ANALYTICA´S YEARBOOK OF INTERNS

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From the Director

Analytica is one of the 'new generation' think-tanks in Macedonia that actively draws solutions to contemporary problems from the ideas, principles and traditions that make Macedonia such an important historical and geopolitical place. It is dedicated to promoting greater cooperation and understanding among the people in Macedonia and wider in the region of Southeast Europe.

Internships are one of the leading qualities of Analytica - they benefit the interns in giving them an opportunity to write research reports and utilize Analytica's experience and knowledge. The Internship Programme is one of the most successful programmes of Analytica – it brings young people with fresh ideas to spend time and do research in Analytica and gain hands-on experience of the SEE region. We at Analytica remain committed to maintaining and further developing this programme in the future.

The 2007 yearbook features contributions from interns from different parts of Europe and wider. The book contains their full reports and excerpts. Most reports address topics related to regional cooperation and EU integration and enlargement with a distinct focus on the Western Balkans region. Some present a specific member state relations with Western Balkans states and comment on the prospects of further enlargements. The original and full-text reports can be acquired from the interns and by contacting Analytica. The first nine reports were written by our residential interns that made their research on our office in a period of three months and the remaining twelve reports were prepared by non-residential interns, who conducted distance research and sent it to us.

We hope this excellent mutual relationship continues and develops further.

Looking forward to more yearbooks to come.

Regards,

Turker Miftar
Executive Director

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Incentives and obstacles to cooperation

Even if the wars in the Balkans can show that the cooperation in the region seems to be impossible, the fact is that there are some incentives to cooperation in the area. Above all, countries of the regions not only are destined to cooperate with each other but also can take out some positive effects of that cooperation rather than acting alone. We call it the incentives.

The first incentive is the <u>creation of a security region within an area traditionally of conflict and fragmentation</u>. From an historic point of view, there have been several attempts, after periods of war, to create regional cooperation. The underlying idea is that fragmentation and conflict would be overcome by economical and political cooperation. And that cooperation would eliminate for once and for all armed conflicts. The first project was the Kingdom of Croats, Serbs and Slovenes in 1918. Afterwards, in 1930s, Balkans conferences were held and focused in low politics issues. In 1950s, there were some initiatives to create a Balkan Nuclear Weapons Free zone, aiming at regional disarmament. During 1970s and 1980s, the efforts were concentrated on cooperation on low politics issues and materialised in the First Conference of Foreign Ministers of Balkan Countries in Belgrade in 1988. Despite the failure of all those projects, especially due to the Cold War influence, Balkan governments state their will to revive the multilateral cooperation in political, economic, humanitarian, justice and internal affairs in order to overcome recurrent wars.

Secondly, there are <u>cultural and historical links</u> that facilitate cooperation and makes the countries of the region share the same point of view. In this sense, Balkan countries share a common geography and have had almost the same historical experience (i.e. ottoman conquest, communism period), which has in fact approached culture links. Similar cultural background is not essential to promote cooperation but it helps and makes it easy.

All Balkan countries also share <u>regional issues and shared problems</u>. A regional issue means that all parts are affected by the same problem, and, thus, it requires a collective and multilateral action, by some or all states in the region, to address it. More benefits can be achieved acting together rather than conducting an individual action. The State members of European Union, acting all together to solve common problems (external trade, environment, transport infrastructures, etc.), which rarely can be solved by all of them acting in an isolated way, is the best example. One of the most important issues in the region is the development of regional infrastructure (transportation, energy and communications network): it is a need shared by all countries of South East Europe countries. After the consecutives wars in Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo and Macedonia, infrastructures have been seriously damaged. The lack of them makes trade difficult, for example. That's why post war reconstruction is one of the most important incentives to cooperation within a regional framework.

Long periods of war, coupled with common geography, have entailed the emergence of some <u>security problems</u> common to the entire region. All Balkan countries must now face organised crime, corruption and illegal immigration, all of them inherited from the war period, where the law could rarely be enforced. The organised crime is not only a shared problem in the region but also takes advantage of the geography to escape from the control of authorities. Only a collective action, such as the sharing of police and court data, could address the problem. The creation of a security common policy in EU and the cooperation between policies of all countries could be one of the best examples.

Besides all, the current trend of <u>new regionalism</u> in international politics is conducive to regional cooperation as well in the Balkans. The East-European countries had joined several regional organisations before entering into the EU. Furthermore, many countries of the region have become members of new regional organisations created to better address common problems and face the globalisation (Black Sea Economic Cooperation, Central European Initiative, etc.). More important, the common goal of Balkan countries to become members of international organisation (such as EU, NATO,

OSCE or the Council of Europe) denotes similar attitudes towards the international environment. Taking into account the fact that thy are not big countries and they do not have great power acting by their own before international institutions, they should agree in a common strategy and try to get all together the best for the region from the international community. As they do not seem to realise that it is better for them to cooperate, Balkans countries are receiving external pressure from the EU, the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and the international donors. These external actors use the best way to obtain from them what they are looking for: conditionality. By using conditionality in the initiatives promoted by international cooperation (Stability Pact and Association process are clear examples of it) they expect to ensure the success of the project. That is the reason why, even if several incentives to cooperation exists, the countries of the region still needs the international community action to overcome difficulties and mistrusts between them.

Whereas the region seems to be addressed to cooperate, several obstacles exist and obstruct in fact the process.

First of all, we can mention the macroeconomic obstacles. There is a lack of economic cohesiveness between the countries and the intra-regional trade is scarce. In spite of the fact that cooperation can be established in a political basis, it is also true that economic cooperation facilitate the mutual understanding between countries. Without economic cooperation all political initiatives can be useless. That's why the lack of trade and the economic cohesiveness makes a good neighbourhood policy difficult. Regarding to trade, the intra-regional trade is almost insignificant and exports to the EU accounts for more than 50% of Balkans countries. After the Cold War several free trade agreements had emerged in the region, but the effects on intra-regional trade have been scarce because there are still too many tariff and non-tariff barriers. The existence of these barriers makes trade difficult. Therefore, it saps growth and production, distort economies and the patterns of bilateral preference.

Secondly, Balkans economies lack of complementarity. They all have a similar economic structure (that is to say, they all produce similar products) and it makes trade almost impossible.

Thirdly, although Balkan economies are geographically proximate, their markets are small in size. As trade between countries in the region is not liberalised yet, foreign companies scarcely invest money in those countries. Moreover, and for the same reason, export companies are still focused on to-EU trade because is much more interesting and gives more opportunities to make profits than intra-regional trade.

These three economic obstacles are mainly the result of a delayed post-communist transition and the succession of wars in the region. These two elements, coupled with the fact that all countries of the region face similar macroeconomic disequilibria, have contributed to the lack of growth in the region, essential for economic development and job creation. As a result, data show that the economic performance of Balkan countries has been much poorer than the ones of East Europe, even tough they started off with similar levels of development.

The second big obstacle to cooperation in the Balkans is the lack of a strong private sector. The political instability and conflict in the region has created an uncertain business environment that has in fact prevented the emergence of a private sector. It would have been able to carry on effective transition from a war economic system to a stable and free market economy. Furthermore, the disruption of trade trough the UN sanctions to Yugoslavia and the destruction of heavy industrial capacity and infrastructure has contributed to hurt their emergence and has seriously damaged the capacity of the countries to develop its economy and undertake economic reforms. If economic reforms were undertaken, the economy and trade would be boosted, a sine qua non condition for regional cooperation. As the private sector has not been able to emerge, an informal sector related to corruption and organised crime has become a structural feature of the region. The corruption in public sector has largely enabled it to flourish. And it is well know that if relations are not normalised, it is very difficult for the countries of the region to cooperate.

There are as well some political obstacles that difficult regional cooperation. First of all, liberal democracies contribute to regional cooperation. However, there is a lack of democracy in the region. The transition in the countries of the region was led by ancient parties, in a calculated strategy to survive in the new regime. In this regard, and for long time, elections only have served to legitimate extremist politicians who have in fact fuelled nationalism for electioneering purposes by generating wars, contributing to instability in the region and by leading a non-democratic rule of power. Despite observing changes in governments of the region, liberal democracy is still a distant goal: there is an absence of rule of law, under-developed labour movements, lack of independent media and a weak civil society.

There is also a lack of social, human and institutional capital in all countries of the region. Social capital means trust in political parties,

trade unions, institutions, etc. and it would establish trust and foster cooperation among actors, both at the national and cross-national levels. Human capital is considered the human knowledge necessary to modernise the country, necessary to bring countries together and makes them integrate the EU. The institutional capital is the ability to create an appropriate framework able to attract foreign investment and contribute to get closer to neighbour countries. The lack of the three types of capital, as it is in the region, coupled with the lack of rule of law in the current transition in SEE, the poor quality of the existing legislation and the judicial systems, turns out to be one of the main obstacles to regional cooperation.

The last obstacle to regional cooperation is the ethnic nationalism. The ethnic conception of nation excludes those who are not part of the majority and relegates them to second-class citizens. Thus, constitutions reinforce the idea of nation-state and exclude minorities from participation in public sector. Moreover, central governments deny any kind of regionalisation because they fear the results of giving power to some ethnic minorities. Consequently, it disables border regions to cooperate with each other. However, the contrary is observed in states where the central power is weak, such as Bosnia-Herzegovina. There, the peripheral regions have easily taken power from the central government. A part from being destabilising (the majority in a country is a minority in the neighbouring state), ethnic nationalism create suspicious among the states and makes regional cooperation difficult. Furthermore, minorities may fell excluded from political process and thus, as they often believe that armed conflict is the best way to satisfy their political demands, the risk of armed conflict may appear.

External approach: the EU and regional cooperation in Southeast Europe

Besides the incentives and obstacles that may exist to regional cooperation, the fact is that the international community has put everything in the idea that the best way to overcome the conflicts and distrust existing in the region is by cooperating. The sequence of wars and crisis in the ex-Yugoslavia has convinced the international community to adopt an overall approach for the whole region and a multilateral strategy to complement the bilateral relations of the various international organisations. In this regard, some external actors, the EU being the most prominent, have ambitioned regional approaches and initiatives for that area. Which is the underlying idea of the EU's project to promote cooperation in the region?

The EU has discussed and theorized on Balkans regional cooperation through several approaches. The first one is the prescriptive argument: positives outcomes of regional interdependence and functional cooperation can be taken out. The idea underlying is that regional cooperation can overcome political divisions by cooperating in material issues, such as economy and trade. Nevertheless, EU does not want to export its model to Balkan region but wants only to give example: t*he regional cooperation model is essentially an extension of the EU's own philosophy that deeper cooperation with neighbouring countries is a route to national as well as regional stability and growth and that such cooperation serves the mutual interests of all countries involved*[1].

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[1] Commission of the European Communities, (2001) *CARDS Assistance Programme to the Western Balkans: Regional Strategy Paper 2002-2006*, External Relations Directorate General.

The second approach is the new regionalist thinking: the best way to face globalisation of the international system is by establishing centres of multilateral regional cooperation. The European Union is the best example, but there are some European countries cooperating in a smaller regional groups to generate above all more security and build confidence between neighbouring states (Visegrad Group, Council of Baltic Sea, etc.).

The EU also points out a strategic argument to promote regional cooperation: multilateral action in the region would enhance security in Central and East Europe. Each Balkan country has a different level of support from external individual countries and this trend has been threatening in fact the unity of EU's common foreign and security policy. The EU wants to talk as one voice with the actors in the area.

The EU also points out the internal argument, as a way to better manage the integration of new countries. Before the accession of ten countries the 1st May 2004, the EU feared that the simultaneous integration of former communist countries could affect its political unity. In order to better prepare them to accession, the EU wanted East-European countries to co-operate among them and divided all former communist countries into sub-divisions. Cooperation not only puts together countries having the same logic and sharing common characteristics, but also, by making them work together and organise themselves in structured organisations, the EU is contributing to facilitate their accession to European institutions.

Finally, the Southeast regional argument shows the specific needs of the region. The

underlying idea is the fact that issues of the region cannot be solved on a national basis through bilateral policy alone. That is because they all are regional in character and therefore requires additional regional measures. The multilateral perspective is more effective than each country acting isolate.

The EU wants the countries of the region to integrate the European Union. Their accession would mean durable peace and stability for the region, and it is going to be positive for both the region and the EU. For the countries of the region it would mean the full accession to the development funds and the opportunity to boost growth and job creation. Politically, the participation of the countries in the European institutions would represent being able to defend its own interests in Brussels and to work close together with its regional neighbours. However, Balkans states are not ready to join the EU yet. Not only for structural problems such as corruption, quality of existing law, poor judicial system and macroeconomic disequilibria but because they are not still able to cooperate with each other. Cooperation is a must to build confidence between governments and societies and to address the main problems in the region, such as the lack of regional infrastructures or organised crime.

Assessment of the existing cooperation initiatives and framework

Although the European Commission and the Stability Pact were successful in inducing the Southeast European state to liberalize their mutual trade, the prospects of deepening are far from clear. The agenda of regional integration, as opposed to regional cooperation, is seen as alarming by particular governments in the region. For example, the suggestion of western countries to establish a Balkan customs union was seen as threatening by Croatia. Zagreb preferred to cooperate with the rest of Stabilisation and Association Process countries on a bilateral basis, not multilateral.

However, there are also encouraging examples showing that, in terms of cooperation, something has changed. The EU has been quite successful in promoting cooperation on energy. The initiative to create a regional electricity market in 2002-2003 has been successful. The shortages in some Balkan countries and the surpluses in others, because of the shrunken industrial output compared to the pre-1989 period, accounted for a great deal of political support for the project. The governments hope that the common electricity market will spill over into greater external investment into transfrontier infrastructure enabling them to deal more effectively with power shortages. In 2004-2005 the initiative was broadened to include a gas market in SEE.

Another area where things have moved forward is cross-border cooperation at the local level. EU programmes have sponsored multiple projects in policy areas such as infrastructure, economic development and environmental protection. The proliferation of Euroregions, associations of municipalities, NGOs and businesses across borders, shows that such approach is well in tune.

Nevertheless, the nature of all regional approaches has been questioned and most of them continue to be post-conflict reactions. This means that no long-term development approach has been adopted yet in none of the initiatives. Moreover, with the exception of South East European Cooperation Process (SEECP), external actors have imposed most of programmes: South-East Cooperation Initiative (SECI) and the Stability Pact. That's why the participation of local actors and the reflection of local specificities and needs are in fact very limited. Thus, the lack of participation of local actors reduces the effectiveness of the initiatives.

The Stability Pact, sponsored mainly by the EU, has found some difficulties. First of all, it has focused too much on infrastructures (road building and transport construction), neglecting a wider structural development strategy for the region. The Stability Pact also suffers from a certain perception of "Balkan fatigue": although substantial human and financial resources have been invested in the region, little progress has been achieved. Furthermore, after 11 September 2001, the priorities of international community have moved into more problematic and instable regions, such as Pakistan and Afghanistan.

However, that's in terms of goals that Stability Pact can be really assessed. First of all, the SP has promoted rapprochement of different social groups by intensifying regional politic dialogue and providing a ground for discussion between the country and the international community. The SP represents the first serious framework created which can be seen as a point of reference for the countries in the SEE to cooperate and create networks of interdependence.

The impact of EU has been much stronger in the field of political than economic cooperation. The SEECP summit held in Belgrade on April 2003, where participants called for a clearer EU membership perspective, or the exchange of apologies between the presidents of Croatia and Serbia-Montenegro for the violence perpetrates during the conflicts of the 1990s, shows that political cooperation, similar to economic cooperation, seems to be working again on a neighbour-to-neighbour basis.

Cross border cooperation (specific issue)

Cross border cooperation among the countries of South-East Europe is a prerequisite for politico-economic development and stabilisation of the region and for the integration of SEE countries in the EU[2]. Transfrontier co-operation is an essential feature of the mutual relationship between the countries of the area and good neighbouring between countries has to be tested first of all in the border areas, where people of the region have social and cultural contacts with people living beyond the frontier. The development of cross-border initiatives aiming for the creation of a net of cultural and economic links between countries is essential in order to avoid conflicts and tensions in the region.

The Thessalonica Declaration points out that "inter-regional cooperation constitutes an essential element of the Stabilisation and Association Process". In this regard, one of the best implemented practices is the Euroregions. The Euroregions, *a form of transnational co-operation structure between two (or more) territories located in different European countries*[3], is a form of cross-border cooperation and can easily contribute to create better understanding between countries of the region. Amongst them, the Southern Adriatic, Ohrid-Prespa, Danube-Tisza-Maros, Drina-Sava-Majevia, Nis-Skopje-Sofia are the most effective.

Regarding European Commission's CBC policy, the budget for cross-border cooperation projects has been considerably increased. Furthermore, the last EU enlargement gives the

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[2] General conclusions of *Cross-border cooperation in SEE: obstacles and opportunities for Euroregional Cooperation* international conference, 18-19 November 2002.

[3] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euroregion

region more possibilities to participate in the EC Neighbourhood Programmes, although local and regional actors from SEE need more information on how to access EU funding.

However, there are some obstacles to cross-border co-operation (CBC) in SEE. First of all, there is a lack of EU policy instruments for regional development and convergence, as well as a lack of harmonisation between different European Union assistance programs. It means in practice few financial means available to SEE governments for the implementation of CBC in the region.

There is also a great variety of institutional capacity and social development from country to country in South East Europe, and between border regions of the EU and their non-EU members neighbouring regions. Such gap undermines the capacity to cooperate across borders and is exacerbated by the availability of Structural and Cohesion funds to EU regions, which are not available to external regions.

Despite the trend to liberalisation in SEE, array customs procedures in the region still hinder cross-border trade and economic cooperation in the region. This has a detrimental impact on the small-scale trend and economic cooperation of border regions.

The VISA regimes between the countries of SEE and the EU members hamper the movement of people across borders and obstruct cooperation in both social and economic spheres. The fact that after Bulgaria accession to the EU Macedonian people needs a VISA to enter the country is one of the best examples. The enlargement of the Schengen borders, with the accession of Eastern European and South Eastern European countries into the EU, represent a risk to traditional social and economic linkages across many borders in SEE

as well as to initiatives of institutional cooperation between countries and Euroregions.

The last obstacle to CBC is the variety of policy and fiscal competency of local and regional authorities in the region. This means that the cooperation across borders has to be brought down to the lowest "common denominator" or being subject to excessive central government control.

Euro Mediterranean region as an example of cross-border cooperation

Cooperation with neighbouring regions is always positive for the least developed regions if they adopt a cooperation strategy with the ones having more capacity to attract development. In terms of positive effects of the cooperation, there is an enlargement of the demand (bigger market), the offer (sharing productive factors), as well as a wider cooperation in terms of research and development, better international promotion, etc. Having this in mind, some border regions of France and Spain decided to crate a Euroregion.

The Euro Mediterranean Region is a common initiative by the regional governments of Aragon, Catalunya, Illes Balears and the Languedoc-Roussillon and Midi-Pyrenees Regional Councils, which signed the Euroregion Constitutive Declaration in October 2004. The Euroregion is a political coordination between five partner regions and their aim is to support projects designed by social, institutional and economic actors of the civil society. The Euroregion is also opened to neighbouring regions in terms of cooperation in specific issues as well as to Andorra.

The common work of the five regions intends, not only to strengthen their voice in the Western Mediterranean area and act as a lobby

before Brussels, but also to overcome the state development model and to move into an integrated development prospect. The Franco Spanish border is seen as a fracture of the territory, and it has seriously damaged the communication between both sides of the frontier. That's why the connection to the most prosperous and dynamic regions of Europe is seen as a must.

In terms of freight and passenger transport infrastructures, the Euroregion is working on improving the communication network and connect it to the European network, focusing especially on high speed trains, and Mediterranean and international routes. The Euroregion plan is focusing as well in R&D, in order to become the land of world leading poles, such as aeronautics and pharmacy industry. As a mean to face globalisation, the Euroregion intends to invest resources to R&D and to move economy into more dynamic sectors. Last, but not least, culture and tourism enables territorial integration and multiculturalism, attracting new talents, new culture expressions and a sustainable tourist model.

A part from several implemented projects, one of the most important issues for the Euroregion is the implication of civil society. *"The Euroregion is not an identity project. (...) However, the role of institutions alone is not enough to administer the region: politicians must involve society in the process[4]"*. Without the participation of civilians the political project is addressed to failure. Not only because the institutional part of the projects is intended to work on projects designed by social actors, but

as well because without the necessary enthusiasm on cooperating projects the project is meaningless. So, the mains challenge for the Euroregion is to get institutions and society closer, avoiding all the mistrust between them as it happens in the EU.

As well as in the Euroregion, cooperation in the Balkans has to move from political cooperation and specific issues (such as infrastructures) to civil society view that cooperation with the neighbour is good for the development of the country and for establishing lasting links which are going to favour all parts.

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[4] Sr. Antoni Fernandez Perez, General Deputy of Labour Department Generalitat de Catalunya, Euroregion conference, Palma de Mallorca, 9-10 June 2005.

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Gauging the Relevance of Regional Cooperation in South Eastern Europe (SEE)

The EU's interest in regional co-operation regarding candidate states is a relatively new idea, emerging with the Central Eastern Europe (CEE) states bid for entry in the late 1990s. The logic of encouraging such multilateral projects as the Central European Initiative (CEI) is easy to follow when considering the EU perspective. Any opportunity to help facilitate a 'Good Neighbour' mentality among European regions of vivid diversity and a recent history of cross-border tension is likely to be harnessed by the EU. Moreover, the keenness of prospective members to accelerate their integration means that the EU wields considerable leverage in assisting cooperative organizations. Consequently the EU is in a unique position to boost stability in 'its own backyard' and it has made regional cooperation in the Western Balkans a 'priority policy'.[5]

From the perspective of candidate and prospective candidate states, the question of regional cooperation is more controversial. There is a genuine feeling among some countries that regional initiatives will inevitably become an alternative to EU integration, and national leaders are always cautious to point out that accession to the Union is their ultimate goal with regional cooperation performing a 'stepping stone' function. This can give way to a regressive trend as candidate countries have less inclination to foster regional cooperation, while those that have no other alternatives are keener to be involved in regional projects. There is a danger that as states get closer to EU integration, their commitment to regional cooperation subsides. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that the EU deals with candidate states on a bilateral basis, thereby undermining the notion that multilateral efforts are part of the process to achieving membership status.

This paper will test the practical implications and successes of regional cooperation by evaluating the cases of Romania and Bulgaria. As the EU presses for more cooperation in the Western Balkans - given the accession hopes of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Croatia - it is important to look to states that have recently integrated.

First it will explain the dynamics of regional cooperation and give some background to the issues that surround cooperation in Eastern Europe. Then it will evaluate the issue of cooperation with regard to Romania. Lastly, it will make suggestions for regional cooperation in the Western Balkans.

Fostering Cooperation: The Dynamics of Cooperating Regionally

Regional cooperation may be defined as 'a broad process which allows many and different actors to engage in building networks of interdependence and common action'.[6] A recent EU report states that regional cooperation is 'recognized as a qualifying indicator of a country's readiness to integrate into the EU', but also points out that the EU can only give support to this process; concrete initiatives have to come from the countries of the region themselves.[7] Indeed, external and international factors can only complement, shape and monitor internal dynamics to produce a consensus among regional actors and foster the ability to recognize common goals of interest.

Despite the rhetoric, most initiatives have been externally imposed, the most significant internal project being the South Eastern Europe Cooperation Process (SEECP). Intergovernmental, non-binding and informal, the achievements of the SEECP have been

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[5] See 'European Commission: Regional Cooperation in the Western Balkans: A Priority Policy'.

[6] BRIE iv
[7] p. 4.

restricted largely to vague declarations. While the Kosovo war in 1999 prompted a re-evaluation of the EU's 'regional approach', more recently there has been a 'Balkan fatigue' as attention has turned to more pressing international issues in a post-9/11 world, namely terrorism. Nevertheless, the organization best-known to the public in SEE, the Stability Pact (initiated July 1999), was launched as a regional tool and discussion forum for its members by the EU, and has arguably created a certain potential for the future by bringing together different social groups and intensifying regional political dialogue. The main tool of financial assistance is the Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation (CARDS) programme, and like the Stability Pact, it carries the conviction that issues and problems of the SEE region cannot be resolved through a bilateral policy alone.

This notion seems to be contradicted by the EU Stabilisation and Association Process (SAP) which offers new contractual bilateral relationships and financial assistance for each individual country. However, the justification for these two conflicting sentiments is that SEE is indeed a hugely diverse region, not just in terms of ethnicity, but also in terms of economic development and political progress. In theory at least, this is not necessarily a contradiction. To achieve the political and economic maturity required for membership, cooperation is essential: to overcome such key issues as borders and trafficking there needs to be regional dialogue; to improve the economic situation of individual countries there must be greater porosity in markets. So while states are admitted individually, it is of benefit to be regionally integrated.

The logic is further explained by Bodo Hombach: '[the EU and NATO] will not look favourably on anyone dashing headlong toward Brussels without even a backward glance to see how their neighbours are faring'.[8] So while countries will be admitted on a

Romania and Bulgaria

In order to understand the relevance of regional cooperation in the case of the new candidate states the logic behind cooperation in the first place must be delved into. If a state is to enter the EU, it must be considered to be in a mature enough state to cope with EU norms. There are 'dimensions' to this: political, economic and security. Political consensus and mutual trust need to be enhanced, in order to overcome nationalism and intolerance and promote political dialogue; in terms of economics regional development is key to increasing prosperity and economic growth and attracting foreign and national direct investments. Lastly, security issues are of a trans-border nature, thus organized crime and corruption, integrated border management and illegal immigration can only be tackled through the prism of regional cooperation.

Bulgaria and Romania are interesting cases as they are the most recent states to join the EU, on 1 January 2007. Having been granted candidate status in 1999, both countries underwent significant economic and political restructuring to conform to EU norms. But how much did they – and do they – commit to regional cooperation?

Political

The political dimension of the Bulgarian and Romanian candidacies differs substantially from the Western Balkans. Both countries'

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[8] 2001 Subregional Cooperation paper.

political elite firmly positioned themselves toward Europe from the very beginning, shunning the notion of regional cooperation. This was partly down to the fact that Romania and Bulgaria had stronger institutional development and democratic practices than the Western Balkans. Indeed, Bulgaria successfully dealt with internal issues of ethnic minorities and political and economic reform and was as such keen to distinguish itself as a regional anomaly, untroubled by the political divisiveness that such countries as FYR Macedonia and Serbia suffered from. Romania was always less connected with other Southeastern European countries by virtue of its poor economic state and traditionally limited links with nearby states. Like Bulgaria, Romania benefited from political stability during the 1990s, and consequently has remained largely trouble free. This must be considered with the fact that the EU's cooperation in justice and home affairs is characterized by a strong dynamic of inclusion and exclusion: 'a safe(r) inside contrasted with an unsafe(r) outside' (Trauner, 2007). Political elites in both Bulgaria and Romania aimed to align their countries with the 'safe inside', a logical strategy considering the political instability in the rest of the region. Consequently the political dimension of regional cooperation was initially largely a question of paying lip service to the 'good neighbour' requirements of the EU, while actually effecting little in the way of regional initiatives.

Nevertheless, both Romania and Bulgaria have spearheaded initiatives in the region, perhaps as a result of their focused foreign policy toward the goal of membership. Most significantly, Bulgaria launched the SEECP (Southeast European Cooperation Process) in 1996, which carried the mission statement of promoting good neighbourly relations,

enhancing peace and stability in the region with a view to approaching European and Euro-Atlantic structures. This is a clear demonstration of the EU's prescription that 'concrete developments have to come from the countries of the region themselves' and indeed a recent European Commission report noted the SEECP is consolidating its role as voice for the region.[9]

The nature of Romania's Security

The most regional flavoured aspect of security issues is cross-border crime and smuggling. Both Romania and Bulgaria joined SECI in 1999, Bulgaria seconding a legal adviser to the headquarters in Bucharest. Most significantly, Romania initiated the THB (Trafficking of Human Beings) Taskforce in 2000, which it continues to coordinate. The broad conclusion drawn from the 2004 Task Force Meeting was that 'a new concept of operation in the field of trafficking humans/migrant smuggling has been implemented'.[10] Indeed, this initiative appears to have enabled the SECI centre to make full use of its coordination capabilities. Qualitative proof of increased coordination in the region regarding security issues is also reported: in 2005 information requesting initiatives increased to 154 cases over six months. Such successes have encouraged a blueprint of a 'future approach' to concentrate on information exchange and coordination of investigations in the field of migrant smuggling. Not only does this information suggest that in the lead-up to integration Romania and Bulgaria displayed a

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[9] 'European Commission: Regional Cooperation in the Western Balkans, A Policy Priority'.
[10] Evaluation Report THB Taskforce Mirage (Budapest, 2005).

significant amount of cooperation on security issues, but a crucial point is that Romania initiated the THB task force: it was not an EU-imposed regime.

Visa Issue

An important aspect of integration is the EU's visa policy toward candidate and potential candidate states, which acts as a form of consular diplomacy. The logic is that the incentive of a European visa encourages states to solve internal security issues. Another dimension to the visa policy is that 'outside' states are find themselves bonded by their visa status and therefore more likely to cooperate. In the case of Bulgaria and Romania, efforts to attain visa liberalization were largely internal: introduction of new passports that incorporate security features, issuing visas according to EU standards, readmission agreements with EU member states. Only some actions may be seen as having a more 'regional' feel: close border cooperation with Greece, enhanced staff at the border with upgraded equipment. Yet in reality these were at best bilateral efforts, there was no overarching regional dialogue: cross border crime efforts such as the one stimulated by the British Foreign Office in Sofia (http://www.csd.bg/en/euro/border.php) appear to have been largely unilateral too.

"In 2003 Bulgaria adopted a National Drugs Strategy for the period 2003–8, modeled on the **European Union** (EU) strategy. As of mid-2005, an interministerial anticorruption commission, established in 2002, had not reduced corruption to the satisfaction of the EU. Prosecution of organized crime figures, who are known to operate sophisticated networks in Bulgaria, has been rare. **Domestic violence** against women and organized **trafficking in women** are considered serious problems.

However, between 2001 and 2004 the overall crime rate decreased."

The Cabinet approved draft agreements with Romania and Greece on the establishment of coordination centre between border police, customs and the services for administrative control of foreigners. The establishment of a coordination centre between the three countries is laid down in the National plan for adopting the Schengen law.

The agreements provide for the cooperation between Bulgaria, Greece and Romania in the combat against illegal migration, smuggling and the traffic in human beings, crimes and offences related to credentials forging, illegal production, trade and smuggling of weapons and explosives, etc.

The document regulates the order and procedures for the protection of information shared between the two countries, as well as the order and procedures for establishing coordination centres, their structure and the status of their employees.

The agreements are to be signed for a five-year term and will become effective after the initial 30 days following the end of the internal legal procedures in the country.

Economics

A 2006 Brussels memo, charting the progress of trade liberalization in SEE since the EU granted the region free access to the EU market, noted that 'the experience of trade liberalization in SEE is an important precursor to the economic cooperation that is an inherent

part of Membership of the European Union'.[11] Between 2001 and 2005 economic cooperation between the EU and SEE increased dramatically, with Bulgaria and Romania being the overseeing the greatest increases (52% and 67% respectively). Furthermore, the memo suggests that increased trade with the EU actually corresponds to increased trade with regional partners, thereby disproving – perhaps – the idea that regional cooperation and bilateral relations with the EU are necessarily in conflict with each other. Indeed, the EU paper on cooperation as a policy priority emphasizes the 'free trade area' of 55 million consumers achieved via a network of bilateral free trade agreements between Romania, Bulgaria and Moldova, which it sees as a mark of progress in the region.

For the past few years countries such as Bulgaria and Romania have been deemed more advanced in terms of civil society and democratic norms than the rest of the region. But these societies have oriented their foreign policy almost exclusively toward EU integration: the Bulgarian elite has for a long time refused to be considered as anything but European, spurning SEE regional initiatives. Interestingly, now Bulgaria has entered the EU, the renewed 'Main Foreign Policy Directions' reiterates the importance of developing relations with neighbouring countries, stating: 'We will further promote the role of Bulgaria as a source of security and stability and as active regional partner in South Eastern Europe, in accordance with the new geopolitical situation of our

country'.[12] This seems to suggest that Bulgaria's membership status has inspired a loosening of Bulgaria's desire to be disassociated with SEE. Furthermore, the reference to its 'new geopolitical situation' – i.e. the fact that its place is firmly secured in the EU – indicates that regional cooperation is seen as something to be carried out after gaining acceptance to the EU, i.e., after the threat of regional cooperation being an alternative to integration has been mitigated.

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[11] **http://trade-info.cec.eu.int/doclib/docs/2006/april/tradoc_128216.pdf**.

[12] **http://www.consulbulgaria-ny.org/FOREIGNPOLICY.htm**.

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Regional Cooperation in Trade and Investment in South East Europe

The Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe (1999) is an EU initiative whose two main objectives are Conflict Prevention and Peace Building. They can only be successful if they start in parallel in three key sectors known as Working Tables. They are:

- Working Table 1: Democratization and Human Rights.
- Working Table 2: Economic Restructuring, Cooperation and Development.
- Working Table 3: Security Issues.

Within Working Table 2, trade and investment are two of the most important aspects. There is an ongoing attempt in the Western Balkans region to promote a business climate more conductive to investment and trade, both of which are the pillars of economic growth and development. Regional cooperation in these areas is essential for sustainable economic growth and eventual European integration.

Trade Agreements:

The main aim of the trade sector in the Western Balkans Region is the liberalization and facilitation of trade through trade agreements. There are currently three levels of trade agreements in the region: Bilateral, Regional and Multilateral.

Bilateral Level:

The Stabilization and Association Agreements (SAA).

At the moment, the EU is negotiating and implementing the Stabilization and Association Agreements (SAA). They currently involve Albania, Croatia and Macedonia in addition to negotiations with Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia that started in 2005. All six of states represent the Western Balkans Countries (WBCs). In terms of trade the SAA focuses on:

- The creation of a free trade area to enhance regional trade competition
- Bringing the legal systems of the region more into line with those of the EU thereby easing trade restrictions.

To this effect in 2000, the WBCs including Kosovo were granted autonomous trade measures allowing for nearly all their exports to enter the EU market free of trade measures with just a few exceptions (such as wine, certain fisheries products, sugar, "Baby Beef", and textiles originating from Montenegro and Kosovo). These concessions were originally granted until 2005 and were then extended until 2010. Trade between the WBCs and the EU has increased an average of 8% in the period 2000-2004. In 2005, the EU ranked first in both the regions imports (63.3% of total) and exports (64.23% of total). With the membership of Bulgaria and Romania into the EU, all tariffs between the WBCs and the two new EU members will also disappear under the SAA regulations.

The overall aim of this agreement is not only improving the economic situation with the creation a free trade area between the EU and the region but includes a convergence in the trade sector between the two in preparation for possible EU accession. Therefore, the SAA are used as an instrument for future membership but they do not explicitly involve membership.[13]

Croatia is the largest trading partner of the EU amongst the WBCs accounting for almost 50% of total trade. (Source, Statistics in Focus)

Regional Level:

The Central European Free Trade Agreements (CEFTA).

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[13]

http://ec.europa.eu/trade/issues/bilateral/regions/balkans/index_en.htm

CEFTA originally began in 1992 as a means former communist states to achieve Western European standards in the political, economic, security and legal systems thus consolidating free market economics and democracy. In 2001 CEFTA members, including Moldova signed the "Memorandum of Understanding on Trade Facilitation and Liberalization" as part of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. This memorandum called for the creation of a vast free trade area through bilateral trade agreements. All original members with the exception of Macedonia and Croatia have left CEFTA and joined the EU consolidating the view that the agreements act as a necessary precursor for transition states wishing to join the EU, even though the EU is not directly involved. As a result CEFTA is being extended to include the entire WBCs and Moldova (May 2007) in order to replace the matrices of bilateral free trade agreements achieved under the Memorandum. This takes the Pact one step further creating a free trade area at the recommendation of the EU thereby availing of the advantages of trade liberalization in preparation for possible EU membership.[14]

Multilateral Level:

Accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO).

In recent years, the EU has strongly supported Balkan countries membership to the WTO. Membership to the WTO is an essential prerequisite for accession to the EU and an important aspect in creating more stabile regimes. Likewise, the World Bank has been providing support and advice to Balkan countries for the purpose of achieving membership.

Currently there is an absence of a direct link between national regulation and policy and international standards. The aim of the WTO in the Balkans is to closer align these two sectors thus facilitating an easier transition to international trade.

Macedonia became the 145th member of the WTO in April 2003, following Albania and Croatia in 2000.
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia are still currently undergoing accession talks.
External trade of the WBCs has increased exponentially in recent years, over 60% in the period 1999-2003 despite the political instability at the time.[15]

Trade in Macedonian:

There are many difficulties faced in the Macedonian trade sector. Following their independence from the former Yugoslavia in 1991, the traditional Macedonian domestic trade market was reduced from over 23 million to just 2 million. This had an adverse affect on the trading sector with exporters needing to find new markets for their goods. Macedonia turned to the markets of the EU for trade but faced many challenges.

Greece is Macedonia's wealthiest neighboring market and an important trade route for the landlocked country through the Greek port of Thessalonica. However the Greek government dispute the name Macedonia being used as the country's title for historical reasons and as such embarked on a unilateral trade embargo in February 1994, ending shortly afterwards at the end of 1995. Since then the title former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is used by Greece, the UN and the EU as a temporary solution, though many states are increasingly using the term the Republic of Macedonia. Despite the dispute Greece remains an important trading partner accounting for 15.3% of exports and 9.2% of imports in 2005 and the dispute has so far not blocked possible EU membership.[16]

Fortunately Macedonia escaped much of the violence as a result of the breakup of Yugoslavia hence much of the countries road and railway links to neighboring states are still intact. But if trade is to become more prosperous, infrastructural improvements to facilitate increased trade must occur. As the Macedonian government lacks the necessary funds for such improvement the EU has promised to increase development aid from the 2006 level of 43.6 million Euros to 81.8 million Euros in 2009. This aid comes under the auspice of Pre-accession Assistance for WBCs.

By far the countries most important trading partner is the EU which represents 56.6% of total trade, reflecting the general consensus that Macedonia's future lies with the EU.[17] In December 2005, the leaders of the EU formally named Macedonia as a candidate country, though no date has been set for accession and talks are ongoing.

Macedonia has become a success story in terms of how far trade liberalization has been

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[14] ibid

[15]Statistics in Focus, Evangelos Pongas

[16] www.wikipedia.org
[17] EU Bilateral Trade and Trade with the fYR of Macedonia http://trade.ec.europa

implemented. In 2005, 86% of total Macedonian trade was conducted under preferential conditions of liberalized trade. Adding that of the WTO, Macedonian trade is almost completely liberalized. Yet according to 2004 data, Macedonia only exports 31% of GDP compared to other transition economies that export over 50% for several years. (i.e. Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia) which leaves considerable room for growth.[18]

Analysis of Trade in the Balkans:

Trade liberalization and Cooperation in the WBCs has progressed at a rapid pace and is soon to create an almost complete free trade area with near unimpeded access to the massive EU markets. Obstacles still stand in the way of this progress such as the political instability that still exists in the region (though great strides have been made in the past decade to reduce the likelihood of such occurrences) and the absence of deeper economic institutions for cooperation that would see the region as a whole benefit. Very often the economic policies have little to do with regional cooperation and more to do with the cooperation with the EU for membership purposes.

The massive liberalization in trade in the WBCs has had the short term effect of firms closing down due to increased competitiveness from foreign firms importing with a knock-on effect of rising unemployment (as high as 35% in Macedonia in 2006).[19] These failing firms were

too inefficient in the first place to be competitive on the world market. The space created by ineffective failing firms will be replaced by more productive firms able to survive and even flourish in the international market leading to an overall net benefit in economic growth and an eventual fall of unemployment rates in the long run, as liberal economic theory dictates. Now that Balkan countries have found new markets to replace those lost by the fall of communism, they must be able to compete for market space. In order to make their domestic industries more competitive they must specialize in industries in which they are more competitive. According to the theory of comparative advantage that explains why it is that countries trading in a system without barriers, such as is increasingly occurring within the Balkans and with the EU, is of advantage to all parties involved so long as each country specifies in goods and services that they have either an absolute or relative advantage in.

Unfortunately Macedonia, like other countries in the region, tends to have a relative advantage in low-skilled labor intensive industries as a result of high unemployment and low cost wages. This is reflected in the fact that nearly 70% of all goods from Macedonia to the EU are either textile products or base metal products.[20] These industries do not contain the potential for long term growth as when living standards rise so does the cost of labor diminishing this advantage. If Macedonia is to experience long term economic growth and bridge the gap with the rest of the EU they must specialize in industries with real long term growth potential through heavy investment in areas such as education, grants and tax breaks to foreign

firms and infrastructure. It is only through investment that Macedonian exporters will be able to find a niche market in which Macedonia goods can excel.

Investment:

Domestic Investment:

Income levels and domestic savings in the WBCs are insufficient to spur economic growth. Government subsidies and tax exemptions to small and medium size profit making firms are essential to create competitive domestic industries. The lack of domestic investment in the region makes FDI essential to spur economic recovery.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI):

One of the main obstacles facing the economic growth in the Balkans region is the lack of FDI inflows. Despite the major advantages for investment in the region such as a large market, a highy skilled large labour force, high productivity, low costs, low tax rates and simple tax system and easy access to other markets such as the EU investment rates have remained low.

In general the cost of doing business in the Balkans is high due to...
This is a significant disincentive for investment.

Investment in Macedonia:

FDI has increased considerably in recent years. In 2002, FDI amounted to $77.8 million, a sum

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[18] The Challenges of the Macedonian Trade, http://www.finance.gov.mk/gb/bulletins/04-05/snezana_delevska_ang.pdf
[19]http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia/economical_profile_en.htm

[20] ?

that increased to over $139.6 million in 2004.[21] Despite the dispute over the name Macedonia with Greece, as discussed earlier, Greece remains the most important source of FDI representing 57%.[22] There are numerous reasons for this.

One is that Macedonia enjoys low tax rates. The flat tax rate is 10% for corporate and personal income, reducing it to 10% thereafter and providing a simple tax system. In order to stimulate economic growth the governemnt has also introduced a 0% corporate tax rate on reinvested profits making Macedonia one of the most attractive tax havens in Europe.[23]

As well as this, foreign investors are offered the same legal protection/regulation and access to markets both domestic and international as local investors. They are also offered additional incentives in regard to tax and custom duties including tax incentives for the research and development market, of which there is a considerable lack of in Macedonia.

Another advantage is that Macedonia offers the same rights to foreign investors as domestic ones and allows foreigners to invest in domestic industries, with the exception of the arms mafufacturing industry which is the case for most countries.

Despite all this, Macedonia has one of the lowest foreigm investemnt rates in the region (net inflows as a % of GDP, 2.9% compared to

neighboring Albanias 4.5%).[24] There are various reasons why foreign investment has been slow to take root.

Corroption is a major stumbling block preventing a greater influx of investment. According to the Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index for 2005 Macedonia ranked 103 out of 158 countries surveyed making it one of the worst counries in Europe for corruption.[25] An improvement in civil society is essential if foriegn bussinesses are to be attracted.

The World Bank, in an effort to curb corruption in Macedonia was able to secure a 4.55million pound grant in Dec 2006 for the implementation of The Macedonian Country and Action Plan to Enhance Corporate Financial Reporting whose aims are:

- To enhance the quality of financial reporting
- To enlarge Macedonia's legal framework institutions and accounting profession
- To better protect investors
- To promote its accounting auditing and business culture as well as
- Identifying actions that are further needed.

This action plan was based on the World Banks Report on the Observance of Standards and Codes (ROSC) aimed at increasing investor confidence in the country by the adaptation of Western rules and regulations regarding accounting and investment protection.[26]

The main concern facing investors is an uncetain political situation that exists following the short conflict between the government and ethnic Albanian rebels in 2001. The Ohrid aggreement that resolved the conflict by having a greater inclussion of the Albanian minority in government has been successful but as long as the potential for strife exists, the less likely that investors are willing to risk their money. The Macedonian government must show the world community that the chance of civil strife is negligable and that the countries legal and civil society have reached the level of Western norms if the advantages that exist for investment are to be utilised to their full potential.

Macroeconomics.

Analysis of Investment in the Balkans.

At the moment, governments in the Balkans continue to subsidize inefficient domestic industries for political reasons such as employment protection. These subsidies must stop in order to create space for more efficient industries and foster a more investment friendly atmosphere. Improvements in access to utilities, i.e. water electricity etc, would be a great incentive to investment.

There is a considerable need to bring policy governing FDI more in line with international standards and codes such as the ROSC.

On the investment front, once foreign investors are enticed into the Balkan markets it will have a ripple effect of enticing more investment.

[21] National Bank of the Republic of Macedonia, Ministry of Finance, State Statistical Office.
[22] European Commission Report, 2005.
[23]
http://www.thebusinessonline.com/Document.aspx?id=42AE27AE-B10C-4930-AF53-2FF4BE56F9C0

[24]
http://www.biforum.org/files2/pdf/ig2006/At_Glance.pdf
[25]
http://ww1.transparency.org/cpi/2005/cpi2005_infocus.html
[26] http://www.worldbank.org/ifa/rosc_cg_mcd.pdf

The Importance of Trade and Investment on the Economic Situation of the Region.

All these efforts in the trade and investment sector are beginning to show the desired effect of economic stability and growth, the promotion of cooperation and good neighborly relations with one another and increased likelihood of EU membership.

There is a need for rapid economic growth in the Balkans to bridge the gap with the EU. Within the WBCs Macedonia and Croatia are candidate countries while the other are listed as potential candidate countries. However, EU assistance must be matched by a commitment to make the necessary reforms in the Balkan countries such as cooperation amongst themselves and applying EU standards and norms.

Membership of the WTO is the gateway to the international trading system and signifies that these countries are open to trade and foreign investment.

That international trade liberalization is for the benefit of all.

Economic cooperation in terms of increased trade will invariably aid in the political cooperation in this still volatile region as well as improve standards of living.

Despite the many changes that have swept the region in the past decade, further reform of market based institutions that are able to utilize increased trade and investment are needed to spur economic growth and prosperity.

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Minorities and the Copenhagen Criteria in Macedonia

On 8 September 1991, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) declared its independence from Yugoslavia and asked for recognition from the member states of the European Union. It became a member of the United Nations in 1993 under the provisional name of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia because Greece angrily protested Macedonia's right to the name. However, because this name is also the name of a large northern province of Greece and to Greece, the use of the name implies Macedonia's interest in territorial expansion into the Greek province.

On 22 March 2004 Macedonia applied for European Union (EU) membership and in December 2005, Macedonia became the latest country to be given official candidate status. The enlargement process is considered one of the EU's most powerful political tools and the attraction of joining the EU has helped to transform Central- and East Europe to modern democracies. However, there is currently blowing a wind of enlargement scepticism due to the rejection of the new EU constitution in both France and the Netherlands. Would this be at the expense of the minorities in Macedonia?

This Analytica report will make an attempt to highlight the situation of minorities in Macedonia

today. It will also try to discover to what extent the minorities are aware of the Copenhagen criteria, and in specific the political criteria, that strongly concern minorities. I have based my facts on interviews with Turkish Yemi Hayat, the Golden Generation, the Bosfor Students Club of the South East University in Tetovo and Kalkan in Tetovo, the Turkish NGO Adeksam in Gostivar, Romani NGO Luludi in Skopje, Common Values in Skopje, the EU Delegation in Skopje and the European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI) in Skopje.

Every large society contains ethnic minorities and they be migrant, indigenous or landless nomadic minority communities. I also would like to emphasise that it is not my intention to shed a bad light on Macedonia in this sometimes sensitive question. However, this report will start to discuss and analyze the wide concept of minority itself, focusing only thereafter on ethnic and racial aspects of minorities. Further, it will also try to predict how a furture membership in EU will affect minorities and by doing so it will have a look at the Copenhagen critera.

Professor Emilija Simoska argues that one of the characteristics of Macedonia is the rather complex web of inter-ethnic relations, not only due to the significant number of minority groups but also because they differ greatly to their

size.[27] She also claims that the legislation draws no distinction between minority groups.

Minorities

"... The promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities contribute to the political and social stability of States in which they live"[28]

Although the above quote is extremely clear, still there are signatories of the United Nations (UN) charter that fail to live up to these UN standards. A critique to the UN is that it has failed to agree upon a definition of what constitutes a minority, beyond that implied in the title of the UN Declaration. Attempting a more precise statement has been fraught with difficulties and in some cases the motivation for

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[27] Taken from a paper titled "Macedonia: A View on the Inter-Ethnic Relations" prepared by Prof Dr. Emilija Simoska in 2005, published in Hikmet- Journal of Scientific Research 2005/2.

[28] Preamble of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities

a tighter definition has consequently led to deny specific rights to certain people. Further, on 19 January 2006, Mark Lattimer, Executive Director of Minority Rights Group International, made the following claim: "Despite a number of commitments made by world leaders at last year's summit to promote and protect the rights of minorities, the reality today does not match the rhetoric of these leaders."[29]

A common characteristic that would identify a minority is arguably disadvantage with respect to a dominant group in terms of social status, education, employment, wealth and political power. Hence, some writers prefer the terms "subordinate group" and "dominant group" rather than "minority" and "majority."[30] However, a critique to this grouping is that "subordinate group" does not necessarily have to be a minority and such was the case with blacks in South Africa during the apartheid-era. Also the Shi'a Muslims in Iraq were subordinated to Saddam Huessin's rule eventhough they constituted a majority group.

Dr Eben Friedman, Regional Representative for the European Centre for Minority Issues in Macedonia (ECMI), argues that the meaning of a minority is quite difficult since it is a large and vague concept and often do minority groups not recognize themselves as such or do not like to see them as a group of minority and an example

of this are the Albanians in Macedonia.[31] Furthermore, belonging to a minority group is most often associated with negative connotations and condescending response. Such adjectives as dirty and thieves are common attributes for Roma in Skopje. Mr Lattimer claims that many governments continue to see minorities as a threat to be violently repressed. "In every world region minorities and indigenous peoples have been excluded, repressed and in many cases killed by their governments." [32]

An offical category, regarding minorities, no longer exists since it appears in relation to other groups and these groups are not always constant and therefore the groups that make up as minorities differentiates. Nevertheless, examples exist where a group referred to as a minority has managed to break out from the negative image and that goes for the Albanians in Macedonia that today have eleven seats in the Macedonian parliament whereas the Roma Union has one as well as the Democratic Party of Serbs and the Democratic Party of Turks has two seats.[33] Two interesting questions that arise in this context are; where is line to be drawn between a minority and a non-minority group and who has the power and legitimacy to confirm it? Is paraliamentary representation sufficient to break out of the negative minority image?

The Turkish NGO Yemi Hayat (New Life) in Tetovo identifies a minority as a group of people

that are low in number and it is not due to an outcome of the role of democracy. This low number is not a reflection of representative democracy rather discrimination. The groups that are outside the political coalition will always remain a minority. Representation does not reflect the true number of people.Therefore a minority is defined by its political representation according to Yemi Hayat.

Another definition is represented by the Turkish The Golden Generation. This Tetovo based organisation argues that a minority is an ethnic group that is small in size in a country. However, it is not always a bad thing due to the advantage they experience when they are represented in parliament.

A third definition comes from Semir Amefi, President of the Bosfor Students Club of the South East University in Tetovo, who argues that an organized minority is a majority and an unorganized majority is a minority. This definition is one that brings hope for the future and further, it supports the claim that nothing is constant rather a continuous process of change and hopefully, a change with positive features.

Adeksam, a Turkish NGO in Gostivar, considers a minority to be a group of people that makes up a small percentage in a new motherland and the concept minority has a political meaning.

Kjmet Amet, President of the Roma Women and Youth association Luludi in "Shutka," Skopje, strongly considers a minority to be a small marginalized group that is put aside and does not have the privilege to obtain their basic needs.

Estimates of the size of the Roma population in Macedonia vary. Dr Friedman presented an

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[29] http://www.un.org/radio/story.asp?NewsID=3773
Derived from www.google.com on 14 June 2007
[30] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minority
Derived from www.google.com on 12 April 2007

[31] Interview with Dr Eben Friedman, Regional Representative for the European Centre for Minority Issues, Macedonia, 17 April 2007.
[32] www.un.org/radio/story.asp?NewsID=3773
Derived from www.google.com 27 April 2007
[33] Figures taken from the Macedonian election in July 2006 election.

offical number of 54 000 but he believes it is more likely to be 100 000. One explanation for this misperception is the problem of identity. Whereas one person is an ethnic Rom she would not consider herselves as one due to the negative attitude facing her. Instead, a person belonging to a majority group would classify her as such since she is different from his etnic background. This also becomes a problem in dealing with public registration since one might fulfill the criteria for being a national, such as paying taxes and obey the law, but still being considered a second class citizen. Furthermore, Dr Friedman suggested another reason for misperception and that is threat. There are data that Roma have been threatened to explicitly claim themselves as Albanians otherwise they may experience violence and suffer from serious troubles. This negative trend automatically seperates the Roma from the rest of the society. Seen from their perspective it can also be a choice not to actively take part in further integration due to the fact that they lack the faith in the judicial system and might not receive respect from the authorities.

All the above NGOs offer different views of what a minority is. Depending on their political departure point, role in society and level of attention from the government, they offer different levels of criticism.

Minorities in Macedonia today

There was a general consensus among the ogranisations I interviewed that the groups considered to be minorities in Macedonia today are Roma, Turks, Vlachs and Albanians. Bosniacs were also mentioned but not as frequently. Suleyman Kazimi, General Secretary of the Golden Generation, raised an interesting

question regarding the Turkish minority. What if the Turkish minority has the privilege to have education undertaken in their own language? Would that be to an advantage for the group or merely a confirmation of their differences in comparison to the majority group within the same soverigen borders? One could argue that only official language could work as a tool of integration but that also depends on each individual's position in the society. From this aspect, the Turkish minority is one of the minorities that has received more positive attention from the Macedonian government in comparison to others. However, these educational schemes are not fixed since they are heavily dependent on the applications explained Mr Kazimi. Another educational aspect is quotas. Mr Kazimi claims that Macedonian students encroach upon the Turkish quotas since the competition is much tougher among the Macedonians and sadly the Turkish students cannot take advantage of their privileges.

Adeksam argued that Turks and Albanians are the most deprived minorities today. Interestingly enough, Romas were not considered due to the fact that they are stateless and therefore can not relate themselves to be a minrotiy group within given sovereign nation borders, continued Adeksam.

During my interview with Luludi, Ms Amet emphasised and explained that according to the constitution, Macedonians, Albanians, Turks and Romas make up the Macedonian people and therefore, in theory, the Roma population is not a minority. If so, the reality offers a darker side. This creates a rather complex dilemma for the Roma population since they can not recieve benefits that are explicit for minorities according to Ms Amet.

The 2001 Ohrid Agreement clearly states in chapter 4.1 "The principle of non-discrimination and equal treatment of all under law will be respected completely. This principle will be applied in particular with respect to employment in public administration and public enterprises and access to public financing for business development." Six years later, this part of the Ohrid Agreement has not been successful according to this view.

Which minority is suffering the most today?

According to Yemi Hayat and Mr Amefi, President of the Bosfor Students Club of the South East University in Tetovo, Roma are suffering the most. A positive confirmation of this situation is the Decade of Romas 2005-2015 in Central & East Europe. It is a project, signed by the Macedonian government, and sponsored by the World Bank and the Soros Foundation and symbolizes a political commitment by governments in Central and Southeastern Europe to improve the socio-economic status and social inclusion of Romas within a regional framework. The prioritized themes are, education, employment, health and housing. One might wonder why this project is coming into place now. Since countries in this region recently joined the EU or are applying for a membership there would rationally be more Roma within the soverign borders of this enlarging union and therfore it would be easier for this Roma "problem" to be transported across borders in accordance with the free movement of people. Nevertheless, what ever the reasons are for this project, there might hopefully be a positive outcome.

Golden Generation and Kalkan argue that the Vlach minority is the most deprived one since

Turks and Romas already got attention through projects dedicated in their names. However, there is not much light shed on the situation of the Vlachs. Why so and is this necessarily a bad thing? Adeksam argues that assimilation has taken place since the Vlachs and the ethnic Macedonians have a similar cultural orthodox background in contrast to the Albanians and Turks, where the majority are Muslims. Would this be a case of descrimination rather than a natural unstoppable process? An argument against governmental initiated discrimination would be that, some situations are out of the hands of the politicians since they are merely unstoppable processes conducted by nature.

An interesting thought, raised by Adeksam, which also supports their claim in this matter is why Turks have gone from a good and leading life style in the Ottoman Empire to a situation today where they are considered as a minority. Further Adeksam wondered why there are so many internal conflicts today and in the past and how the ruling in the Ottoman Empire managed better in keeping this region together peacefully. A simple answer to this question is impossible and instead one has to look to many different regional factors such as the change of balance of power and the invention of new techniques and knowledge and not to a specific event or public policies.

Šuto Orizari, a municipality which forms part of Skopje, is suffering the most, as consequently are the Roma, emphasised Ms Amet. According to her there are 40 000 inhabitants in "Shutka" and 80 % of these are Roma. Further, if the Roma suffer the greatest unemployment rate then one can figure out that it is not a developing area. This stagnation and lack of progress has led to a Luludi initiated campaign called "STOP the Violence." The dark and

frustrating situation in "Shutka" is most likely to be a contributing factor to an increased rate of violence against women, such as physical, verbal, economic and sexual violence. The aim of this campaign is to empower Roma women, to teach them about their fundamental rights and to lobby for legislative change to improve the rights of women who suffer from domestic violence.

Common Values is an NGO that tries to find common needs on how to develop society and this spin-off from the Soros Open Institute also dedicates its resources on the protection of national minorities. Kliment Gligorov, Programe Coordinator in Common Values, gave some figures that supports Ms Amet's picture of Roma, at least in Skopje. In 2006, 300 Romas started first grade in Macedonia and only one completed higher education. A positive outcome from the 2001 Ohrid Agreement is that today there are 38 Romas are working in governmental institutions and ten Romas are working within decision making bodies. One obstacle againt this equal employment is the fact that the economy of Macedonia has difficulties to provide the new employment opportunities stipulated in the Ohrid Agreement. It is a steady debate over efficiency versus equity. However, this employment has demanded additional training due the negative tradition, among Romas, that school and education are not encouraged. This is a mindset and tradition that needs to be broken and instead build up a capacity that will enable Roma children, not only to go to school, but to complete higher education as well. For instance, one of the political criteria (part of the Copenhagen criteria) regarding minorities states: "Further promote access to education for all ethnic communities." The problem is not the

access to education but the will to education and this is not something an EU membership can change. This change of mindset, arguably mainly based on poor financial conditions, must partly come from the Roma community. Capacity building is something that Common Values are strongly dedicated to. However, breaking a people's tradition, and in this case, a minority's tradition is not something that will be done over night and might on the contrary take generations to complete.

Are you familiar with the Copenhagen criteria? If so, progress?

Yemi Hayat, the Golden Generation, the Bosfor Students Club of the South East University in Tetovo and Kalkan, in other words, all four organisations that were interviewed in Tetovo were not familiar with the Copenhagen criteria and one of the organisations claimed that this absence of important flow of information demonstrates lack of democracy within the sovereign borders of Macedonia. Wheras Adeksam in Gostivar was well aware of the Copenhagen criteria and one member was still very critical. His reasoning was based on his view that the criteria are set up as an easy way for the EU to buy its way out of the issue with minorities hence avoiding dealing with it.

Luludi was also unaware of the Copenhagen criteria as such. However they are conscious of political enforcement policies for minorities but not necessarily that they are called the Copenhagen criteria. Strangely enough, this association is supported by the EU and therefore one would assume that they are updated with accurate information.

Is it not up to the government to inform the country's NGOs and the minorities for that matter since the Copenhagen criteria are greatly concerning them? Or maybe the claim above made by a member from Adeksam is correct, that the whole issue about the Copenhagen criteria is an official and idealistic power tool that never will be implemented or evaluated thoroughly.

However, one can not only blame the EU and the goverment since it is quite crucial that an organisation is well updated with its rights and obligations. They owe that to themselves and their members since one of the purposes of an NGO[34] is to influence policy making. Still, an NGO representing minorities most certainly has a political agenda.

An interesting thought is that how come four Turkish NGOs in Tetovo are not familiar about the Copenhagen crtieria while Adeksam in Gostivar is. Does it depend on the level of education among the members, the funding, the relation with other NGOs or on relations with the government?

Is there a sense of solidarity among the minorities in order to create a united and louder voice?

Both Yemi Hayat and the Golden Generation replied with a firm no. However, the Bosfor Students Club of the South East University in Tetovo stated that there has been projects with minorities involved but only between a minority group and a majority group. Kalkan considered this to be a great idea but the organizations lack

the capacity to organize. Based on the above answers this could clearly be a starting point for critical thinking and likewise constitute an actionplan which will target this area and also, get in touch with other NGOs in the same city and that might hopefully lead to a louder united voice. Adeksam argued that there was similarity but only among ethnic assimilation.

Luludi referred to an interethnic NGO network led by ECMI although Ms Kjmet did not think it contributed with a successful outcome. The name of the project was "ECMI NGO Network for the improvement of Interethnic Relations in the Republic of Macedonia." Dr Friedman commented on Ms Kjmet's remarks, noting that the overall view among network member organizations in Skopje, Gostivar and Stip shared Ms Amet's take on this project.

On the other hand, in Dr Friedman's view, network member organizations positioned in Kumanovo, Tetovo and Bitola seem to have been more satisfied with the project due to the positive relations among the member organizations based in these municipalities.

Are you optimistic about the future?

Yemi Hayat and the Golden Generation are optimistic about a democratic future that EU membership will bring them. Also Kalkan and the Bosfor Students Club of the South East University think that EU membership will improve the rights of minorities in Macedonia. This loyalty and optimism towards the EU is, at the same time, very impressive and surprising due to the lack of knowledge regarding the Copenhagen critera. However, the Copenhagen criteria are only one part of the EU and apparently these four organisations have

managed to obtain some facts about this current enlargement-sceptical union, that have convinced them about a brighter future.

Adeksam demonstrates a more critical approach to a future EU membership and argues that the EU is merely a tool to silence the minorities and sarcastically emphasised that a membership in the African Union would be more attractive. Even though Adeksam was aware of the Copenhagen criteria and the specific minority rights that are part of the criteria, they are not optimistic.

Luludi suggested that: "If we have good politicians, I am optimistic." However, Ms Amet believes in her organization independently from progress in the public sector, and can see the difference it is making. Further, they believe that the politicians are suspicious of the NGOs as being spies and therefore the relation between the government and NGOs will not become much better than they are today. Common Values shares this optimistic view since in the long term they are hoping for more cooperation that would consequently lead to further progress.

Further, the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005-2015,[35] sponsored by the World Bank and the Soros Foundation, is a political commiment by governments in Central and southeastern Europe to improve the status of Roma within a regional framework. The main targets of the Decade are education, employment, health and housing. Since it is signed by the Macedonian governement, Macedonian officals have acknowledged the dreadful situation of Roma and also important, it will commit the

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[34] I am well aware that not all NGOs are involved in exerting influence on policy making.

[35] **http://www.romadecade.org/**
Derived from **www.google.com** 17 June 2007

governments to consider the other core issues of poverty, discrimination and gender mainstreaming. However, Dr Friedman argued that the level of implementation has not been as successful as expected and he fears that in 2015 when people look back on this project it might be as a failure, and therfore there will not be any more money allocated to future Roma projects. What it needs are more efficient professionals that only focus on this project and speed up the results claims Dr Friedman.

EU delegation in Macedonia

The EU delegation in Skopje is trying to offer a realistic picture of the EU and what a possible membership would bring to the Macedonian people. On the other end of the scale there is the "Garden of Eden" portrayed by the government, according to Mr Nafi Saracini, Advisor on Civil Society on the Delegation of the European Commision. The role of the media, as a political tool, is also crucial in this balance depending on what purposes it serves and who is controlling the media.

The core criteria recognized for Macedonia relate to its capacity to meet the criteria defined by the Copenhagen European Council in 1993. Further, Mr Saracini argued, an EU membership will not solve all the problems. Many of the changes must come from within Macedonia, such as tackling corruption, judicial reforms, strengthening the rule of law, and reducing unemployment. Arguably, an EU membership should be seen as political enlargement which will promote democracy and stability to the country. Not until national security has been achieved can the economic sector take off. Obviously this heavily depends on regional

stability and the future of Kosovo which is hot topic at the moment.

Mr Saracini still thinks that Macedonia has made some progress, arguing that otherwise it would not have obtained candidate status. Unfortunately that are problems in the region that certainly are slowing down Macedonias efficiency in implementing the Copenhagen criteria and they are: refugees from Bosnia in the early 1990s, refugees from Kosovo in the late 1990s and the issue with Greece regarding the name Macedonia. These distractions have made it difficult for the government to take advantage of the assistance the EU delegation has contributed with, claims Mr Saracini, and in theory, Macedonia could have made greater progress in implementing the EU reforms.

Since these reforms are on a official level, Mr Saracini thought my question "How do you inform the minorities about their rights stipulated in the Copenhagen criteria?" was unrealistic. And according to that reply, my concern about the non-existent flow of information, regarding this matter, between government and the NGOs was alleviated. The Copenhagen criteria are public policy that is executed by politicians who are elected by the people, and therfore one would assume that the politicians are acting in the name of the people of Macedonia, disregarding ethnicities. However, on the official web page of the EU Mission to Macedonia it states: "One of EU Mission's key tasks is to inform the authorities, institutions, media and citizens of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia about the pre-accession process and about the EU institutions and policies. It also maintains regular contacts with academic institutions, business community and

representatives of the civil society."[36] Clearly this appears to be contradictive and nonetheless confusing since are not minorities of Macedonia citizens of Macedonia and are not the Copenhagen criteria policies.

Concluding remarks

This report has shown that the concept minority is vague and that among organizations active with minorities in Macedonia there is no universally accepted definition of 'minorities.' The term 'minority' is interpreted differently in different societies and it also due to the context, that is always under a constant change influenced by none determined external forces. In other words, the context is never fixed and is always becoming something new. Belonging to a minority can sometimes be regarded as sensitive and threatening hence people that do belong to a minority do not acknowledge it or like to se them selves as one.

By interviewing Turkish and Roma NGOs in Macedonia this report has come to demonstrate one reality that Turks and Roma are part of in Macedonia. The majority of the NGOs are very optimistic about the EU and most likely their positive attitude is based on the image the government is representing. However, the changes must come from within the country and it is unrealistic to put all hopes in the hands of the EU. Data collected during the interviews demonstrates that improvements must depend on a reciprocal process between the civic society

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[36] **http://www.delmkd.ec.europa.eu/en/about-us/role.htm**
Derived from **www.google.com** 16 June 2007

and the official sector. Minorities must be more dedicated to engagement in political debates and demonstrate a hunger for information. Still, there are progress being made in the shape of self-sustaining campaigns, the Decade of Roma and Turkish educational policies but still the transition from governmental policy to implementation must become more efficient. Having obtained EU candidate status also signifies national progress due to the membership status per se.

Applying the same laws and regulations equally to all citizens indirectly confirms that all are equal and regarded as ordinary citizens. To do so, contemporary governments must assume the people they rule all belong to the same nationality rather than separate ones based on ethnicity. Legislation explicitly shows (even though sometimes indications are more implicit) if the state is a friend or a foe of the minorities. Last but not certainly not least, as a wise student from Tetovo once said: "It is crucial that a minority will be organized otherwise it will remain a minority."

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Cultural Cooperation in Southeast Europe

1.1. Introduction

Whilst much attention has been paid in recent years to economic and political cooperation in Southeast Europe[37], cultural ties in this region have been largely ignored or repressed, whilst promoting cultural cooperation has been sidelined. This report will examine what exists in the region in terms of cultural cooperation and will consider what ought to be done in the future to improve the current situation.

1.2 Regional Cooperation

Regional cooperation in the Western Balkans is a policy priority for the European Union and is to be encouraged, because it is key to political stability, as can be seen by its being included in the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe Dayton Treaty (1995)[38] and EU-Western Balkans Summits in recent years. Regional Cooperation is also a specific requirement under the Stabilisation and Association Agreement.

However, whilst regional cooperation might appear theoretically to be beneficial to all parties involved, it is sadly lacking in many areas:

"Further efforts are needed to increase trust and cooperation between people and countries"[39]

The causes of this lack of will are twofold. Firstly, there are developments in recent history, which have contributed to an atmosphere of distrust between some countries in the region. Secondly, related to this, is the fact that many countries are still in the process of identity building after having gained independence. Bertan Selim, from the European Cultural Foundation, remarked on this,

'the countries in the SEE are very interconnected and share common histories and myths - often considered to be hostile from the other party'[40]

This means that *although* there is a shared cultural heritage, there is also resistance in the recognition of this fact which hinders cooperation.

1.3. Definition of Culture

To start, it is worth offering a definition of culture as this is central to the report. This is a broad term, which, with the onset of technological advances, is ever-widening.

In general, the term *culture* denotes the whole product of an individual, group or society of intelligent beings. It includes technology, art, science, as well as moral systems and the characteristic behaviors and habits of the selected intelligent entities. This report aims to be inclusive, and for this reason will make no distinction between what is often divided into 'low' and 'high' culture, thereby moving away from Mathew Arnold's concept of culture, as being 'contact with the best which has been thought and said in the world'[41] and towards a more inclusive, objective understanding of the term. Anthropologist John Bodley offers a more useful definition:

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[37] This report will concentrate on the region of Southeast Europe, comprising Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, FYR Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro.

[38] What is troublesome about the SP is the fact that it does not make any explicit reference to culture, it does not have a table set aside for it, as it does for other issues. In fact, the only appearance which culture makes is as the 14th item of 14 on the preservation and restoration of cultural heritage.

[39] European Commission 'Regional Cooperation in the Western Balkans' Olli Rehn, European Commissioner for Enlargement, Foreward.

[40] Bertan Selim email

[41] From http://www.wsu.edu/gened/learn-modules/top_culture/culture-definitions/arnold-text.html

'Culture involves at least three components: what people think, what they do, and the material products they produce.'[42]

It is clear that these three components are interlinked, and for this report, what is understood by *culture* is the combination of all three. What people think determines what they do; what they do determines what they produce. This report will centre on how culture is *expressed* in the region of Southeastern Europe, and on what cooperation exists between the countries in this expression.

1.4. The Importance of Culture & Common History

The Council of Europe Opatija Declaration of October 2003 highlighted the role that culture can play in society by establishing as one of its aims the prevention of conflict through intercultural and inter-religious dialogue. Director Jasmila Zbanic, discussing her film *Grbavica: The land of my dreams,* stated that 'culture is as important as food'[43] The common history of this region cannot be ignored when discussing culture, as this history means that the region has very specific problems in this area. This has been recognized by those working in the field,

'The countries in SEE are still in the process of identity building'[44]

2.1. Cultural Policy

Whilst under Socialism, cultural policy was constructivist; it is now mostly deconstructive, focusing mostly on a revival of the past through heritage protection and support of 'living heritage'. Whilst there is inherently no problem with this, it is rather limiting and there ought to be an effort to push for cultural policy to move on.

Whilst in Western Europe, cultural policy generally tends to assure regional cooperation and networking, in the SEE region, this is not yet the case. The role of culture is often simply ignored on the political level, as can be seen by the absence of any mention of culture in the tables of the Stability Pact and the Copenhagen Criteria for EU entry. However, as mentioned above, it has long been recognized by those working in the cultural sector that the role of culture is extremely important in terms of development and stability. It is crucial not to forget that economics, politics and culture do not exist independently of each other.

All of the interviewees questioned for this report recognized culture as being a stabilizing factor and an essential ingredient for conflict resolution. This was echoed by EU commission representative Bertan Selim, who wrote,

'policy planning on a regional level could be a positive development'[45]

However, such policy planning on a regional level is simply not taking place. In fact, international cooperation is not even mentioned in the cultural policy of some of the countries in the region. A quick survey of cultural policy in the countries in the region illuminates to what extent cooperation is being ignored:

Albania has no official strategy on international cultural co-operation. Culture is simply not a topic. Bulgaria is somewhat of an exception in the region, as it has an open and inclusive cultural policy, although this is most likely due to the fact that policy reform in general was a precondition for EU entry. Macedonia also has no specific cultural policy for international cooperation, although this is currently under review. 2-3% of the annual budget of the Ministry for Culture is directed towards programs and activities in the field of international cooperation. Romania also does not have specific cultural policy for cooperation, but does have the SEE region as one of key interest. Serbia has no cultural policy for cooperation. However, one encouraging sign is the Ministry's current work with other ministries from the region to establish a regional fund for Cinematography. Other instruments of international cultural cooperation are, however, lacking.

One important development in the area of cultural policy in Southeastern Europe is the creation in 2000 of the website http://www.policiesforculture.org/ which is an up-to-date resource,[46] providing information on cultural policy in the region. This

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[42] From John Bodley. *Cultural Anthropology: Tribes, States, and the global system.* 1994. Cited in http://www.wsu.edu/gened/learn-modules/top_culture/culture-definitions/bodley-text.html, viewed 16.05.2007

[43] From Open Society Interview with the director, available as an audio file on the OS website, http://www.soros.org/resources/events/grbavica_20070221 viewed 06.06.2007

[44] Bertan Selim
[45] Bertan Selim

[46] Made possible by European Cultural Foundation (Amsterdam) and the ECUMEST Association (Bucharest)

resource is valuable as it encourages transparency.

3.1 Role of the EU and Pull of the Other.

Many of the parties interviewed for this report used the EU as a reference point, and this in itself is illuminating when it comes to analyzing why regional cooperation is not happening as much as could and might be expected. In the region, Bulgaria (and Greece) are members of the EU, whilst Croatia and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have candidate country status. Other countries in the region are working towards candidate status. Thus, the EU now encircles the Western Balkans. The EU has clear policies on culture, yet a small budget for it, and recently launched a new Culture Program 2007-2013, 'Crossing Borders – Connecting Cultures', whilst 2008 is to be the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. One of the aims of the Culture Program is 'encouraging the emergence of European citizenship'. This raises the question of what is understood by 'European', as arguably many of the countries not in the EU are also European.

What this means for the SEE region is that two of its countries are already being included in cultural cooperation, but with the EU. Thus, there are divided loyalties. Whilst the EU has commendable cultural projects, there is a danger that its might and influence will overshadow SEE regional cooperation (which it is in no position to support directly, as some of the countries involved are not part of the EU). As of yet, the EU has shown no targeted interest in Southeast Europe as a region,

'It is worrying to see, at high political EU levels, the strong link between cultural

cooperation and the rebinding of social ties interculturally, and placing culture center stage in support of social reconstruction in the Balkans is IGNORED'[47]

However, on the other hand, the presence of the EU is not wholly a negative force. In Macedonia, EU approximation is bringing about much-needed policy reforms in the cultural sphere, ranging from authors' rights to visa issues facilitating improved mobility,

'Almost all of the modernising and post-war reforms that have come about in the region so far are thanks to the pull factor of Brussels and the promise, however tentative, that another flag, blue with gold stars, might be raised.'[48]

The EU is not the only other factor pulling away from SEE cooperation, there is also the general pull of the rest of the world, which is not to be underestimated,

'the need of integration with the world, was also a "destimulative" for Balkan cultural cooperation [in the post-1989 transition period]. To become present in Paris, London or New York became a crucial demand and guaranteed the feeling of being acknowledged as part of the world, of global culture, of the values that count, i.e. of the values recognized abroad.'[49]

Much of this still rings true. It is important to remember that EU membership is not a quick-fix solution, nor is it going to happen

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[47] Sesic and Suteu P99[caps. in original]
48 A symbolic change in Belgrade Jun 7th 2006

From Economist.com

[49] Sesic and Suteu, p89

any time soon.[50] Whilst many are hopeful it will bring about positive changes in the area of culture, this is not necessarily a given. Violeta Simjanovska, director of PAC Multimedia in Skopje, Macedonia, stressed the importance of change coming from within a country, rather than being exerted from the outside,

"We have to change mental maps and this has nothing to do with the EU."[51]

International attention to the region is still fairly strong, yet definitely waning. International organizations involved in cultural development and initiatives are gradually shutting down their programs. Open Society Institutes from the region are being closed or functioning with downsized funds. The OSCE, in cooperation with the EU, organized a Mobile Culture Container Project, which ran from 2001-2003. This project comprised of 16 containers touring the countries of ex-Yugoslavia and holding workshops for art and new media. However, the project encountered difficulties and since then nothing has been initiated by the OSCE.

4.1. Networks in the Region

After having outlined some of the reasons for lack of regional cooperation, it is an apt juncture to consider what is happening in terms of regional cooperation. One area of regional cooperation which is encouraging is that of networks and network-building. There

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[50] See Ollie Rehn's, enlargement commissioner's, comment on the progress of countries in the region towards EU membership, "it is no bullet train, no Eurostar, no TGV...it is a slow, slow train".[50]

[51] From interview with Violeta Simjanovska

are many informal bilateral and multilateral connections, as well as more formal networks such as Balkan Express and the Balkan Artists Network and these seem to be functioning well.[52]

4.2. Projects in the Region

Turning to actual projects which are happening in the region, it can be seen that there is indeed cooperation taking place. However, as this brief overview will show, much of it is short-term, initiated and facilitated by outside actors or concentrates on heritage, rather than any initiation of innovative projects.

The Goethe Institute runs a seminar for managers of music festivals in SEE, whilst The Council of Europe runs a program, 'Cultural Corridors in Southeast Europe', which has been funded by the Bulgarian Ministry of Culture, UNESCO, ICOMOS, the Council of Europe and the European Commission. This has grown from an informal network of experts, who drew up the corridors together in 2000, to a fully-fledged project with two information centres in Sofia and Bulgaria. This program is part of a larger framework of programs, World Cultural Routes and thus far seems to be very successful.

One extremely successful project in the recent past is the Soros Foundation's *Living Heritage,* an initiative undertaken with the King Baudouin Foundation. This project ran from 2001-2005 in the SEE region and consisted mostly of assisting small NGOs and informal associations in the region.[53]

Another project which deserves mention is The Balkan Incentive Fund for Culture, which was set up in 2006 and supported by the Open Society Institute. This fund aims to promote and support cultural projects in the region. It is too early to say as yet how successful it, but those involved are optimistic about the success of the project.

There is also the SECI, a student forum for South Eastern Europe, which has at its aim the integration of southeast European countries into EU structures, whilst encouraging regional cooperation. Although not directly concerned with culture, many of the projects done by students in the forum have a cultural basis.

5.1 What's In a Name?

Another, less tangible, factor contributing to the resistance to regional cooperation is that of perception. The negative connotations of the word 'Balkan', of the Balkans

being a 'comic opera written in blood' have been well documented,

'the Balkans have become nothing but a metaphor for conflict, incivility, and violence'[54]

This negative association with the region itself seems to contribute in no small part to the lack of enthusiasm when it comes to developing regional projects. This has not gone by unnoticed,

'Although 86% of the citizens of the EU think of themselves as citizens of a region first and of a country second, in South Eastern Europe, the proportion is more-or-less reversed.'[55]

The pull of the West and the EU seems much stronger than any other ties which there may once have been. Maria Torodova discusses this in 'Imagining the Balkans' and claims that the Bulgarians are the only people in the region to have a positive idea about the Balkans and the concept of regional identity.

6.1 Funding

Despite the fact that there are international actors involved in sponsoring cultural cooperation, this level of involvement is not high. The reasons for this are not difficult to fathom. For many donors, culture is simply not considered a high priority compared with socio-economic challenges facing the region. What is lacking in this assessment is awareness of the links which exist between culture and these socio-economic challenges. In terms of economic challenges, one need only take a look

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[52] Other networks include: BAP (Balkan Association Of Publishers)
BAN (Balkan Artists Network)
Balkan Express Network
ENTAC Balkan Platform
SEECAN (South East European Contemporary Art Network)
Balkanmedia (Sofia)
Balkan umbrella (Remont, Belgrade)
Balkanis (Ljubljana, Slovenia)

[53] Another related project of interest, which is not focused solely on the SEE region, but does include it, is the Open Society Institute's East East Program: Partnership Beyond Borders. This initiative includes projects such as the 2006 *Start Negotiating/Developing Intercultural Dialogue*, which was run for University Students in Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia.

[54] Goldsworthy, p 29
[55] Politics and Culture in Southeastern Europe, Razvan Theodorescu & Leland Conley Barrows, p 12

at the UK, where the creative industries are a major component of GDP. For NGOs and independent organizations especially, funding is a huge concern. When asked what he considered the largest problems facing the region were, author Igor Isakovski stated simply that what was needed was, 'huge piles of money'. This sentiment was echoed elsewhere. It is also the case that NGOs do not necessarily receive enough support from ministries.

7.1. Who is Involved

Another aspect of the cultural cooperation which is taking place is that it tends to be based in the capital cities of the countries involved, and sponsored either by ministries or international donors. This is a shame, as Violeta Simjanovska from PAC Multimedia in Skopje highlighted when talking about cultural development,

'Active citizenship is a priority. We need to give power to the municipalities.'[56]

8.1. Face of Culture in 2007

The arrival of modern technologies has already done much to transform the face of culture. Whilst some view this as being a threat,

'The widespread use of radio, television, recordings, video-cassettes, modern art, and the requirements of often-cosmopolitan fashion have tended to erode traditional cultures and folklores.'[57]

I would argue that this is one of the most important potential areas for growth for regional cooperation.

8.2 The Role of Technology

From interviews conducted in Macedonia, it is clear that technological developments are generally seen as being a positive force in cultural matters, particularly those which involve cooperation. The internet has opened up a whole new, accessible and affordable world, in which mobility issues, border control and other barriers have no place. This is a world separate to the bureaucratic one inhabited by ministries. For this reason, many networks now have a virtual base.

Related to the topic of the internet is the availability of resources. As of yet, many internet businesses, such as www.amazon.com do not deliver their full range to all countries in the region. This hinders technological advancement as well as research, so an improvement in this area would be welcomed.

Television also has a pivotal role to play in culture, as it can be used as a tool to both shape and change culture. The SEE region has a higher than average viewing per person in Europe (average viewing time is more than 4 hours daily in SEE).[58] Sadly, co-production of television programs with a cultural content is rare. In SEE, the situation has been described as 'a public broadcasting service crisis'.[59]

One example of a regional project is the TV show 'Toa sum jas! *This is me!'*, shown in

Serbia, Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia. This was broadcast in three different languages – Serbian, Macedonian and Albanian, initially funded by the OSCE, and aimed to being children from the four countries together. Deemed by those involved a success, it is of note that it was funded entirely by foreign organizations and foundations and that the Macedonian public broadcaster pulled out of broadcasting after having agreed to do so. This exemplifies the manner in which public broadcasters in the region approach their mandates (to which the cultural broadcasting belongs).

This programming contrasts strongly with the support shown for another show of the same name, the reality show where participants come from ex-Yugoslavia to live in a house in Skopje. This show was broadcast by MKRTV, in direct conflict with the public broadcaster's mandate.

9.1. *I'll scratch your back if you scratch mine -* Nepotism

One issue which was raised in several of the interviews conducted was that of problems of nepotism in cultural affairs. When commenting on cooperation between the Ministry of Culture and NGOs in Macedonia, one representative from the Ministry explained that such cooperation, when it existed, took place between friends on an informal level 'up to 80% of the time'. Igor Isakovski also drew attention to the problem of nepotism in the publishing industry, with authors of questionable talent still being published in the region because they had contacts in publishing houses.

10.1. Research

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[56] From interview on 29.05.07.
[57] UNESCO Politics and Culture, p 177

[58] IP International Marketing Committee 2004:25
[59] Kolar-Panov, p70

When considering problems with cultural policy and development, it is important to consider why countries in South Eastern Europe do not have satisfactory cultural policy. One reason for this is that there is simply not enough research being done in the field. Dr. Suzana Milevska, from the organization Euro Balkan made mention of the fact that not enough research is taking place in the field of culture, and this sentiment was echoed by Biljana Prentovska from the Macedonian Ministry for Culture. She noted that there was no official government research taking place, and that, indeed, Euro Balkan was the only organization doing this work. In addition to this, she made clear that this was not satisfactory, as it is not possible to talk about policy using the facts if there is no research being done.

11.1. Conclusions & Recommendations

What can be seen from the overview provided above is rather a mixed picture, but the dominant conclusion is that cultural cooperation, where it is happening, seems to be a show run by outsiders. However, there are some encouraging signs. The following is an extract from the Subcommittee on Innovations, Information Society and Social Policy EC – Republic of Macedonia,

'*In the present acts for jobs classification and organization of the Ministry related to international cooperation and European integrations, the aspect of strategic planning and realization of the international cooperation in terms of cultural promotion outside the borders of the Republic of Macedonia and especially the European integrative process as a*

priority of the Government policy has not been enough stressed.[60]

This shows that the Macedonian Ministry of Culture, at least, has recognized that international cooperation is important. It has also recognized that more money needs to be invested in culture by aiming to stimulate tax policy in culture between 2006 and 2010. In cooperation with the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe, Venice – BRESCE, the Ministry organized in 2006 the Third Ministerial Conference on Cultural Heritage in Southeastern Europe. One point which emerged from this conference is of interest,

'Attention should also be given to the strengthening of bilateral as well as regional cooperation and to cross-border activities regarding cultural itineraries and corridors'[61]

In addition to this, the International Working Group expressed its approval of the creation of a regional data-base of experts.

These conferences are promising because they show clearly that culture and cultural heritage are now being given attention not only by international actors, but also by ministries in the region.

The role of technology ought not to be overlooked when considering the future of cultural cooperation. As seen by Blesok, the internet is an invaluable tool for aiding communication.

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[60] Report from the Ministry of Culture, p2
[61] Conclusion and Recommendations of the International Working Group (in response to the conference), p55

Economically, regional cooperation means a larger market and therefore more consumers, yet these advantages seem only to have been recognized in an economic context. In addition to this, a common approach would make it much easier for the region to secure a good position for creative work in the wider European and global context. Funding is a big issue, as international players reduce their budgets in the area and ministries continue to overlook cultural issues. This urgently needs to be addressed. Fundraising is a must if cultural cooperation is to be encouraged, and should not be something left to NGOs and reliance upon international donors. Rather, countries need to reconsider other sources of funding, and experiment with systems which have proven successful in other countries. This may mean copying the UK's lottery system (where a part of the proceeds of lottery tickets is set aside for the arts), or simply freeing up more of the ministerial funds. Too much attention is being placed on outside assistance and too little on working towards building lasting cultural relations with neighbouring countries.

Despite the fact that the overview given above paints a rather uninspiring picture of cultural cooperation, it would not be true to say that the overall mood is pessimistic. Certain actors are cautiously optimistic about the future; Ministries for Culture seem to be slowly becoming more aware of their responsibilities, whilst the prospect of EU entry is pushing policy reform.

13.1 Recommendations

1. International donors need to be kept interested in the region, and this can happen if more impetus comes from within the region. For this to come

about, aspects of the present environment, such as nepotism need to be removed so that organizations and ministries can be taken seriously. Aspects of policy which are currently viewed as being merely 'formalities' need to be followed through more properly.

2. Mobility can be seen to be one of the main issues preventing cultural cooperation. This must change, and can be changed by easing the process of visa applications (by both speeding them up and reducing the paperwork involved).

3. More civil involvement, not just in the main cities.

4. Cultural Policies should include a Regional Cooperation component.

5. NGOs etc should be assisted more in terms of setting up networks (particularly virtual networks).

6. Those involved in the cultural sphere should try to avoid thinking just in terms of the EU, as EU entry for some countries in the region may not happen for some time, but rather consider strengthening cooperation in the region.

7. More money needs to be freed up by governments for culture, because there is definite evidence that culture plays a crucial role in development and conflict prevention. This money need not come directly from taxes, but rather indirectly, e.g. by setting aside a section of lottery ticket proceeds for cultural purposes, by reducing taxed for artists etc.

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY: THE PERCEPTION OF EU ENLARGEMENT IN FRANCE AND MACEDONIA

Introduction

It is easy to guess that making a comparative study between France and Macedonia on a subject like enlargement to European Union will lead to different conclusions for both countries, since they have not many similarities apart from their belonging to the European continent. France is, after Germany, the largest European country in terms of population (about 63 millions) and has always been one of the major actors on the international scene. As a founding member of the European Union, the country had to deal with the issue of enlargement as early as the first accession negotiations with Great Britain in 1961, creating, almost every time, a heated intern debate. Now, in 2007, the European Union is composed of 27 member states and an increasing number of French are becoming skeptical about further enlargement of the EU, especially to Turkey.

Macedonia, as one of the smallest European country in terms of area and population, has been historically part of the biggest empires (Byzantine, Roman, Ottoman) or of a federation, but only became a sovereign and independent state sixteen years ago, gaining international recognition at the same time. Thus, its place on the international scene is recent, even though since 1991 Macedonia has joined major international organizations like the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the World Trade Organization or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Since 2005 Macedonia is an official candidate for joining the European Union, and has also applied for NATO membership. The perception of Macedonia regarding EU enlargement is that of a small country in the middle of its economic transition, which has nothing to loose by tempting to join the European Union family, while France's prerogatives within the EU might be threatened if EU enlarges. As a consequence, each of them having different histories, economic situations, internal problems, their relation to EU and their perception of EU enlargement can only be different.

The last European summit that took place in June 2007 has led with very much difficulty to the settlement of an Intergovernmental conference aiming at drafting a new European treaty. This "mini treaty" should reform the European institutions so that the decision-making process can work with 27 members. Even though agreements were found, especially with Poland and Britain, it also clearly showed that some European nations were not ready to give up their prerogatives. It showed however that there was a strong willing for the European Union to progress after the French and Danish "no" to the referendum on the constitutional treaty that led Europe to a dead-centre. What is more, with the election of new French president Nicolas Sarkozy in May 2007 and the appointment of Bernard Kouchner as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, France is likely to be very active and influential regarding many international and European issues. Thus one can reasonably expect France to lead a key role regarding the enlargement process, especially during the French European presidency in 2008. At the same time Macedonia has been granted status of official country since 2005 and is waiting now for a clear date for the beginning of the accession talks.

In this general European context, such a comparative study is particularly relevant in order to have a better understanding of what is at stake for France if EU enlarges and how the French perceives a further enlargement, compared to the perception of enlargement in Macedonia, a non-member state strongly willing to join the European Union. Such a comparison can help take hindsight and bring moderation to ideas found in discourses of politicians or in public opinion, for a more objective approach to enlargement.

What are the general tendencies regarding enlargement in both countries?

Surveys have been led in each country regarding the support to EU enlargement, the results being closely linked to the perception of the European Union in various topics as well as the perception regarding the living standards in the country.

The last Eurobarometer poll[62] published in June 2007 shows that only 32% of the French are in favor of further EU enlargement in the forthcoming years, which represents one of the lowest results together with Germany (34%), Luxembourg (25%) and Austria (28%), the average figure among EU member states being 49% in favor of enlargement. A survey led in February-March 2004[63], that is, just after the largest enlargement of European history and one year before the referendum on the European Treaty, showed that this strong skepticism regarding further enlargement was already present, with the same figure of 32% in favor and 47% against. Moreover the French also expressed very weak support to the new enlargement with 47% opposed to it. In October 2003[64], just before the 2004 enlargement, a majority of people were in favor of further enlargement, despite a big increase of those against it. The poll showed that the younger, more educated, intellectual professions and activities were the most favorable to a new enlargement.

In January 2006[65] however, the opinions were less contrasted: 49% thought the 2004 enlargement had been a bad thing and 47% a good one. Among those who perceived this enlargement as a bad thing were people above

[62] Standard Eurobarometer 67, Public opinion in the European Union, European commission, June 2007
[63] Standard Eurobarometer 61, Public opinion in the European Union, European Commission, Spring 2004
[64] Poll BVA-SIG, The French, the European construction and the European enlargement, October 2003
[65] Flash Eurobarometer 178, What Europe? The European Construction for the French opinion, European Commission, March 2006

40 years old, those who has ended their education before 21, the inhabitants living in rural areas, and eventually those politically closer to the right-wing parties. In January 2006, those who had voted against the constitutional treaty mostly rejected the integration of Romania and Bulgaria, while a majority of French supported it but on a rather long-term perspective. The support regarding enlargement to Turkey and Croatia was more contrasted: if 38% of the people thought Turkey should never integrate the EU, 59% considered the accession of Turkey on a short or long term perspective. French people seemed in favor of Croatia joining EU even though, most of them declared they preferred it to happen in several years. Again the results showed that those who had rejected the constitutional treaty were the less favorable to enlargement to Turkey and Croatia. Thus it cannot be denied that French people have been expressing, for the past years, some reluctance regarding further enlargement, especially on a short-term period. They seem however in favor of it as long as it happens in several years. The opinions are still rather contrasted, depending on several factors such as age, education, residence area or political tendencies.

As far as Macedonia is concerned, a poll realized in June 2007 showed a strong enthusiasm about the accession of Macedonia to EU with 95% of the people interviewed in favor of it, a figure that only slightly fluctuated since for the past four years. When asked about when this could happen, the average answer is within 7.3 years, whereas in March 2006, Macedonians would rather estimate the country to integrate the European Union within 9.3 years. These results tend to show an increasing enthusiasm and optimism among the Macedonian public opinion, especially following last year's parliamentary

elections. In fact, the number of citizens who believed that Macedonia was moving in the right direction (34%) outpaced for the first time the pessimist citizens.

These attitudes towards enlargement cannot be separated from the perception of the European Union as well as the internal situation of the country. In the case of Macedonia, the same 2007 study reveals that Macedonians are still very much preoccupied by the state of the economy, with 37% of them stating their economic situation was worse (and 20% better) while there were 68% of them in the beginning of 2003. Almost three quarter stated their life was better before the breakup of Yugoslavia, an attitude which is often heard in Macedonia by elder people who are nostalgic of this period that provided them with employment and allowed them to travel wherever and whenever they wanted. This nostalgia could explain that, for more than half of the Macedonians (55%), unemployment is considered as the most serious problem facing the country today, but also that since November 2006, abolishing visas is the most important foreign policy issue for 38% of the people, before recognition of the name. Thus, the link between entering the EU and the hopes for better economic situation and living standards can be firstly made.

Regarding France, the case is not very different, since, even though there is a general enthusiasm about the European construction, 54% of the people thinking that France has beneficiated from belonging to the European Union in 2007. However, like in Macedonia, unemployment was, in autumn 2006, the very first preoccupation of the French, a strong majority of them judging the employment and economic situation bad or very bad. Moreover, the French consider the effects of the European

integration as positive when it comes to the influence of France in the world and the national security, which contrasts with the effects on employment and economy where the opinions are much more mixed.

As a consequence it seems that the general enthusiasm over the European integration in Macedonia is linked to the hope for a better economic and employment situation, while most French people, while recognizing they have beneficiated from the European construction, express feelings that it did not have very positive effects on priority issues for them like employment. Almost three quarter (72%) of the French thought, in March 2006, that a new EU enlargement would create problems on the national labor market, and only 21% thought previous EU enlargements had decreased the prices of many products. Once more it appears through this poll that the weaker people (elder people, less educated, unemployed or the lower incomes) expressed most fears of a new enlargement.

France: issues raised by the enlargement of the European Union

- The main French concerns

The main French popular concerns raised by the last two enlargements are closely linked to an "enlargement fatigue" also visible in other member states. The whole dynamics that had been the engine of the previous enlargement is weakening; the enthusiasm that followed the collapse of the Berlin Wall has seriously reduced. These enlargements have raised many popular questions linked to current hot topics like economic globalization, the combined impact of legal and clandestine immigration, demographic changes, relation to Islam, security challenges in the close European neighborhood.

The preoccupations of the average people are related to the economic side of enlargement and to their confidence in the internal situation of the country. The farmers fear a cut in subsidies after Poland, a country with an important agricultural sector, accessed EU. Many workers from the industrial sector fear delocalization of their firms to countries where the labor market is cheaper like Romania or Bulgaria. Employees of the third economic sector have expressed their concern over liberalization of the public services that could mean the end of small public facilities in rural areas (this was actually the main campaign theme of Gérard Schivardi, a candidate for the French presidential election). This skepticism is closely linked to the confidence in the internal economic situation of the country. The last Euro barometer (june 2007) shows that only 26% of the French people think the economic situation is good. If the living standards and the unemployment rate do not change in a positive manner over the next years, it is possible that the reluctance towards the next enlargements (to the Balkans, most probably) increase, even though the concerns are mostly related to the internal governance of the country.

The enlargement to Bulgaria and Romania had a contrasted welcome. For Sylvie Goulard, the president of the French European Movement, this enlargement to former communist country is a good thing, even though both sides were maybe not perfectly ready for it. According to her the decision to let them integrate has a political character, it was impossible to keep them waiting, even though they have still to make a lot of progress. Even though the institutional limits of a system that was not made for 27 countries have been reached, the integration of these two countries is an

important achievement if we consider their situation twenty years ago. According to her, it was not very welcome in France because of the "depressed" climate, whereas the Germans have well understood what meant the end of the cold war. Moreover they will become more prosperous and all the EU member states will benefit from it. On the other hand, the journalist Jean-Michel Demetz expresses his disappointment that their integration has almost been decided secretly (whereas it has been prepared and negotiated for about fourteen years). For him, the European political model has been challenged since the failure of the constitutional treaty, and the enlargement to ten new members was probably too early. So this new enlargement happened whereas the two main engines of the European dynamics-enlargement and deepening- are broken down. Charles Grant, the director of the Centre for the European Reform, also warned that if Bulgaria and Romania happen to be unable to manage the European programs and policies, and try to embezzle European funds through organized crime, the whole enlargement process will suffer. The consequences for the rest of the Balkans, who are waiting for the determination of their future, could be disastrous, and Europe would not win anything at the end.

Other EU experts and academics have also raised the problem, noticing the frequency of the enlargements and the growing number of states, from six to twenty-seven, which challenges the running of the institutions. They have raised important questions that are related to the European project itself: between enlargement and deepening, what should be achieved first? Should the rule of unanimity be kept with 27 member states? Should the institutions be reformed before of after enlargement? (Up to now it was always realized

before)? Will European integration be possible with 27 or 30 member states? Are the newcomers "Euro compatible"? Will EU be able to absorb new countries indefinitely? Where do the European boundaries stop? All these problems are linked with the topic of enlargement and far from being answered yet.

Enlargement to Turkey is the most debated topic as far as enlargement is concerned. The new president Nicolas Sarkozy have clearly said he was not in favour of the Turkish integration but rather if a "euromediterranean union". Former president Jacques Chirac favoured the integration of Turkey, because he feared the country might develop integrism if the European door is closed in front of it. The Turkish accession would, according to his views, extend peace and democracy, while Ankara would bring incredible power to the EU facing other important regional poles. In France the opinions are really diversified regarding this topic, since many arguments can be used in favour or against the accession of Turkey. For instance it is true that part of Turkish territory is in Europe, but the 2/3 of the country is in Near-East. Turkey has had long historical relations with the European continent, but also with Asia. The usual argument against are the absence of European traditions or values and the Muslim heritage, whereas Europe has a Christina heritage. So its position astride between the European civilization and the Arabian/Asian civilization makes it a complex case. But what is sure is that it is an official candidate country and the perspective of enlargement has been existing since 1963.

- <u>What can be expected in the future?</u>

Concerning enlargement to Turkey, one of the most controversial issues about enlargement, the election of Nicolas Sarkozy in May 2007 has changed the official French position. In fact Jacques Chirac was in favor of the accession of Turkey into EU while Nicolas Sarkozy, as said previously, have brought the idea of a Mediterranean Union (that would gather countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea), an idea rejected by the Turkish authorities. He has agreed to let the talks between EU and Turkey continue but has however succeeded in blocking one important chapter in the negotiation talks that opened in July 2007 (on economic and monetary policy) since France threatened to oppose its veto. On this issue, if France goes on using its veto to block further negotiation chapter, it could upset the Nordic countries, Spain, the UK and Germany who want the negotiation accession to continue. Maybe Sarkozy will be reminded by Merkel, Barroso and politicians from other EU countries that EU has taken the pledge to let Turkey in when it fulfils the necessary criteria. The accession process would help Turkey to become more stable and prosperous. Some analysts in Turkey fear that blocking new chapters on the grounds that it would bring Turkey closer to full membership will derail the whole process while giving credibility to Turkish nationalists. Two things can be encouraging for Turkey: the fact Sarkozy's other European plans are controversial (more protectionist trade policies) should bring him to be more careful on a fight over Turkey. What is more, he appointed Bernard Kouchner, who is openly in favor of the Turkish application, as a minister for Foreign affairs. Eventually the issue of the Turkish integration will depend on the evolution of EU in the next 10 years. If EU turns to evolve in a hard core surrounded by a large market, then Turkish can integrate. In the current state of affairs EU has to strengthen

before integrating such a state as Turkey which is still in political, cultural and demographic transition.

Concerning enlargement to the rest of Europe and especially the Balkan countries, the position of Sarkozy is clear: he declared several times that EU enlargement had to be suspended as long as the institutions were not reformed, since the absorption capacity of the EU was not endlessly extendible. But for him a distinction has to be done between the countries who are to develop a privileged partnership (euro - Asian and Mediterranean countries) and those whose future integration to EU is not a problem for anyone. He meant all the countries clearly belonging to the European continent that will be joining whenever they want (Norway, Switzerland, and Island) or whenever they are able to (Balkans). The European council of December 2006 decided as well of a pause on the enlargement process after the integration of Romania and Bulgaria. However, since the last European summit in June 2007 when an agreement was found on the opening of an intergovernmental conference aimed at drafting the final version of a new European treaty, the reform of the institutions is in progress. Even though the issue of enlargement was not dealt with directly, the aim of the new treaty is to facilitate the running of the EU with 27 member states and diversified fields of action. The goal is to be working with institutions adapted to an enlarged Europe and more democratic, since up to now the EU had been running with institutions mostly inherited from the EEC with 6 member states. The Balkan countries thus are bound to join the EU when they are ready; however, as far as France is concerned, a referendum is from now on necessary to ratify the accession of new countries. The risk that the

French fears compromise new enlargement exists.

Macedonia: confronting hopes and expectations to obstacles and challenges on the road to EU

It is rather common in Macedonia to hear middle-aged and elder people who have lived in the communist time talk with nostalgia about the good old time when the Macedonians had a better lifestyle under Tito and Yugoslavia, when they could travel much easier, they all had a job and did not have to pay for medical care… A survey led in June 2007 shows that 71% of the people think their life was better before the breakup of Yugoslavia. Since gaining its independence from the former Yugoslavia in 1991, Macedonia has faced a troublesome political and economic transition. The symbolic value of the EU is clearly important for the Macedonians: since 1957, EU enlargement has consolidated democracy, human rights and respect for the rule of law across the continent, as well as extended the area of peace and stability. In economic terms it has helped to increase prosperity and competitiveness (for example with the case of Spain or Ireland). Thus it is understandable that joining the EU means the prospect of better living standards, political stability, less unemployment with the opening of markets, an increase in foreign direct investment.

Another benefit the people would gain when integrating EU is the resolution of the visa problem, which is psychologically a crucial issue and seems to be one of the first short-term interests of EU accession for the Macedonians. With the last European enlargement, Balkan countries like Macedonia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo, and Serbia remain locked in a shrinking economic space, since, as the new guardians of the European Union's frontiers, Romania and Bulgaria had to tighten their borders in order to protect the common European space. There is a risk that EU enlargement might lead to a 'ghettoization' of the Balkans. For some analysts, many of the European Union's current policies on the Balkans and its visa policy in particular, have far-reaching economic consequences. For example it makes it much more difficult, if not impossible, for families in eastern Macedonia that were living on trading of foodstuffs between Macedonia and Bulgaria to conduct their business. Regular business trip across EU member states can require multiple visas, which requires many documents, time and money. And these are just a few examples of the problem the visa policy entail, let alone the psychological humiliation that is part of the process. In April 2007, the EU and Macedonia concluded a visa facilitation agreement that, when it comes into force, will decrease visa fee rate and accelerate application procedures for the Macedonians who want to travel within the EU territory. It represented a first step towards visa-free travel even though before that the country will have to improve significantly, in particular its capacity to fight organized crime, corruption and illegal migration and to strengthen border control. A survey led in 2007 reveals that abolishing visas is since January 2007 the most important foreign policy issue facing Macedonia for 38% of the population, before the issue over the name.

In October 2006, new Macedonian Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski said his country wanted to join EU in 2013, that is, in six years. While calling on the EU to set a date for starting negotiations next year, he also admitted the disappointment of Macedonians over the growing anti-enlargement atmosphere linked to the Union's absorption capacity, which was not a reason since Macedonia had only two millions inhabitants. The disappointment of the Macedonians reveals they are maybe not aware that the implementation of reforms, and not the Union's absorption capacity, is the major restraint to Macedonia's faster integration, especially since the European institutions are being reformed. The almost unanimous support for EU accession reveals the Macedonians are not well informed on what EU accession really means. The impression is that EU is seen as an Eldorado, which is far from being a realistic approach of EU. In fact, when the visa regime will disappear and people will be able to travel easily in the EU area, the EU support will inevitably decrease because of the increasing awareness of the reality of EU. There is the risk that, when comes the time to adopt and implement all the European norms necessary for the economic, political and legal adaptation of the country, it wont be easily accepted by the Macedonians, all the more so since their will be repercussions on the everyday budget with the increase of taxes. So the realistic approach to support for EU accession should be 60 to 65%. However the Macedonians seem interested in the EU affairs and are willing to have information about it. At least thirty persons daily visit the EU Information Centre in Skopje, and the EU issue is constantly treated in the Medias.

As a consequence, Nikola Gruevski's hopes for Macedonia to join EU in 2013 seem optimistic, but even though it was the case, it does not really help Macedonia to focus on the efforts to make. In fact, it's up to the European commission to assess, in its annual report on the progress of the country, if the country has met all the standards. So, the date to start the negotiation talks will be given when Macedonia has implemented the necessary acquis. For the

moment Macedonia is not ready for that, since numerous obstacles still remain on Macedonia's road to EU. Many reforms have been implemented since the Macedonian application in 2004 and this have been acknowledged by the European Commission, for example in December 2005 when Macedonia was granted the status of candidate, recently with the launch of the visa facilitation and readmission agreement with the EU, and, most importantly, the implementation of the Ohrid agreement as well as the fruitful consultations between the government and the opposition on the use of the Albanian language in public institutions.

But, even if the perspective of the Macedonian accession is ensured, many Macedonians are probably not aware that the criteria to join EU are very strict and very technical. The annual report drafted by the European Commission on the progress made by the country criteria by criteria testifies of the complexity of the European accession on practical cases such as the standard of the civil aviation system, construction and maintenance of the railway system… Thirty-three chapters examine the country's ability to assume the obligations of membership, that is, the *acquis* as expressed in the treaties, the secondary legislation and the policies of the union. It also analyses the country's administrative capacity to implement the *acquis*.

In 2005, the European council decided to grant Macedonia candidate status as an acknowledgement of the implementation of the Ohrid agreement framework, but also as an incentive to continue implementing further reforms. The council also decided that negotiations for accession will be opened when Macedonia has fulfilled its obligations to a suitable extent under the Stabilization and Accession Agreement. The short-term and medium-term priorities were also given. The opening of the negotiations will not happen this year, the commission being unable to make a favorable report since all the five short-term priorities have not been implemented, among which the police and judicial reform, which also concerns the problems of corruption and organized crime. Legislation have been adopted on these issues over the last year, however it is not sufficient since the implementation also has to be monitored, which will be impossible to assess before the next report of the Commission in November 2007. Regarding the respect of the obligations of the SAA, reforms on intellectual propriety or liberalization are still not totally implemented. The reforms regarding the electoral code and the registration system of new companies have been implemented. However, as long as the five key priorities are not fulfilled, the negotiations cannot start. Administration is mobilizing, for example in the police and justice fields the means are progressively increasing. There's also an increasing mobilization in some agricultural sectors, the business world, universities… The internal political crisis also added another preoccupation, since it revealed a crisis in the institutions, political stability being one of the EU criteria and one of the main reasons for receiving the candidate status.

<u>What can be expected in the future</u>?

The perspective of Macedonia to integrate EU is certain. The European Union has already integrated the Balkans in many European policies which precede their accession and make it clear that EU and Macedonia are interdependent. Only the Macedonians can decide on the date the negotiations will start, depending on the implementations of the necessary reforms. Even if the date for the beginning of the negotiation talks is fixed next year, it has to be reminded that they can last a long time. However in the case of Macedonia, the negotiation talks may be shorter since Macedonia already has links with European politics. But they can also be suspended if the country does not comply with the accession criteria, as it was the case with Turkey. The conditions for integration will be the capacity of the country to implement necessary reforms.

Two elements can also play a role, but will not have much impact on Macedonia as far as EU integration is concerned. The first one is the possible turmoil the settlement of the Kosovo status could entail. It seems very unlikely that an independent Kosovo provokes new conflicts with Albanians. The modernization of country is having a positive contribution to the rest of the region; Macedonia has developed fairly good relationships with its neighbours and helps for the stabilization of the whole Balkan region. The status of Kosovo is a bilateral problem between Belgrade and Pristina, and in that sense Macedonian officials have stated the country would support any agreement that would be found between them. The conflict with Greece over the name remains a frustration for Macedonians. As an ongoing issue discussed in UN, EU would agree on any position between the two countries under United Nations. EU officials declared recently that the name dispute was not part of the conditions for organization accession. However Greece, as any member state, has the possibility to veto Macedonian accession. In late June Greece threatened to seek a veto on Macedonia's bid to join EU unless the name dispute was resolved in its favor. According to the latest poll conducted in June 2007, more than 80 percent of Greek citizens

would block their neighbor's bid to join EU under name "Macedonia," while some 60 percent would block it regardless of which name it was registered under. But can Greece really afford it? The dispute over the name is a bilateral dispute, and moreover the integration of Greece in 1981 was made without the approval of the European Commission. Greece is one of Macedonia's greatest investors and the agreement found in 1995 on a temporary name for Macedonia allowed Macedonia to integrate other international institutions. Macedonia is in a better position now since most of the major world powers support Macedonia in the case or have demonstrated a complete lack of interest in the dispute. Eventually, for some analysts, any attempt by Greece to block Macedonia's EU accession would be a major expenditure of political capital. In the end, Greece would be blamed for inhibiting the Euro-integration of the Balkans, especially since EU wants to make more credible the European policy to the Balkan people that are rather skeptic with the international promises.

The European Commission is not going to take risks and will only give a date for negotiation talks on the basis of a solid report on the progress made by Macedonia in implementing the criteria. The negotiation talks being based on a double system between an Intergovernmental Conference (member states) and the Commission, the member states need to be convinced that Macedonia is ready to enter so that the final decision, which requires the unanimity rule, does not compromise the whole process.

Conclusion- Recommendations

This comparison between France and Macedonia on the approach to enlargement shows that they do not – and cannot- have the same perceptions on the issue. As a non member state willing to join the EU club and in the process of reforms and transformations, Macedonia is willing to be given a clear sign that its efforts will be rewarded. For now the government is especially calling for the settlement of a date to open the negotiation talks, and hopes to be ready to access EU by 2010-2013. For the government, Macedonia is managing its transition well and is getting ready fast, and so find the perspective too far away, while many EU or foreign diplomats working in Macedonia are skeptical as to the reality of EU membership, and finds the EU perspective too close due to the complex and difficult situations met by the Balkans, including Macedonia. The Macedonian government thinks a too late settlement of a date would remove hope and motivation for Macedonia it its way to reform. A clear date could act as a focal point, an incentive for implementing reforms. As Milososki put it in March 2007, "the appeal of membership pushes us to adopt reforms and helps us keep the peace. Giving Macedonia a date to start our membership talks is a win-win for all. The EU internal process is unlikely to be impacted in any way by this decision, and yet, democracy, reforms, and economic progress in the region will win out in the long-run. By opening up to Macedonia the EU would send a positive signal to the region". Nikola Gruevski also underlined in October 2006 that "progress in Brussels toward EU membership was vital because it would encourage people in his country to support tough measures needed to revamp the economy and institutions required for admission to the elite club."

Instead of asking constantly for a date, the Macedonian government should focus on meeting the rigorous standards, each applicant country's performance being a condition for the pace of enlargement. As Michael Leigh, Director General of European Commission's DG for Enlargement, said in 2006, "applying a rigorous conditionality is for the benefit of all. It is the means for the EU to promote political, economic and administrative reforms in the candidate countries. (…)A well-functioning Union is in the interests of both present and future members. Therefore, the EU will and must remain firm in demanding that aspiring members fulfil all the requirements before they join". Of course much progress has been made since 2001, however the November Progess report of the commission has noted that the pace of reforms have slowed down in 2006. For Leigh, there are several priorities for the country: first, to ensure political consensus. Political leaders must work together in a spirit of consensus – which implies mutual concessions. Constructive and permanent dialogue among all political parties will be essential for adopting and implementing important political reforms and related legislation. Secondly, the country needs to go on implementing the necessary reforms in order to comply with the criteria.

Most importantly, the citizen has to be put at the centre of the political action and the national interest before any other interest. In that sense the Macedonian politics have to modernize. There should also be a general mobilization in every levels of society, since it is not only the government responsibility to lead reforms and start changing thins, but also the universities, the companies, the NGOs, associations etc. The way to Europe is an individual and collective responsibility, and in Macedonia there is the feeling of a general lack of popular will in that

sense. The necessary reforms to implement, whether economics, judicial, police, have to be seen primarily as a way to improve the daily life of citizens rather than a way to please the European Commission. The reforms of the economic, judicial, police systems should be encouraged by the citizens as a way for the life to improve. The perspective of integration should not be the first incentive for the implementation of such reforms. In that sense more pedagogic programs should be put into place in order for every people to understand the complexity of EU integration and the different parameters at stake. It would probably make them more involved in the general transformation of their country.

However there is much hope considering the new generation coming which is trained, more educated, seem to understand better the imperatives and are more prepared to bring Macedonia inside the EU. Moreover the general support for accession is likely to put pressure in order to make the necessary reforms.

As far as France is concerned, the image of Balkans does not correspond to reality, the Medias are talking about the region whenever there are fights, but the everyday life, the opening to modernity, is never treated. There is obviously a lack of information and education. It is necessary to cross a mental boundary as

regards to the Balkans and stop imagining them as people always fighting. It is necessary to promote a better knowledge of Balkan countries in order to facilitate the enlargement process, and destroy stereotypes and preconceived ideas that are the basis of fears and reject of the unknown. Turkey is a different case since the parameters are different, it is not entirely in the European continent, the majority of its inhabitants are Muslims… Here information is also necessary but the issue at stake is different. While the Balkan countries are certain to integrate EU one day, the case of Turkey will depend on the approach taken by EU.

That is why the goal of the European project has to be defined clearly soon, in France but also in other western countries, otherwise further enlargement, especially to Turkey but also to the Balkans, shall be compromised if EU citizens are not clearly explained the motives and benefits for further enlargement. Some essential questions have to be answered: where EU is going to extend? Can EU with 27 or more countries become a global actor? Two main approaches can be defined: a visionary approach of those who think EU cannot become a global actor without Turkey, and a pragmatic approach of those who think a new enlargement would threaten the stability and the internal development of EU? On these two approaches, it's difficult to say which one is going to frame the future of Europe.

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FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN MACEDONIA

Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights

"Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right certainly should include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of the frontiers"[66].

Freedom of Speech and brief introduction on Macedonia and its political situation

The notion, freedom of speech or freedom of expression, it is important to political behaivours , moreover it is essential because it is the implementation of the right of free expression or to express freely without censorship and in many cases it is the exercise of the right of peaceable collection and freedom of worship.

This entry explores the topic of free speech. Freedom of Speech is the idea or notion where a person has the liberty to speak freely without restriction or suppression. In many cases it is considered as an essential notion in modern liberal democracies. The right to freedom of speech is agreed under the international law, especially under Article 19 of the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights and Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, even though the usage of these rights is not present in many countries. On the other hand, the notion freedom of expression which is the identical notion to the freedom of speech, in many cases is favored, given that the right is not limited or restricted or restricted to verbal speech, but quite the contrary it is identified to defend any accomplishment of seeking, receiving and imparting suggestions no matter which method is used. This provides a useful starting point for further detour on the subject matter.

Even though Macedonia gained independence in 1991, the perception of the extended disconnection and intolerance within the country implies a significant conflict for the Macedonian powers. The government has to take into consideration and at the same time to offer support to alter the direction of the various violations of freedom of speech.

Moreover, "the presence of the restrictions exist on the issue of freedom of expression, which are in the breach of international standards in this area, also the law should constitute unacceptable government interference in media

regulations and undermine the fundamental independence"[67].

On the other hand, the presence of the problems with human rights are in any case quite visible. According to human rights organizations in 2003, there were so-called extrajudicial implementations, threats and pressure against human rights protesters and rival journalists and claims of torture by the police.

Therefore I move further on, by explaining the important aspects of freedom of speech. First of all, I will begin with the examples that include freedom of speech in Macedonia:

- Legal protection of free speech,
- Limited access to public information
- Public awareness in freedom of speech

The legal protection of free speech

The legitimate principles for protecting the right of free speech, in general cases are recognized by international law. In many instances, the nation itself, in legal terms ensures freedom of

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[66] www.pfc.org.uk/node/328

[67] http://www.freemedia.at/cms/ipi/statements_details.html?ctxid=CH0055&docid=CMS1146830477139&year=2001

expression as access to information. This particular action has expanded itself in various principles. For the most part, these principles were realized with the help of the European Institutions, such as OSCE, COE, NATO, European Commission etc., which improved the collaboration and at the same time improved the quality of the cooperation. In spite of this, the board emphasized that the rights and laws are not sufficient. Inadequate performance and the attitude of self interest restrict their usefulness. As we move on further, the board states that even though the usage of resources is well-known, still employees tend to lose their jobs, since they expose essential and worthy information in front of the eyes of the public.

The media has assured sovereignty in agreement to the law, but unfortunately it is not implemented accordingly. As Roberto Belicanec (program director of Media Development Center), said: "The government used poor financial situation within the public broadcasting sector, to stop the reform process and through subsidizing schemes has put it back under its total editorial control."

Libel is still against the law, but it has been de-panelized. Luckily for this criminal code, nowadays, only fines are used, but not jail as it was used in the past. Then again the real obstacle or subject matter is that the existence of corruption within the courts is still present, and as a result, because out of this outcome, the media, press, and journalists hardly ever win these cases.

> "The media does not have any limitations in accessing international news sources, except for their financial resources to pay such sources. The government does not impose any special licensing for

journalists. However, it has influence on the employment policy of the public broadcaster (the largest single media employer) and also handpicks the journalists who may cover certain events. Also, privileges are granted to certain journalists who are in favor of the government"[68].

The political standpoint and the limits of freedom of expression presented through cases

There are various stages of freedom of expression which are divided in numerous aspects, those include: Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom From: Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Respect for Civil Liberties, Including: Freedom of Speech and Press, Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association, Freedom of Religion and so forth.

Exemplar on the limits of freedom of expression:

a. Freedom of Speech and Press

As we are aware of the press in Macedonia, even today is divided into ethnic categorizations and outlooks, where in various apparent reports are still dealing with notorious political issues. Yet the government in overall cases dedicated the time to respect and obey the rights for freedom of speech and freedom of press.

To explain more in details, here is a suitable example for the following case: in November 2004, the local court in Skopje, Macedonia,

[68]http://www.irex.org/programs/MSI_EUR/2006/macedonia.asp

condemned both, the reporter from Albania, Rajmonda Malecka and her father to five years of prison for allegedly planning terrorist attacks in the commune of Kondovo in Skopje. For this particular case, the police supposedly found various evidences of a videocassette with footage of an armed group in Kondovo. The suspects were arrested in April, but the appeal for the case towards the court was set to be held in September. In situations like this one, it is clearly stated that within the law, the offence, libel and malign assaults can result by prison sentence and various stages of fines.

Another evident case where the libel and slander were brought before courts is the case with Goran MIhajlovski, the owner of the Vest Newspaper, who was related with the accusations for the pharmaceutical company Replek, where this company tried to sell unlicensed medications within the country. This case was presented in the court within the month of December.

During the same time another case with A1 Television reporter Biljana Sekulovska was in court for the case of Dilaver Bojku Leku since she was charged for offence accusations related to her criticism for the human trafficking.

Another type of a case for accused journalists was present for the period of 2004 *Start* the reporter Marjan Gjurovski who was discharged from the insults that were filed by the former director of the Public Security Bureau Goran Mitevski.

From the given cases, my point of view would be negative, for the following reasons: no progress was made in the two police investigations in 2003 in the cases of Aracinovo,

Kondovo, or on the accusations on the pharmaceutical company Replek, where local people actually outlawed MTV, Sitel, and Telma television from exposing on local protests. A number of the reporters that were involved with the media maintained damage in the dispute.

On the other hand, however, despite the cases with the media and press, the political pressure on the judiciary is present: election on political participation, government corruption and transparency, governmental attitude regarding international and non-governmental investigation of alleged violations of human rights.

Bellow I will illustrate a case that involves the election on political participation. In April 2004, the presidential elections were held. Additional international bodies were monitoring the whole voting process, where at the end the election it was concluded as a satisfactory one. Yet, on the second round of the elections, certain small irregularities were noticed. The opponent VMRO-DPMNE confronted the voting results stating that the results contained a variety of abnormalities. At the end of the voting and revising process, the international bodies concluded that these abnormalities did not have any significant effect on the final election results.

During the month of March, local elections were held for selecting mayors and council members of the country's 84 municipalities in the city of Skopje. A month later another set of elections were sustained in 20 municipalities because particular irregularities were noticed. In some parts of the country, the international bodies stated that the overall election process for the municipal local votes went well without any

abnormalities within the system, but unfortunately they failed to meet the key international standards.

 "At least seven polling stations were closed due to violent incidents, and international monitors observed voting system filling in a number of surveys , primarily in areas populated by ethnic Albanians. The ethnic-Albanian opposition party DPA imposed sanctions on the second round of elections and subsequently withdrew from parliament, citing serious irregularities in the elections and the government's failure, in its view, to address them adequately"[69].

A final credible and suitable case is the issue with the governmental attitude regarding international and nongovernmental investigation of alleged violations of human rights:

Various national and international human rights groups in general cases function without any government limitation, in which these human rights groups have the liberty to explore, exam and announce various findings concerning the human rights cases. The authorized representatives in normal circumstances were pretty much interested towards the work of the participants of the human right groups. Within Macedonia, more then four thousand national and international Non-Governmental organizations are active in the country. Organizations such as: FORUM, Transparency International, MOST, Macedonian Helsinki

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[69]

http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61662.htm

Committee, and non-governmental organizations that are dedicated towards cases with special needs. OSCE, guided the international commune efforts to connect the government on human rights issues. However both OSCE and EU continued with the monitoring missions, so they can further develop the relationship among the ethnic Albanians and the ethnic Macedonians in a better way.

 "The ombudsman has a mandate to improve nondiscrimination and reasonable representation of minority communities and operated six local branch offices around the country. The ombudsman has the legal right to visit all persons under arrest, including those in pretrial detention, and officials from the ombudsman's office exercised this right freely during the year. The ombudsman found that government institutions violated individuals' rights in 569 cases, or approximately 29 percent of the complaints received in 2004. Most cases concerned violations of judicial procedures, police abuse, and labor and property rights. The government acted on the ombudsman's recommendations in 73 percent of these cases but in some instances did not provide information requested by the ombudsman's office in the course of their investigations. The government generally cooperated with the International Criminal Tribunal of Yugoslavia. In March the International Criminal Tribunal of Yugoslavia indicted two ethnic Macedonians—former interior minister Ljube Boskovski and former police officer Johan Tarculovski— accused of complicity in the 2001 killing

of ethnic Albanian civilians in Ljuboten"[70].

b. Limited access to public information

Certain approaches like, access to information and freedom of reception and transmission of information, public address, public information, freedom of speech and the formation of various associations for the public information are certainly present.

The Law on Free Access to Information of public character was adopted on 25 of January 2006, and it came into force in September the same year. This particular law allows any person to attain information from the state and municipal bodies. This kind of appeal can be oral, written or electronic, in addition, the various types of public information can be personal data, protecting intellectual property, classified information, confidential information, tax violations, pending investigations, documents that have been compiled if it would cause misunderstanding environmental protection. The above mentioned types of public information are subject matter to an experiment that entails if the community's curiosity is better and superior than damaging.

> "The law also provides for a limited whistleblower protection that limits sanctions for any public employee who discloses protected information that reveals abuses of power or corruption or that is for the prevention of serious

threats to human health and life or the environment"[71].

Media: We want information right now

A credible case presented for the limited access to public information, was between the daily newspaper "Vest" and the ministry of interior. The case was about the police officers that took part in the Parliament security during the protest rally in Macedonia, while inside the Parliament the members were debating on the new division of the territory law. "Vest" questioned the ministry of interior but the only answer that the reporters got was "Enough" → the reporters had to take some measures, meaning they called on to their own credible sources because no matter how was the situation between them and the minister they had to go live with the new information's.

> "When the media doesn't get the needed information up to 17.00 or 18.00 o'clock, when daily's and news editions in television stations are closing up, then the journalist will be forced to publish or broadcast information's gathered from "own sources". This razes problem called "speculative journalism" and we are facing the danger of being accused": says Robert Popovski, Secretary General of Journalist

Association and Editor in Channel 5 TV"[72].

The implementation point of view

As the issue with the freedom of expression becomes more extreme at the same time it becomes complex as well. Since Macedonia is a multiethnic country and the freedom of expression concept has to obtain certain accomplishment and realization. Implementation is one of the significant concepts that play a major role with the freedom of expression in Macedonia.

- Implementing and strengthening of the government capacity in the field of human rights, moreover,

- Promoting and defending human rights in Macedonia

Models of human rights that have been implemented:

- Implementation of the Ohrid agreement and suggestions of the minority rights, and

- Reporting of the Ombudsman Annual Report

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[70] http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61662.htm

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[71]

http://www.freedomfo.org/countries/macedonia. htm

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[72] http://www.netnovinar.org/netnovinar/dsp_page.cfm?articleid=1371&specialsection=ART_FULL&pageid=491&PSID=4390

According to the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, the following human rights abuses have been reported:

- "Police harassement of ethnic minorities, particularly Roma,
- İmpunity and corruption in the police force,
- Government interference with union activity"[73]

According to the Ombudsman Annual Report

- "The Public administration continues to shows elements of inefficient bureaucratic behavior about the needs and human rights of the citizens.
- There are inadequate condition and unequal opportunities for dignified fulfillment of the rights for every child in the Republic of Macedonia.
- The level of communication between the service providers and citizen users is unprofessional, unsatisfactory and there is a lack of appropriate regulative that would have secured appropriate protection and control over the control on the market.
- İncorrect relation and non-cooperation was noticed as well in the second instance governmental commission that decides upon cases in the field of property-legal issues"[74].

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[73] Human Rights in the Republic of Macedonia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/human_rights_in_the _Republic_of_Macedonia

[74] Human Rights in the Republic of Macedonia

Public awareness in freedom of speech

The intended and forced discovery of information that various organizations contain documents with commercial secrets that should not go on public, these types of cases offer valuable models, where the commercial secret is misused to cover up diverse corrupt government documents.

Hate speech- is a controversial term that causes profound and personal offence, such as degrading, intimidating, initiating violence, or prejudicial action against a person or group of people based on their race, gender, ethnicity, religion and so on. This notion includes oral, written types of communication and some kinds of public setting activities. A better explanation for this type of freedom of speech, I will take under consideration the example with the violent pornography. The crime or the insult that is initiated by a demonstration in any case cannot be prevented by saying-don't make any demonstration simply because the crime or insult is taken by the basic information that as a matter of fact the demonstration is taking place.

"If we examine some of the other factors regarding offensive speech, the social value of the speech seems too marginal, the number of people offended will be large, and it is difficult to see how it is in the interest of the community"[75].

The above example in addition maintains good illustration even for the violent pornography.

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http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/human_rights_in_the _Republic_of_Macedonia
[75] **http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/freedom- speech/#3.3**

The only distinction, on the other hand, is in the stage of the insult, which is particular, serious and goes along the pattern of the hate speech- which is intended to a certain type of audience.

Conclusion
"Ever since the first consideration of the idea of free speech it has been recognized that the right to free speech is subject to restrictions and exceptions. Freedom is defined as without limits. Therefore, free speech is without limits. A nation's first freedom of speech law is usually without limitations. Limits are often added in new legislation as time passes. Various governing, controlling, or otherwise powerful bodies, in many places around the world have attempted to change the opinion of the public or other by taking action that allegedly disadvantages one side of the argument. This attempt to assert some form of control through control of discourse has a long history and has been theorized extensively by philosophers like Michael Foucault. Many consider these attempts at controlling debate to be attacks on free speech, even if no direct government censorship of ideas is involved"[76].

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[76] **http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom_of_speech**

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THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN PROMOTING INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE IN POST-CONFLICT MACEDONIA

Media may often contribute to the escalation of conflict; they are a dangerous tool in hands of political leaders. However, at the same time strong and independent media may not only foment conflicts but also help at the process of post-war reconciliation and lead to peaceful coexistence of different national or religious groups. In particular they may promote the minority rights and human rights. Moreover, media play a huge role in rising public consciousness and willingness for consensus.

Media in the whole ex-Yugoslavia including Macedonia could contribute strongly to create tolerance, understanding and dialog among the still divided societies where different ethnic or religious groups live separately. By intercultural dialog I mean as it was defined by the Council of Europe: "*an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups belonging to different cultures that leads to a deeper understanding of the other's world perception*"[77]. That can lead to combating the serious problem of intolerance, racism and social exclusion.

As the previous President of the Commission and current Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi said:

"*Peace is not merely an absence of War. It is the upshot of systematic education in understanding*, cooperation and solidarity"[78].
     The aim of this analysis is to present the situation and role if the media during the conflict in 2001, how does the situation look like nowadays, concerning the inter-ethic relations in media in Macedonia as well as freedom of media and freedom of expression. Without the right to expression, the right to obtain information and, consequently, without strong independent media no democratic system can function. The lack of information means that citizens are unable to hold their government accountable; they cannot consciously vote nor participate at any decision-making process or public debate.

"*Freedom of information is a fundamental human right and […] the touchstone of all freedoms to which the United Nations is consecrated*"[79].

It must be seen in connection with other rights and treated as a tool to exercise them. It is a precondition for their realization. Moreover, freedom of expression is essential to expose and challenge potential human rights violations.

Above that, the aim of this report is to show if media in the Republic of Macedonia can play any role in promoting post-conflict reconciliation, rights of minorities and building a civil society. What could or needs to be done and how is this fulfilled by journalists.

1. Media in Macedonian-Albanian conflict

"*The media – and particularly the broadcast media – played an important, if destructive, part in the break-up of the former Yugoslavia and the war that followed. Political leaders who controlled the local outlets of the state broadcasting network of the former Yugoslavia used their broadcasts to promote ethnic nationalism and hatred and to arouse fear*

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[77] Council of Europe: Forum on intercultural dialog http://www.ifuw.org/uwe/docs/coe-intercultural-dialogue.pdf

[78] Council of Europe: Forum on intercultural dialog http://www.ifuw.org/uwe/docs/coe-intercultural-dialogue.pdf

[79] UN General Assembly, (1946) Resolution 59 (1), 65th Plenary Meeting, December 14.

of the others"[80]: The State of Media Freedom in Bosnia and Herzegovina:
The Public Service Broadcasting, OSCE report 29.03.2007

The negative influence of media on the crisis in Macedonia cannot be compared to the evens in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina as those conflicts are incomparable neither.

However, media were active in the crisis as they must have had an impact on what was happening.

"*The first combatants in the conflict in Macedonia were the media, both Macedonian and Albanian. It was only later that other parties joined the killing*".[81]

According to Mihajlo Lahtov form the Macedonian Media Institute not much can be said about the role of media during Macedonian-Albanian conflict as no researches on this topic have been conducted. Each person may have a different opinion on this topic, for some they were objective for some they were talking sites[82]. To the same conclusion came Emilija Petreska in her report "Hate speech and the Macedonian media: Considering the recent war, low intensity of hate speech" saying that "*in Macedonia no methodically sound research has*

been conducted yet which would focus on any potential hate speech on commercial and public radio and TV stations*"[83].

However, the fact is that the media in Macedonia "*operated in two parallel universes*"[84]. Journalist working for Macedonian and Albanian media presented the events in a totally different way and their target audience was only their ethnic group. That must have led to some problems and misunderstandings. Furthermore, neither Macedonian nor Albanian media made any effort to present the situation from the other point of view. As Florin Pasnicu, the former spokesperson OSCE Spillover Mission to Skopje, said "*journalists prefer to say on their own site without crossing to the other to verify the information*"[85]. The same problem showed the report by the International Press Institute. The annual report on the situation in media in Macedonia 2001 pointed out as a main problem"*disregarding objectivity and adding to the tensions through unbalanced reporting*"[86]. Good examples for unbalanced reporting are the words of a Macedonian journalist how has been quoted in the same report: "*In this story there is no balanced reporting or should there be. There is nothing to be said for the other side. I have no question for those who kill people*"[87]. What is

more, the media in Macedonia tended to base in their reportages on some "anonymous sources", "unnamed sources in Macedonian Intelligence Agency" or "anonymous foreign intelligence sources"[88]. That made their reportages closer to some editorial commentary that a professional reportage.

Very typical for the coverage of the conflict by the media was the language used to describe the combatants. For Macedonian media the Albanians were "terrorists" assisted by "gangs from Kosovo and Albania" and "Mujahedins" often linked with "al-Qaeda terrorists". Macedonians were "defenders of fatherland". Albanian speaking media showed the situation differently: for them Albanians were fighting for the freedom against "*Macedonian security forces and paramilitary groups assisted by mercenaries from Serbia, Russia and the Ukraine*"[89]. The same has been noticed during a research on media in South Eastern Europe conducted by ACCESS-SOFIA Foundation: "*media were caught in this trap using pejorative words and metaphors underlining stereotypes, especially against the other ethnic community*"[90] namely there were

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[80] The State of Media Freedom in Bosnia and Herzegovina: The Public Service Broadcasting, OSCE report 29.03.2007

[81] "Macedonia: the conflict and the media", Macedonian Institute for Media, Skopje 2003.words by Senad Slatina s.9

[82] Interview conducted with Mihajlo Lahtov working for Macedonian Institute for Media

[83] Emilija Petreska "Hate speech and the Macedonian media: Considering the recent war, low intensity of hate speech" http://www.mediaonline.ba/en/?ID=373

[84] "Ohrid and Beyond. A cross-ethnic investigation into Macedonian conflict" Institute for Peace&War Reporting" London 2002. p.73

[85] ibidem

[86] World Press Freedom Review: Macedonia (FYROM) 2001 http://www.freemedia.at/cms/ipi/freedom_detail.html?country=/KW0001/KW0003/KW0071/&year=2001

[87] World Press Freedom Review: Macedonia (FYROM) 2001

http://www.freemedia.at/cms/ipi/freedom_detail.html?country=/KW0001/KW0003/KW0071/&year=2001

[88] Gordana Icevska, Ilir Ajdini: "Same World, parallel Universes: the role of media in Macedonian conflict" in "Ohrid and beyond. A cross-ethnic investigation into Macedonian conflict" Institute for Peace&War Reporting" London 2002 p. 73-81

[89] Gordana Icevska, Ilir Ajdini: "Same World, parallel Universes: the role of media in Macedonian conflict" in "Ohrid and beyond. A cross-ethnic investigation into Macedonian conflict" Institute for Peace&War Reporting" London 2002 p. 73-74

[90] „Media Landscape of South East Europe" Access-Sofia Foundation; Sofia 2002, p.209

ethnic slander like "Shiptar" for ethnic Albanians or "Slavo-Macedonians" for ethnic Macedonians [91]. Moreover, media tended to present the refuges in a very bad light, thus creating intolerance against them[92].

The way Macedonian and Albanian media covered certain evens show they were not always objective. A good example is the reaction of different media on the killing of five people in Gazi Baba (district of Skopje) on 7th of August 2001.
According to Macedonian language media the victims were Albanian terrorists, who were killed as they opened fire first when the police arrived. At the some time an Albanian language newspaper Fakti wrote that they were innocent citizens who barely touched on weapons. Another Albanian newspaper Fljaka went even further saying that the attack was "*a massacre carried out by the Macedonian special police forces, blinded by a pathological hatred. In order to justify the murder they presented the victims as dangerous*"[93]

An example of hate speech in media might be an article published on 9.08.2001 by the newspaper Dnevnik. Editor-in-chief Branko Gerovski wrote*: "the Albanian terrorists have declared a total war. They are talking Tetovo. Tomorrow they will attack Gostivar, Skopje, Kumanovo, Kichevo, Debar, Struga. But they will not stop there. Macedonia is their goal. Those bloodthirsty murderers don't want peace. After yesterday there is no peace for, nowhere and for no one. There is not a single peace of Macedonian soil that is not in danger. There is*

not a single Macedonian house that is safe. There is not a single Macedonian family that it's safe...*"[94]* Further in the same article " *Your soldiers will be sent home in coffins, you will feed refugees, bombs will explode in your cities, while your children get hooked on drugs from the Tetovo enclave*..."
Those kind of articles, even if didn't appear often in the press in Macedonia, prove that kind of media war or even propaganda did exist in the crisis in 2001. Probably the most terrifying example of how media was involved in the crisis is the female journalist who while reporting on the actions on the Macedonian army did fire an army cannon (TV Kanal 5, Skopje, 28 May 2001)[95].

Those examples show that during an armed conflict the professional and ethic standards may be easily replaced by the ethnical ones. The loyalty toward a certain national or religious group becomes stronger then the principle of professionalism[96]. Similarly the role of the media in the conflict sees Remzi Lani from the Albanian Media Institute in Tirana:
"*My opinion is that the media during Macedonian conflict was not a part of the technology of the war preparation, but rather its behaviour during the war was more patriotic then professional. And I say this for both Macedonian and Albanian media.*" [97]

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[91] „Media Landscape of South East Europe" Access-Sofia Foundation; Sofia 2002, p.209
[92] ibidem
[93] "Macedonia: the conflict and the media" Macedonian Institute for Media, Skopje 2003,p.111

[94] "Macedonia: the conflict and the media" Macedonian Institute for Media, Skopje 2003,p.108
[95] Emilija Petreska "Hate speech and the Macedonian media: Considering the recent war, low intensity of hate speech" http://www.mediaonline.ba/en/?ID=373

[96] "Macedonia: the conflict and the media" Macedonian Institute for Media, Skopje 2003,p.111
[97] Transcript form International Media Conference: The role of media in conflicts (1-2.Novermber 2003, Skopje), Macedonian Media Institute 2003.

II. Current situation in the Republic of Macedonia concerning media
"If freedom of the media is a mirror of democratic processes, the region's reflection in that mirror is not so good"[98]

The media in the republic in Macedonia have been strongly criticized because of 3 problems:
• Lack of independence
• Chaos in media market and the need for reforms
• Difficult inter-ethnic relations

The major problem is the lack of independence. It has been shown by the reports of OSCE, Word Press Institute as well as progress report published by the European Union. The same information I got while conducting interviews with Borjan Jovanovski a journalist working for TV station Alsat and during the interview at the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje. Borce Manevski, the OSCE Media Assistant, thinks that Macedonian media, and especially the public broadcaster, are highly political. The main reason for that in his opinion is that are no broadcast fees in Macedonia, first channel is being financed directly from the government with makes it very week for political influences.
The same information can be found in The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Progress Report 2007 by the European Union;

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[98] "Cross the Balkans, media freedom still under constraint" Zoran Nikolovski for Southeast European Times in Skopje – 29/10/07
http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/articles/2007/10/29/reportage-01

"…despite new legal procedures to ensure the independence of the Broadcasting Council and the public service broadcaster, these bodies remain vulnerable to political interference. The economic and financial independence of the public service broadcaster and the regulatory body has not been sufficiently ensured (…) the media continue to be subject to significant political influence"[99].

Even further in the critic goes Vesna Sopar in her report "The Press in Macedonia: Still in Transition" published at the book-collection "Quality Press in Southeast Europe" being part of the project "**The Media in Southeast Europe**"[100]. According to her analysis "the government (the state) is reluctant to relinquish control over the former state-owned newspapers (although some of them call themselves 'independent'), and the political parties (especially the large ones) are not satisfied with their own partisan media and are trying, directly or indirectly, to influence some other (private) newspapers. For their part, the newspapers (at least some of them) that are trying to win independence on a purely commercial basis voluntarily become 'servants' of economic interests (including political interests), constantly claiming that private ownership is a guarantee of the democracy and freedom of the press. The decision about what kind of picture of reality will be offered to the public (censored, even doctored) depends solely on the respective political party (government/opposition) which, overtly or covertly, is presented in the media sphere – of

course, through demagogy that this is in the interest of the public!"[101].

The other serious problem concerning the media in Macedonia is the chaos in media market.
During my interview with Mihajlo Lahtov, he said that the media market in Macedonia is very chaotic; it used to be very easy to get a license therefore there are nowadays far too many broadcasters. This information is pointed out by many reports. In the OSCE report prepared by the representative of media in 2000 it is being said that "The government of newly independent Macedonia took a laissez-faire approach to the media, allowing an explosive growth in the number of broadcasters"[102]. The intentions were good and the aim was to ensure pluralism in the country. What were missing were legislation and some control. As the result by 1997, "there were 210 registered broadcasters, including 90 radios stations, 29 television stations, and 91 radio-television stations. It was pluralism of a sort that Croatians or Serbians could only dream of". However, the quantity didn't mean quality: around 90% of private station didn't show anything but music, commercials, light entertainment or pornography[103].
"It was also chaotic and piratical. During 1993, the first year of the media boom, inflation was running at 20 to 30 per cent per month. Incomes had collapsed since independence; the

advertising market was small. The new media were undercapitalized, often run from a private flat. Regulation was minimal; there was no concession fee or frequency maintenance charge"[104].

Not much has changed in this matter over the years. Currently in Macedonia there are: 19 newspapers, 70 magazines, 3 electronic periodicals, 67 TV broadcasters (69 TV channels), 101 radio broadcasters (103 radio stations)[105]. Talking into consideration that the country's population is only 2 millions, the variety of media is really impressive.
However, according to Vesna Sopar and her report "The Press in Macedonia: Still in Transition" "it is very difficult if not impossible to give precise data about the total number of newspapers in Macedonia. Any attempt at presenting a comprehensive profile of the press is bound to fail because the number of newspapers registered at the Agency for Information does not correspond to the situation on the ground. Many newspapers, especially the monthly or periodical titles, mainly due to financial problems, take shorter or longer 'breaks' and some, despite the good intentions, do not manage to survive on the market longer than several months"[106].

Furthermore, the media in Macedonia, especially the public ones need some serious reforms. According to Media Assistant at the OSCE Spillover Monitor Mission to Skopje the problem might be the fact that the average age of the employees is 53, those people cannot cope with new technologies. Moreover, the over-

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[99]The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia progress report 2007
http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/key_documents/2007/nov/fyrom_progress_reports_en.pdf
[100] http://soemz.euv-frankfurt-o.de/media-see/qpress/articles.html

[101] http://soemz.euv-frankfurt-o.de/media-see/qpress/articles.html
[102] OSCE report: "Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia (FYROM) and Kosovo International Assistance to Media." Mark Thompson, Vienna 2000.
[103] OSCE report: "Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia (FYROM) and Kosovo International Assistance to Media." Mark Thompson, Vienna 2000.

[104]
[105] "Media landscape of south east Europe" ACCESS Sofia Foundation, Sofia 2003
[106] http://soemz.euv-frankfurt-o.de/media-see/qpress/articles.html

employment has been a problem for a few years now.

Similar diagnosis showed the report by Vesna Sopar: "…*if we take as the criterion the range of issues covered by the media, then the situation is far from satisfactory. Public media (especially Macedonian Radio and Television) tried to cover as broad a range of issues as possible and to report on events both with fairness and with balance. But, this is not the usual standard; there is frequent improvisation, which is not surprising if one knows that the average age of journalists in this company is 50, that journalists are constantly under the pressure of organizational and programming changes, that they are afraid of losing their jobs, not knowing when they will receive their next salary"* [107].

The two issues presented by me are pretty typical for the whole region. The Republic of Macedonia is facing another problem: difficult inter-ethnic relations.

The Republic of Macedonia is a multi-ethnic society characterised by a complicated linguistic topography.   A bit less then 70% of the population considers Macedonian as their mother tongue, 22,7 % speak Albanian, 4% Turkish, 2,2% Romany, 2,1% Serbian, 0,4% Vlach [108]. The public broadcasting service includes 29 local radio and television stations. Seven of these broadcast in a language other than Macedonian[109]. There is only one example of nation-wide, multi-lingual radio and TV station.

After 16 years from the crises the divisions between Albanian and Macedonian media are huge. The relations between them are difficult because of the language difference. Although Albanians usually speak Macedonian, the Macedonians usually do not understand Albanian so they tend to stick the "their" media.

The situation in the media in Macedonia concerning the minorities and intercultural relations has been evaluated by many reports. According to the one prepared by OSCE:

"The Broadcasting Council proposes some concessions specifically for broadcasting in minority languages. There are 43 broadcasters that broadcast in minority languages. 33 are private and 10 are public. The division is as follows: there are 13 private Albanian television stations plus one state television channel (MTV's 2nd channel which is mostly but not exclusively Albanian-language): there are 12 private radio stations in the Albanian language plus one State Macedonian Radio third channel (mostly but not exclusively Albanian) plus even state-owned "local public radio stations". For the Roma language there are only two private television stations (BTR and SHUTEL) *and three private radio stations. Then the State Television and Radio 3rd channels have some Roma-language broadcasting, plus there is one local state-owned public radio which includes some Roma programming"*[110].

Freedom of information and the free access to media for the minority groups are guaranteed not only by internal Macedonian law but also by international treaties.

As far as international legislation is concerned there are a few documents protecting those rights. The most significant provisions concerning freedom of expression seen in connection with minority rights might be found in the following documents:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights [111]

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights[112]

- European Convention on Human Rights [113]

- Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities [114]

- European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages[115]

[107] Vesna Sopar:" The Media Landscape of Macedonia in 2004: questionable pluralism"
http://www.mediaonline.ba/en/?ID=348

[108] "Media landscape of south east Europe" ACCESS Sofia Foundation, Sofia 2003, p.19

[109] "Minority-Language Related Broadcasting and Legislation in the OSCE" OSCE 2004

[110] "Minority-Language Related Broadcasting and Legislation in the OSCE" OSCE 2004

[111] **http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html**
Art.19
[112]International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_ccpr.htm
Art.: 19, 20, 26, 27
[113] European Convention on Human Rights:
http://www.echr.coe.int/NR/rdonlyres/D5CC24A7-DC13-4318-B457-5C9014916D7A/0/EnglishAnglais.pdf
art.10
[114] Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities

http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/157.htm
Art. 7,9
[115]

http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/Treaties/Html/148.htm

Free access to media and the right of information has also been guaranteed by the internal law of the Republic of Macedonia.

The constitution of the Republic of Macedonia from 1991 states the right of free expression and free access to media. Article 16 says:

"*The freedom of personal conviction, conscience, thought and public expression of thought is guaranteed.*
The freedom of speech, public address, public information and the establishment of institutions for public information is guaranteed.
Free access to information and the freedom of reception and transmission of information are guaranteed.
The right of reply via the mass media is guaranteed.
The right to a correction in the mass media is guaranteed.
The right to protect a source of information in the mass media is guaranteed.
Censorship is prohibited"116.

Furthermore, article 48 states:
"*Members of nationalities have a right freely to express, foster and develop their identity and national attributes.*
The Republic guarantees the protection of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of the nationalities.
Members of the nationalities have the right to establish institutions for culture and art, as well as scholarly and other associations for the expression, fostering and development of their identity.
Members of the nationalities have the right to instruction in their language in primary and

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Art. 11
[116] Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia
http://www.mlrc.org.mk/law/l004.htm

secondary education, as determined by law. In schools where education is carried out in the language of a nationality, the Macedonian language is also studied" 117

Many significant provisions have been incorporated as a result of the Ohrid Agreement concluded between the Republic of Macedonia and the Euro-Atlantic community on 13th of August 2001118. This Agreement changed a lot the situation of minorities, especially Albanians. However, indirectly it influenced the situation of all the minorities.
"*This Framework will promote the peaceful and harmonious development of*
Civil society while respecting the ethnic identity and the interests of all Macedonian citizens"119.

Although there is a law concerning the free access to media for different minorities, there is not much apart the law that is being done. Giving a right to different minority groups to access to media is not enough. What they need is a support from the state, mainly financial one. The organization for security and Cooperation in Europe prepared Guidelines on the Use of Minority Languages in the broadcast Media where it dealt with the problem of state support. What should be guaranteed to the minorities are: *provision to access to broadcasting, subsidies and capacity building for minority language broadcasting* 120

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[117] ibidem
118 Ohrid Framework Agreement
http://faq.macedonia.org/politics/framework_agreement.pdf
[119] ibidem
[120] Guidelines on the use of Minority Languages in the Broadcast Media, OSCE 2003, art. 14

The republic of Macedonia doesn't have any good state media policy regarding the minority issues. It cannot be called minority sensitive.
The media of minorities get support only from NGOs (that are leaving Balkans already and they role is getting smaller) or the authorities of their countries, for example Albanian speaking media get some support form Albania, Serbian speaking from Serbia etc. In the worst situation is the Roma minority. They have only some local radios, and newspapers. Roma community in general is being excluded in the society, lack of good education leads to lack of journalists[121]. The situation of smaller minorities may be shown at the example of one of the smallest ones: Vlachs.

III Media in process of building the civil society and contributing at post-conflict reconciliation
It is necessary to make the people who until very recently were at war, face the past but also teach how to live as good neighbours[122] "

The first though while thinking how the media in do Macedonia fulfil their public mission is that they do not at all. The public media are said to be too week to play any role in the process of building a civil society or promoting inter-ethnic dialog. They first need serious reforms in order to improve the quality. While

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http://osce.org/documents/hcnm/2003/10/2242_en.pdf
[121] Interview with Borce Manevski, OSCE Mission's in Skopje Media Assistant
[122] Jelena Veljkovic: ",,Journalism in the post conflict period": transcript from the International Media Conference: ,,The role of media in conflicts" Skopje, 2003, p 93

the private are, what is understandable focused rather on the income than any mission.

What is definitely not helping the media is the fact that the distrust in media is really high in Macedonia. The survey conducted by the UNPD showed that "*less then 25% believe that the media in Macedonia report objectively and accurately on political issues (…) when it comes to inter-ethnic issues only 23, 8% believe that the media are objective and accurate. Among ethnic Albanians, 74% distrust media when they report on inter-ethnic issues, which are matched by an equal high score of ethnic Macedonians (68%) and others (66,4%).* The level of distrust may show even better looking at the results of the same survey conducted in Kumanovo (ethnically mixed) where only 15% of the inhabitants responded that they have some degree of belief in media's reporting on inter-ethnic issues[123].

        Not much seems to be done in order to make media belonging to ethnic groups cooperate. *Albanian and Macedonian media are focused only on their own ethnic group. But, fortunately, they are not focused against the other ethnic group as it was during the conflict*[124] .
A common excuse is the language difference. However, as it has been proved by the TV station Alsat, it is not a problem impossible to overcome. This station is namely broadcasting programs in Albanian with Macedonian subtitles

and the other way round[125]. That's probably the best solution. The similar initiatives are the attempts for creating mixed newsrooms. The Albanian language weekly "Lobby" and Macedonian: "Capital" exchange articles on regularly bases. "Untrinski vesnik" as well as "Dnevnik" (both Macedonian speaking) always have columns written by Albanian intellectuals[126] .
In general, the relations between Macedonian and Albanian speaking media are far better then they used to be, and the reason for that is simple: when a Albanian broadcaster plans to have only Albanians as the target audience he will not get more then 30% of the population. Private media are getting money from the advertisements: the more popular the station is the bigger income will it get. Therefore, they are trying to attract the whole population[127].

        The other efforts made in Macedonia are rather the initiatives of the Non-governmental organizations still present in the region than domestic ones.

        The organization, for which media sphere is particularly important, is the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. It does not only come up with it own initiatives but also coordinates activities of different groups.
One of the most important projects of OSCE was so called City desk in Tetovo, which was implemented in December 2001. The aim was to make Albanian and Macedonian journalists work together, share resources and provide their audiences with well-documented, balanced and accurate stories. The Representatives of

various media agreed to take part in the project and committed fully to the development of the idea[128]. The city desk lasted till April 2003. During this time there ware 1,500 stories produced, all both in Macedonian and Albanian. The closure of the city desk did not mean the ending of the cooperation between the journalists in Tetovo. On the contrary, it is continues with even stronger infectivity[129].
The other important success by the Media Unit was the initiative for the support for public broadcaster in Macedonia. As the result programs in different languages are being broadcast and the website is available in 10 languages. However, OSCE mission to Skopje is sizing down and so is the media unit

        United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is also very active in supporting the media in Western Balkans.
 One of its initiatives in the Republic of Macedonia was to issue its periodical magazine Multi-ethnic Forum. The aim of the magazine should be the reduction of the risk of deterioration of the future inter-ethnic relations in Macedonia. Multi-ethnic Forum is a magazine co-produced by multi-ethnic team, that follows the objective journalistic criteria and provides accurate analysis of political, economical r social issues. The magazine will be issued in 100,000 copies in both Macedonian and Albanian language. Approximately 400,000 beneficiaries among the general public from all ethnic

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[123] Thomas A. Bauer, Olivier Vujovic: " Media and Minorities in South East Europe" South East Europe Media Organisation 2006, p.361
[124] Risto Popovski: „Journalism in the post conflict period": transcript from the International Media Conference: „The role of media in conflicts" Skopje, 2003, p. 94

[125] interview with Mihajo Lahtov
[126] Risto Popovski: „Journalism…" p. 95
[127] Interview with Borce Manevski

[128] Interview with Borce Manevski and OSCE Mission to Skopje information brochure: Focus on 15 years"
[129] Sandra Srbinovska: "Journalism in the post conflict period": transcript from the International Media Conference: „The role of media in conflicts" Skopje, 2003, p 99

communities in Macedonia have been targeted[130].

Macedonia could take an example for the other ex-Yugoslav republics where a lot attention has been paid to the role of media in improving the relations between different ethnic groups. One of the most significant programs is educational and information project „National minorities- bridges of cooperation and stability factor between former Yugoslav countries." This program has been started by STINA news agency (Split, Croatia), Media Plan Institute (Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina) and School of Journalism from Novi Sad (Serbia and Montenegro). The aim is "*to found and develop media network for promotion of the role of national minorities and inter-ethnic tolerance as elements of cooperation and stability for countries in the region and region as whole. Regional dimension of this project is important in order to facilitate exchange of information, experience and solutions regarding position of minorities, as well as pointing out different possibilities of how minorities can become bridges of cooperation instead of being parts of conflict*"[131]. Those three institutions were issuing newsletter on topics like: inter-ethnic tolerance,

minorities, hate speech and many others available in Serbia, Croatia and BiH[132].

The best conclusions for my report are the words by Gordana Vilovic said during the conference on role of media in conflicts which took place in Skopje in November 2003.
"*In countries, not only in Macedonia, but also in all countries in former Yugoslavia in the reconciliation process is to perform and practise professionalism in reporting as a basing thing. Not to take sides, not to participate in the events (…) but to ask all sides to consider all facts and to report to the public correctly and with balance. After that of course we need to have more money because we are more or less in the same situation. But for me, this is the basic thing in the process of reconciliation; a good will of course*"[133].

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[130] UNESCO Continues Support to Free and Independent Media in the Western Balkans 05-01-2005 (Paris)

[131]

http://www.mediaplan.ba/docs/newsletter/200709EN.html

[132] Newsletters available at http://www.mediaplan.ba/docs/newsletter/200709EN.html
[133] Gordana Vilovic, : "Journalism in the post conflict period": transcript from the International Media Conferance: „The role of media in conflicts" Skopje, 2003, p 104

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Good governance issues and EU financial assistance in Macedonia
- excerpt -

1. Introduction

In December 2005, the **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**[134] was granted by the European Council the **status of candidate country**. This important step forward towards EU accession was taken in order to "*give recognition to this country's reform achievements*" and as "*an encouragement to pursue reforms on the road towards fulfilling the country's European perspective*"[135]. The candidate status, while being a positive assessment of the country's reform efforts, is not an end but represents the beginning of a long process of reforms in order to meet the requirements for EU accession. In order to qualify for EU membership, Macedonia must respect the Copenhagen criterias for accession: political criteria, economical criteria

and capability to assume the obligation of EU membership (the *acquis communautaire*).

Since 2005, the Commission has released two Progress Reports, in November 2006 and November 2007, over what has been achieved and closely watches over the ongoing reforms in this candidate country. The next step will be the granting of a date by the EU to start the bilateral negotiations for EU accession, on a chapter by chapter basis. This date will be granted when the Commission will evaluate Macedonia as being ready to start negotiations, with the final decision on the opening of negotiations being taken by the Council upon a recommendation from the Commission. So far, despite the calls of the Macedonian government for a negotiations date, no such decision has been taken, underlining the problems, such as the ones related to good governance, Macedonia still has to deal with before a more positive assessment from the Commission.

According to the United Nations, **good governance** is *the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented)*[136]. Governance can then be used in different contexts such as corporate governance, national governance or local governance. While never fully achieved, good governance at a country

level represents a policy objective in order to improve the whole decision making and implementing system. Transparency, efficiency, civil society participation, rule of law or accountability of the system are some of the criterias to be dealt with while performing an assessment of the progress of a country towards good governance.

This report deals with the problems Macedonia has to overcome in the field of **good governance**, meaning here, the main identified problems in the **Public Administration**, **Judiciary and Police sectors**. The EU has supported, through its assistance programs, such as CARDS, the country in tackling those issues which are part of the political criteria for EU membership. The year 2007 has seen the coming into force of a new instrument for pre-accession assistance, IPA, aimed, as we are going to see it further on in this report, at replacing all previous financial instruments and bring them all into a single one[137]. In the field of good governance, IPA funds are meant to provide an adequate answer to help Macedonia dealing with the necessary reforms as we are going to see it.

Considering this framework, I tried, throughout the report, to identify <u>what are the main problems in the field of good governance in Macedonia, what is being done and planned to be done by the Macedonian government in</u>

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[134] Throughout this report, I used both FYROM and Macedonia as synonyms for the name of the country. The fact of using Macedonia does not imply that I took sides over the name dispute with Greece, dispute which in my opinion should be solved by a negotiated solution, mutually acceptable to both countries. Working as an Intern in Skopje, for a Macedonian "think tank", Analytica, it would have been disrespectful of me to not to call the country by the name used by its inhabitants, Macedonia.

[135] Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, "Enlargement strategy and main challenges 2006-2007", COM (2006) 649, Brussels, 08/11/2006

[136] United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, "What is good governance?", available at: **http://www.unescap.org/pdd/prs/ProjectActivities/Ongoing/gg/governance.pdf**.

[137] See below.

order to tackle them and how the EU, through IPA funds can contribute and help with the adoption and the implementation of the needed reforms. My objective was not to be comprehensive in dealing with every single issue, but to provide the reader with an overview of what are the most important good governance issues in Macedonia and how IPA funds are relevant in dealing with them. While the first part of the report is focused on the identified problems in the Public Administration, Judicial system and Police sectors, the second part considers the possible answers to those problems within the IPA framework from both EU and Macedonian perspective and puts forward some suggestions and recommendations.

In order to draft this report, besides **desk research** and use of **official Commission documents** such as the Communications on the Enlargement Strategy and the FYROM Progress Reports, I also conducted **interviews** in Macedonian ministries and institutions like the Ministry of Justice, the Secretariat for European Affairs or the Public Prosecutor's Office. Moreover, I had the privilege to be received for interviews at the European Agency for Reconstruction office in Skopje and at the EC Delegation where I had interviews with Commission officials, one of them being the current EUSR and Head of the Delegation, Mr. Erwan Fouéré. I am grateful for their time and for their help to all of them. Eventually, most of the time I was not allowed to directly quote the person I had the interview with and, while respecting the interviewee's will, I provided only the location of the interview as a footnote.

2. Problems to overcome towards good governance in Macedonia

2.1. Public Administration

The Council Decision of 30th January 2006[138] identified both short term and medium term priorities for FYROM in the field of Public Administration. According to this document, the candidate country should, on the short run, and amongst other short term priorities, "*depoliticize the recruitment and career advancement of civil servants and other public agents and introduce a merit-based career system*". Almost two years later, after two EC Progress Reports in November 2006 and November 2007, and despite some improvements, this issue remains to be dealt with.

The **depoliticization of the civil service** probably represents one of the biggest challenges Macedonian government has to deal with. Over the last decade, every time a new government takes over, it removes a large part of the administrative staff working under the outgoing government and proceeds discretionary to new appointments according to the following procedure: the new ministers appoint new category I staff (top civil servants), then category I staff appoint new category II staff (mid-level) and those last ones appoint new category III staff (lower level)[139]. Consequently, the whole administrative staff within a ministry changes when a new government is in charge following parliamentary elections.

Such a situation disrupts the good functioning of the ministries and impedes the

work of the government which looses time and expertise in drafting and implementing new legislation. Furthermore, when civil servants have been precisely trained through Community programs to deal with the country's European integration, it is highly prejudicial for the incoming government to dismiss and replace them with **untrained and inexperienced civil servants**. The European Parliament has also underlined this issue in the comments on the EC Progress Report 2006 saying it considers as "*undesirable that civil servants should lose their jobs with changes of government and in particular expects civil servants who are specially trained to meet the needs of the EU acquis to continue their work*"[140]. Moreover, according to the last EC Progress Report 2007, the depoliticization of the civil service should be a priority for the Macedonian government which should work towards the implementation of a civil service where recruitment and promotion is regulated by "*objective and merit-based criteria*" and a where a "*clear distinction between the political and the administrative level is observed*"[141].

The Council decision of 30th January 2006 also identified medium terms priorities like the further **development of the capacity of the administration** to implement the SAA and the further implementation of the OFA, especially in the field of the **representation of minorities** in public administration. Those two issues are still current ones and further capacity building initiatives in order to strengthen both

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[138] Council Decision 2006/57/EC on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
[139] Interview at the European Agency for Reconstruction.

[140] EP, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Draft report on the 2006 Progress Report on the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 2006/2289(INI), 18/04/2007.
[141] The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2007 Progress Report, COM(2007)663, 06/11/2007.

central and decentralized Macedonian Administration most needed.

The Commission assessed in November 2007 that the "*Administrative capacity for both strategic planning and policy development needs to be further strengthened*' and that the "*capacity to prepare legislation, and hence the quality of draft laws, continues to be uneven*"[142]. This situation is mostly due to a **lack of training amongst the administrative staff** and also to the fact, as mentioned above, that there is no real commitment from the government to have the personnel staying in the position they were trained for. Despite some efforts made by the CSA to introduce a national system for coordinating civil servants' training there is **no comprehensive training for all civil servants**. "*Training remains ad hoc and largely funded by international donors*"[143].

Moreover, the administration is seen by the Macedonians as a place where it is not worth to work for. There are no advancement opportunities, no value given to the work done and **no internal motivation for the employees** working in the civil service. Besides that, there is a legal problem between the civil servant status and the public administration one. The civil servant status is set under the Civil Service Law while the public administration status is set under the Labour Law. Consequently the former is seen as being more advantageous than the latter[144].

With regards to the representation of minorities in public administration, further efforts should be done by the government **to ensure a fair representation of all "non-**

majority communities"[145]. Concerning the shares in the representation of representation within Public Administration, Serbs are overrepresented, Macedonians are fairly represented and Albanian representation is increasing. Roma are also underrepresented in the Administration but this issue raises another problem which could be solved in the longer run, the one about the education and the fact that Roma are not educated in Macedonia[146].

Overall, the main problems to overcome in the Public Administration sector are mainly linked to the need for the implementation of a merit based recruitment and career for civil servants, to the lack of training for the administrative staff and to the need for strengthening the capacity of ministries to deal with more complex and technical legislation. The government should allow trained staff to stay in their administrative positions and stop discretionary removing them when there is a government change.

2.2. Justice

The identified problems in the Macedonian Justice sector are manly linked to its **lack of independence and efficiency**. The issue of independence particularly remains an important one. There is a blurred distinction between the Technical/Administrative level and the Political level. The Public Prosecutor is appointed by the Parliament upon proposal by the Government. This is clearly a discretionary procedure with high risk of politization and lack of independence from the judiciary[147].

The appointment of the Public Prosecutor through this system has been strongly criticized by the opposition parties because the Prosecutor is then seen as being the agent of the government. "Concerning the Public Prosecutor's Office, this government's idea is how to influence it and through it how to influence the general Law enforcement"[148]. The opposition further criticizes the fact that now the government wants to make even more appointments through this **discretionary system** and gives the example of the Deputy Prosecutor incoming appointment[149]. A Law aimed at bringing a solution to this controversial issue and increase the independence of the judiciary is still stuck in the Parliament with one of the major issues being the mandate of the Public Prosecutor. The Government wants the mandate of the Prosecutor to be reviewed after a certain period and its renewal submitted to some tests while the opposition proposes a full permanent mandate[150].

Concerning the **inefficiency of the judiciary**, there is still an **important backlog** of cases. "*The backlog of cases, mainly comprising enforcement and misdemeanor cases, as well as administrative cases dealt with by the Supreme Court, still seriously hinders the judiciary's ability to handle the workload*"[151]. In January 2006, a report from International Crisis Group on Macedonia stated that "*the judicial system remains unreformed and dysfunctional*", and that "*a country of two million citizens has a*

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[142] The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2007 Progress Report, COM(2007)663, 06/11/2007.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Interview at the European Agency for Reconstruction

[145] Ibid.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Interview at the Public Prosecutor`s Office in Skopje

[148] Interview at the Macedonian Parliament with Mr. Igor Ivanovski, Vice-President of the SDSM, the main opposition party in Macedonia
[149] Ibid.
[150] Interview at the Ministry of Justice
[151] The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2007 Progress Report, COM(2007)663, 06/11/2007.

backlog of some 1.2 million cases"[152]. This statement still remains accurate after almost two years and further effective implementation of the needed reforms required.

This inefficiency is also fueled by the **lack of financial and technical resources** committed to the judiciary; for example, only € 300.000 was available for the Prosecutor's Office over the last year[153]. And in 2007, the budget committed to the Courts was even decreased by 0.6% compared to 2006, to about € 21 million[154]. With regards to the **IT infrastructures**, the situation is uneven. Some Courts have been provided with modern IT equipment particularly the Court in Skopje but some others, in the rest of the country are still in the need of IT equipment. The Ministry of Justice inaugurated in March 2007 an IT Center but this one is not yet fully operational[155].

Moreover the judiciary is not only seen by the population as being inefficient but also **highly corrupted**. More precisely, the Prosecutor's Office is seen as being the most corrupt body. The role of the Prosecutor is crucial since he has to initiate the prosecution for a crime in front of a Court. This leads to a lot of suspicions amongst population when

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prosecutors choose to not prosecute and further fuels the mistrust towards the judiciary[156].

Overall, the Justice sector in Macedonia still suffers from a lack of independency and efficiency. The main difficulty encountered now when considering reforming the judiciary lies on the poor political dialogue and consensus about the reforms to be adopted. "Political elites both from the ruling majority and the opposition have shown a lot of immaturity in dealing with EU related reforms"[157]. The political showdown around the issue of appointments tends to mirror the fact that Justice is a political issue and that every party is concerned about how best influence it.

2.3. Law enforcement

Talking about the Law enforcement, an international official said that in Macedonia, Law is seen as being "just a suggestion"[158]. The two main identified problems when dealing with Law enforcement in the country are related with the widespread corruption and to the need to reform the Police sector.

Anti-corruption policy:
Corruption is seen by the population as a major issue and by the EU as another big priority to be dealt with. **Fight against corruption** has been made an important objective, especially since the 1999 Tampere

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summit. This objective was made a pre-condition for fulfillment of EU requirements, particularly for admission within the EU[159]. In the last Progress Report, the EC stated that "*corruption is widespread and constitutes a very serious problem*" and that "*the approach to tackling corruption is not yet comprehensive*" in Macedonia.

The implementation of the adopted legislation is here also a key issue and is now more important than continuing to adopt more Laws in this field. In order to fight against corruption the government tried to **increase the transparency** of its acts by allowing a public access to information. The Macedonian Parliament adopted in February 2006 a "Law on the Public Access to documents" and the government claims this legislation has now been implemented, works well and civil servants are committed to answering to the public[160]. However, on the last EC Progress Report, in November 2007, the Commission considers that this **law has not been fully implemented** since "*many public bodies which hold information of public interest are not fully prepared or are unwilling to facilitate access to it*"[161].

The EC has also called for **increased coordination** amongst the state bodies dealing with the anti-corruption policy. There is still no unified approach concerning the terminology to be used and no possibility for mutual access to databases. This issue was another one of the priorities highlighted by the Council in January

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[152] "Macedonia: Wobbling toward Europe", ICG Report, Europe Briefing N°41, Skopje/Brussels, 12 January 2006, available at: **http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3869&l=1**
[153] Interview at the Public Prosecutor`s Office in Skopje.
[154] The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2007 Progress Report, COM(2007)663, 06/11/2007.
[155] Interview at the Ministry of Justice

[156] Interview at the Public Prosecutor`s Office in Skopje.
[157] Interview at the EC Delegation in Skopje
[158] "Macedonia: Wobbling toward Europe", ICG Report, Europe Briefing N°41, Skopje/Brussels, 12 January 2006, available at: **http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3869&l=1**

[159] Interview at the Public Prosecutor`s Office in Skopje
[160] Interview at the Macedonian Secretariat for European Affairs
[161] The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2007 Progress Report, COM(2007)663, 06/11/2007.

2006[162]. Moreover, sometimes there are difficulties arising due to mistrust amongst the officials in charge with anti-corruption matters. "*It is difficult to work when there are ethnical problems between people at top levels*"[163].

Concerning the achievements made so far, the opposition claims that the results of the government and the number of corruption cases already prosecuted are irrelevant because they deal only with the **least important cases**. "*The government made just some make up by prosecuting the small guys but not the most important cases of corruption*"[164]. Concerning this issue, the EC had a cautious approach. While noticing that efforts have been made in prosecuting corruption cases and some at a high level, the Commission also stated that "*sanctions were lenient*"[165]. The Commission acknowledged at the increased efforts to tackle corruption but also supports **more effective action** in this field.

Police sector:

Over the last years and under the provisions agreed in the OFA, Macedonia has made some progress in this field, particularly on the issue of the representation of ethnic minorities by adding Albanian officers in the

Police[166]. However, despite some improvements, this representation remains poor and uneven. The EC noted in November 2007 that the **representation of non majority communities** in senior Police ranks has not improved at all, "*in particular within the criminal police and the department for security and counter-intelligence*" [167]. Moreover, in criminal proceedings and in local and central government, **not enough interpretators** are available yet, in order to bring the Law on use of minority languages into a full implementation[168].

The government adopted on the October 30th 2006 a new **Law on Police** but failed to reach a strong political consensus on this issue and so far, one year later, some important provisions of this law has not entered into force. The main Albanian party, the DUI, has expressed its disagreement with the Law and threatened to civil disobedience[169]. The current main issue deals with the appointment of local police commanders which had to be done by the 11th of November but still "*nothing has been done and no one has a clue when this*

will be done"[170]. The opposition further claims that the government tries to impose hardliners coming from the ruling party ranks as field police commanders. "*The main fear of the SDSM is that this will be a move which will not be locally accepted by the population, especially in areas where the other Albanian party, the DUI, is powerful*"[171].

This bitter fighting over the appointments of field police commanders is also representative of the poor cooperation amongst Macedonian political parties when it comes to dealing with most needed reforms. This **lack of political cooperation** has led the implementation of an important reform to be delayed so far for one year. Already, in the Progress Report 2006, with regards to the Law on Police, the EC pointed out that "*constructive cooperation between the government and the opposition to ensure the smooth implementation of the law is needed*"[172]. In the light of this political clash, the year 2007 is unofficially considered as a lost year for the adoption of reforms[173].

Eventually, the Police sector still suffers from a **lack of training** for its staff. To underline this priority, the first IPA funded project in Macedonia will deal with Police training, in order to continue what has been done for one year and a half now, under a

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[162] Council Decision 2006/57/EC on the principles, priorities and conditions contained in the European Partnership with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
[163] Interview at the Public Prosecutor`s Office in Skopje.
[164] Interview at the Macedonian Parliament with Mr. Igor Ivanovski, Vice-President of the SDSM, the main opposition party in Macedonia
[165] The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2007 Progress Report, COM(2007)663, 06/11/2007.

[166] "Macedonia: Wobbling toward Europe", ICG Report, Europe Briefing N°41, Skopje/Brussels, 12 January 2006, available at: **http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3869&l=1**
[167] The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2007 Progress Report, COM(2007)663, 06/11/2007.
[168] Ibid.
[169] South European Times, "Macedonia's parliament adopts new law on police", online article available at: **http://www.setimes.com/cocoon/setimes/xhtml/en_GB/features/setimes/features/2006/11/03/feature-02**.

[170] Interview at the Macedonian Parliament with Mr. Igor Ivanovski, Vice-President of the SDSM, the main opposition party in Macedonia
[171] Interview at the Macedonian Parliament with Mr. Igor Ivanovski, Vice-President of the SDSM, the main opposition party in Macedonia
[172] The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2006 Progress Report, COM(2006)649 final, 08/11/2006.
[173] Interview at the Ministry of Justice

twinning program with the German Police[174]. Furthermore, in 2003, a Police Academy was created in Macedonia aimed at training police officers but the EC has stated that it has been little used due to legal status and budgetary problems[175]. The issue behind is the fact that the Police Academy has two masters. It is part of the University "St-Climent Ohridski-Bitola" but it is also under the supervision of the Macedonian Ministry for Internal Affairs and its budget comes from the Ministry.

Overall, Law enforcement in Macedonia continues to be closely linked to the progress in the fight against corruption and on the implementation of the Law on Police. As long as there would be no strong resource commitment to combat the widespread corruption and no consensus on the implementation of the reforms in the Police sector, Law will remain a suggestion rather than being the rule.
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4. Conclusion

The process to be a member of the EU is a long and painful one. The more countries are in the EU the more complex the accession of new members becomes. But if this process is long, the direction is clear since there is just one single way leading to the EU membership and what really matters is the political will of a country to take it and handle the necessary reforms to achieve the process and be a member of the European family. Consequently,

"the Government policy towards EU accession should be on the automatic drive"[176].

We have seen in this report that in the field of good governance, the main problems on the agenda are mostly due to lack of implementation of the adopted reforms in the Public Administration, Judicial system and Police sector. Moreover, the lack of political dialogue impedes a real political consensus and prevents the fast adoption and effective implementation of the EU related reforms.

An important answer, from the EU perspective, to assist Macedonia in reaching its EU objectives came in 2007, with the new IPA financial program. This new program advantages are that it streamlines the administrative procedures, offers a unique and flexible approach with regards to EU assistance to Macedonia and brings increased responsibilities for Macedonians, through ownership. This will provide Macedonian Government with the capacity to better deal with the identified problems, as soon as it will be ready to handle the management of those funds.

So far, IPA funds are managed directly by the EC Delegation in Skopje which saw its importance in providing technical and financial assistance rising. The importance of this assistance will further grow in 2008, with the staff of the Delegation increasing from 34 people to around 80, making then the EC Delegation in Skopje one of the most staffed EC Delegation worldwide.

Eventually, if no date for the starting of negotiations was announced so far, this is mostly due to lack of progress in 2007. However, some recent encouraging efforts show

the government takes into account the EC observations and is willing to work in a more efficient way in 2008 to achieve EU priorities. The next year, 2008 should then be a test both for the Government and the opposition on how seriously the objective of European integration is taken.

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[174] Interview at the Secretariat for European Affairs
[175] The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 2007 Progress Report, COM(2007)663, 06/11/2007.

[176] Interview with Mr. Erwan Fouéré, EU Special Representative and Head of the EC Delegation in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

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EU VISA REGIME AND MACEDONIA

On the 30th November 2006 Macedonia's Foreign Minister Antonio Milososki and Interior Minister Gordana Jankuloska met with European Justice Commissioner Franco Frattini to discuss the possible simplification of the European Union (hereafter referred to as EU) Visa Regime with concern to Macedonia. Macedonian officials also hoped to reinvigorate talks on potential European Membership for Macedonia.

Macedonia entered the talks with the optimism that an agreement would be forthcoming on the simplification of the VISA Regime by mid-2007, whilst the EU offered a more cautious deadline of the end of 2007. With 'mid-2007' fast approaching let us now see where Macedonia stands with concern to the EU Visa regime, what has progressed and what still needs to be done?

As yet there has been little progress on the Visa issue. Officials on both sides met on the 25th January for a second round of talks, to negotiate not only the issue of easing the Visa regime but also re-igniting talks on re-admission of Macedonia to the EU. Macedonia asks that the EU simplify the Visa procedure for as many of its citizens as possible, although concentrating initially on reducing paperwork for several groups such as students, journalists, researchers, scientific workers, civil servants and others travelling with official delegations. Macedonia also asked for assurances and timetables to be given on a likely date for the full liberalisation of the Visa regime. The EU however at present can only comment on how far Macedonia has met the demands of its Visa policy and where improvements and alterations need to be made.

Why have a Visa Regime?

Why have a Visa Regime in place? Is perhaps the first question to be asked when determining what is happening with concern to Macedonia and the EU Visa Regime. According to the International Crisis Group the point of having a Visa Regime in place is two-fold. Firstly Visa regimes are a means of protecting one's citizens and indeed economy against the effects of unwanted aliens. Secondly a Visa Regime is a means of identifying the unwanted aliens from those that are acceptable. The latter of these reasons is most evident in the current 'white list'/ 'black list' approach of the EU. To clarify the EU has drawn up a list of countries with which they are willing to ease Visa Restrictions, these are present on the 'white list', and include countries such as Israel and Argentina[177].

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[177] Official Journal of the European Communities (15th March 2001) 'Council Regulation (EC) No. 539/2001'. Annex II, pg. 12 (http://eur-lex.europa.eu)

Nationals of these 'white list' countries do not require Visas for visits to the EU of up to 90 days or 3 months. In addition there is a list of countries, known as the 'Black list', that require Visas to cross the border into any EU country, the Former Republic of Macedonia is included on this list, along with a number of other Balkan states. Although perhaps what is most disturbing for the members of the 'black list' is that they are accompanied by nations such as Afghanistan, Iraq and North Korea, countries which have been dubbed the homes of Terrorism.

To summarise the point of a Visa Regime is primarily to protect ones Citizens both economically, through tying in to trade agreements and tariffs and protecting ones employment market, and physically, through preventing the entrance of dangerous individuals. However the International Crisis Group also identifies a secondary purpose of Visa Regimes, and that is to represent what is acceptable behaviour and values to those implementing the regime.

What is the EU Visa Regime?

The present EU visa regime rises out of the Schengen Agreement signed initially in 1985 by seven countries to bring an end to the need

for internal border controls, and thereby aid their economies and security through greater coordination and fewer tariffs. This agreement has since been extended and now includes 30 signatory countries[178] (three of these are non-EU; Norway, Iceland and Switzerland), although only 15 of these signatory countries have fully implemented the agreement, and further territories are covered indirectly. To clarify there are a great many countries covered in some manner by the schengen agreement, whether this be officially with all states or via smaller sub agreements.

The Schengen agreement was drawn up independently of the EU, yet later adopted into European Law under the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1996, and all but two member states, Ireland and the United Kingdom, are now full signatories to it. Therefore despite its non EU origins, and indeed few non EU members, the Schengen Agreement is now considered an integral part of the EU framework.

The Agreement now extends beyond the removal of border controls and guards to police cooperation and sharing of information, as well a uniform external controls, with concern to Asylum, Trade and so forth. In light of these developments a country must meet with a great deal of conditions before gaining access to the Schengen area.   Indeed conditions are comparable to those of joining the EU, as paperwork, police forces, custom controls and many other factors all need to be harmonised, in order to ensure the smooth runing of the Schengen area. However simplified Visa regimes can be extended to non-members at the discretion of members, for example Russia has many agreements that ease travel of its citizens

to and from the EU zone, whilst remaining outside the Schengen agreement. Conversely members can temporarily re-instate border controls, for example Madrid after the Train bombings.

What does Macedonia want? and why?

Macedonia seeks a simplification of the Visa regime for two key purposes. Firstly in the obvious manner that a simplified regime will allow for greater movement of people's and goods between Macedonia and its neighbours and friends in the EU, this point becomes more pertinent with the recent acceptance of Bulgaria and Romania into the EU. Yet simplification of the Visa regime is also intricately tied to a second factor, the possibility and credibility of EU membership for Macedonia, demonstrated by the dual purpose of recent negotiations, precisely officials met to talk about both the Visa regime and EU membership. Underlying both of these ambitions is a desire to aid the development of Macedonia through economic and political development. To expand becoming a member of the EU, or even closer ties to the EU through a simplified and more welcoming Visa Regime will improve the political standing of Macedonia, whilst the EU may not be the greatest power on the political scene it does carry greater weight than Macedonia alone, or even the Balkans as a region. This is because the EU is intricately tied with the ideals of democracy and tolerance, an image that Macedonia longs to cultivate but yet continues to remain elusive as the walls to Europe remain in place. Secondly in terms of economic development, an improved politcal stature will encourage foreign investment and a reduction in tariffs will also aid the Macedonian economy.

In terms of the first reason the importance of free trade and movement between Macedonia and EU members has become increasingly important since the accession of its neighbours, Bulgaria and Romania, to the EU. Bulgaria and Romania must enforce the EU Visa regime, set out in the Schengen Aquis (1990), when dealing with Macedonian citizens, in order to meet their requirements as members of the EU. However this is expected to adversely affect business links between the countries, as the previous independent agreements between the countries were more liberal. Trade between Macedonia and Bulgaria totalled $380 million in 2005[179], and around 550,000 Macedonian tourists[180] enter Bulgaria each year. Already the new border controls detailed by the EU Visa regime has induced a drop in numbers crossing the border, with 73,000 Macedonians crossing into Bulgaria via the Deva Bair checkpoint in December 2006 compared to 13,000 in January 2007[181]. Many Macedonian truck drivers have already lost their jobs at it proves too expensive and time consuming to gain access to their former markets in Bulgaria. Yet the Bulgarian Government is also conscious of the affect a new more demanding Visa policy regime with Macedonia may have on its economy, with 230,000 Bulgarians travelling to Macedonia in 2005, and has drawn up an agreement to make the system easier for certain groups of Macedonians, even to the extent of opening a

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[178] www.auswaertiges-amt.de

[179]

www.birn.eu.com/en/45/130/2328/?tpid=83
[180]

www.birn.eu.com/en/45/130/2328/?tpid=83
[181]

www.birn.eu.com/en/45/130/2328/?tpid=83

new consulate in Bitola[182]. However firstly Bulgaria is still looking after its own trade primarily, and thus whilst this separate agreement alleviates the situation in part, it still involves more 'red-tape' and a reduction in trade, and Bulgaria is evidently not the only country with which Macedonia hopes to trade. Only an agreement with the EU as a whole can really suffice to help Macedonia develop economically through reducing the paperwork and costs that presently discourage foreign trade and investment, as individual agreements only encourage more paperwork and more conditions to be met.

The EU Visa Regime does not only affect the Macedonian economy in a general sense by making it difficult to trade and commute to European countries, but it is also costly to individuals. The standard cost of a Visa to enter the the Schengen zone is 35 Euros, although there is a proposal from the French Government to raise this to 60 Euros[183]. Whilst this price may not seem very high considering one could potentially gain access to the entire Schengen region, it is a high price to pay in a region where the average monthly income is around 250 Euros.

'Macedonians, who can visit only 12 countries visa-free, spend about 2.5 million euros a year on Visas'[184].

In addition this is merely the cost for the Visa, which it may be added often only allows access to a specific country, for a limited time period (usually 90 days), and does not include the costs of travelling to a consulate to get paperwork checked and signed, the cost of official translations and copies of paperwork and the days of work lost queuing to gain access to the officials who have the authority to issue Visas. All of the former can raise the cost of obtaining a Visa from anywhere between 40 and 200 Euros[185], well beyond the capacity of most people in Macedonia. Therefore not only does Macedonia seek to simplify the Visa process in order to help its economy recover and rejuvenate, but additionally to allow its citizens a chance to go abroad, to illustrate with a comparable example, it is estimated that 49% of Serbians[186] have never been abroad, one can assume it is a similar situation for the majority of Macedonians. This is an alarming amount of people considering the citizens of these countries are supposed to be seen as European. Critics of the current Visa Regime argue that if the EU is serious about welcoming the Balkans back into Europe then they must give young people access to the values and society that they want them to aspire to. Indeed some go as far as to say that the EU is encouraging the rise of Xenophobia and violence in the Balkans, because it is easier to gain access to countries such as Pakistan and Iran, where these values

are determined to be rife, than any EU country, in which tolerance and acceptance are supposedly more highly valued.

To summarise the current Visa Regime has a high economic cost for the Macedonian economy as a whole, through making it difficult to conduct international business and trade, this was clearly illustrated by the accession of Bulgaria to the EU, a situation which at least one Macedonian travel agent thinks will cost him a fifty percent drop in customers[187], as citizens are restricted to where and for how long they can travel. In terms of travel to Bulgaria which was previously simple, many businessmen and tourists now face up to a two month wait, that is a two month loss of business. In addition to beign costly to individuals who are discouraged from travelling by the high Visa costs.

Finally in terms of cost, there is also a psychological cost to be considered. As stated earlier there is the unappetising situation of being placed on the 'black list' of countries alongside Iraq, Afghanistan and North Korea. Unappetising because it appears to equate the citizens of Macedonia with the 'axis of evil', associating its citizens with terrorists and extremists, a proposition that is evidently unfounded and unhelpful. Indeed it is proposed that the current Visa Regime serves only to propagate rather than discourage criminal activities by making people-trafficking more viable. Precisely as the Visa process continues to be humiliating and time and financially costly to the average citizen, more and more Macedonians are forced to turn to alternative means of gaining access to neighbouring countries. There is evidently a desire amongst

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[182]
www.birn.eu.com/en/45/130/2328/?tpid=83
[183]
www.iht.com/articles/2006/09/27/opinion/edlax.php
[184]
http://macedoniannews.blogspot.com/2006/11/students-in-skopje-protest-against-eu.html

Students in Skopje Protest against Visa Regime, November 21st 2006

[185] International Crisis Group. 'EU Visas and the Western Balkans'. Europe Report No. 168, 29th November 2005

[186] www.citizenspact.org.yu Exit Against Visas, 5th July 2006

[187]
www.birn.eu.com/en/45/130/1867/?tpid=83

Macedonians to enter Europe and thereby gain access to an education, employment, and exposure to different cultures and thereby tolerance and acceptance of others, yet the current Visa regime makes ordinary citizens feel unwelcome to such things.

'If they compare themselves with their peers from othe European countries they can conclude that what is worth for others does not apply to them[188]

Some critics have gone as far as to claim that the current Visa regime is leading to a 'ghettoisation' of the Balkans[189]. This is particularly pertinent amongst the youth who have more access to countries that are rife with extremism then they have to the democratic values of the EU that they are supposed to emulate. Perhaps this is why Macedonia strives foremost for an alleviation of the Visa Regime with reference firstly to students, scientists, and businessmen, because they hope that the EU understands they are serious about a democractic, even 'European' transformation but for this they need the current and future leaders to have access to the European example. The students themselves have held protests and designed campaigns such as EXIT[190], which Olli Rehn himself has visited to try and explain the EU's position to young people and hear their grievances. EXIT aims to ensure young peoples opinions are heard concerning the Visa regime and related issues such as discrimination and employment.

'We cannot speak of a European dimension for Education, mobility, corruption,

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[188] **www.citizenspact.org.yu**
[189] **www.citizenspact.org.yu**
[190] **www.exitfest.org**

democracy and tolerance while cramped within the boundaries of our country[191]

Although returning to the idea of trafficking expressed earlier it is feared that given the strict visa regime, criminals will resort to using trafficking in the guise of student exchanges, as has often occurred in the past. The counter argument to this is that if the Visa system were simplified young people would not have to resort to the black market in order to gain access to the EU.

In this sense Macedonian pays an enormous psychological cost through the present Visa Regime. It is said that '*organised criminals by-pass regulations whilst legitimate travellers are humiliated at the consulate gate*[192]. Firstly as individuals made to undergo a gruelling process in order to visit their neighbours, '*people often queue for Visa in sun and rain, and consular departments of many embassies do not show the minimum of respect for human dignity regarding the applicants*[193]. The whole visa application process has become so infamous that two books have now been published of people's experiences, stories which apparently shocked Dutch counterparts when the book was promoted there[194]. Secondly as a country grouped with a number of undesirables on the infamous 'black list' and thirdly as a

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[191]

http://macedoniannews.blogspot.com/2006/11/students-in-skopje-protest-against-eu.html
Students in Skopje Protest against Visa Regime, November 21st 2006
[192] International Crisis Group. 'EU Visas and the Western Balkans'. Europe Report No. 168, 29th November 2005
[193] www.citizenspact.org.yu
[194] **www.citizenspact.org.yu** The Book is entitled 'Best Stories from the Visa Queues'

society, with a new generation growing up with intolerance and unacceptance from their neighbours and supposed 'saviours'. To reiterate a point made earlier, it seems incredible that the officials in the EU expect Macedonian society to adopt its values and attitudes without allowing its people access to these things.

'*Those that are expected to transform their societies and make the Balkans a peaceful and stable region are not allowed to be introduce to the system of values they are expected to create*[195].

This section has so far dealt with the issue of Visa alleviation as a means to alleviate economic costs to both the state and the individual as well as pyschological costs. However the introduction also indicated another motive behind Macedonians desire to simplify the Visa regime, that of gaining entry to the EU. As stated earlier Macedonia desires this for the economic and political development it will encourage, particularly the latter.

Macedonia is the first of the West Balkan countries to begin Visa and Membership negotiations with the EU and this will both hinder and help their situation.

Hinder, in that the EU is aware that anything that they agree with Macedonia may serve as a precedent for other West Balkan states and therefore they are cautious. Precisely the EU does not want to rush into opening up its borders to Macedonia, as it may be forced to do the same for other, less secure West Balkan states. Whilst the EU has always demonstrated and stated that its policy towards the West

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[195] **www.citizenspact.org.yu/new 5th July 2006**, 'Exit against Visas'

Balkans is based on individual countries meeting the criteria set out for all its potential and actual members and allies, rather than a policy of 'one in all in'. However it would be difficult not to apply a more open visa regime to the rest of the western Balkans if the process were to be simplified for Macedonia, who according to the reports released by the EU is still plagued by a number of security and economic problems, such as corruption, an ineffective justice system and lack of foreign investment. Therefore Macedonia is faced with the paradox that in order to better meet the membershp requirements of the EU a simplification of the visa regime would be desirable, and yet for this to occur Macedonia has to better meet the membership requirements. Both the EU and Macedonia are going to be forced to make some compromises on these two issues if they are serious about joining and accepting Macedonia into the EU.

On the other hand Macedonia has continually proved able to avoid open conflict, avoiding war in 2001 and continuing to make moves to alleviate ethnic and social tensions, as indicated in the 2003 report by the International Crisis Group. Therefore Macedonia may be able to avoid be painted with the same brush as its neighbours. In terms of meeting the criteria for Visa simplification Macedonia has already agreed to introduce Biometric passports, an expensive scheme, but one that makes the whole system more secure. Macedonia has also worked on meeting the requirements of the Ohrid agreement, working on bringing Albanians into the police force and Army, introducing legislation to deal with corruption and independence of the Judiciary, amongst other improvements.

In conclusion Macedonia seeks a simplified Visa regime with the EU in order to improve its political and economic status, as well as those of the Balkan region. This will be achieved through the simplified regime making trade easier and cheaper and encouraging foreign investment through both a decrease in redtape and an increase in political acceptance. To expand on the latter in the eyes of Macedonians simplifying the Visa regime would be a clear manner of indicating that they are considered European and acceptable, as they would no longer be grouped with supposed terrorists and criminals and would also have access to the values they are expected to emulate.

Why the EU may be 'dragging it's heels'?

Macedonia's attempts to simplify the European Union's Visa Regime also have to compete with a number of pejorative trends in European Society, namely: the rise of xenophobia and Right wing extremism; Europe's ageing population; the global threat of terrorism; and globalisation more generally. In short all of these trends relate to the purpose of a Visa regime, to protect one's citizens against outside threats, mostly in an economic sense, and account for the reluctance to welcome in 'outsiders'.

The rise of xenophobia and right wing extremism makes things more difficult for Macedonian citizens, and indeed any non-EU citizens, to achieve a simplified entrance to the EU as more and more people are persuaded that these non-europeans are coming to steal their job opportunities, benefit from the taxes they pay and criminalise European society. This rising trend can be seen in the new Asylum policies of

most European states, the rise in support and election of rigt wing parties such as the NPD in Saxony, Germany, Jorg Haider in Austria, Le Pen, the British National Party and so forth. This is despite evidence that citizens from Eastern Europe tend to maintain strong links with their home country and want to return to use the skills and education gained within the EU to improve their own societies, for example 500,000 Bosnian refugees returned home voluntarily when given the choice[196].

The ageing population of Europe should logically encourage the opening of Europe in order to keep European economies functioning and able to support those workers that will eventually have to retire. However Europe also has a rising level of unemployment, and fears are great amongst its dwindling youth about the prospects of finding a job. In addition money earnt by non-europeans tends to be sent home to support their families rather than used to support the retirement and care of ageing Europeans. It seems the preferred policy, particularly in the case of Germany, and to some extent Britain, is to encourage its youth to have more children through increasing Child benefits. Therefore an ageing population affects the visa regime by making Europeans more protective of their own citizens.

To summarise an ageing population and rising xenophobia is contributing to a feeling of cautiousness and suspicion of 'outsiders'. This makes it unlikely that the Visa regime will be simplified for any nations citizens, particularly those of nations that have little to offer the EU financially, like Macedonia.

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[196] Conflict Prevention Partnership Event. (30.11.2005) 'EU Visa Policy in the Western Balkans'

In terms of how the global threat of terror affects the position of Macedonia with concern to the alleviation of the Visa Regime, it is merely that the Balkans are still perceived as a hotbed of criminals and extremism in the minds of many. Ironically it has been argued that it is the lack of access to Europe that has allowed extremism to remain rife, as groups are able to play on people's grievances with the EU, and also people also have greater access to countries where extremism is present than they do to the EU. In addition it is difficult to ask people to respect difference and practice tolerance when you do not do the same towards them, some may argue if you treat the people of the Balkans to the same strict checks as you do those people trying to gain access from countries supposedly rife with terrorists then what do you expect them to feel is your attitude towards them.

Finally in terms of Globalisation more generally one can once again see a more general trend of fear over employment and financial, as well as cultural security contributing to a less willing acceptance of others. In short global trends are often represented as a threat, a means by which outsiders can flood national identities and steal financial markets. This trend of fear entails that outsiders are only accepted when they either offer some clear advantage or demonstrate no threat, neither of which Macedonia at present fulfils.

As referred to earlier the simplification of the Visa Regime is intimately tied both in the minds of Macedonian's and in the minds of European Union officials to the process of European Union membership. Therefore any change to the system reflects not only on Macedonia's ability to improve border controls and identification documentation, but also whether they are making sufficient progress in aligning Macedonian legislation and society with more wide ranging policies such as environment and energy policy. Evidently the negotiations do not explicitly state this but one cannot help but realise that particularly given the societal and security situation within the European Union at the moment, the European Union is unlikely to alleviate it's Visa Regime with any country that does not meet a wide range of its requirements, especially one that has as little to offer the EU as Macedonia at present. One can make this last point because the EU does have a more simple Visa regime with China and Russia, countries which do not meet EU requirements on a range of issues such as Human Rights and Transparency of political processes, yet both countries have something to offer the EU, whether it be access to new technology or energy resources, and therefore the EU is prepared to take a greater risk.

In conclusion Macedonia has to reassure the EU that it has something viable to add and does not pose a threat financially or physically if it hopes to achieve a simplificaton of the Visa regime. Viewed from an alternative angle one can see that alleviation of the Visa regime depends on trends and factors external to the control of Macedonia, thereby making the process more difficult.

What hope for the future?

At present it seems that there is little hope of a speedy change for the citizens of Macedonia, yet it seems not because of a lack of effort on the part of Macedonia, but, because of current political and sociological trends within the EU. It seems that despite evidence to the contrary the EU is still frightened of mass influxes of Eastern Europeans, terrified of outsiders stealing their jobs and benefitting from their generous welfare systems. Yet perhaps one should not say that the EU itself, or even member state governments and experts express this fear, but instead there is a rising trend within some media and certain political parties towards intolerance and xenophobia. Certain groups continue to use outsiders as scapegoats for the problems of the EU, and play upon the general fear in Western society that has risen since 9/11 to keep everyone out of the EU.

This is not to say that Macedonia meets all the criteria set out by the EU in order to benefit from a simplified visa regime, far from, but that it seems at present that the EU has run out of enthusiasm for welcoming. Hotel EU is full for the foreseeabe future!

So what can Macedonia do? Of course there are wide reaching trends at work that Macedonia alone cannot hope to alter, yet that does not mean that Macedonia should sit back and wait. Indeed Macedonia should carry on taking significant steps to improve border controls and immigration and asylum legislation to match current trends within the EU, the government should continue not only issuing legislation to improve security and justice systems but also implement this legislation, particularly it seems where the judiciary is concerned. In short if Macedonia hopes for a simplification and eventual eradication of the strict and damaging Visa Regime then it must fulfil the criteria for accession.

It seems the Macedonian citizens also have the right idea with continuing to peacefully protest and lobby the EU, drawing attention to their plight through literature and art, and highlighting the gross hypocrisy in the EU's position, it seems that Macedonia needs to keep

shouting out '*How can you expect us to be European when we are not allowed to experience what European is*'.

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REGIONAL COOPERATION IN SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE
- excerpt -

Introduction

The concept of Regional Cooperation is not new in the South Eastern Europe (SEE) region. The first attempt of developing multilateral cooperation dates back to end of 19th and the first half of 20th century.[197] SEE region countries were in some kind of economic unions with their neighbours before the break-up of so called "Soviet Block". During that time, the countries with in SFR of Yugoslavia (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Slovenia, Serbia and Montenegro) enjoyed a special economic union and links with member countries compared to its neighbours (Romania and Bulgaria), less dependent in trade with other socialist countries.

Regional Cooperation is of greater importance toady, in the aftermath of the Kosovo conflict, than few years ago. There have been many initiatives, initiated for Regional Cooperation in SEE region. Despite many initiatives of Regional Cooperation there has been no significant increase in the intra-regional trade in SEE region. The success of these initiatives, depends on how economically secure are the states in SEE region. Economic development is the key issue for any country. This paper discusses the aspects of Regional Cooperation, which concern the economic sphere by analysing the trade of past and present trade links in the region and why closer economic ties should be encouraged with in the SEE region.

Background

As mentioned above the crises in Kosovo and problematic political and economic situation in rest of the South Eastern Europe region have influenced the international community, mainly the EU that, there is a need for a regional approach and a multilateral strategy to compliment the bilateral relations of these countries with the various international organisations. Since then the international community has been advocating for regional cooperation and promoting regional initiatives.[198] The regional initiatives have emerged in two phases;

o   The first phase of regional cooperation was initiated after the fall of 'Easter Block'. They are

o   The second phase of the regional cooperation initiatives were started after the disintegration of Former Yugoslavia and after the end of conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. They are;

Table 1 Regional Initiatives

First Phase	Second Phase
Central European Initiative:	South East European Cooperative Process:
Black Sea Economic Cooperation:	Royaumont Process:
Central Europe Free Trade Area	Southeast European Cooperative Initiative:
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Table 1 shows the regional initiatives initiated during the both first and second phases in the SEE region. Table 2 describes the member nations of the regional cooperation initiatives

The main incentives of regional cooperation was[199]

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[197] Regional Initiatives in South East Europe: An Assesment   by Dusko Lopadic

[198] Chapter 3. THE EXTERNAL APPROACH; EU AND REGIONAL INITIATIVES, Balkan Regional Cooperation & European Integration, Othon Anastasakis & Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic, July 2002·

[199] Regional Initiatives in South East Europe: An Assesment   by Dusko Lopadic

- Interdependence among neighbours, particularly in view of relatively limited national markets, rather law levels of economic development, a necessity to develop infrastructure and to regulate a growing number of economic and social issues at regional/international level;
- A need for a better exploitation of one or more common resources, and for market liberalization;
- External pressure by the European Union and other powers on Balkan States to set up a better and more efficient bilateral and multilateral cooperation;
- Models of other sub-regions in Europe or beyond to be followed (such as Benelux States, Scandinavia, Mediterranean or Baltic States);
- Along with centrifugal trends, the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia resulted in a considerable void, actually calling for new forms of cooperation.
- Many SEE countries see regional cooperation as an opportunity to get closer to the European Union and other European integrations; In the same time, cooperation within Southeast Europe should also contribute to overall European "architecture";

There are many common aims and objectives which overlap among the regional initiatives mentioned above table. They are regional cooperation via economic cooperation, improve private sector, cooperate to fight against organized crimes, etc.

Economic development is the main issues for the countries in SEE region. Regional cooperation has been essential in the economic growth of the SEE countries. Regional cooperation has created a much-needed environment for foreign investment, which has resulted in reduced unemployment and increase in living standard.

Table 2

Country	CEI	BSEC	CEFTA	RP	SECI	SEECP	SP
Albania	+	+	-	+	+	+	+
BiH[*]	+	-	-	+	+	+	+
Bulgaria	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Croatia	+	-	-	+	+	O	+
Macedonia	+	-	-	+	+	+	+
Romania	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Yugoslavia	+	-	-	+	+	+	+

+: Participant; -: Non-Participant; O: Observer
Source: Balkan Regional Cooperation & European Integration, Othon Anastasakis & Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic, July 2002.

From the above table, it is evident that though not all the countries in the SEE region were involved in first phase of initiatives of regional cooperation but in the later phase all the countries of SEE region have initiated the initiatives.

Growth performance of SEE transition economies

To promote trade EU has strongly encouraged for trade liberalisation. Trade liberalisation has successfully created an atmosphere to create greater opportunities for foreign direct investment. EU, regional trade liberalisation started much recently in the mid of 2001 when the MoU on trade liberalisation was signed by the seven SEE countries[200]. This process led to reduce or removal of tariff barriers between the EU and the SEE countries. EU has granted duty free access to its market. There has been sharp increase in trade between EU and SEE region. EU has become the most important trading partner for the SEE countries. In 2005 the total trade between these regions amounted to 79 billion euro, an increase of 53% compared to 2001.

EU-SEE Trade

Table 3 shows the trade data between EU and SEE countries from 2001 till 2005. It is evident from the table that exports of EU from countries such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Moldova and Serbia and Montenegro has registered high percent for growth. While Albania has registered less percent of growth compared to other countries of SEE region. Over the past five years, SEE countries have generally registered increasing exports to the EU, though there are substantial variations among the individual countries. Most SEE countries shares of imports from the EU have been relatively stable over the past five years, confirming their

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[*] Bosnia-Herzegovina

[200]Trade in Southeast Europe: recent trends and some policy implications by Milica Uvalic

high dependence on imports primarily from the   EU.

Table 3 : **EU Trade with SEE countries (€ million), 2001-2005**

Country	EU Exports			EU imports			Total Trade		
	2001	2005	Growth %	2001	2005	Growth %	2001	2005	Growth %
Albania	1.114	1.320	18%	336	459	37%	1.451	1.779	23%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2.047	2.730	32%	696	1.324	90%	2.743	4.027	47%
Bulgaria	4.436	7.133	61%	3.741	5.282	41%	8.177	12.415	52%
Croatia	7.042	10.371	47%	3.128	3.968	27%	10.169	14.340	41%
FYR of Macedonia	1.409	1.340	-5%	693	954	38%	2.102	2.294	9%
Moldova	508	787	57%	258	363	41%	766	1.160	51%
Romania	12.103	21.789	80%	10.135	15.278	51%	22.238	37.067	67%
Serbia and Montenegro	3.175	4.945	56%	1.266	1.744	38%	4.444	6.688	50%
W Balkans	14.791	20.679	40%	6.119	8.449	38%	20.909	29.128	39%
Total	31.838	50.398	58^	20.253	29.372	45%	52.090	79.770	53%

Source: A New Regional Agreement to Develop Trade in South Eastern Europe. Memo - Brussels, 19 December 2006

Intra-Regional Trade

Trade between South East European countries has been boosted by the establishment of
bilateral Free Trade Agreements. In 2004, regional trade amounted to € 3.5 billion, up 33% from the figure of € 2.6 billion of 2002. Croatia's exports to the SEE countries went up €227 million in two years (27% of total), Romania's exports to the SEE countries went up € 244 million (47%) of total. All countries registered increases in their exports to the other countries of the region. The intra-regional trade in SEE region is present primarily regarding its exports, and much less because of its imports. Table 4 shows the intra-regional trade among SEE region countries. Some SEE countries today have much more balanced trade in general than the others, having less pronounced trade deficits and a much higher coverage of imports by exports. The analysis of recent trends in trade of the SEE countries has led to the conclusion that intra-SEE trade is a very low portion of their overall trade. If we compare the total trade between EU and SEE region and trade with in SEE region, the total trade with EU amounts to 53%, the trade with in SEE region is 33%. It is evident from the two tables that there is a huge contract between the trade between EU and the Balkan countries and intra-regional trade.
Trade liberalisation has successfully encouraged trade between EU and SEE region countries, but it has not been so successful to encourage intra-regional trade between SEE region countries. The reason for low intra-regional trade can be attributed to economic and political factors[201].

Table 4 : *Intra-SEE trade, 2002-2004 (€ million)*

Country	Exports to SEE Region

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[201] Balkan Regional Cooperation & European Integration Othon Anastasakis & Vesna Bojicic-Dzelilovic July 2002

	2002	2004	Growth%
Albania	13	15	15%
Bosnia - Herzegovina	164	267	63%
Bulgaria	570	727	28%
Croatia	839	1.066	27%
fyROM	421	512	22%
Moldova	65	98	51%
Romania	519	763	47%
Serbia and Montenegro	60	70	17%
Total	2.651	3.518	33%

Source: A New Regional Agreement to Develop Trade in South Eastern Europe. Memo - Brussels, 19 December 2006

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SECURITY SECTOR REFORM IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE
- excerpt -

INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the Cold War and the inter-ethnic conflicts sprung in the Balkans after the fall of the iron curtain many changes have been undergone in South-East Europe (SEE), brining most of the countries in the area beyond recognition. They have all undertaken their own transition process to post-communist statehood characterized by free elections, market liberalisation and civil society empowerment. Moreover, the political will of the democratic governments, together with the commitment of the international community towards the region have made possible a decade without major conflicts and the achievement of impressive reforms at all levels of the state.

Being former Warsaw-Pact members or having suffered a decade of inter-ethnic conflicts, the Security Sector of SEE countries was one of the areas that needed a deeper reform and thus has been prioritized by the international community concentrating most of its efforts. The fall of the iron curtain left these countries with oversized, outdated and highly politicized armies that were totally unable to face post-Cold War threats and needed to be adapted to peacetime conditions and to a globalised world . Moreover, throughout most of its existence, the authoritarian regimes of these countries relied on the support of the armed and special police forces, which exercised almost exclusive control over the security sector; a tradition that continued in the 1990s in most of the republics resulting from the Yugoslav disintegration.

Since there is the common understanding among the international community that an unreformed security sector represents a decisive obstacle to any reform efforts aiming sustainable development, lasting democracy and peace[202], the reform of the security sector has been playing a central role in the reform plans for the region and has concentrated most of these reform efforts.

Great progress has been achieved and many reforms have been successfully undertaken since the reform plans were launched in the 1990s, but this process has nearly begun for most of these countries and there is still much to do. This report aims to analyse on the light of the new conceptualisations in the security sector the progress made by SEE countries in the security sector and verify how much progress they have achieved and whether they have successfully adapted their security systems to the new realities or further reforms are required.

NEW PERSPECTIVES IN THE SECURITY SECTOR

The fall of the iron curtain supposed a dramatic transformation in the strategic environment both in Europe and globally. The end of the bipolar system based on the East-West confrontation, by the disappearance of one of the parts, left armies of both opponents, oversized and all cold war military strategies and security patterns no longer useful. New perspectives in the security sector were then required to describe a reality that has been since then changing vertiginously.

At the end of the cold war the world was rapidly waken up of the optimistic dream of a new peaceful order by the eruption of a number of brutal and bloody armed conflicts in the Third World. Wars were also brought back to Europe after 50 with the Balkan conflicts that accompanied the disintegration of the Yugoslav Republic. These conflicts were the first practical demonstration of post-cold war threats and made also evident the inability and lack of means of the international community these new challenges which were not related with global military conflicts but with humanitarian crises, and ethnic and regional conflicts.[203]

The accelerating globalisation and the increasing of transnational phenomena has increased the importance of these 21st century threats, a wide range of new issues –such as ethnic conflicts, mass migration, regional destabilizations, failed states, organised crime, pollution, overpopulation and underdevelopment– that exceed state logic and transcend borders and that represent a threat to peace and security, in

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[202] Hänggi, H. and Tanner, F. (2005), p. 8

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[203] Predrag Simic 'Do the balkans exist?' in Triantaphyllou, Dimitrios (ed) (2001)

the same manner as traditional interstate military aggression.[204]

Finally, the 2001 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington were a practical demonstration of new global security challenges, consisting in asymmetric threats where large, territorial defence structures based on military muscle are no longer useful, but a multi-dimensional approach with close cooperation between military and civilian structures are required. Sceptical were made aware with these attacks that post-Cold War security threats might surely have a much lower destructive potential, but they are much more probable to occur within borders of western countries.

Post-cold war world appears then to be much more complex than ever before, and old security concepts based in equating security with military security and the protection of the state sovereignty are clearly insufficient. New conflicts are highly complex and spring from a variety of factors, occurring most of them within states, rather than between states. Hence since the fall of the iron curtain and simultaneously to the rapidly changing reality a wide range of new security concepts have been appearing in an attempt to describe these new security challenges and to provide governments with useful patterns on how to address 21st Century's threats.

Despite the huge literature on the topic, given the huge changes occurred in the post-cold war world in short lap of time, together with the increasingly accelerating process of globalisation, most of the terms have appeared quite recently and there is not unanimity, being most of the concepts still contested and suffering from a certain lack of definition.

Nonetheless new perspectives in the security sector share some common principles and understandings.

There is a general acceptance that the classical state security concept based mainly on national sovereignty and regarding primarily military security is no longer sufficient. New security concepts understand the necessity to break the traditional military monopole in the security sector, by taking into account a much wider range of issues affecting security. Non-military security dimension such as its political, economical, societal and environmental aspects entered as component parts of a new security agenda.

The necessity to promote a public political debate in security issues, highlighting the importance of civil control over the military is also a common feature of new security conceptualisations. The *Security Sector Governance* (SSG) concept aims to introduce the idea of governance into the security sector, it understands that given the security sector's condition of public good it should meet good governance practice as any other service provided by the state, being civilian supremacy and legislative accountability the most crucial elements of this approach.[205]

The proliferation of intrastate conflicts and the privatisation of conflicts in failing and underdeveloped states that the post-Cold War world observed made international community begin to recognise the need to protect individuals and social groups rather than states whose disfunctionality was often the primary cause of insecurity. The human being acquired then the focal standing in the security discourse to the detriment of the state. This idea has been

mainly developed under the *human security* concept which focuses security on the human dimension and has the provision of freedom from fear and freedom from want for all human beings as its main goal.[206]

And last but surely not least, the evidence that no sustainable development is possible in countries whose security sectors are the main source of insecurity or at least are not able to provide an effective security led to develop the Security Sector Reform (SSR) term. This concept focuses in the need to reform the security sector as a prerequisite in any development program and thus bridges two traditionally separated concepts such as security and development.

SECURITY SECTOR REFORM

The Security Sector Reform (SSR) is '*essentially aimed at the efficient and effective provision of state and human security within a framework of democratic governance*'.[207] Although it is still a contested concept and there is not a commonly accepted definition, SSR is the term of choice in this report as it is the concept most used in international discourses on security issues and its dimension includes the other concepts mentioned above.

SSR concept was first developed in the late 1990s for the development donor community to debate on reform in the transition countries of Central and Eastern Europe and has since then spread rapidly in international discourses exceeding its original meaning. As democratic efforts were being made in these countries, it was soon evident that without a reform on their security sectors to downsize former Warsaw-Pact military forces and to promote civil control

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[204] Axworthy, Lloyd (1999)

[205] Hänggi, H. and Tanner, F. (2005) p. 12

[206] Annan, Kofi (2000)

[207] Hänggi, H. and Tanner, F. (2005) p. 16

over the military no lasting democracies would be possible. In front of this evidence the donor community required then a concept that intellectually justified its new venture into the previously left aside security-related field.[208]

The increase of intrastate conflicts in the 1990s, specially the Balkan conflicts, made Western donor countries and multilateral development actors recognize the importance of the security-development nexus. SSR was embedded then into development assistance policies and programmes as a good opportunity for development cooperation, gaining thus practical relevance in the context of externally-assisted reconstruction of fragile and post-conflict states.

SSR is the recognition that security-related issues cannot be excluded from development strategies, and links security sector reforms and the promotion of development, particularly the reduction of poverty. It also aims to bring security in the centre of the political debate, highlighting the importance of civil control over the military and including all the actors playing a key role in security issues. This means taking into account non-military security aspects of the security such as the police and the judicial system, and all the other aspects affecting it, such as social, economical or environmental aspects.

By bridging together the previously separated international discourses of security policy, the promotion of peace and democracy, and development assistance,[209] SSR is an innovative and promising approach, while at the same time highly demanding in terms of its definition and implementation.[210]

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[208] Brzoska, Michael (2003), pp. 20-21
[209] Bryden, A. and Law, D (2007)
[210] Ibid

Key features of the SSR approach

- The SSR agenda favours a *holistic approach* to the provision of security, by providing a unique framework for not only defence reform, but other parts of the security sector such as intelligence, police and judicial reform, integrating all the partial reforms that were previously conducted as separate efforts.[211] Furthermore, it includes civil society actors and armed non-state actors as relevant elements of the security sector.[212]

- SSR has a strong *normative commitment* to consolidation of democracy, promotion of human rights and the implementation of the principles of good governance, by creating a culture of accountability and transparency.[213] It also aims at putting the security sector and all its components under democratic governance.

- SSR is necessarily *context-specific*. Each country constitutes a special case and hence no common model of SSR exists. However, three broad SSR contexts may be distinguished depending whether the economic development,[214] the nature of the political system or the specific security situation is the main reason of concern. Each development, post-authoritarian or post-conflict context[215] present different rationales and opportunities for reform[216] and determines the way SSR is approached and implemented.

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[211] Brzoska, Michael (2003), p. 16
[212] Hänggi, H.; Law, D.; Thompson, G.; et. all (2006), pp. 10-11
[213] Brzoska, Michael (2003), p. 16
[214] Hänggi, H.; Law, D.; Thompson, G.; et. all (2006), pp. 10-11
[215] Hänggi, H. and Tanner, F. (2005), pp. 16-17
[216] Hänggi, Heiner (2005)

- SSR agenda has a clear *commitment to development*, being reform planned and implemented in a way to maximise the contribution to development,[217] specially the reduction of poverty.

- Finally, SSR is necessarily a *long-term undertaking* and requires large resources.[218] Therefore, SSR tends to be externally assisted. This requires a strong commitment of international donors and creates simultaneously an inherent tension between the externally-supported nature of SSR and the need to develop local ownership being it one of the main difficulties of the SSR approach.[219]

SECURITY SECTOR REFORM IN SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE

South-Eastern Europe is probably the region that has had a greater influence in today new security concepts and represents the most important practical experience of externally assisted security sector reform. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Balkan conflicts the international community has showed a strong commitment to the region. The key providers and exporters of security in Europe, NATO and the EU, have been working with all South-eastern countries providing advice and financial support to their transition processes with special attention the security sector reform. Despite the huge differences existing among these countries, they all present some common features that determine their SSR programmes.

A first problem shared by all SEE countries is the lingering Soviet legacy that conditions the

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[217] Brzoska, Michael (2003), p. 16
[218] Hänggi, H.; Law, D.; Thompson, G.; et. all (2006), pp. 10-11
[219] Bryden, A. and Law, D (2007)

overall political environment. This environment is one of '…*conformity not initiative, control not delegation, compartmentalisation not cooperation, and secrecy not transparency*'.[220] Old military and secret police forces retain an enormous influence, democratic control over the use of force by state institutions is generally weak and the traditional national security systems' attitude, as being above rule of law, still dominates some of these countries.[221] This makes transparency and accountability in the security sector of South-eastern countries extremely difficult.

Moreover, the weakness of civil society makes the mobilisation of those social forces on whose behalf transparency and accountability are supposed to be exercised particularly complicated. Together with a weak civil society, all SEE countries to a larger or smaller extent require to establish impartial judiciaries and to strengthen legislatures in front of the executives.

Finally the communist legacy shows also its imprint on the style of governance. South-eastern governments tend to lack transparency and inclined to secretive manners are reluctant to divulge information in national sensitive issues and uncomfortable with public debate.[222]

However, all SEE countries also share the ambition to accede to the Euro-atlantic community, namely NATO and the EU. This has supposed an impressive reforming impetus for these countries, having all taken important steps to implement their SSR programmes.

Membership prospect in NATO and the EU has indeed acted as a catalyst for reform, facilitating the sometimes traumatic security sector restructuring efforts that otherwise would have hardly been undertaken. As a result of these reforming efforts, all SEE countries have at least started to negotiate with the EU and NATO being some already full members. However, despite these shared features seen above, the regional diversity makes it impossible to adopt a common approach to the different SSR engaged by these countries. Therefore, South-eastern countries are divided in this report following the EU established practice in two groups: the more advanced countries located in Eastern Balkans, Bulgaria and Romania, in one hand, and the post-conflict countries located in the Western Balkans, namely Albania and the former members of Yugoslavia, in the other.[223]

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[220] Law, David (2004), p. 6
[221] Petovar1, Tanja, 'Security System Reform in the Baltics, the Commonwealth of Independent States, and Southeast Europe' in DAC (2005), pp. 125-142
[222] Law, David (2004), p. 6

[223] Following the EU approach, Slovenia, being already an EU member, and Moldavia, due to geographical reasons and the unresolved border conflict in the Transnistrian region, are not included either as East or West Balkans countries.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN CONFLICT AND POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES
- excerpt -

The definition of conflict given by Thomas (1990) says: *"The conflict starts when an individual or group of persons realize that another individual or group of person are or will be cause of harm"* (e.g. an athletic competition, or a war between nations).

There is a big variety of conflicts (individual, group, national, international, religious etc.), but the most common are the ones generated by the competition for the limited resources.

Another frequent cause of competition is the proprietorship over the space: is my room too small in comparison to yours? Has my nation the right to have this territory?

The greatest contributor to sentiment of conflict is for sure the poor, and insufficient communication, it can generate marital conflict, group unrest, employee discontent and even international hostilities. If the ineffective communication is the generator of a conflict, the introduction of the mediator becomes the most important element of its resolution, for example the marriage counsellor, the courtroom judge, or the United Nations.

The term *International Conflict* was used only for sovereign nation-states, but in the last years also the inter-group and communal conflicts within one country are also defined by this term (e.g. Ireland, Kosovo, and Bosnia).

The sovereign of an ethnic group could concern the political, economic and religious structures of the country.

The policy of non-intervention in the internal conflicts started to be violated after the World War II and the public consciences of foreign states generated a very strong influence in the domestic conflict and in the strategy of intervention.

The identity of the groups is an important factor in the definition of conflict; the opponents attribute an identity to themselves and to the adversaries thereby creating an opposition between "us" and "them".
There are a lot of examples of this kind of identity, or "inter-group" conflicts, such as based on race, religious belonging, sex orientation or even gender. The identity is something which develops a young person into a mature one, and in the collective meaning extends to countries and ethnic communities.

The sense of solidarity of people belonging to the same group can stimulate a spirit of intervention. The feeling of insult appears when the group of people sharing the same identity is injured (e.g. after September 11th). Identity is created by experiences and the history; a usual factor of identity is the race, even if it might be not so important in some societies (e.g. in the UK, where the culture is based on the multiculturalism).

The identity is hence related to ethnic and cultural elements, and this subject is nowadays discussed a lot. It is based on shared values, beliefs and concerns, such as religion, political ideologies and culture, thus we have a multiple identity that can change in different times and circumstances.

In the age of the mass migration and of the Internet, cultural plurality is an irreversible fact; like it or dislike it, it's where we live, and the "dream" of monoculture is at best an unattainable, nostalgic fantasy, and at worst a life-threatening menace.

The concept of identity can thus create links between people, but it can also cause conflicts as the cultural pattern in a group that can push to mistrust another group and belittle theme. An ideologist group having racist behaviour regards the others as aliens, strangers, unequal and inherently inferior.

The sense of the revenge of the discriminated group grows, and it could feel threatened. Prevention of attack can threaten the other

group, hence we have self-perpetuating destructive struggles.

Leaders of the groups gain power arousing emotion against the other group, of which the Nazism against Jews is the biggest example one can imagine. On the other hand, there are methods of deconstruction of negative identity, changing ideologies approach that sustain the incomprehension.

The admission of the unjustice of the past can also contribute to solving the conflict, as was in the case of Pope John Paul II with regard to the Crusade.

Since identities tend to be very deep-rooted, this makes the conflict more difficult to resolve, and requires different resolution techniques to deal with.

One of the most important and relevant cause of conflict is the nationalism.
Graham Evans and Jeffrey Newnham give a good definition of nationalism: "*This term is used in two related senses. In the first usage, nationalism seeks to identify a behavioural entity - the nation - and thereafter to pursue certain political and cultural goals on behalf of it. In the second usage, nationalism is a sentiment of loyalty toward the nation which is shared by people.*"
Those who study the meanings of the State and the Nation know that there is a great distinction between these two terms.
The State can be defined as the institutions running a territory, and the nation as a psychological characteristic, with which the individuals identify themselves.

Some countries, like the United States and France, identify the nation and the state as a

"unique" and indivisible identity, while other states do a deep division in this regard: Scots not British, Quebecois not Canadian. And, the most tragic example of nationalism was the disintegration of Yugoslavia into six different states by a cruel war.

In this context, the nationalism is important for two reasons:
1 What we call patriotism like the one we observe in the United States, France or the United Kingdom. In these countries the state is legitimate to act according to the population and most of the citizen are ready to put on a uniform, if necessary.
2 The leader of the State can convince the citizen that they are abused by the other, or that the member of our state that is out beyond our borders, needs to be included in the state: "the Homeland".
But is it the emotion provoked by the leaders strong enough to justify for the atrocities caused during wars and violent conflicts?

The largest cases of nationalities which historically would like to be states are rather tenuous - as in Chechnya or Yugoslav republic - but the people who used army in those conflicts have the same deep emotion as those in all the other wars of nation-based ideology.
The recommendations which avoid this ideology are to try not to create this sentiment of "we versus them". Thus, we should not chose or elect leaders who are encouraging this slogan. By the way, it is very difficult to follow, if one thinks, for example, of the sentiment of the Americans after September 11th and how easy it was in that moment to choose as as leader someone who promotes the vengeance.

The concept of humiliation and depression is the one that can contribute to feed the sense of revenge, as was the case in the period of the World War II in Germany and the post-September 11th in the USA.

One of the main ways to promote the nationalism is the use of media, and if in the past its use was rather primitive, in the recent conflicts this method was used extensively, like in Serbia and in Rwanda.

The leaders can use the nationalism in different ways. There exist the leaders who really believe in the ideals they are professing - as the prejudices of Adolph Hitler, or the leaders who use this prejudice and discrimination as the means of obtaining the power - as Slobodan Milosevic.

When we talk about conflict, we usually mean destruction of structures, houses, bridges and other material elements, but we do not consider enough the less visible psychological destruction of the people involved in the war.
When trying to find peaceful solutions, we should think more about the irreversible trauma caused in the people, and the psychology of the conflict shall be considered at the same level with the economic and political topics.

Economic analysis explains the injustice and the inequity which generated the conflict, while the political analysis can explain the proper governance of the leaders. Psychological analysis combined with the other two analyses can explain deeply the problematic of the conflict and the possible peace solution.

Very important in the analysis is to study the history and all the steps which bring to this difficult situation. Trust and cooperation, which normally are the bases of the peace between nations, during the conflict are seriously compromised.

When there was not cooperation in the past and maybe also strong domination of one part in the history of the two nations, then in the present it might be more difficult for the 2nd and 3rd generations to create cooperation without a negative sentiment versus the others. Every part wants their own interests to be respected, and we can see it in the dynamics of the conflict, in the defence, and in the offensive.

The loss of trust is possible when the history doesn't permit to forgive past conflicts, and this sentiment can generate fear and insecurity; it is interesting also that sometimes the perception does not correspond to the realty.
The best way to avoid the sentiment generated by history is to create a new solid relationship built between the nations.

One of the famous theories of the psychology of conflict is called mirror image theory and explains why the perception of ourselves is so positive, and why the perception of the other is extremely negative.
The others are violent and aggressive, while our group is innocent and full of justice.

A way to avoid the perception of good versus evil would be to develop empathy, which is really difficult to find in the relations between countries. The perception is not a solid element in the human mind, and can change during the life. It could change positively when we learn to get acquainted with the other cultures and start the exchange, workgroups and trustful sentiments.

As mentioned above, most of the time the perceptions vary, the danger is that the negative perception can become reality when we take into account the theory of "self-fulfilling prophecy". According to it, when the perception of a concept is so strong then probably it will became the reality.

During the conflict a very important element is stress. However, the definition of stress can be ambiguous, as the perception of stress can change from person to person. Appearing on TV or doing extreme sports can be very stressing to some people, and completely stimulating to the others. Hence, in order to take off the ambiguity of the meaning of this concept we consider stress as the response to overload. It could be created from internal or external pressure, or could be developed from chronic or acute pressure.

When the stress becomes too strong, the psychological reaction is reflected in the dysfunctional physical and mental responses. The post-traumatic stress disorder can generate digestion problems, ulcers and heart disease.
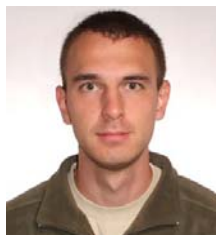
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PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT: A BASIS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
- excerpt -

Introduction

The earth's environment is changing under the influence of human activities. This is no recent phenomenon – for many hundreds, and even thousands of years man has deliberately changed the surrounding environment to serve his needs. As a result of human activities, our entire environment has been changed in some way. There have been many unwanted side-effects as a result of these changes; some were predictable, others came us surprise. In order to prevent the unwanted effects of environmental changes, in the recent decades efforts have been put in protecting the environment through sustainable development. This term integrates economical development, protection of environment and social needs of the people.

This report aims to make a review of the components of the environment, the changes that occurred under the influence of the development and to provide guidelines for achieving sustainable development – through protection of the natural environment. The report is organized in three chapters. The first chapter gives a sound basis of the Earth's natural resources. Description of the human activities, which are the source of environmental threats and changes, is given in the second chapter. The third chapter explains the term sustainable development and describes how sustainability can be reached in many fields without ignoring the economical development

and other needs of the people. At the end of the report there is a short epilogue and a list of used bibliography.

Earth's natural resources

Natural resources are nature's life support system, the pillars upon which all life is based. The Earth's natural resources are vital to the survival and development of the human population. They are a complex system of individual components that serve specific ecosystem functions and fulfill human's basic, economic and social needs. However, these resources are limited by the Earth's capability to renew them. The human exploitation can affect their sustainability if the rate of utilization is greater than their regenerative capacity. For instance, fossil fuels and raw materials, such as ores, can be replaced only in geological time-scales. Where the exploitation of the resource does not exceed its regeneration, the resource is described as renewable; otherwise, the resource is non-renewable. Freshwater, food, forests and harvesting products are renewable. Fossil fuels and metal ores are non renewable (Perman et al, 1996). Short descriptions of some of the main natural resources and their functions are as follows:

Waters. The Earth's salt water and fresh water appeared in the course of the history of the planet as a by-product of numerous chemical processes transforming rock matter at large

depths. Although the total amount of water on Earth is fixed, the physical state of the water is continuously changing between the three phases, circulating through the different water reservoirs (ocean, atmosphere, glaciers, rivers, lakes, soil moisture and groundwater). The presence of water in all three physical states is important for maintaining the Earth's climate within a stable state and for the stability of the Earth's ecosystems. It has been estimated that there is approximately 1360 million km^3 of water on the Earth, of which less than 0.7 percent is in the form of fresh water in lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater, the source of almost all drinking water for the human and terrestrial animal population of the planet.

The role water plays in the whole life on the Earth is irreplaceable. It is important for the full spectrum of ecosystems. Rivers support a complex range of habitats, which include the river channel with its mud, sand and vegetation. Rivers and lakes provide habitat not only for aquatic species but also for vegetation typical to riverside and small animals or aquatic birds, which depend on their vegetation. The oceans are a home to the greatest diversity of aquatic flora and fauna and they are large energy reservoir, which has direct role in making Earth's climate suitable for life.

Water is used by the people for domestic and industrial use, but also other requirements become increasingly important. These include agricultural irrigation, improved personal

hygiene, hydropower generation, as well as recreational purposes such as swimming, boating and fishing.

Soil. Soil is often seen as an inert medium, merely a support for human activities. However, soil is more than that: it is a dynamic, living system a matrix of organic and mineral constituents enclosing a network of voids and pores which contain liquids and gases. It is a complex system where crucial biochemical processes occur. In the top 30 cm of one hectare soil, there are on average 25 tones of soil organisms, that is 10 tones of bacteria and actinomycets, 10 tones of fungi, 4 tones of earthworms and 1 tone of other soil organisms such as springtails, mites, isopods, spiders, coleoptera, snails, mice, etc. The soil fauna and flora recycle organic matter to form humus and mix it with mineral material; they also create and maintain the airways within the soil that are essential to plant roots; some species found in soil control others that are pests to crops.

The soil buffers chemical substances as well as temperature; external inputs of chemicals such as acidifying compounds, are buffered by the basic cations (of sodium, calcium, potassium and magnesium) present in the soil and derived from the weathering of clay minerals. It acts as a sink in which pollutants accumulate until the buffer capacity is depleted. Also soil microorganisms are responsible for the decomposition of organic matter and the transformation of other substances such as sulphates and nitrates. In optimal conditions, more than 99 per cent of pesticides are transformed into non-toxic compounds within the plough layer of arable soils.

Soil is also a historical medium, concealing archaeological artifacts and paleontological materials, which are a unique source of historical information. Soil genesis is a long process – the formation of a layer of 30 cm of soil takes from 1000 to 10000 years. It is formed so slowly that soil can be considered as a non-renewable resource (EEA, 1995).

Animals. Animals include a large group of living things from insects and other invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians, fish, birds, and mammals. With over 2 million known species, and many more awaiting identification, animals are the most diverse forms of life on earth. They range in size from 30-m long whales to microscopic organisms only 0.05 mm long. They live in a vast range of habitats, from deserts and Arctic tundra to the deep-sea floor. Animals are the only living things that have evolved nervous systems and sense organs that monitor their surroundings.

Compared to plants, animals make up only a small part of the total mass of living matter on earth. Despite this, they play an important part in shaping and maintaining natural environments. Many habitats are directly influenced by the way animals live. Grasslands, for example, exist partly because grasses and grazing animals have evolved a close partnership, which prevents other plants from taking hold. Tropical forests also owe their existence to animals, because most of their trees rely on animals to distribute their pollen and seeds. Soil is partly the result of animal activity, because earthworms and other invertebrates help to break down dead remains and recycle the nutrients that they contain. Without its animal life, the soil would soon become compacted and infertile.

Few parts of the earth's surface are entirely devoid of animal life. Animals cannot survive in places where water is unavailable or permanently frozen, or where temperatures regularly exceed 55° C. However, in all habitats that lie between these extremes, animal life abounds. By preying on each other, animals also help to keep their own numbers in balance. This prevents abrupt population peaks and crashes and helps to give living systems a built-in stability. On a global scale, animals influence some of the nutrient cycles on which almost all life depends. They distribute essential mineral elements in their waste, and they help to replenish the atmosphere's carbon dioxide when they breathe. This carbon dioxide is then used by plants as they grow (Microsoft, 2004).

Forests. Forests are the world's air conditioners and the earth's blanket; without them world would be a bleak and inhospitable place. They are renewable resource and nature's gift to mankind. The forest eco-system consisting of a variety of flora and fauna is essential for environmental stability and food guaranty. Forests provide a great range of different benefits. Due to the large amount of biomass that characterizes this ecosystem, forests are able to create their own microclimate, influence general climatic conditions, improve air and water quality and soften the impacts of urban or industrial pollution on the environment.

Still cradles of life, forests, perform all kinds of practical services that benefit modern humans. They produce oxygen we breathe and suck up air pollution. Forests purify water and refill underground aquifers; in addition, they absorb rain and slow down floods and water runoff. Forests conserve soil, ameliorate climate and combat global warming and desertification.

Each part of the forest supports life. The soil is full of microbes, insects, and fungi, essential to recycling organic matter, and thus to the survival of all life on earth. Larger animals live on the forest floor, and the shrub and tree canopy layers are vital to birds. The extent of forested lands has made it possible for birds and animals to range freely in search of food and

appropriate climate; the resulting horizontal and vertical complexity of the forest and its density of life creates biodiversity.

Forests are also of substantial value for recreation and the sustainable maintenance of groundwater reserves, ensuring long-term water supply. Furthermore, they play a crucial role providing natural protection against erosion and avalanches in mountain terrains (U.S. Department of State, *Forests: Our Planet's Endangered Edens*).

Environmental changes and human development

Environmental change occurs as a result of both natural and human processes. Environmental systems and human activities contribute to environmental changes through the transformation and transportation of large quantities of energy and materials. Natural systems transform the sun's energy into living matter and cause changes by cycling materials through geological, biological, oceanic and atmospheric processes. Human activities, on the other hand, transform materials and energy into products and services to meet human needs and aspirations. Compared with natural processes, human transformation of materials and energy has for the most of the human history been relatively small. Nowadays, human activities are altering these flows at unprecedented scales. Since the industrial revolution, human activity has increased to such an extent that it must now be regarded as a significant perturbation of the critical biochemical cycles of the planet. Indeed, it can be argued that some activities, such as mining and agriculture, have initiated new cycles. The magnitude of human activity is global and the effects are vast.

The ways in which human activities interact with environmental processes are not always obvious. While, for instance, energy production and transportation are clearly related to carbon dioxide emissions and the greenhouse effect, the relationships between the state of the environment and human activities need to be systematically identified. By focusing on the main human activities this chapter examines the causes of changes in the environment.

Energy production. The activities related to energy use may be analyzed in three stages; the production of primary energy, its conversion to derived energy, and the sector in which fuels are finally consumed, or end use. The main factors which determine the quantity of energy consumed in any particular country include the number of people, their income level, the level and structure of production in the economy, energy efficiency and energy prices. At all stages in their cycle of use from extracting through processing to end use many energy types have potential environmental impacts to varying degrees. High levels of energy consumption are particularly associated with the rich countries where energy prices have been very low in the past. In 1990, the world gross energy consumption was about 8250 million tones of oil equivalent.

The environmental impacts caused by energy sources that have attracted most attention from policy makers in recent years are atmospheric – acid rain and global warming – both of which stem largely from the combustion of fossil fuels. Producing energy from fossil fuels is the most obvious source of environmental pressure, because several or all of the following steps are required, each having their own impacts: mining or extraction, processing, conversion, combustion and waste disposal. Combustion of fossil fuels results in emissions to the atmosphere of carbon dioxide (CO_2), sulphur dioxide (SO_2), nitrogen oxides (NOx) and dust, as well as metals and radionuclides. CO_2 is a major contributor to global warming, while SO_2 and NOx cause acid rain, and together with dust contribute to decrease the quality of the air.

Impacts from coal mining differ substantially between deep underground mining (which is visually less intrusive but expensive) and opencast mining (which results in major local impacts, both visually and on air quality). Existing or abandoned mines can be a source for heavy metals in the water and for soil contamination. The major impacts from oil are associated with accidental spillages during transportation both at sea and on land. The damage to coastal areas and marine life can be dramatic in the short term and may also have long-term consequences; clean-up is very expensive.

Industry. Industry is for most countries one of the main contributors to generating income. The purpose of industrial activities is primarily to manufacture goods for final consumption, and for the manufacture of other products. In meeting these demands, manufacturing industries have an impact on the environment, through processing of raw materials and their manufacture into finished products.

For many manufacturing sectors, it is the combustion of fuels that is used to generate energy, heat, steam or other power, which has the biggest impact on the environment. Carbon dioxide emissions arise from the combustion of fuels in industry, particularly the cement industry. Sulphur dioxide is emitted mainly from combustion of sulphur-containing fuels in power generation and from some industrial processes. Industry also contributes to carbon monoxide emissions, although the amounts involved are usually small.

Industry's impacts on the waters arise mainly from the discharge of process effluents

to watercourses, estuaries, and the sea. Most synthetic organic chemical pollution is from industrial sources, including chemical and petrochemical plants, refineries, pharmaceutical manufacturing, iron and steel plants, paper manufacture and food processing. Soil contamination

Emissions to air which are deposed nearby the site of production can occur soil contamination. In heavily industrialized regions, this will result in a general spread of common pollutants deposed from the atmosphere, such as soot, hydrocarbons and metals. Also, soil can be contaminated from discharges in waste water. Water can contain elevated concentrations of heavy metals and other contaminants, which are toxic for river sediments and riverside vegetation.

All branches of manufacturing industry contribute to some extent to environmental impacts through use of energy and raw materials. However, although manufacturing industry is a contributor to environmental pressures, it also has the capability to play major role in providing solutions to environmental problems. It can do this by developing new processes and machinery necessary for effective pollution abatement, by introducing new technologies and modified products, through better product quality, and by improving industrial productivity.

Transport. An efficient transport system is a crucial precondition for economic development and an asset in international competition. Personal mobility for work, study and leisure purposes is considered a key ingredient of modern life. With the overall human development, transport is also a major growth sector.

The benefits of transport, however, come at a high price. Since the 1970s, transport has become a major consumer of non-renewable energy sources. All power-driven transport consumes energy. Oil currently fulfils almost all transport energy needs. In the EU, road transport currently accounts for over 80 per cent of oil consumption of the transport sector. Thus, the demand for oil products by transport is largely responsible for the depletion of non-renewable resources, energy-related emissions and environmental impacts arising from the oil industry.

No mode of motorized transport is environmentally friendly. It is a major contributor to emissions of greenhouse gasses. The most important of these are emissions of CO_2, and to a lesser extent nitrous oxide (N_2O) and methane (CH_4). Road transport is currently the greatest offender, accounting for 80 per cent of CO_2 emissions from transport and 60 per cent of total nitrogen oxides emissions. However, emissions into the air from aircraft and shipping and operational discharges to water from shipping are also cause for concern.

Transport infrastructure covers an increasing amount of land to the virtual exclusion of other uses, cuts through ecosystems and spoils the view of natural scenery and historic monuments.

Agriculture. Agriculture is essentially a manipulation of ecosystems to produce or raise organic matter (crop plants or livestock) from the use of land. By employing various technologies and techniques like use of fertilizers, irrigation, mechanization, production can be maximized. At the same time other methods are used to minimize loss of crops such as, pests and weeds, including mechanical weeding, biological control and use of insecticides. The purpose of agriculture has traditionally and primarily been to meet the demand for agricultural products, mainly food, but also raw materials for fibre manufacture. Although the underlying purpose of agriculture has not changed, the nature and ways in which these demands have been met have changed over the last few decades. Changes have resulted from a variety of factors. These include: patterns of consumption of agricultural products; food distribution and processing; the progressive globalization of agricultural markets; and the influence of national and international agricultural policies.

Agriculture is a human activity that without doubt affects the environment. It contributes to a variety of emissions to the atmosphere including ammonia and methane. These emissions do not only contribute to damage to terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, but also represent an economic loss of valuable nitrogen fertilizers. Use of fertilizer can contribute to the greenhouse gas nitrous oxide (N_2O) emissions.

The main types of pollution from agricultural activities are from nitrates, pesticides and slurry. Rising nitrate levels threaten the quality of drinking water. The use of pesticides can lead to contamination of water bodies and residues in drinking water supplies. Accidental spills and leaks of materials high in organic matter into water can deprive aquatic organisms of oxygen and lead to serious loss of aquatic life. Non-accidental but steady releases of such materials which are also high in nutrients can lead to eutrophication.

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CHANGING CONCEPT OF SECURITY IN SEE
- excerpt -

Introduction

Several political changes, occurred in Southeast Europe (SEE) over the last years, give us the permission of thinking about a new security concept in the region. This report shows how the countries under our attention actually do not have any own security strategy, but rather an extra-European country, the United States (US), plays the most important role in this corner of Europe. It will be asserted that SEE keeps on being one of the most uncertain security region of the world because of reasons, namely related to the geographical proximity to Russia and to Iran, and to the growing distrust between some states of the European Union (EU) and the US. Yet the sorts of the SEE strategy could potentially change depending on the efficiency of the diplomacy herself.

An outlook through the years

The demise of the Soviet Union in 1991 produces irreversible effects in SEE, whose the most important one is the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. It was strongly wanted by Stalin, but created only two years after his death, in 1955. That alliance among communist countries from Eastern Europe was thought as the natural military contraposition to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), founded in San Francisco in 1949. Its end in 1991 shows the weakness of the Soviet Union and discloses altogether the weaknesses of the all Eastern

countries. It is from here that history for SEE changes dramatically.

Suddenly every country of the region discovers of not being protected from a great power. More importantly, every country faces the need of rebuilding democratic institutions, an economic system and a defensive asset. The fragility and the distrust by which the states carry out their policies bring to some wars reflecting oldest caveats, related to ethnical and religious differences. The war between Slovenia and Croatia in 1991 is somehow explained in these terms, so alike that in Bosnia Herzegovina in 1995. Nevertheless, the most tragic conflict is run in Kosovo in 1999, where the international diplomacy probably fails before the eyes of the world. The Serbian ethnical cleaning is as a base shame as the missile attacks (*erroneously*?) of NATO against the civil population in Kosovo. Even after seven years the end of the hostilities, SEE maintains his hotbeds such as the uncertainness of the independence of Kosovo, the arrogance of Serbia against the International Criminal Court on the Human Rights, and the instability in Bosnia Herzegovina in regard to the Srpska Republic.

After the tragic events of September 11th the SEE appears to belong increasingly to just a one family of societies, the Western one. In the same year of 2004, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia join NATO; Slovakia and Slovenia join the EU, too. Just since the January 1st of this year both Bulgaria and Romania have been

members of the EU. Something completely new in terms of strategy and more particularly, of history, changed: several former communist countries join the ex opposite to the Warsaw Pact and the EU. To add, during the last NATO Summit, ruled in November 2006 in Riga, Latvia, three countries, namely Albania, Croatia and the FYROM (Former ex-Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) were invited to join the Membership Action Plan (MAP), a step that NATO strictly requires to any eventual or future member of the Atlantic Council.

Among the lines: Opportunism

In terms of power politics, we could affirm that SEE has shown through these years an impeccable political opportunism. As politics, and specifically the *realpolitik* teaches, this word has no to sound in a negative sense. In fact, for opportunism, here, we mean that the SEE countries have faced with strategic choices of two types. First, by coming from a disastrous economy and by facing with lower supply, the countries of the region needed to look at the close EU as model or helper. To join the EU has represented a dream or a reason to compete with better internal policies in order to conquer Brussels. The final result has been an emulation among the countries and the attainment of the conviction to have a right behavior in the economic field. Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania, and hopefully Albania, Croatia and FYROM, could take advantage of a strong Euro and of

the mobility of both the work and capital supply.

Second, in terms of defense, SEE has chosen the US as model preferred, by joining NATO and giving Washington the permission to displace some military bases in the region, such as Cogalniceanu and Otopeni in Romania. The reason why the Americans are well viewed in the Balkans is no doubt their military supremacy in any field, conventional or not. Moreover, the countries of the region dislike Russia as a neighbor whose build-up is in any case worthy. Finally, these countries do not believe so much to the Europeans – they do not forget the lack of interest by England and France in Munich 1938 towards the Eastern European countries, and the lack of cohesion and force during the Yugoslav crisis during the 1990s. US appears to be more concrete and mainly more appropriate to confront with Russia.

On the whole we can say that SEE has the possibility of playing this opportunism, by using now this ally and then this other one. This condition gives it more attention and makes it a new place where great powers need to look with different eyes.

Who has a real new strategy: the case of the US

Perhaps it can appear to be unbelievable or simply "very strange" that who has a really concrete strategy in SEE is not an European country nor the EU herself, but the US. The EU, in fact, even though owns a policy of Security and Defense (PESD) and a Neighborhood Policy with regard to the SEE, does not have any perspective as great power in the Balkans; by contrast, the US does.

The American strategy in SEE relies on three pillars. First, the Balkans are geographically contiguous to the Middle East and to Iran, the principal threat to the US nuclear supremacy. The suspicious behavior of Tehran in

implementing a nuclear policy not only for civil goals on one hand, and the lack of collaboration with IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) officers on the other hand, give the Americans some reasons to stay ready for any change in the moves of the Iranians. In this context, SEE represents an ideal place where Americans could prevent any attack to Europe. The scheduled plan of constructing a higher specialized missile defense system in the region seems to have just this goal. But in general, the US Department of State is convinced that this new modern system is adequate to contrast any form of terrorism coming from the Middle East against Europe and the NATO members of the region. With his presence in the region, added to that one in Iraq and in Afghanistan, the US wants to show Tehran how much the Americans are strong worldwide and how many good allies it has.

Second, a reason no less important than the first one is represented by Russia. The Bush administration, mainly during the second legislature, has been facing with a change of direction in her policy towards Moscow: there is no Cold War clime, but almost. The Neocons have become more suspicious about the lines run by the President Putin, with regard to the oil and gas supplies management with Europeans, for instance; or with the retirement from the Multi-Conventional Arms Treaty. In her turn, Moscow responds that the Americans are doing as much as possible in order to get nerves on the Russians, firstly by inviting to join NATO former communist countries, and by deciding a Summit siege like Riga, Latvia, at the edge of Russia and without inviting the President Putin; secondly, by constructing a sophisticated missile defense system in the former Warsaw Pact countries. Moscow cannot tolerate all this at all. The US goal, in fact, is to give Russia the impression of being surrounded as the Americans are already present via NATO in the

Baltic countries, and in Turkey, Iraq, Afghanistan, Central Asia (Kirghizia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan have strong US contingents). To stay in SEE would mean to form a great barrier for any containment from Russia. Even though the US keeps on affirming that the new missile defense system is thought and related only for Iran, Moscow continues herself to not believe that, rightly. What the Americans want is better understandable if we look at a big world map: the large Russian boundary, both in Europe and in Asia, would be completely surrounded from the US which, in his turn, relying on the Central Asia bases, those in South Korea and in the Pacific Ocean, at the same time deserve a reason of deterrence for China as well.

Third, one part of the US strategy in SEE is strongly dominated by the wish of reasserting authority and unilateralism in confront of some EU countries. Washington does not forget that countries such as France, Germany and Spain, at the time of the Iraq war, were often hard with it and disagreed completely about that conflict. The Bush administration, grace to a good timing policy, too, has tried to anticipate the Europeans on any strategy in SEE, mainly by asserting that deploying an EU force in the region would mean to duplicate the role of NATO in Europe. The fact that some SEE countries join at the same time both NATO and the EU is a precious advantage to Washington, as it can continue to play this game of *divide et impera* towards those Europeans that dislike the American unilateralism. To have a strong strategy in SEE is essential to the US to do remember to the EU that it has remained in Europe, it has no gone home.

And the SEE countries? Pros and cons

Certainly, SEE has always represented during the history a crucial and strategic region to some great power: for the Turks and the Soviets

it was, for example. Nowadays, it seems that the US relies a similar attention on the Balkans and perhaps, a little bit more. But once said all this, what are the advantages and the disadvantages for the countries of the region?

On one hand, among the pros the SEE countries have the likelihood to access to an higher military technology, by giving the US the permission to set military bases. In terms of military asset, this is extremely important, mainly for countries whose build-up is old and not updated. Being part of NATO, also, gives the possibility to these countries to be part of an integrated force for the first time in their life. Moreover, this gives the feeling of joining a unique family where the head is the best military force of the world. No doubt that this reassures the security and the defense of the SEE countries.

Another pro is that the SEE countries could have a *certitude* and leave from a *limbo*, where probably they would have remained if they had been "conquered" from the Europeans. In this way, these countries have the certitude of being sheltered from the US, for any reason or inconvenience. It is like a silent treaty: so much is the region important to the US. By contrast,

the incertitude and the slowness by which the EU runs his external affairs, due to internal contrasts among the nations, do not give the SEE countries safety and security. In other words, the unilateralism and the determination of the US seem to be preferred, and this, in global politics, seems to be more efficient although no kind. This argument acquires more importance mainly when we talk about Russia, with which – the history teaches – you need to have much determination and certitude in dealing with. The Europeans, for instance, do no seem to have the same size and power than the Americans to deal with Moscow; therefore, the choice of field of SEE is undoubtedly correct.

On the other hand, one disadvantage could seem a paradox, but it is only a rude law of power politics: if the US is the right figure to assure security and defense in the region, however this brings to increasingly militarized levels of the region. Unfortunately, SEE is a dangerous and instable political crossroads, due to the geographical proximity both to Russia and Iran. Thus, even though the US represents a stable defender, it is never good or positive to have as neighbors those suspicious powers. On the whole, this fact will bring to an ongoing

militarization and nuclearization of the region, by making it more instable. If Berlin or Cuba represented the places of maximum sclerosis of the Cold War, SEE could represent the friction point of the new Cold War against Russia and Iran.

A second disadvantage is related to what the international political theorist, Robert Gilpin, calls the dependence from a third country. According to Gilpin, when a weak country decides to *bandwagoning* and to stay much time with a great power, this is not a positive fact for the rest of his life, because in terms of security and military bases that country will be always dependent on another country. And a country that depends on another one cannot be really autonomous and sovereign. This is the risk that the SEE countries are running: to depend always from the Americans and to not have any independence in carrying out some policies, even internal. The only exit strategy is the same that the Europeans took after the end of the Cold War: to take consciousness of his own power and economic independence. But this is strongly unlikely that could happen in a short future in SEE.

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EU INTEGRATION AND THE EFFECTS OF THE LAST ENLARGEMENT WAVE
- excerpt -

Introduction

After the second wave of integration to the European Union, Romania and Bulgaria, the candidates of the last wave have gathered a huge experience and have gone a long way due to the integration process. My study shall analyze Romania's performances and downsides in the last stages of the integration process and immediate after the integration.

Candidate countries for the EU membership can use the Romanian and Bulgarian example as a base for their negotiations process. I will try to point out in the end the few main points that any new candidate needs to consider.

1. Generic terms of the integration to the European Union

The EU is an organization meant to create a certain new order on the 'old continent', which was generated by the needs imposed by the other world powers and by the political, economical and social needs of the World.

In effect the EU wants to get to the point where it will act as a single state in resort with the other Great Powers and as the same single state when it comes to the rights and obligations of its citizens.

The idea of a Union of the states of Europe came as the result of the big success that the United States of America had from most points of view. The only problem with creating a European Union was the history of the peoples that were to compose it and their traditions and ambitions. The ideas was suggested only in the 1950's after the equilibrium of the forces of the World Powers was re-balanced although it is much older than that, some historians placing this idea even before the one in America, in the 17th century.

There is a major difference between the union in America and the one in Europe. The states that joined or will join the EU will have to pass through a number of extreme tests in economical, political and social terms. They had or will have to adopt certain standards and certain policies that are the same allover the EU.

When joining every European state must respect certain rules to the very point. Some of these rules refer to:

- the location of the country (the country must be located on the European continent). For this reason and none other the application of the state of Morocco was rejected, as it was located in Africa.
- The economical development: each country has to respect certain rules and must have a certain economical level of development. The inflation must not reach outside certain limits and at the same time the rate of unemployment must not go beyond certain boundaries. The economical criterion was one of the major reasons for which some of the applications of the countries from the former soviet block were rejected.
- The political environment. From this point of view things were interpreted in many ways. For example some of the applications of the states in the Balkan area were rejected due to the political instability of the area and not because of economical or social reasons. At the same time Turkey's application is stalled due to the political pressures that might be generated with the countries from the Middle East or with Russia. Internal politics has a major role to play as well in the application for joining the EU. Internal political instability, the existence and persistence of corruption and the political pressure imposed over the economy were a few of the reasons for which several countries from Eastern Europe were rejected as members initially.
- The social development. The countries that founded the European Union had reached a certain level of development from the social point of view. The standard of living, the rate of poverty, the strength of the middle class, were a few of the elements that had to be imposed to any candidates. This was a major problem when the countries that had been for

almost 50 years under the Iron Curtain wanted to join the EU.

All these factors were to be considered every time a new state wanted to join and to make things easier to control and in order to make the integration of new members less costly, several waves of integration were set. At the beginning of the new century, in 2002, a wave of integration brought to the union several countries that have been under the Iron Curtain and that have made big efforts to reach the terms imposed by the EU. 5 years later a new wave brought to the Union 2 more candidates (Romania and Bulgaria) that have not reached a satisfactory level in 2002 but managed to reach the standards by 2007.

II. The integration process of a candidate from the last wave: Romania

Romania is a clear example of a candidate that had to struggle to meet the demands imposed by the European Union. It failed to do so, together with Bulgaria on several previous occasions and thus as a member of the EU it is under intense observation from the European Commission.

As a former country placed under the communist influence, Romania faced major problems after the fall of the communist block in the early '90s. The same people that led the country before the revolution from December 1989 stared to lead it on the road of democracy. But there was a major, fundamental problem: the leaders had no experience under a democratic system. For this reason most of their first actions did not have a positive result and lead to big problems such as:

- the disappearance of the middle class
- an inexperienced generation of business people

- the growth of the level of poverty and the drop of the standard of living
- mass corruption within the public sector
- fiscal evasion due to the unfit rules
- the death of the major state owned companies
- a high rate of inflation
- an unsafe economical environment for investors.

Although the negotiations with the European Union have started in the early 90's, they have been finalized only in 2006, more than 10 years later.

Romania had a very rough integration process that became successful because of the constant supervision from the European forums in charge of economics, politics and social welfare. By adopting certain rules that have been imposed by the EU, Romania became in time a country with the required standards for being accepted as a member in 2007.

As an ex-communist country Romania had a big problem regarding the leadership: it was lead by the same people that lead it before the 1989 revolution, but in a different order. Since most of the government officials were members from the high ranks of the former Communist Party, they had close to none experience in leading a country towards market economy. This later in the 1990's generated a serious of problems:

- the rise of corruption within the government
- untrained and un-experienced people came to manage state's property
- the fall of the main industrial companies owned by the state due to poor management.
- The fall of the main social services (pensions, health insurance, etc)
- The degradation of the medical system.

When negotiations started between Romania and the EU at the beginning of the 90's the EU officials were too optimistic and they considered that Romania and Bulgaria would be able to join the EU before the year 2000. Events have shown that due to the un-experienced governments that came to power in both Romania and Bulgaria, things have progressed quite slowly and they would have stalled if it hadn't been for some serious pressures from the officials in Brussels.

Special evaluations from the EU Commission took place in the two candidate countries and special appointed people came to monitor the progress of the negotiations. The also had to send periodically reports to Brussels regarding the state of the negotiations. These reports were very important as several bad reports could have lead to the termination of the negotiations and the instant rejection of the candidate country.

In the fall of 2006 following a very rushed completion of the negotiations in both candidate countries, the EU Commission announced that both Bulgaria and Romania would be invited to join the European Union in January 2007 as the whole integration process was finally successfully ended.

January 2007 brought up some serious facts that question the whole idea of European Union:

In the first instance, although the official voices congratulated Romania and Bulgaria, most Western Europeans were not happy with the two new members and some of them showed signs of concern. This reaction is explicable because of the bad reputation that the Romanians and Bulgarians had in the West. Most of the concerns were about the rise of the criminality rate, the illegal labor and prostitution. At the same time people from the older member countries feared that the weak economies of the two member states will draw back the European

Economy and will destabilize the general balance.

Romanians and Bulgarians although they were now called European citizens they had several restrictions unlike the other older members. For instance they did not have the free access on the labor markets and they were restricted to work in most of the Western European countries. Not even Italy or Spain raised the work restrictions even though millions of Romanian and Bulgarian nationals work there more or less legal generating huge profits for those countries economies.

2007 is also a critical year for the two countries as any sign of dropping out of line and losing the stability from the economical or political and social points of view may trigger a clause which in the worst instance may mean the loss of the member status.

With almost three thirds of the year gone, Romania seems to show some slight signs of political instability, but in general terms all factors show that for the moment there is no danger for the clause to be triggered.

III. Romania 8 months before the integration in the European Union

As this report is based on the Romanian case we shall analyze the status of this country 8 months before January 2007, the date when Romania was invited to join the EU together with Bulgaria. We shall try an analysis from three important points of view: economic, social and political.

Considering the economical point of view we can say that Romania has gone ahead of Bulgaria in terms of net growth average wages, foreign and local investments and in terms of economical reforms. 8 months before the integration, Romania had de-centralized the main industries that have been taken over from the state and

the government by several foreign companies. We can show the following examples:

- The Dacia car manufacturer has been bought by Renault in 1999
- The national telephone corporation was taken over by a Greek corporation, OTE
- The national Oil company was bought by OMV, the Austrian group
- The gas and electricity national companies were taken over by the Germans at E-on

This aspect was one of the hidden conditions imposed by the EU for Romania.

The positive signs showed by Romania's economy several months before the integration have triggered a large number of foreign investments in several fields:

- Real Estate investments have proven to be most successful as property value had a constant growth over the last few consecutive years. Also specialists predicted a continues growth for the next few years as well.
- Oil Industry began very attractive for new corporations and this resulted in the taking over of Rompetrol by a big corporation from Kazahstan in September 2007.
- Clothing industry received major investments especially from the internal financial markets.
- IT was also a major sector for foreign investments within the last few months before the integration.
  Romania's status as a candidate country can be analyzed from the social point of view as well. With a continuous growth between the upper classes and the middle class, but with a growing middle class, Romania was beginning to reach the social structure of the Western countries. Still some of the classes were left behind. I'm referring to the old people that had to live from their

pensions. With a lack of a private pensions system the old people had to rely on the state pension that was significantly low and kept about 4 million people in a deep state of poverty. Politically we can discuss of 2 phases that occurred in the 8 months before the integration:

- a rush to end negotiations with the EU in time
- reorganizing the government to ensure a political stability for the big event.

The first stage was characterized by a very big effort to meet all demands and to end all negotiations in time. It was a real struggle as it proved to be a very hard work to apply the new European structure to the justice system and to the internal administration system. Corruption was very hard to eliminate, new laws were very hard to put into practice, and the changes in the internal administration were not welcomed by the people which found them quite suspicious.

The second phase regarded the creation of a stabile political environment. It was clear that a lot of tensions became present between the Prime Minister and the President and that the PNL-PD Alliance that won the elections in 2004 was a few moments from collapsing. It was also clear that the minorities and their representatives requested huge benefits and reported a lot of problems in the Romanian constitution.

The solving of all these problems was achieved by canceling the political arguments between the parties leading the government and the president, on one side, and intensive work to calm down the minorities.

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MONEY LAUNDERING THROUGH THE REAL ESTATE MARKET IN MACEDONIA
- excerpt -

Destruction and Reconstruction of the Macedonian's Foreign Market

From a macroeconomic point of view, the Balkan Crisis meant the fall of the whole East Economic System. Whereas many enterprises simply went bankruptcy, others lost the even weak links they had to the Western European Markets. The State itself found no funding to make its basis social mechanisms properly work.

The so called "Stability Pact", created among the four States constituting the former Yugoslavia under the supervision of the NATO Forces had –among the necessary target to avoid further military crises and internal fights – the absolute need to "create vibrant market economies based on sound macroeconomic policies"[224]

Money was necessary for economic and politic stability , and money could only come from

- private entities

- public aids.

   Whereas public aids had to be something transitory (themselves at risk of being exploited by OC groups), the private market forces were the only ones to rely onto in the future.

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[224] Appendix V – TheStability Pact – pag.87 – in General Accounting Office of the US – Balkans Security – April 2000.

Privatization and the Real Estate.

Private Entities wouldn't have funded the Macedonian Economy for charity reasons. Something was needed to awake the economic system with foreign capital and business inflows. The existing businesses - coming from a state-owned era – wouldn't have been able to compete with the Western Europe Market; machines and knowledge were too obsolete to fill the technological gap created in more than 40 years.

Furthermore, due to the starting low prices of lands and work, foreign Investors would have invaded the country in any case. The best choice was the one to take advantage from this kind of invasion. Investors had not to be allowed to be spoilers and conquerors only. They had to be real investors, carrying workplaces, skills and taxes to Macedonia. Still, the market would have to be a free one to comply with the European Standards; protection measures and differences among residents and foreigners wouldn't be allowed for a period but a transition one.

A Fast privatization of state-owned Firms and Enterprises was performed , aimed at reaching the EU and International Institutions Access Targets[225] other than the free economy

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[225] "The process of privatization had progressed substantially, and the rate of privatized companies

surviving standards. Within such an operation, a major role was played by the Real Estate.

Real Estate is defined as any kind of immovable property, land and fixed attachments to the land (like houses, factories, etc…), there including the eventual commercial and touristic activities there performed (productions, restaurants, hotels, casinos, etc…).

The economic background of the Real Estate: foreign investors more than welcome.

Real Estate was one of the mainstream of the perspective renaissance of Macedonian Economy, so that its attack by foreign investors had to be facilitated by a financial and fiscal point of view, too. "Property tax was not paid on business premises… The sales tax on real estate and rights was proportional and amounted to 3 per cent of the established market value. "[226] Buying Real Estate – especially Commercial Real Estate – meant putting money, in a stable way, in Macedonia. A Real Estate is something you have the title to own, and you cannot take it

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had reached 90 per cent in early 2000." – World Trade Organization - Working Party on the Accession of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (report Of) - WT/ACC/807/27 26 September 2002 – pagg.1-2
[226] Working Party – cit. – pag.3

out the State so easily as you would do with a bank account.

Anybody establishing a new business in Macedonia had to be helped[227], and the fact that the ownership of a Real Estate wouldn't be definitive thing for foreigners [228] wasn't going to be a serious problem for foreign investors, nor something uneasy to overcome[229]. Any foreign Buyer of a commercial building (or a residential, or a touristic one) was a perspective tax payer, a perspective employer, a perspective further buyer of many more activities and houses.

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[227] "Incentives to attract foreign investment included tariff exemptions on imported capital equipment and spare parts retained by the investor for minimum five years, and a three-year tax holiday on the profits generated by foreign capital (as long as the exempted profits would not exceed the initial foreign equity contribution). " – Working Party – cit. –pag.6

[228] "Parliament had enacted a new Law on Construction Land in April 2001 (Official Gazette No. 53/01). Construction land - identified in accordance with spatial or urban development plans - and anything situated on or under its surface, or permanently related to it, could be owned by the State and domestic legal entities and natural persons (Article 6). The rights of foreign natural and legal persons were regulated in accordance with Articles 243 to 252 of the Law on Ownership and Other Real Rights (Official Gazette No. 18/2001). Foreigners were generally not entitled to own real estate in FYROM, but could be granted access - subject to reciprocity - under long-term (maximum 99 year) leases. "- Working Party – cit. – pag.6

[229] ". ... Legal entities with mixed (domestic/foreign) ownership could own real estate, including construction land, provided the legal entity was registered in FYROM. Land owned by the State could be made available to domestic or foreign natural and legal persons under concessions granted by public tender." – Working Party – cit. – pag.6

Many starving former National Enterprise, their buildings, along with houses (that are, anyway, cheaper being intended for many more and fragmented investors) needed fresh foreign capital to survive and to allow their local employers continue being such. National annual wages had been furthermore lowered by the early post-socialist State in order to reduce inflation[230]; an effective privatization was – along with the opening of a real free market area – the only solution to allow foreign capital enter again, after the collapse of the old market system.

"Tax incentives[231] were provided for foreign investments"[232] in a downwards scale, especially when related to profit taxes, the ones we're more interested in.[233] This "red carpet" policy performed towards foreign investors – something that sometimes forgives them fiscal irregularities, too – isn't "per se" something meaning that money launderers are entering the arena. Speculations only can be performed, for example, without the use of dirty money.

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[230] "Wage restraint, as an integral part of macroeconomic policy, had been applied to control private consumption and hold down inflation. The Law on Payment of Salaries (Official Gazette Nos. 70/94, 62/95 and 33/97) had "frozen" salaries in part-privatized companies. " – Working Party – cit. pag.2

[231] "Macedonia has recently become a tax heaven in Europe. The new Government introduced a flat tax of 10% for corporate and personal income." – Taxes – in Agency For Foreign Investments of the Republic of Macedonia -2007

[232] Working Party – cit. – pag.3

[233] 4.2 Profit Taxes – pag.46 – in PriceWaterHouseCoopers – Doing Business and Investing in Macedonia – 2006/2007

WEAKNESSES, THE REAL ESTATE IS A SECTOR ALWAYS AT RISK. [234]

According to an useful practical classification made by McDonell[235], a successful money laundering procedure enables the criminal to:

- Remove or distance themselves from the criminal activity generating the profits, thus making it more difficult to prosecute key organizers;
- Distance profits from the criminal activity – to prevent from being confiscated if the criminal is caught
- Enjoy the benefits of the profits without bringing attention to themselves, and
- Reinvest the profits in future criminal activity or in legitimate business.

"Drug Traffickers and other criminals need houses to live in and this fact alone means that the proceeds of crime are likely to be laundered, however unwittingly, through the client accounts of lawyers"[236]. But, Real Estate has often

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[234] McDonell, Rick – Money Laundering Methodologies and International and Regional Countermeasures – presented at the conference "Gambling, Technology and Society : Regulatory Challenges for the 21st Century – Sidney – 7-8 May 1998 - Pag.6

[235] McDonell, Rick – Money Laundering Methodologies and International and Regional Counter-Measures - presented at the conference "Gambling, Technology and Society : Regulatory Challenges for the 21st Century – Sidney – 7-8 May 1998 - Pag.6

[236] Bell, R.E. – The Prosecution of Lawyers for Money Laundering Offences – Journal of money Laundering Control – Vol 6 – Nr.1 – 2002 – pag.17

been seen as just one of the usual many "sterile"[237] means of channelling dirty money coming from other predicate crimes[238].

Money Laundering through the Real Estate Sector is one of the crimes that "taint and corrupt the free market system. They mix legal and illegal methods and legal and illegal products in all phases of commercial activity"[239] and , surprisingly, its violence is growing. Although experts "claim that more than 200.000 occupational deaths occur each year and that 'corporate violence' annually kills and injures more people than all street crimes combined" [240] its identification like an "occupational crime"[241] or a "corporate crime"[242]

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[237] "As can be seen from the various money-laundering mechanism typologies reports, money laundered
through channels other than financial institutions is often placed in what are known as "sterile" investments, or investments that do not generate additional productivity for the broader economy. Real estate is the foremost example of such sterile investments;" -
[238] See, for example : Reuter, Peter – Truman, Edwin M. - Chasing Dirty Money: The Fight Against Money Laundering – Institute for International Economics – 2005 and FIU's in action – 100 cases from the Egmont Group" – 2000 where the case studies involving the Real Estate remain just boxed case studies.
[239] Siegel, Larry - "Criminology" – Thompson Wadsworth – 2006 – pag.315
[240] Siegel, Larry - "Criminology" – Thompson Wadsworth – 2006 – pag.315
[241] "Occupational Crimes are committed in the course of one's employment." – Hunter, Ronald D. – Dantzker, Mark L. – Crime and Criminality : Causes

Uneasy to Detect   : Property is not registered.

Macedonia has a working Real Estate Cadastre Project in development.[243] The speed of a purchase and resale of a Real Estate Property cannot be compared with the time still needed to register the sale itself and eventual mortgages[244]. Such a time-gap is easily exploited to perform any kind of fraud in Real

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and Consequences – Criminal Justice Press – Monsey NY - pag.13 **www.criminaljusticepress.com**
[242] "Corporate crimes are criminal activities conducted during the course of doing business or that result from inappropriate business practices" – Hagan, Frank - Introduction to Criminology – Nelson-Hall Publishers - 1998
[243] "In 1986, according to the *Law of survey, cadastre and real estate registration rights,* the process of establishing the *real estate cadastre* started. Before the process began, the surveying and making cadastral maps had to be completed. Today, the real estate cadastre is established on 44% of the territory ." – Dimova, Sonja –Mitrevska, Tatjana - Types of registration of the land in the Cadastre of R. Macedonia - 4TH International Conference Recent Problems in Geodesy and Related Fields with International Importance -*February 28 - March 2, 2007, Inter Expo Centre, Sofia, Bulgaria – pag.4*
[244] "**We will strengthen our legal system, property rights, and contract enforcement**. At present, about 50 percent of the territory in Macedonia is covered by the Real Estate Registry, while the remaining 50 percent is still covered by the Land Cadastre. In order to resolve this problem, we will expand the coverage of the Unique Real Estate Registry (Cadastre) to 68 percent by end-2007, and aim to complete it by end-2008." – pag.12 – to the IMF - Nikola Gruevski (Prime Minister) – Zoran Stavreski (Deputy Prime Minister) - **Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia:** Letter of Intent, and Technical Memorandum of Understanding - April 10, 2007

Estate Business. Whereas the registration of a new business activity is really fast, the State survey of who owns what is incredibly slower. Any kind of fake identity can so be used, since a real estate purchase is finalized in front of a notary only, whereas its registration is an ex-post procedure.

Risk of Social Approbation thanks to the allowing of working places.

Money Launderers within the Real Estate Sector find – while investing money in Constructions and Real Property Markets – a global social agreement. Many former depressed areas are constellated with main "artificial" activities (and that's a sign of something strange) that led to the creation of work places and satellite activities.

Risk of political slavery and funding. Risk of Corruption

Whereas money is laundered in the Real Estate and Business Market, the launderers can obtain indirectly (so, without penetrating the political system) a political power. Other than tax payers, they support the whole economy of former abandoned areas;
- Officers can be paid in order to issue a building permit

- Politicians can depend on launderers in obtaining the support of potential electors. If an Hotel is, for example, built in a poor area, people living there can find a workplace and push the election of the politician who promised that.

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RELIGION AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN MACEDONIA
- excerpt -

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance (UN Declaration of Human Rights: Article 18).

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. (UN Declaration of Human Rights: Article 19).

Macedonia is ethnically diverse country. Total population is 2,022,547 in year 2002. The results in year 2002 showed the population consisted of 64.18% ethnic Macedonians, 25.17% ethnic Albanians, 3.75% ethnic Turks, 2.66% ethnic Roma, 1.7 % ethnic Serbs and some other small communities.[1]The country has two major religions: Orthodox Christianity and Islam.

Nominally, approximately 66 percent of the population is Macedonian Orthodox, approximately 30 percent is Muslim, approximately 1 percent is Roman Catholic, and approximately 3 percent is of other faiths. There is also a small Jewish community in Skopje.[2]

The European Convention on Human Rights was ratified by the Republic of Macedonia in 1997, an in the following period Macedonia also ratified the protocols of the Convention.

There is a special form of protection of the human and civil rights and freedoms which are related to freedom of belief, conscience, thought and public expression of thought, political association and the protection from discrimination based on gender, race, religious, national, social and political background. Protection of these rights can be sought directly from the Constitutional court of the Republic of Macedonia.

The XIX Amendment was brought in 2003 and with it the freedom and privacy of letters and all other forms of communication is guaranteed. According to this amendment this right can be derogated only by a court decision and through a procedure regulated by law. The problem is that the law has not been brought yet and this right is continually violated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the name of realizing certain activities without any mode of control or protection from abuse.[3]

The freedom of thought, conscience and religion is a weak link in the implementation of the Convention in the legislation of the Republic of Macedonia. The law on religious communities and groups (brought in 1997) did not even come close to ensure either the practicing or protection of this right. Right after the law was brought, sever articles were brought in front of the Constitutional court of the Republic of Macedonia, which ruled positively in most of the cases and annulled the articles. Unfortunately it did not annul article 8 from this law according to which for one denomination there can be only one religious community. This decision is extremely problematic (particularly in the absence of a definition of the term denomination and under conditions of the open favouritism shown to the Macedonian Orthodox Church as a

state accepted church). From 1998 the law exists in this reduced form with which there is much room for action by the state (particularly via the Committee for relations with the religious groups and communities, but also via other state organs) and the making of ad hoc decisions in specific cases.[3]

Armed conflifct in 2001 forced sides to sign the Ohrid Framework Agreement. It was signed on 13 august 2001 as the peacefull solution. But the political and human rights in the Republic of Macedonia was determined in 2003 by the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement. It included a complex system of voting in the parliament, quantitative standards for the representation of minorities in the administration and public services, and changes in the use of the minority languages. [1]

IHF based on on the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia, Annual Report on the Situation of Human Rights in the Republic of Macedonia in 2003 says that the authorities in power used the Ohrid Agreement as an excuse not to apply and indeed to violate laws regarding criteria for employment in the administration, changes to the State Judicial Council and appointment of Constitutional Court judges. Instead of the necessary reform in the judiciary, state administration, army and police, personnel changes presented to the public as reforms resulted in further violations and constraints of human rights and freedoms. Furthermore, the practice of

radicalization of opposition parties continued, and these continued to call for an early election.[1]

Freedom of Expression and the Media

The constitutional provision for religious freedom is refined further in the 1997 Law on Religious Communities and Religious Groups. This law designates the Macedonian Orthodox Church, the Islamic community, the Roman Catholic Church, the Jewish community, and the Methodist Church as religious communities, and all other religions as religious groups. However, there is no legal differentiation between religious communities and groups. In 1999, the Constitutional Court struck down several provisions of the 1997 law, and in practice the remaining provisions are not enforced consistently.[1]

Journalists most often took sides with the defenders of the Macedonian or Albanian cause.
The greatest problem was the violation of the presumption of innocence by or through the media and several cases of ill-treatment of journalists by the police were registered in year 2003.

Large number of court proceedings was instituted against journalists. According to data in the last three years, 125 criminal charges were brought against journalists.[1]
IHS in it`s report give many exemples of charges brought against journalists. In November 2003, the Skopje I First Instance Court fined Sonja Kramarska with

20,000 denars (€333) for a commentary in which she used the word "liar" to describe Stojan Andov, a member of parliament. Explaining the verdict, the court stated that the fine was prescribed as a correctional measure.
Zoran Markozanov, editor at the Zum weekly magazine was sentenced to a three month prison sentence, two years suspended for the same crime of libel.
Bobi Siljanovski, a journalist for Radio Bitola and correspondent for the Macedonian Radio & Television and Start, a weekly magazine, was sentenced to 5 months in prison with a one year suspended sentence and was fined 21,00 denars (€350) for the crime of libel.[1]

SEEMO in 2004 was deeply concerned about restrictions on the free movement of journalists in the Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). "They were followed by a group of journalists working for print and electronic media in Skopje. After entering the village, the journalists reported seeing some 200 men in black uniforms. Before the talks started, the journalists were forced to leave Kondovo and were told they would be given statements by the participants later."[6]

Freedom of Religion
The law clearly favors "traditional" religions and discriminates against religious minorities.
According to a high-ranking Orthodox priest interviewed by the Macedonian daily, "Dnevnik," his church has asked to be granted the status of a "national church." It also wants a privileged status that

would, for example, exempt it from all taxes; allow it to give religious instruction in schools; exempt its priests from military service and other public duties that are contrary to their calling; provide it with financial assistance from the state budget; and allow it to conduct religious sermons in the army, hospitals and jails.According to the government Commission for Religious Communities and Religious Groups, there were 25 religious communities and groups.

Macedonia's religion law adopted in July 1997 still contains many restrictions on free religious practice. Constitutional Court decision in 1998 and 1999 removed the most restrictive provisions. It recognised five faiths - the Macedonian Orthodox Church, the Islamic Community, the Catholic Church, the Jewish Community and the Methodist Church - as "religious communities", while others are deemed "religious groups" with lower status.[1]

One controversial provision in the current law and in earlier drafts of the new law is that only one religious denomination of any one faith can get legal status – which has allowed the government to deny legal status to the Serbian Orthodox Church's Ohrid Archdiocese in the country and to the Bektashi Community (which has no separate legal existence from the Islamic Community). Asked about whether this provision will be included or removed, Mucunski refused absolutely to comment. "At this stage I can't comment on the working text as it might change. The legislative process hasn't started yet." The

only provision in the draft text he revealed was that registration of religious communities is set to be transferred to the courts.[4]

The Constitution guaranteed separation of church and state. Article 19 of the Constitution was amended on the basis of the Ohrid Framework Agreement and mentioned five religious communities by name; the others were guaranteed equal status. In practice, however, the smaller religious communities were under threat and unable to conduct religious activities freely.
There were open attacks against religious people and facilities and in Strumica, Orthodox priests and their followers prevented the laying of the foundation of a Catholic Church. The construction of a Jehovah's Witnesses facility in Prilep was prevented a similar manner.[4]

According to the law, foreigners must obtain a special permit before being allowed to give a religious lecture or service. The establishment of Orthodox Churches in which services would be conducted in a language other than Macedonian, such as in Vlach, Serbian or Greek, was prohibited.[4]

Themembers of the Serbian Orthodox Church was presecuted and they were banned from entering Macedonia.
The Helsinki Committee of Human Rights in Macedonia accused the state of restricting the right and freedom of religion in the case of the former bishop of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, Jovan

Vraniskovski. Also, the Committee claims that the courts jeopardized their independence and objectivity.[7]

The sentencing of Jovan Vraniskovski to a term in prison for his idea of establishing a parallel orthodox church in Macedonia, on the pretext of "provoking religious hatred" is another demonstration of the non-secular character of the Macedonian state, says the Committee.[7]

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EXPLORING THE STAKEHOLDERS IN MACEDONIA'S BID FOR NATO MEMBERSHIP
- excerpt -

INTRODUCTION

Over the last seven years Macedonia has been experiencing significant changes and developments towards a market economy based democracy, military reform and overall country stability. In this context, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) has been playing different roles – from the military missions in the country during 2001, to the international security forum in 2007 (for an overview of NATO's engagement with Macedonia from 2001 until present day see Appendix 1). Evidently, there are many themes that could be discussed with regards to NATO-Macedonia relations; however, due to the scope of this report only few of them will be touched upon here.

The first chapter of this report answers the question of why Macedonia wants to join NATO. First, NATO guarantees security and military support, which is particularly important to Macedonia in light of its relatively unstable borders. Secondly, NATO conditionality means that member countries have demonstrated that they are military, politically and economically stable, which gives credentials for their political

maturity and prestige in the international arena.

The second chapter looks at NATO's post 9/11 agenda and the role of US, as a dominant Alliance member, within that, focusing specifically on NATO's approach to South East European enlargement. In this context, Macedonian geopolitical significance is situated within the Alliance's (and the US) search for a new regional centre of operational support in the Middle East and Central Asia. Furthermore, NATO enlargement is indicative of the Alliance's determination to improve the scope of it's legitimacy within the Euro-Atlantic area.

The final chapter of this report discusses Macedonia's current steps towards NATO membership. Although there is political consensus and a strong will in Macedonia to join Euro-Atlantic institutions, the country still has to implement some of the necessary reforms before the important NATO Summit in Bucharest.

WHY DOES MACEDONIA WANT TO JOIN NATO?

Over the last seven years Macedonia has been experiencing significant changes beginning with instability and civil war throughout 2001 to being a host country

for prestigious international meetings, such as the II Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council Security Forum. It can be stated that the country, once seen as Europe's backyard, now not only has its foot on the European Unions' (EU) door but it also has very good prospects of joining NATO next year. NATO membership has been one of the country's top priorities since its independence in the early 1990s. Therefore, one of the key questions this chapter intends to answer is why Macedonia wants to join NATO?

There are many possible reasons for why Macedonia would like to become a NATO member. Firstly, the Alliance guarantees military support and protection for its members and this is a huge benefit for a small country such as Macedonia, which has relatively unstable borders (Mitropolitski 2006). Indeed, Macedonian president Branko Crvenkovski himself stated just a few months ago, during the II Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council Security Forum in June 2007, that 'Kosovo directly affects the security and stability of our region' (Ames 2007). Furthermore, Stefanova suggests, that as long as Serbia is not fully participating in the international arena there will be negative consequences for the Balkan region (Stefanova 2005:48).

Therefore, Serbia is influencing the inter-ethnic relations in Kosovo and Macedonia, and as a result there is danger of a repeat of the 2001 ethnic conflict in Macedonia (Stefanova 2005:49). In the words of some political observers the situation in Macedonia can be described as a 'peace that never was' (Ridderbusch 2001). Nenad Sebek, director of the Centre for Democracy and Reconciliation in Salonika thinks that 'this is a part of the world where even the moderates are more extreme than they pretend to be' (The Economist 2004).

Secondly, NATO membership will boost Macedonia's status in the international arena. All countries wishing to join the Alliance must not only agree with what is stated in the 1949 Washington Treaty, but they must also contribute to the Euro-Atlantic security area and meet certain military, political and economic criteria. According to Baker there are at least 5 explicit and 2 implicit criteria for admission (2002:96). The main 5 goals are as follows:

- Functioning democracy based on a market economy;
- Respect of minorities;
- Good relations with neighbour states;
- Military contribution to the Alliance;
- Commitment to democratic civil-military relations (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation 2005).

In addition, a country wishing to join NATO should share Alliance security concerns and be a member of the Atlantic community (Backer 2002:96). Moreover, it can be assumed that successful implementation of military reform will go hand in hand with political stabilisation in the country. By meeting these requirements for membership, a country shows that it has the credentials to be treated as a stable and reliable international actor that shares the same security concerns with the Alliance and its partner countries. For example, Macedonia has already made significant progress, and demonstrated continued resolve, in meeting these goals. This reality was illustrated in June this year when the country held the NATO Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council Security Forum, in which ministers, senior officials, parliamentarians, academics, and NGO representatives from NATO and Partner countries came together to discuss key security issues on the shores of lake Ohrid in Macedonia (United Macedonian diaspora 2007a). One could argue that this event was a testament to Macedonia's growing political and economic stability (Newsahead world 2007). In addition, NATO membership would have the advantage of attracting increased foreign investments to the country and thus boosting its economic development. This would, in turn, help to strengthen Macedonia's position as a market-based democracy. According to Mitropolitski, while the EU constitutes the main economic driving force in the region, NATO symbolises broader affiliation to the Euro-Atlantic community (2006).

In summary therefore, Macedonian aspirations to join NATO can be understood as deriving from the need to protect its unstable borders in the wake of Kosovo's unresolved problems and the resulting inter-ethnic conflicts in the area. In addition, membership in the Alliance can be seen as a prestigious place for a small country, such as Macedonia, that illustrates that country's political maturity, stability and willingness to have an input within Euro-Atlantic community.

WHY DOES NATO WANT TO SEE MACEDONIA IN THE ALLIANCE?

Although Macedonia's aspirations for joining the Alliance appear to be quite clear, NATO's reasoning for further enlargement into the Balkans is not so straightforward. What is more, one cannot ignore the role of the United States in NATO, especially following the events of 9/11, which symbolised the onset of a new geopolitical world order (see Agnew 2003). Therefore, this next section explores the reasons why NATO would like Macedonia to join the Alliance, with particular attention given to the United States.

To begin with, it is very important that every new NATO member increases the overall security in the Alliance, and do not bring with them unresolved disputes, especially those with other NATO members (Mitropolitski 2006). The prolonged disagreement between Macedonia and Greece over Macedonia's constitutional name suggests that, while this dispute cannot prevent Macedonia from joining international organisations such as the EU and NATO, there is nothing to stop Greece from vetoing Macedonia's bid to join NATO. However, as the NATO summit in Bucharest approaches, Skopje is willing to

go to compromise with Greece and join NATO under the name of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). According to the president Branko Crvenkovski:

Naturally, our accession to NATO under our constitutional name would be the most satisfactory for us. Nevertheless, if no solution to the dispute is found before we join NATO, we are ready to become a full member with the name with which we are currently referred to at the UN, as a temporary solution (Tzimas 2007).

Despite Macedonia's visible willingness to make compromises in its bid to join NATO, Athens response has been somewhat sceptical, stating that if Macedonia wants Greek approval on the matter, it has to demonstrate good relations with its neighbours, especially with the ones that are members of NATO and the EU (Kathimerini 2007). However, it can be argued that this dispute is really just a political game, and does not constitute, in itself, a solid threat to Macedonia's NATO bid. Indeed, the 'name' dispute has never stopped Macedonia from active involvement in the Partnership for Peace (PfP) and the Membership Action Plan (MAP). Furthermore, in the Riga Summit in 2006, Greece strongly encouraged NATO enlargement to South East Europe (US department of state 2007a). As such, despite the fact that Greece has been very vocal over Macedonia's constitutional name, it is committed to NATO's enlargement in the Balkan area.

If Macedonia wants to join NATO, it is essential that the country not only maintain good relations with its neighbour countries, but also with superpowers such as the United States. Macedonia has been active in seeking Washington's support for its Alliance bid. It has supported US missions in Afghanistan and Iraq by sending military units to the conflict areas (the same could not be said for other European counterparts). In allying itself with the US in the global war on terror Macedonia has, as a relatively small and young democracy, been able to secure backing from the superpower for its NATO membership bid. Macedonia also participates in NATO's South East Europe Initiative and continues to be active player in the Kosovo Force's (KOFOR) rear area, hosting NATO troops, including US forces, that are operating in Kosovo (US department of state 2007b). As a result of Macedonia's compliance in both the 'war on terror' and in NATO's mission in Kosovo, it has received support from the United States. This has been demonstrated by the Adriatic Charter signed between Albania, Croatia, Macedonia and the US (see Appendix 1), the US's recognition of the country's constitutional name, and in its expressed support for Macedonia's NATO bid, if it can meet all the requirements (Macedonian news 2007).

Another important thing to recognise, in looking at NATO's standpoint on Macedonia, is that, NATO enlargement policy to Southeast Europe has been heavily shaped by the US security agenda after 9/11, which placed greater focus on the geopolitical significance of the

candidate countries (Stefanova 2005: 40). It is evident that following 9/11, geostrategic considerations became more important than political ones for some NATO members, first and foremost the US (Stefanova 2005:46). In this regards, it can be argued, to a degree, that NATO became an instrument of US foreign policy, and served to maintain the United States presence in European security. As such, NATO has served US interests in projecting US power to areas beyond Europe, such as the Middle East and Central Asia (Szayna 2001:10). So, Macedonia, or the overall NATO enlargement to the South East Europe, is a logical step for the Alliance and for the US to include another regional centre of their operational support (Stefanova 2005:46).

Macedonia's economic and geopolitical significance to the US can be seen with regards to the Burgas-Vlora pipeline project. The project covers three countries: Bulgaria, Macedonia and Albania, and will supposedly become part of a pan-European energy infrastructure which will boost the economies of the three Balkan countries (Yotov and Kiriakov 2006:34). Overall, control of the project is held by the US with the US registered oil corporation AMBO being responsible for the project. Furthermore, this company has received substantial financial support from the US Trade and Development Agency. First and foremost, this project is therefore about protecting US corporate interests in the Balkans. However, it is also about the broader US mission of promoting free market democracies throughout the world, which has coincided with the further

privatization of economies in South East Europe, facilitating integration within Western Europe.

Although recognizing the economic significance of the pipeline is important we cannot ignore the broader geopolitical dimensions. First of all, as Ferguson notes, 'America's own crude resources are declining rapidly' and the country is already heavily dependent upon foreign imports, which, in 2002, constituted about 50 percent of its annual needs (Reuters 2002). Therefore, this pipeline project represents extremely important opportunity for the US to help secure the future of its resource requirements in an increasingly competitive environment (for example, there is another competing project Burgas-Alexandropolis, controlled by Russia, which runs through Bulgaria and Greece). Moreover, the significance of the Burgas-Vlora oil project must be located within the broader context of deteriorating relations between Russia and the US. For example, recent events such as Russia's response to the USs' plan to establish a missile defence base in Central Europe, as well as Moscow's decision to employ a much more aggressive foreign policy in recent months (as witnessed with regards to the return of its long-range aircraft patrols, reminiscent of the Cold War) have echoed in a new era of US-Russian relations. In light of this rapidly changing political environment, Macedonia's importance to the US is rooted, to a

degree, in its role as a conduit for these hugely sought after resources. In summary therefore, Macedonia's future NATO membership hopes hinge heavily upon their ability to maintain a strong and positive relationship with the US, and consequently, as Phillips states, the future of these relations will strongly depend upon the progress made in fostering the Burgas-Vlora pipeline project through Macedonia, which will 'secure the passage of oil from the Caspian Sea' (2004:183).

In conclusion, this chapter has set out several potential reasons as to why NATO wants to see Macedonia within the Alliance, ranging from its mission to increase overall security in the Euro-Atlantic area to the country's geostrategic significance. More broadly, however, it can be argued that NATO has been in continuing decline, since the end of the Cold War, and has been searching for the new purposes for its continued survival. In the middle of Iraq crisis, then Secretary of State Colin Powel argued that NATO was 'breaking itself up' because of an inability to 'meet its responsibilities' (Carpenter 2003:518). Rupp notes, that 'without agreement upon a common threat to vital interests, NATO is operating at the margins to which the Iraq crisis and the ongoing mission in Afghanistan attest' (2006:179). In light of Macedonian accession to NATO this is an important point, in that each new member to the Alliance can be seen as extending the organisation's legitimacy,

providing new justification for the very existence of the Alliance.

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ECONOMIC COOPERATION IN THE BALKANS
- excerpt -

INTRODUCTION

This paper provides an overview of needs and requirements of economic cooperation in South Eastern Europe.It first discusses about the basic structure of SEE and the need of economic and political reforms in these countries.

Definition of Economic cooperation

The term economic cooperation is made from two words –economic and cooperation. According to literal definitions economics stands for
Pertaining to the production, distribution, and use of income, wealth, and commodities
And cooperation stands for an act or instance of working or acting together for a common purpose or benefit; joint action.
So together we can summarize that economic cooperation means the common use of available resources and factors of production for the purpose of common benefit of the group.

What is SEE (southern Eastern Europe)

The **Balkans** is the historic and geographic name used to describe a region of southeastern Europe. The region has a combined area of 550,000 km² and an approximate population of 55 million people. The archaic Greek name for the *Balkan Peninsula* is the Peninsula of Haemus (Χερσόνησος του Αἵμου, *Chersónisos tou Aímou*). The region takes its name from the Balkan Mountains which run through the centre of Bulgaria into eastern Serbia.(source –wikipedia)

The region takes its name from the "Balkan" mountain range in Bulgaria (from the Turkish *balkan* meaning "a chain of wooded mountains") The name is still preserved in Central Asia where there exist the Balkhan Mountains and the Balkan Province of Turkmenistan.

In recent times, *Balkan* is believed to have negative connotations in the West (perhaps due to the emphatic and slanted use of the word 'balkanise' in English), and is often associated with fragmentation, violence, strife, and clannishness. Although such characterization of the Balkans is common today, it is also widely exaggerated, and misrepresents the totality of the history of the area.

Due to the aforementioned connotations of the term 'Balkan', many people prefer the term **Southeastern Europe** instead. The use of this term is slowly growing; a European Union initiative of 1999 is called the *Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe*, and the online newspaper *Balkan Times* renamed itself *Southeast European Times* in 2003.

The major countries in SEE

In most of the English-speaking, western worlds, the countries commonly included in the Balkan region are as follows-

- Albania
- Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Montenegro
- Greece
- Republic of Macedonia
- Serbia
- Turkey, but only the European section of it (traditionally called Rumelia or Eastern Thrace)

Some other countries are sometimes included in the list as well:

- Moldova
- Romania
- Slovenia

History in the present context

After the Second World War, the Soviet Union and communism played a very important role in the Balkans. During the Cold War, most of the countries in the Balkans were ruled by Soviet-supported communist governments.

However, despite being under communist governments, Yugoslavia (1948) and Albania (1961) fell out with the Soviet Union. Yugoslavia, led by Marshal Josip Broz Tito (1892–1980), first propped up then rejected the idea of merging with Bulgaria, and instead sought closer relations with the West, later even joining many third world countries in the Non-Aligned Movement. Albania on the other hand gravitated toward Communist China, later adopting an isolationist position.

The only non-communist countries were Greece and Turkey, which were (and still are) part of NATO.

In the 1990s, the region was gravely affected by armed conflict in the former Yugoslav republics, resulting in intervention by NATO forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and the Republic of Macedonia. The status of Kosovo and ethnic Albanians in general is still mostly unresolved.

Balkan countries control the direct land routes between Western Europe and South West Asia (Asia Minor and the Middle East). Since 2000, all Balkan countries are friendly towards the EU and the USA.

Greece has been a member of the European Union since 1981; Slovenia and Cyprus since 2004. Bulgaria and Romania became members in 2007. In 2005 the European Union decided to start accession negotiations with candidate countries Croatia and Turkey and the Republic of Macedonia was accepted as a candidate for the European Union membership. As of 2004, Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia are also members of NATO. Bosnia and Herzegovina and what was then Serbia and Montenegro started negotiations with the EU over the Stabilization and Accession Agreements, although shortly after they started, negotiations with Serbia and Montenegro were suspended for lack of co-operation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

The importance of Stability Pact and EU accession (reference –institute of European affairs) march 2006

The second biggest step in the recent history of SEE is the formation of stability pact. The stability pact for South Eastern Europe (SP) had been established in 1999 following the Kosovo crisis of that year. The focus of the pact was on developing regional cooperation under three heading as illustrated below—

The economic reconstruction aspect of the pact –working table II –has given priority to three areas of activity.

- Regional infrastructure ,including environment
- Private sector development

- Social Cohesion- off setting the negative impact of economic reforms

THE EU and SEE
After the formation of European Union, the economies of SEE have largely become integrated with the economies of European Union.

But at the same time this table reveals that there are few countries which are more focused towards trading within SEE and there are few which are more focused towards trading within EU .The biggest advantage can be gained if these countries would be able to found some areas in which each can be specialized.This will provide them economies of scale and higher margins in their exports.
The three major criterions which were essential to become an EU member is as follows
1. The fluctuation in exchange rate should be within +/- 2.5%
2. The public finance deficit should not exceed 3 % of GDP on an annual basis
3. The public debt should not exceed 60% of GDP
If we analyze the current situation in the SEE countries, most of them are having troubles in managing their public debt and finance deficit. So these accession rules will work as a wake up call to all these countries which are still in the dilemma between capitalism and socialism. They have to realize that in any form of government it is essential to have a balanced financial condition.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TODAY

1. Social and Political stability

The first prescription for success of any country is the requirement of social and political stability, so first the countries of SEE needs to provide a democratically elected government and social stability.

2. Administrative Reforms

The second requirement is great reforms needed in governance and administration. It can be learned from the example of Ireland and India that if countries are able to provide an easy entry and exit atmosphere and low tax regime, they can easily achieve GDP growth rate of 8-10 percent.

3. Privatization of non priority areas

The government needs to focus on which are their priority area and they should focus on that .The private sector should be allowed to access the rest of the areas. Since from the history of the world it is evident that market based reforms are most effective.

However, privatization in itself is not a panacea for the problems facing the region, especially when it suffers a relative lack of contemporary and innovative entrepreneurship, and the labor force is in need of education and training (knowledge economy) in order to limit the phenomenon of widespread absence of professionalism.

Moreover, the promotion of closer cooperation, and the encouragement of mergers, especially in the banking sector (to make the banks, in their mediating role, not only stronger but also competitive), of insurance companies, stock markets, various businesses, and in the field of research, will assist the necessary structural changes in its economies and perhaps also help to reduce the damaging brain drain.

Opening of Service and informal sector – the SEE countries had great advantage in terms of language and culture to work as a manufacturing base or a outsourcing base for highly developed European countries like UK and Germany. The only need of the hour is that they should have a skilled work force and an established infrastructure.
These two requirements need a long term investment and strategy .so these countries should try to focus on areas of Information Technology and networking backbone.

CONCLUSIONS

In summarizing words it can be said that the globalization has provided a tremendous opportunity of development for the south eastern European countries .at the same time, these countries can get example from growing economies like India and china to bolster their performance. But as has been said that there are no free lunches in the world .so these countries need to tighten their belt and to be prepared for the next wave of growth in Europe.

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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COPENHAGEN CRITERIA IN MACEDONIA
- excerpt -

The Copenhagen criteria are regulations which form part of an international agreement signed in 1993 by member states of the European Union (EU). These criteria were decided upon and signed by the member states at an intergovernmental conference of the European Council in Denmark. Its purpose was to create a set of regulatory criteria controlling accession to the EU, which would ensure that all states wishing to join the EU would be democratic, respect human rights and be economically capable for participation in the common market. The most recent country to have its candidature accepted to the Community is the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, by a decision of the European Council dated December 17th 2005.

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia initiated relations with the European Community in October 1992 by appointment of a representative in Brussels. Throughout the 1990s Macedonian cooperation with the Community progressed, becoming a full partner in the PHARE programme (a programme of Community aid to central and eastern Europe) in March 1996, creating a Cooperation Agreement in April 1997 and holding six Cooperation Councils. In January 2000, negotiations for the SAA (Stabilisation and Association Agreement) officially began. However, it wasn't until 24th March 2004 that the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia applied for official candidacy to the European Union.

Since the intergovernmental conference of 1993, all states seeking to join the European Union are obligated to fulfil the requirements as decided at Copenhagen. The first criterion is 'democratic'. Functional democratic governance requires that citizens of the country have the opportunity to participate in political decision making. It follows therefore, that: free elections with a secret ballot, the freedom to establish political parties, fair and equal access to a free press, free trade union organisations, freedom of personal opinion, executive powers restricted by laws and free access to independent judges are included, as they are essential elements to any democratic state. The rule of law, another fundamental principle, obligates government authority to only be exercised in accordance with the law as adopted through an established procedure. Human rights, universal, must also be protected in order for the state to be considered democratic. The respect and protection of minorities, a final essential element in the democratic state, implies that members of national minorities should be able to maintain their distinctive cultures without suffering any discrimination.

The second criterion created by the intergovernmental conference of 1993 states that candidate countries must have a functioning market economy and companies must be capable of coping with the pressure of competition and market forces. The budget deficit of the country per year must not be higher than 3% of the GDP, and the total

government debt must not be more than 60% of the GDP. The candidate countries have to be able to adapt to the free trade and common market system advocated by the Community, unique to this supranational organisation.

Thirdly and to address the last criterion, the country seeking membership must be capable of undertaking the obligations of membership and be able to comply with the Union's aims. This means that all prospective members must bring their domestic laws into line with European laws by enacting national legislation. Areas in which the country seeking membership must improve before its candidature will be accepted are known as acquis communautaire. These are negotiated and split into chapters and once completed, a draft treaty of accession is drawn up.

The Copenhagen criteria apply to all countries seeking membership to the European Union, and so the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is also subject to these regulations. However, given the political, social and economic history of the country, how are these criteria being implemented? It is intended that the current paper shall be divided into 2 parts. In the first section we shall be discussing the political, social and economic situation of Macedonia for the period between 1992 and 2000, a period marked by civil unrest and economic problems after the fall of the Soviet bloc in 1990. In the second section we shall contrast this with measures taken after the official opening of negotiations with the EU on

future candidate status. It is intended to show how the nation made efforts to move towards European integration through bringing its domestic legislation in line with that of the Community under the obligation of the Copenhagen criteria.

I: The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: democracy, human rights and economics before 2000

A) A brief overview of the political and ethnic history of the nation

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as recognised by the United Nations and the European Union, has had a varied and difficult past, both economically and politically. Due to its geographical positioning the country has experienced many wars, both civil and international, and occupation by foreign troops. The division of its territory amongst the other Balkan states after these conflicts led to many population movements. The population profile is diverse, with 66.5% Macedonians, 23% Albanians, 4% Turkish, 2% Roma, 2% Serbs and 0.4% Vlachs.[245] It is evident that there are many minority ethnic and racial groups present, something which has provoked a certain amount of conflict in the country's recent history. However, since the independence of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia from Yugoslavia in 1991, the main source of conflict has been clashes between ethnic Macedonians and Albanian Macedonians.

Under the Socialist Republic of Macedonia of 1946, the constitution guaranteed the right of minorities to cultural development and free use of their language. The Constitution read: "A state of the Macedonian people and the

Albanian and Turkish nationalities." However, during the late 1980s, after the autonomy of the Albanian Kosovo region was revoked, repression of the Albanian people increased, which also spread to the Socialist Republic of Macedonia. The Albanian language no longer appeared in public, children were no longer allowed to be given Albanian names, and Albanian families were limited to having two children only. The Constitution was amended to state: "the national state of the Macedonian people"; thus, all national rights belonged to the Slavic-Macedonians, and Albanian Macedonians were denied the constitutional rights they previously shared on equal footing. After the granting of independence to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, in January 1992 a referendum on territorial autonomy was organised by some Albanians, resulting in a crackdown by Macedonian authorities claiming the referendum to be an attempt to secede.

In 1999, the Kosovo war led to thousands of Albanian refugees fleeing to Macedonia, creating even more tensions between ethnic Macedonians and Albanian Macedonians. In 2001 ethnic Albanian rebels (the National Liberation Army), claiming to represent Albanian ethnic minority grievances, took up arms near the Kosovo border, demanding the Macedonian constitution be rewritten to enshrine certain ethnic Albanian rights such as language rights. The conflict soon spread throughout the north of the country, but within six months was resolved with the help of NATO and the European Union. Peace was restored with the dissolution of the guerrilla groups and the handing over of weapons. Since 2001 the problem of social unrest has been dramatically reduced through the creation of laws guaranteeing the equality and fair

treatment of minority groups, notably with regard to the Albanian population.

Although the Former Yugoslav Republic is today a signatory to many international conventions advocating the protection of human rights, such as the European Convention on Human Rights, the United Nations Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the Convention against Torture, human rights abuses were still an important issue until very recently. Even as late as 2001, human rights organisations reported suspected extrajudicial extraditions and threats and intimidation directed against human rights activists.[246] There were even allegations of torture against the police.[247] In 2000, the killing of three police officers outside an Albanian village sparked a severe case of police brutality, resulting in one of the suspects detained for the killings dying in custody. A report from the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights also announced that police abuse of suspects and harassment of ethnic minorities continued to be an issue, as did political pressure on the judiciary and government interference with union activity.[248]

It is evident that the history of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia contains many issues which need to be addressed in order for the country to fulfil the Copenhagen criteria and thus be eligible for accession to the EU. However, since beginning to work towards candidacy for membership of the Community,

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[245] The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: a future with Europe, Hans Jorn Hansen, pg 1

[246]

http://wwww.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/AllDocsByUNID/123700d4caca95bac1256a6b005b3b6f, the International Helsinki Federation For Human Rights, 8 June 2001

[247] Ibid.

[248] Ibid.

the government of the country has made real progress towards fulfilling the essential political and economic requirements of the Copenhagen criteria. In the following section it is intended to discuss the cooperation between the European Union and Macedonia in the period between 1992 and 2000, thus highlighting the progress made with the support of the Community.

B) The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 1992-2000: cooperation with the European Union and economic, democratic and social progress

In the period immediately following the independence of the country, the economic situation was unstable. 15 million euros from the ECHO and 85 million euros through the Critical Aid programme with PHARE provided for humanitarian needs. This PHARE programme was set up by the EU after the fall of the Soviet bloc in Eastern Europe in 1989. The programme aims to provide financial assistance to the new countries of Eastern Europe, to help them transform their economies and initiate democratic change, as well as facilitate a transition to EU membership for those wishing to join. In order to implement the above, PHARE introduced financial assistance through payment support, humanitarian aid (where necessary), investment capital from European banks, advice and training are also available.

For the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, which joined in 1996, the EU's central concerns in providing the PHARE programme were to ensure the maintenance of a fully democratic state and the creation of a market economy. The approximation of domestic legislation has also been very prominent under the programme, especially in the areas of economic and commercial laws. Common support programmes such as PHARE

expressed locally in land policy (Land Policy and Cadastre project) and in combination with specific initiatives such as education (TEMPUS), have improved the financial and democratic standing of the country in recent years, through funding, publicity and training. Public administration reform is also a high priority. PHARE democracy also provides extensive support through the development of NGOs, autonomous trade unions, publications for the general public on the role of the media in society, and support to independent media. An estimate of funding provided by the PHARE programme to the Republic is 108 million euros for the period 1996 to 1999.[249]

As well as the PHARE programme, a Regional Approach was adopted by the Council in 1996 concerning the Balkan states, the aim of which was to improve relations between the countries both politically and economically through respecting democracy, the place of minorities and commitment to the market economy system, similar to the Copenhagen criteria. In 1998 it was decided by the General Affairs Council that the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was working positively to the criteria set by the Regional Approach. The country also signed a Cooperation Agreement in November 1997, entering into force on the 1st January 1998. The Cooperation Agreement was wide-ranging, covering areas such as transport and trade, and the European Investment Bank was permitted to grant loans to the country. This was supplemented by Cooperation Council meetings which monitored the progress of the country according to the rules contained in the accord, beginning in March 1998.

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[249] The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: a future with Europe, Hans Jorn Hansen, pg 4

Since 2000, many more steps have been taken by the government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, with the help and support of the European Union and other international organisations, to improve the human rights and minority protection under the domestic law. Now that we have seen in section I the support provided by the European Union to the Republic in a period of unrest and economic difficulty, and the progress made by the country during this period, section II will demonstrate how the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia overcame these issues to be awarded candidate country status in 2005.