slow down the enlargement? For example, how would the Ukraine crisis affect the process of enlargement?

NATO in international operations

NATO is already acclaimed actor in the international community when it comes to maintaining international peace and security. Probably one of its biggest missions so far has been its role in Afghanistan with ISAF. Macedonia under the NATO umbrella participated in ISAF 2002-2014. Even though Macedonia has extensive track record in participating in NATO operations such as ISAF, the public knows very little about it. The mission ended in 2014 and this could serve as an inspiration

for stories potentially on:

- Lessons learned from Macedonia's contribution to ISAF
- Whether the mission fulfilled its mandate?
- How did Macedonia benefit from it?

The intention of Macedonian authorities is to continue with its participation in NATO operations.

Because there is not much public discussion on this topic, the wider public would benefit if there were articles including interviews with officials from the Ministry of Defence as well as experts about the upcoming mission. The journalist can cover this topic by asking some of the following questions:

- What would be the profile of any new missions and in what capacity would Macedonia contribute?
- What are the rationales for Macedonia's contribution to another mission?
- Interview with members of the Parliament Committee on Security and Defence on their opinion about the mission. What would be the pros and cons?
- How much will Macedonia's participation to the operation cost etc.

NATO in geopolitical context (Ukraine crisis.)

Because of Macedonia's proclaimed interest to join NATO, Macedonian public should be familiar with the role of the Alliance around the world for better outreach and more informed citizens.

There are those that argue that the crisis in Ukraine (bordering NATO member states and Russia) has reinvented and brought to the surface the traditional military alliance. At the moment the involvement of NATO as an organisation in the Ukraine crisis is minimal and primarily through political statements not completely excluding the possibility for membership of this country in the Alliance. On the other hand the militia controlled eastern part of Ukraine and the thousands of lost lives so far shows the worrying situation in Europe's neighbourhood where NATO is still relevant. The conflict in Ukraine is opening the question of European security where Macedonia is part. Journalists should therefore be interested in following closely the involvement of NATO in the Ukraine conflict and its relations with Russia. Also looking at the foreign policies towards Ukraine of the countries from the region would be useful in better understanding the context in which Macedonia operates.

Who to follow for latest news on NATO?

NATO's Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg is active on social media including Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/jensstoltenberg> and Twitter: <https://twitter.com/jensstoltenberg>.

NATO Spokesperson Oana Lungescu can be also reached on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/natopress>. NATO has Facebook channel <https://www.facebook.com/NATO> as well as a separate Twitter Channel <https://twitter.com/nato>

In Macedonia, NATO is represented through the NATO Liaison Office in Skopje and Bulgaria Navy Capt. Rumen Radev: <http://www.jfcnaples.nato.int/hqskopje.aspx>

7.4. Decision-Making process for participation in peace operations

The process of contributing troops, police and civilians is not comprehensively dealt with under a single law, but is dispersed throughout different pieces of legislation. The modalities of sending the Armed Forces abroad vary slightly depending on the organization they would be attached to (EU, UN or NATO etc.). Regardless of the organization, all military deployments must be approved by the Macedonian parliament. The Ministry of Defense is the first to consider any invitation to contribute troops. A draft proposal for sending troops is developed and then sent to the relevant Parliamentary committee, which in Macedonia's case is the Committee on Security and Defense. Once the Committee approves the proposal it is then sent to a Parliament Plenary session.

For participation in NATO missions, changes in procedure will come into effect when Macedonia becomes a NATO member state, which is unlikely to happen very soon due to the unresolved name dispute with Greece. These changes would circumvent the need for approval from the Parliament, instead allowing the government to take the decision without parliamentary approval. The need for such a solution is unclear. For example Croatia (a NATO member state since 2008) does not have such a legal provision. Instead all the powers regarding sending troops abroad are vested in Croatia's Parliament.

Civilian contribution

At the moment, Macedonia's civilian participation in peace operations is regulated by the 2007 Law on sending personnel to international missions and international organisations as well as the primary laws covering the work of certain security actors, such as the Law on Police.

In the context of civilian missions the Law on Sending Personnel to International Missions and International Organisations clears the way, legally speaking, for sending civilian personnel to peace operations in the capacity of experts. By "international mission" this legal act means missions that are meant to support internal order, establish democratic institutions and provide aid to civilians affected by a crisis. Likewise, it clearly states that the mission should be dealing with: security sector reforms, public order, judicial reforms, rights of minorities, elections, freedom of the media, etc.⁴¹

7.5. OSCE

www.osce.org/skopje

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is the biggest security related intergovernmental organisation in Europe with 57 participating states. Even though its primary area of focus is Europe, members of the OSCE stretch to countries such as the United States and Kazakhstan. Originally established as a platform for security discussions on Europe, many of the projects the OSCE is doing today target countries in Central Asia, South Caucasus etc. Yet, the crisis in Ukraine has proven once again OSCE's vital importance to the peace and stability in Europe.

Similarly to the EU, OSCE has the possibility to project only soft power hence serving as a platform for discussions on important security related developments. For example one of the profound results of its work can be seen in the signing of the Helsinki Accords in 1975 which have reassured countries' territorial integrity and sovereignty and important achievement can be seen in the setting up a group to monitor the respect of human rights in the USSR.

41 Law on Sending Personnel in International Missions and International Organisations, Article.4

OSCE is present in Macedonia from the early days of its independence. Throughout this period the mission has worked on fulfilling different mandates. Current mandate of the mission is to support the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement stretching across different segments of society such as policing, inter-ethnic issues, good governance etc. Apart from the main mandate associated with the work of the OSCE's Mission to Skopje, the OSCE is the principal independent and international organization monitoring elections in Macedonia. These type of activities are done by the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights ([ODIHR](#)). As a participating state Macedonia in the organization is also benefitting from the work of the OSCE's [Representative on the Freedom of the Media](#).

OSCE's role is best understood as a conflict prevention mechanism in Macedonia's society but also in many other areas this organization is active. Apart from Skopje serving as its headquarters the Mission has also a field office in Tetovo (Western Macedonia). Having in mind its conflict and prevention role when journalists report on increased violence among youth or about increased inter-ethnic relations, OSCE office in Skopje would be a good reference point for commenting on stories.

For more information contact:

OSCE Mission to Skopje

Skopje

Office: +389 2 323 4000

info-MK@osce.org

Bibliography and useful links

Association of journalists of Macedonia www.znm.org.mk

Code of Journalists of Macedonia <http://www.znm.org.mk/drupal-7.7/mk/node/440>

Toolkit in Journalism Ethics

<http://www.znm.org.mk/drupal-7.7/sites/default/files/Priracnik%20za%20etika%20vo%20novinarstvoto%20maj%202012.pdf>

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Institutions:

Ministry of Interior www.mvr.gov.mk

Ministry of Defence www.morm.gov.mk

Intelligence Agency www.ia.gov.mk

Ministry of Finance www.finance.gov.mk

Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia www.sobranie.mk

Public Prosecution www.jorm.gov.mk

State Audit Office www.dzr.mk

Bureau for Public Procurement www.bjn.gov.mk

Commission for protection of the Right of Free Access to Information from Public Character www.comspi.mk

Directorate for Personal Data Protection www.dzlp.mk

Directorate for Security of Classified Information www.dbki.gov.mk

International organizations:

United Nations www.un.org

European Union www.eeas.europa.eu

EU Delegation in Macedonia

http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia/index_en.htm

NATO www.nato.int

OSCE www.osce.org/skopje

A stylized, monochromatic graphic in shades of gray. It features several hands holding various tools, including screwdrivers and a wrench, arranged in a way that suggests a collaborative or technical process. The background is composed of overlapping circular and rectangular shapes, creating a complex, layered effect.

SKOPJE 2015

HANDBOOK

HOW TO REPORT ON SECURITY- RELATED ISSUES?

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