

# 1998 ELECTIONS IN MACEDONIA

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## 1998 ELECTIONS IN MACEDONIA

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Macedonians go to the polls on 18 October 1998 in the first of two rounds of voting to elect 120 members of the country's parliament. The forthcoming poll is Macedonia's third general election since the disintegration of one-party communist rule. Moreover, it takes place in the shadow of ethnic violence between Serbs and ethnic Albanians in the neighbouring Serbian province of Kosovo and political instability in neighbouring Albania. Although Macedonia has managed to avoid the violent conflict which has afflicted the rest of the former Yugoslavia, its experience of democracy has so far been mixed. Politics is divided along ethnic lines and the last multi-party elections in 1994 were marred by accusations of fraud with two major parties boycotting the second round of voting.

After four years of debate, parliament adopted a new electoral system in July 1998. Under the new legislation, parliamentarians are elected by a mixture of a majoritarian, constituency-based system and proportional representation. Of a total of 120 seats, 85 are elected by the former and 35 by the latter system. The introduction of proportional representation ensures that a significant number of minority parties will continue to participate in the government. However, the limited number of seats to be allocated by this method should ensure that the political scene is not excessively cluttered by small parties. Meanwhile, a strong ethnic Macedonian party is likely to continue to act as an anchor in Macedonian politics.

Although, the election laws received the overall support from the parties, there remain some areas of contention. For example, opposition parties consider the media regulations to be lax and fear that there is insufficient education of the voters. In addition, ethnic Albanian political parties have accused the government of deliberately drawing the boundaries between electoral districts in such a way as to dilute the voting strength of their natural supporters. Constituencies which are predominantly comprised of ethnic Albanians have on average some 20,000 voters, whereas, constituencies which are predominantly comprised of ethnic Macedonians tend to average 16,000 voters.

Under current circumstances, no single political party appears able to win an absolute majority of the vote in the next parliament. Coalition-building is therefore the order of the day. Most electoral alliances, however, have no moorings to the traditional left, right or centre. The electorate, in return, has very tenuous loyalties to the parties with opinion polls pointing to a high number of “undecided” voters.

The next government will almost certainly be a coalition dominated by either the ethnic Macedonian nationalist party VMRO-DPMNE, which formed the largest party after the 1990 elections, or the SDSM, the former Communists, who have dominated Macedonian politics since 1994. Here, even though SDSM is likely to win fewer votes than VMRO-DPMNE, it is probably in a stronger position, since it can work better with the ethnic Albanian parties and already has experience of negotiating a governing coalition.

The degree to which the elections are considered “free and fair” by the general public and international observers will be a good indicator of Macedonia’s political maturity. If all political parties endorse the election results, an important political milestone will have been achieved. The balance between ethnic Macedonian treatment of their ethnic Albanian citizens and ethnic Albanian willingness to compromise is the key to preserving internal stability. Ethnic Albanian parties must continue to participate in Macedonia’s political life or the country will see further deepening of its ethnic divisions. Much of this depends upon how much tolerance the government shows the Albanians, as well as the pragmatism of Albanian leaders. A VMRO-DPMNE-dominated coalition which attempts to exclude ethnic Albanian parties could upset the current balance in ethnic relations.

With this in mind, ICG recommends the following:

- Public confidence in the integrity and secrecy of the ballot must be restored in Macedonia. The international community should ensure that any declaration of “fair and free” elections is supported by an evaluation of the entire electoral framework rather than just polling day procedures.
- Should the election results be contested due to alleged electoral fraud or manipulation, the international community should work closely with the accredited election observers to investigate all complaints and written explanations of all conclusions made available to the general public as quickly as possible.
- The international community should encourage the new government to push aside its campaign rhetoric once the polling is complete. The first priority should be to form a working coalition rather than settle old political scores, especially through highly charged public hearings.
- The importance of cordial inter-ethnic relations should be key to forming a new government. Given the current situation in neighbouring Kosovo and Albania, the new government must ensure that it does not encourage

radicalisation of the sizeable ethnic Albanian minority in Macedonia by deliberately excluding ethnic Albanian political parties from power. International assistance should be predicated on the new government's commitment to improving inter-ethnic relations.

- At least half of the new parliament may be comprised of candidates who have no prior legislative experience. It is important that these new legislators receive adequate training. The international community should encourage European and US political parties and associations to initiate contacts with the newly-elected officials.

**Skopje-Sarajevo, 9 October 1998**

# 1998 ELECTIONS IN MACEDONIA

## I. INTRODUCTION

Macedonians go to the polls on 18 October 1998 in the first of two rounds of voting to elect 120 members of the country's parliament. The forthcoming poll is Macedonia's third general election since the disintegration of one-party communist rule. Moreover, it takes place in the shadow of ethnic violence between Serbs and ethnic Albanians in the neighbouring Serbian province of Kosovo and political instability in neighbouring Albania. Although Macedonia has managed to avoid the violent conflict which has afflicted the rest of the former Yugoslavia, its experience of democracy has so far been mixed. Politics is divided along ethnic lines and the last multi-party elections were marred by accusations of fraud with two major parties boycotting the second round of voting. As a result, the electorate remains wary of polling.

This report examines the importance of the 1998 parliamentary elections in Macedonia. It discusses past elections and recent changes to the electoral system. The report analyses the strengths and weaknesses of the political parties and coalitions competing in the polls. It looks at the domestic and international issues that dominate the campaign, and the extent of international involvement in the polls. The report also assesses the likely outcome of the elections and potential governing coalitions. And it considers the consequences of the poll on the country's already tense ethnic co-existence. Appendices at the end list the key political parties, the leading candidates on each party's list and the findings of recent opinion polls.

## II. EARLIER ELECTORAL EXPERIENCE

The 1990 parliamentary elections took place before Macedonia became an internationally-recognised independent state and were administered by the Republic Electoral Commission along with 120 municipal commissions overseeing each voting district. These first democratic polls were held under a majoritarian, constituency-based electoral system, in which the smaller parties failed to win any seats. The victorious parties supported the continuation of the system under which they had benefited. The more centrist parties and ethnically-based parties lobbied for a switch in electoral systems to one which was a combination of majoritarian and proportional representation or fully proportional.

Ethnic Albanian leaders complained that polling boards strictly enforced the rules that electors had to present identity cards to vote in predominantly ethnic Albanian areas but not in predominantly ethnic Macedonian regions. Otherwise, most complaints lodged by the political parties concerned the inaccuracy of the voter register and the failure to make it public.

Following the election, VMRO-DPMNE (*Vnatesna Makedonska Revolucionerna Organizacija Demokratska Partija za Makedonsko Nacionalno Edinstvo* or the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation-Democratic Party for Macedonian Unity), SDSM (*Socijal Demokratski Sojuz na Makedonija* or Social Democratic Alliance of Macedonia) and PDP (*Partita per Prosperitet Demokratik* or Party of Democratic Prosperity) formed an uneasy coalition. Frequent walk-outs by VMRO-DPMNE and the ethnic Albanian parliamentarians, however, hampered the legislative process. Often, parliamentary sessions were cancelled because there were not sufficient members present to form a quorum. The parliament failed to reform the constitution, electoral system, privatisation, government administration and a number of other issues confronting the new republic. Increasingly dysfunctional government finally collapsed in July 1992 following a vote of no confidence in parliament. VMRO-DPMNE withdrew from government and joined the opposition. The new coalition government was a marriage of convenience and inherently unstable.

Under these circumstances, new presidential and parliamentary elections were called for October 1994 under the legal framework of the old Yugoslav laws, old electoral districts and using an outdated voter register. More than 1,700 candidates competed for the 120 parliamentary seats. Candidates represented 37 parties and 284 ran as independents. In many respects the 1994 polls were simply a rerun of 1990. The first round of voting, however, was marred by a series of administrative errors and inconsistent application of regulations.

More than 50 percent of the electorate did not receive an official invitation to vote. This meant that voters did not know which polling site they had been assigned to. Moreover, the voter register was inaccurate and out-dated. Family members were often assigned to different polling sites and names of deceased voters and emigrants appeared on the list. As in 1990, many people were unable to vote because they did not have the necessary documentation such as newly-issued passports or citizenship certificates. Again, ethnic Albanians were disproportionately disqualified from casting ballots.

International and domestic election monitors noted that voter lists were incomplete and inaccurate and polling officials were inadequately trained. The monitors judged that there was little evidence of a co-ordinated pattern of disenfranchisement and that most problems

stemmed from administrative incompetence and poor planning by the State Election Commission (SEC).

Two of the largest political parties viewed the situation differently. The largest nationalist party (VMRO-DPMNE) and DP (*Demokratska Partija* or Democratic Party) boycotted the second round of voting. They believed that their poor showing was the result of fraud, not simply bad polling. The party leaders charged that the international observers, primarily from the Conference for Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE),<sup>1</sup> arrived late and only witnessed the end of the elections “from their hotel rooms”. Petar Goshev, the DP leader, said that most of the fraud did not occur during the elections but before them, through manipulation of the voter register and changes to the boundaries of electoral districts. He argues that had the observers arrived earlier, studied the election law, and witnessed the violations, they would have reached different conclusions.

Despite the protests, international monitors endorsed the elections. The final results showed that President Kiro Gligorov won the presidential race with 52.4 percent of the vote. The Alliance for Macedonia, a coalition formed by SDSM, LDP (*Liberalna Demokratska Partija* or Liberal Democratic Party) and SPM (*Socijalisticka Partija na Makedonija* or Socialist Party of Macedonia), secured 95 out of 120 seats. Due to their boycott, VMRO-DPMNE and DP failed to win any seats in parliament.

Macedonia's first local elections took place in November 1996. The elections for council seats and mayoral posts were held under new laws for local and territorial division. Although the SDSM emerged from the polls as the strongest party, winning 500 of the 1,903 contested council seats and 52 of the 124 mayoral posts, they lost the major cities of Skopje, Prilep, and Ohrid. The polls also confirmed the continued strong support of the ethnic Albanian parties in all of western Macedonia. The nationalist opposition interpreted the 1996 results as a victory.

An opinion poll conducted after the elections found that only 38.6 percent of voters felt the elections were fair and democratic and 35.6 percent believed the elections had irregularities but were generally fair and democratic.<sup>2</sup> Despite numerous complaints lodged about the accuracy of the voter register, the polling results were accepted by all political parties.

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<sup>1</sup> The precursor of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

<sup>2</sup> Natasha Gabr and Aneta Joveska, “Necessity of Combining the Election Model”, *Forum*, December 1997/January 1998, p. 25.



### III. THE ELECTORAL FRAMEWORK

Parliament adopted a new electoral system after four years of debate in July 1998. The forthcoming elections will therefore be governed by three new laws -- the *Law of the Election of Members of Parliament*, the *Electoral District Law*, and the *Voters' Identification Card Law* -- which incorporate amendments addressing many of the criticisms of the earlier system.

Under the new legislation, parliamentarians are elected by a mixture of a majoritarian, constituency-based system and proportional representation. Of a total of 120 seats, 85 are elected by the former and 35 by the latter system in such a way that it is likely that parliament retains its multi-ethnic character without jeopardising the ethnic Macedonian majority in government. The new framework is also expected to encourage the pattern of a strong ethnic Macedonian party, supported by smaller ethnic Macedonian parties and one or more ethnic Albanian parties in a coalition.

Efforts to promote public confidence in the political process are as important as ensuring that the contents of the law meet international standards. Although, the election laws received the overall support from the parties, there remain some areas of contention. For example, opposition parties consider the media regulations to be lax and fear that there is insufficient education of the voters. Moreover, there are no provisions for Macedonian citizens living abroad to cast ballots.

In late September 1998, VMRO-DPMNE circulated a petition to all the political parties in order to secure their pledged support of "fair and democratic" elections. Of the 16 registered political parties, all but SDSM have signed the declaration. SDSM refused to support the initiative for two reasons. First, the text included the statement, "having in mind the irregularities of 1994 . . ." Secondly, the declaration called for the use of indelible ink to track electors who had voted to make sure that they did not cast a second ballot. Minister of Justice Gjorgji Spasov said that the use of indelible ink was an African practice or only employed in countries emerging from war. He said that Macedonian voters would not submit themselves to such a marking because it was beneath their dignity and potentially branded all voters as traitors.<sup>3</sup>

#### A. Electoral System and Procedures

In constituencies, a candidate wins a seat in the first round if the candidate wins a majority of the votes and that number is not less than one third of the total number of registered voters in the district. If no

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<sup>3</sup> *Dnevnik*, 9 September 1998.

candidate wins a majority or if the majority is less than one-third of the registered voters in the district, a run-off election is held in 14 days. Under this system, an absolute majority is required in the first round and a simple majority in the second round. The top two candidates from the first round proceed to the second round, and the one who wins the majority of votes after the second round wins the seat.

The d'Hondt model is being used for the 35 parliamentary seats elected by proportional representation. Since large parties tend to be over-represented under the this formula, it is considered the least proportional variant of the proportional representation systems.<sup>4</sup> The d'Hondt method takes the votes obtained by each list and divides them by one, two, three, four, and so on up to the number of seats to be filled. The quotients obtained are ranked from the largest to the smallest, and seats are allocated to the lists with the highest average. The d'Hondt method's relatively severe treatment of small parties and its discouragement of party fragmentation have made it popular, at least with the dominant parties, as a practical formula for allocating seats to party lists.

Under the new legislation, political parties must receive a minimum of five percent of the total vote cast in order to be selected from the proportional list. Inevitably, this five-percent threshold hurts the smaller ethnically-based parties which are effectively obliged to form coalitions or merge with larger parties to survive.

## **B. Administration of the Elections**

The composition of the election oversight committees was a source of great contention during the legislative deliberations. A compromise was eventually agreed whereby the supreme oversight body or the State Electoral Commission (SEC) is comprised of a president and eight members. The president and two of the members are Supreme Court justices, while three members are nominated by the political parties in power and three members are nominated by the opposition parties, which received five percent of the vote in the previous election.

Each of the 85 electoral districts will be represented by a District Election Commission (DEC), which is comprised of a president and four members. Two members (and their replacements) of each DEC are nominated by the political parties in power, and the other two members are nominated by the opposition. The commission members will serve a four-year term. These commissions, in turn, appoint the Polling Election Boards (PEB) for each polling station. The PEB consists of a president, four members and their replacements, who are

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<sup>4</sup> Michael Gallagher, "Proportionality, Disproportionality and Electoral Systems", *Electoral Studies* (1991), 10:1, pp. 33-5.

nominated according to the same formula as the DEC. The winners of the majoritarian contests will be announced at each DEC.

The SEC has been the target of criticism by opposition parties and journalists. In an editorial entitled "The SEC, C'est Moi", the Skopje daily *Dnevnik* accused the SEC of practising old-style politics and operating with excessive secrecy. The SEC has missed a number of important electoral deadlines, which only heightens tensions between the parties and the supreme electoral body. The posting of the candidate lists was five days late; the descriptions of the election units were seven days late; and the posting of the polling stations was two days late.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the continued lack of SEC responsiveness to party inquiries contributes to overall distrust in the system.

### **C. Drawing Boundaries between Electoral Districts**

Ethnic Albanian political parties have accused the government of deliberately drawing the boundaries between electoral districts in such a way as to dilute the voting strength of their natural supporters. Moreover, their charge is, in part at least, well founded since constituencies which are predominantly comprised of ethnic Albanians have on average some 20,000 voters, whereas, constituencies which are predominantly comprised of ethnic Macedonians tend to average 16,000 voters. This effectively means that a vote cast by an ethnic Macedonian is worth more than that cast by an ethnic Albanian. Under the *Law for Electoral Districts*, there can be "minus 10 percent to plus 10 percent" of the average number of voters in the districts. Given that the number of registered voters is 1,572,976 and there are only 2,973 polling stations, this margin could have been set lower in order to minimise the variance between populations in constituencies.

### **D. Voter Registration and Identification Card**

Two procedural improvements have been made to the voting process, which should introduce greater transparency and increase party confidence. The voter register has been made available to political parties for review and voter identification cards issued.

Political parties may now check the voter register for accuracy. As in previous polls, there have been numerous complaints that voter lists are inaccurate or have been deliberately tampered with by the government. This suspicion was heightened when the SEC failed to meet the deadline for closing voter lists and distributing them to political parties. Political parties had until 27 September 1998 to request copies of the final voter register. According to the law, the

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<sup>5</sup> *Dnevnik*, 30 September 1998.

State Commission for Voters' Lists has up to 15 days (12 October 1998) to release copies to the parties. This delay means that parties potentially may have only six days to review the lists before polling day.

The State Electoral Commission has issued voter identification cards to all registered voters. The identification cards do not have photographs attached to them. Although these identification cards should reduce the possibility of voter fraud, some of the opposition parties, VMRO-DPMNE, in particular, have raised concerns about the issuance of the cards. VMRO-DPMNE has claimed that more than 100,000 cards had not been distributed to voters and said that this opened the door for abuse. In some distribution offices, the voter identification cards are stored in large sacks. The time-consuming process to locate specific identification cards may discourage some voters from claiming them.<sup>6</sup>

## E. Media Regulation

The basic provisions regarding media regulation of the election campaign are contained in Article 43 of the *Law for Election of Members of Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia*.<sup>7</sup> The law places the responsibility on the media for determining rules for access to the media by candidates and political parties during the election campaign. Many parties complained that the regulations guiding the media are too loose and open to interpretation. In a country without a tradition of impartial media, the power to set media access policy might have been better placed with the SEC or a special media oversight body.

The current law does not specify what constitutes a violation, nor does it provide for specific penalties. Moreover, there is no institutional mechanism by which candidates or parties can present complaints or receive assurances of remedies such as media retractions, corrections or apologies. Parties have also charged that there is insufficient voter education. Only Macedonian Television (MTV) is obliged to provide public service announcements and private stations are exempted. Moreover, the issue of media fairness in news coverage is perhaps more important than providing media access to political candidates.

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<sup>6</sup> ICG visited six randomly-selected municipal offices between 10 and 16 September 1998 to verify the conditions of storing and distributing voter identification cards.

<sup>7</sup> Article 43 states: "The media in the Republic of Macedonia are to provide equal conditions for equality in presentations of MP candidates, political parties, groups of voters and their programmes. The length of the election presentation, and the advertising conditions and methods for using the programme time, that is, newspaper space for presentation of candidates, political parties, and groups of voters are to be announced by the media no later than 50 days before the election day."

## F. Domestic Observers

The new election law contains several confidence-building provisions, which incorporate the participation of the political parties in election administration and make the system more open to public scrutiny. For example, political party nominees will serve on all three levels of election commissions. At the request of the parties, election monitors will be able to put their remarks to the election process directly on the reports submitted by the Polling Election Boards (PEB) and District Election Commissions (DEC), rather than simply enclosing the additional remarks.

Under the new law, there are explicit provisions for monitoring all activities of the campaign and polling day by both Macedonian and international organisations. It is estimated that more than 9,000 domestic monitors will be deployed throughout the country. The majority of these monitors will be party agents, who may follow the work of the DECs and the PEBs from the beginning of the elections to the announcement of the results. In addition, several domestic non-governmental organisations (NGOs) plan to train 500 observers to monitor the elections.<sup>8</sup>

## IV. INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Both the Macedonian governing coalition and opposition parties are wary of international election monitors. SDSM and SPM, in particular, have been critical of the international community's decision to send long-term observers. They view this as a signal of distrust and an indication that Macedonia is not quite European. The opposition parties VMRO-DPMNE and LDP, are more ambiguous in their stance towards the international monitors. They welcome the observation but also remember the international community's endorsement of the 1994 election results, which they considered flawed.

International monitoring will be primarily conducted by the Warsaw-based Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), in conjunction with the OSCE. ODIHR does not have a mandate for providing technical assistance to administer the elections. It will exclusively provide election observation from mid-September through 1 November 1998 with a core international staff comprising three experts. Prior to polling day, ODIHR will analyse the electoral framework and monitor its application, oversee the registration of

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<sup>8</sup> Domestic NGOs monitoring the elections include: the Association for Democratic Alternatives, Association for the Development of Democracy, Centre for Civic Initiatives, Helsinki Commission for Human Rights, Women's Association of Macedonia, and the Youth Information Centre.

candidates and distribution of voter registration lists to political parties, observe campaign rallies and monitor media coverage and candidate access to the media. The Dusseldorf-based European Institute for Media (EIM) began comprehensive media monitoring on 1 October 1998. ODIHR expects to have about 150 election observers deployed throughout the country on polling day and will publish a snap assessment of the elections the day after polling (19 October 1998). A final report will later be issued from Warsaw and Vienna.

ODIHR currently has 11 long-term observers deployed in ten regions. The observers monitor activities at a district level. Their efforts will be enhanced by the deployment of 80 election weekend observers supplied by OSCE member states, delegations from the Council of Europe and the European Union Parliamentarian Group, and volunteers from local embassies will supplement the polling day observations. Other independent monitors include the US Embassy in Skopje, two American-based NGOs -- the International Republican Institute and the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs -- and observers deployed by the Dutch Embassy.

Current investigations by ODIHR relate to technical complaints filed by political parties and independent candidates. VMRO-DPMNE has charged that the voter registration lists are inaccurate and voiced concern that counterfeit voter identification cards have been distributed. In addition, an independent candidate from the Republican Party charges that his deletion from the candidate list by the SEC was biased. He claims that his failure to open a campaign finance account before the required deadline should not disqualify him because other candidates from the PDP-PDPA/NDP coalition also failed to meet the deadline but are being allowed to stand as candidates.

## V. POLITICAL PARTIES AND PRE-ELECTION COALITIONS

Party politics in Macedonia appears confused with a plethora of small parties, some ethnically-based, others based around the personality of a charismatic individual. The survival and proliferation of such parties has in part been due to the boycott of VMRO-DPMNE and DP in 1994, in part the result of personal patronage. The original VMRO, for example, has spawned three smaller parties following the secession of dissidents. Prior to 1994, there was only one ethnic Albanian party, but PDP has since split into four smaller parties, of which two have merged to form a new party.

Many of the smaller political parties can be categorised more as celebrity followings rather than as fully-formed parties. The continuing

electoral success of independents, as well as their numbers, attest to the importance of this factor. In a 1997 poll conducted by the Institute for Sociological, Political and Legal Research Centre for Ethnic Relations, the biggest factor influencing the 1996 electorate in their votes for mayors and city councillors was personality.<sup>9</sup>

Ethnicity is also an important factor in electoral politics. The most numerous ethnic groups are ethnic Macedonians, who form about 67 percent, and ethnic Albanians, who form about 23 percent of the population. There are a number of small but significant minorities including Turks, Roma, Serbs, and Muslims. Most ethnic Albanians live in a triangular area in the north-west of the republic, adjacent to the borders of Albania and Kosovo, or in the capital Skopje.

Despite frequent threats to leave the government, ethnic Albanian representatives have remained in ruling coalition throughout the life of the parliament. Indeed, the current coalition government is an affirmation of the importance of including ethnic Albanians in public service and has attempted to address some of the issues influencing inter-ethnic relations. Moreover, possible future exclusion of ethnic Albanian political parties from the government may stimulate political crisis. Nevertheless, the coalition remains a delicate balancing act attempting to cater for ethnic Albanian interests, without giving ethnic Macedonians the impression that their national interest is being undermined.

Despite the uneasiness of the current coalition, SDSM has the best record in co-operating with ethnic Albanian parties. LDP is also experienced in working together with the ethnic Albanian parties. VMRO-DPMNE, by contrast, continues to have a problematic relationship with the ethnic Albanian parties. Nevertheless, the party assumes that its likely future status as the largest grouping in parliament will make it an attractive coalition partner. In fact, however, such a coalition is unlikely to come to fruition unless the party learns how to negotiate and how to communicate with ethnic Albanians.<sup>10</sup>

The political strategy being employed by VMRO-DPMNE and DA coalition is an attempt to by-pass the obstacles in gaining ethnic Albanian support without responding to some of their demands. The DA will run nine "Muslim" majoritarian candidates and six "Muslim" candidates on the proportional list. (Most of these candidates are ethnic Albanians but a party spokeswoman preferred to classify the candidates as "Muslim"<sup>11</sup>). DA believes that it can bring ethnic

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<sup>9</sup> Natasha Gabr and Aneta Joveska, "Necessity of Combining the Election Model", *Forum*, December 1997/January 1998, p. 17.

<sup>10</sup> *Dnevnik*, interview with Ljubomir Frckovski, 10 September 1998.

<sup>11</sup> ICG phone call to DA headquarters on 30 September 1998.

Albanians who are not members of ethnic Albanian parties into the government.

Under current circumstances, none of the political parties has the potential to win an absolute majority of the vote in the next parliament so that it will be critical to find coalition partners with whom to govern. Here, SDSM can work much better with the ethnic Albanian parties and has experience in negotiating a governing coalition. If VMRO-DPMNE wants to govern, the party will need to negotiate fairly with the ethnic Albanian parties. Otherwise, it will have to remain in opposition.

Given that no political party is in a position to dominate the political scene in the way that SDSM has for the past six years, coalition-building is the order of the day. The 1996 local elections demonstrated that the opposition parties fared better in coalitions than alone. These electoral coalitions, however, have no moorings to the traditional left, right or centre. The electorate, in return, has very tenuous loyalties to the parties. Opinion polls indicate that the recorded electoral support of a party changes constantly and there is always a high number of "undecided" voters. Constant internal struggles within party leaderships also contribute to shifting party loyalties.

Increasing voter discontent has led to certain cosmetic changes in party leaderships, but fresh faces have failed to enter the political scene. Party structures are generally stagnant and remain dominated by former communists. Political expediency is the only thing the coalition partners have in common. Rather than pushing tired party leaders off the stage, the size of the stage has been expanded. Sixteen parties or coalitions registered to contest the elections as well as one group of independents. The long-term future of these new coalitions is difficult to predict, however, because of the instability of the organisations and their fragile support among the electorate.

#### **A. VMRO-DPMNE and DA: Union for Changes**

The biggest surprise of the election coalitions has been the alliance of VMRO-DPMNE and DA. The two parties are not ideologically close, but the political ambitions of the two leaders have helped bridge the gap. VMRO-DPMNE can rely on the support of a significant section of the Macedonian electorate, while DA leader Vasil Tupurkovski is popular with the international community. Tupurkovski explained his reasons for forming the coalition as the oppositional character of DA, the electoral system, which contains incentives for coalition-building, and a popular desire for change. Opinion polls consistently rank Tupurkovski as the most admired politician in the country and he is especially popular among intellectuals and educated Macedonians. The coalition promises to bring economic growth, improve education and fight against crime. It alleges that the government has stolen more



than 600 million DM through privatisation and promises to put the perpetrators on trial.

After leaving government in 1992, VMRO-DPMNE is only now emerging from the political wilderness. Due to its good showing in the 1996 local elections, the party can count on a number of mayors and city councillors and use their political infrastructures to its advantage. VMRO-DPMNE has also had some success in expanding its electoral base beyond the working class and unemployed. Students and under-35s in general have become increasingly active in the party. VMRO-DPMNE has long supported closer links with the Macedonian Diaspora, particularly in Bulgaria. The party claims to have moved away from its pro-Bulgarian tilt, but this has not been reflected in continued presence of "Bulgarian supporters" in its top ranks. That said, the party's nationalist slogans have been muted in recent months. Nevertheless, the party platform includes references to stopping the demographic explosion in the country and to having all children learn together. Ethnic Albanians see these references as thinly-veiled promises to halt ethnic Albanian immigration, introduce forced family planning, and insist that all children learn in Macedonian.

DA is promoting a Plan for Renewal and Development (POR), which is based on foreign financial participation. Tupurkovski has promised to bring \$1 billion of foreign investment into the country in two years. The DA economic programme includes employment of 121,000 people, renewal of existing plants and building new ones, and privatising the agricultural sector.<sup>12</sup> The campaign's focus has shifted from an early emphasis on building civil society, improving education and social services, and reinstating respect for laws, to the economy.

Tupurkovski has vowed to create a multi-ethnic party and formally it appears as if has succeeded. However, ethnic Albanians remain distrustful of DA's motives. They blame two senior DA advisors Savo Klimovski and Radmila Kiprijanova-Radovanovic for encouraging last year's student protests against the teaching of the Albanian language in the university's pedagogical institute. Tupurkovski, himself, has deplored the poor quality of education for ethnic Albanians, but stated that Tetovo University cannot be recognised.<sup>13</sup>

The coalition between VMRO-DPMNE and DA followed failed negotiations between VMRO-DPMNE and LDP. Those negotiations reportedly broke down because LDP leaders Petar Goshev and Stojan Andov were not willing to concede the prime minister slot to VMRO leader Ljupco Georgievski. According to party sources, the potential government composition places Georgievski as prime minister and Tupurkovski as speaker of the parliament. DA is presumed to be

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<sup>12</sup> *Nova Makedonija*, 21 September 1998.

<sup>13</sup> *Dnevnik*, interview with Tupurkovski, 4-5 July 1998.

interested in the ministries of economy, justice and education. Should the two form a governing coalition, Tupurkovski will be well positioned for his long-anticipated presidential candidacy next year.

## **B. SDSM: Victory for Macedonia**

As the strongest party in the ruling coalition, SDSM is mounting a well-financed campaign. Prime Minister Branko Crvenkovski is running alone, without the benefit of a coalition and without the public support of President Kiro Gligorov who has not endorsed any political leader. Crvenkovski's campaign strategy is to attack and discredit his opponents. If the electorate fears change, then his party offers the safest choice. He paints worst-case scenarios such as VMRO-DPMNE inviting the most radical ethnic Albanian parties, to share power.

SDSM has directed its most intense criticism towards VMRO-DPMNE and DA. Most observers believe Crvenkovski is trying to preserve some good will towards the LDP, in the event that he needs LDP to form a coalition. Most of his attacks have been launched toward Tupurkovski's party platform. He has directly accused Tupurkovski of "betraying global Macedonian interests and the Macedonian people . . . those who are promising \$1 billion, must tell the Macedonians who will donate the money."<sup>14</sup> This strategy may back-fire. If VMRO-DPMNE comes to power, the residual antagonism among the parties may jeopardise the future government.

SDSM's greatest strength is its experience of government. It has the most developed party structure and can afford to put up candidates in all 85 constituencies. Moreover, SDSM has been courting voters in earnest via a series of calculated increases in public expenditure. Government employees have been given a holiday pay bonus; children are to receive free text books; social security benefits will be increased; and back pensions will be paid to those in retirement. The party platform concentrates on Macedonian stability and economic growth.

The greatest dilemma for SDSM is how to run as a party dedicated to "Macedonian" issues without severing ties with the ethnic Albanian community. During the campaign, the party cannot appear to yield to ethnic Albanian separatist aspirations because of the possibility of a backlash from ethnic Macedonians. Despite political posturing, SDSM has in practice proved skilful in working with the ethnic Albanian parties.

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<sup>14</sup> *Nova Makedonija*, 25 September 1998.

### C. PDP and PDPA/NDP: With Wisdom

Despite their many differences, the ethnic Albanian political parties in Macedonia do agree over basic principles. The largest ethnic Albanian party, PDP (*Partita per Prosperitet Demokratik* or Party of Democratic Prosperity), believes that by participating in the government, it will bring greater benefits to its constituents. Its motto has been that it is better to be in government and exercising influence than to be in opposition achieving nothing. The PDPA/NDP (*Partita per Prosperitet Demokratik te Shqiptareve* or Party of Democratic Prosperity for Albanians and *Partia Demokratike Popullore* or People's Democratic Party) coalition takes a less compromising approach to achieving equal representation and treatment of ethnic Albanians in all aspects of society.

The coalition platform promises to achieve the following: equal status for ethnic Albanians in society; education for ethnic Albanians in their native language at all levels; more uses for the Albanian language in central and local government; proportional representation of ethnic Albanians according to their numbers in the wider population in state institutions, public enterprises, public administration, and economic and financial centres; decentralisation of central government; and the release of ethnic Albanian political prisoners.<sup>15</sup>

The coalition is especially concerned with the on-going violence in neighbouring Kosovo and frequent outbreaks of anarchy and violent demonstrations in Albania. Although the parties are independent, the fraternal links to Albanian and Kosovo cannot be ignored. The radicalisation of ethnic Albanian politics in Kosovo has brought broader changes to Macedonia as well. PDP, as a long-term coalition partner, is losing popularity for not being able to bring about any solutions to long-standing problems of their electorate.

Not all ethnic Albanians are happy about the electoral coalition. The parties are hoping to win 17 seats in predominately ethnic Albanian constituencies. PDP will run ten and the PDPA/NDP will run seven majoritarian candidates. However, many party members are upset by the choice of candidates to run in specific districts. The merger had been talked about for some time but was cobbled together at the last moment. In its haste to select candidates, the nominating commission members seemed more concerned with placing themselves on the ballots than choosing the strongest candidate from each district.<sup>16</sup>

PDPA/NDP branches in Gostivar and Struga nominated candidates other than the ones selected by the committee. These two local branches objected to the selected candidates and have threatened to

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<sup>15</sup> *Flaka e Vellazerimit*, 11 September 1998.

<sup>16</sup> The committee members include: Mevlan Tairi (PDP), Abdyladi Vejeli (PDP), Qamil Veliu (PDP), Menduh Thaci (PDPA), Fadil Bajrami (PDPA) and Fatmir Etemi (PDPA).

stage boycotts. In two other constituencies (42 and 66), ethnic Albanian candidates who were rejected by the nominating committee are running as independents. Nazmi Maliqi, an incumbent PDP parliamentarian, has a strong following in district 66 and many of his supporters are disappointed that the coalition chose a PDPA/NDP candidate. The fact that all the ethnic Albanian candidates have already been chosen may lead to voter apathy and discourage voter turnout. If this happens, ethnic Albanian parties may fail to win the eight proportional seats they are anticipating.

#### **D. LDP-DPM: For a Better Life**

LDP was created out of the merger of the Liberal Party and the Democratic Party that was formed in 1996 for the local elections. The two individual parties, now led by Petar Goshev, have always advocated a centrist balance and attention to economic issues. If anything, the two parties were more different in style than in substance. The new coalition partner, DPM, (*Demokratska Partija na Makedonija* or Democratic Party of Macedonia) is, however, an oddity. It is essentially a one-man band led by Tomislav "Bombaj" Stojanovski and brings the coalition only one parliamentary seat and considerable political baggage in return. LDP may have felt that it was perceived as being too accommodating towards ethnic Albanians, hence the addition of a well-recognised ethnic Macedonian nationalist.

The LDP strategy is to avoid criticising the current government but optimistically predict its team of leaders, Goshev, Andov, Penov and Bombaj, will cut unemployment by half. The current LDP mayor of Skopje, Risto Penov, has transformed a jaded electorate's expectation of what one politician can accomplish by revamping the Macedonian capital. Building upon the success and popularity of the Skopje mayor, the coalition promises to turn the country into one large construction site.

LDP could potentially participate in either a VMRO-DPMNE or an SDSM-led government. LDP has been an effective opposition party but its leadership appears to miss the limelight. The party was last in government in 1996, leaving the ruling coalition after falling out with SDSM over privatisation and monetary policy. The Liberals accused their former partner of corruption and claimed that SDSM was trying to concentrate all power in its hands. They were, in turn, accused of profiting from the sale of the country's most lucrative public enterprises.

#### **E. Movement for Cultural Tolerance and Civic Co-operation**

SPM (*Socijalisticka Partija na Makedonija* or Socialist Party of Macedonia) forms the backbone of the only multi-ethnic coalition.

Moreover, two political deals appear likely to ensure the party's survival. SPM has persuaded SDSM to co-operate in 14 constituencies and the two parties have agreed to support each other's candidates in the second round of voting.

In an unlikely combination, SPM has joined forces with several small ethnically-based parties. The Democratic Party of Turks (DPT), the Party for Full Emancipation of Roma (PCER), the Democratic Progressive Party of the Romas, the Unions of Serbs (DPS), and the Bosniac Party of Democratic Action (SDA) have allied together under the leadership of Ferid Muhic. The movement stresses that the parties have "clean hands" and that members have not been involved in criminal acts. The platform promises to encourage democracy, safe investments and domestic production.

The rationale for the electoral alliance is the five percent threshold necessary to receive a single proportional seat. SPM is unlikely to receive five percent of the electorate without this coalition. Although, SPM would probably win a couple of majoritarian seats on its own, the party needs at least five to be considered a player in the new government.

## VI. LIKELY RESULTS

Many opinion polls have been taken in the run-up to the elections, though most Macedonians view the results with scepticism. It appears that at this stage of Macedonia's democratic development, opinion polling, and especially surveys conducted by telephone, tends to under-represent the strength of opposition parties. VMRO-DPMNE supporters, for example, generally refuse to answer pollsters' questions. Based on its own polling and field observations, ICG foresees the future distribution of seats in parliament as the following:

VMRO-DPMNE	34-37
SDS	27-31
PDP/PDP-A/NDP	22-25
LDP	8-10
DA	5-7
SPM	5
DPM	1
Others	3

## VII. POTENTIAL GOVERNING COALITIONS

The 1994 elections resulted in the complete domination of one party, SDSM, in government. The outcome of the elections will be different this year with no single party likely to win an overall majority. Either SDSM or VMRO-DPMNE will probably form the next government with the co-operation of at least two other parties. Alternatively, it may even be possible for VMRO-DPMNE and SDSM to form a coalition between themselves.

For SDSM to form the government, two things need to happen. Firstly, the VMRO-DPMNE-DA coalition must receive fewer than 50 seats, otherwise it would be in a position to form a government with either the support of SPM or LDP and a few ethnic Albanian independents. Secondly, SDSM needs to gain at least 35 seats, including those of SPM, to form a government with PDP. As a fall-back, SDSM may also look to LDP for support.

VMRO-DPMNE is hoping that together with DA it will win 50 seats with its coalition. If, however, the coalition picks up fewer than 44 seats, they are in a much weaker position compared to SDSM. Even with the co-operation of LDP, SPM and a few independents, it is unlikely that they could achieve a 61-seat majority. The coalition's belief that it may appeal to the ethnic Albanian parties is probably misguided. In effect, VMRO-DPMNE seems destined to remain in opposition unless it wins a landslide or is able to garner the support of one of the ethnic Albanian parties.

The ethnic Albanian party coalition is not expected to last beyond the first round of elections, but is almost assured to winning at least 20 seats: 17 majoritarian seats and at least three proportional seats. The additional seats gained proportionally will depend upon Albanian voter turn-out. PDP has made no secret of its desire to see SDSM form the next government with its co-operation. They see a historic opportunity to deliver on some of their promises to their constituents.

PDPA/NDP elected members are likely to remain in opposition regardless of which ethnic Macedonian party forms the government. Prospects of the PDPA/NDP coalition joining a VMRO-DPMNE government make sense from the perspective of a united opposition but are unlikely given programmes and past relations.

## VIII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The 1998 parliamentary elections signal a new phase in Macedonia's experiment with electoral reform. The degree to which the elections are considered "free and fair" by the general public and international observers will indicate the level of political maturity that the country has reached. If all political parties endorse the election results, an important political milestone will have been achieved.

These elections will be held under a uniquely Macedonian framework that was constructed to preserve the present political structure. The introduction of proportional representation ensures that a significant number of minority parties will continue to participate in the government. However, the limited number of seats to be allocated by proportional representation should ensure that the political scene is not excessively cluttered by small parties. Meanwhile, a large, strong ethnic Macedonian party is likely to continue to act as an anchor in the country's politics.

Proportional representation may increase the influence of ethnically-based parties, since it encourages ethnic Macedonian parties to create coalitions based on ethnicity rather than on party platforms. For a country which already has a tendency to polarise along ethnic lines, this is likely to be a step backwards.

The development of civil society in Macedonia requires the inclusion of ethnically-based parties in the governing coalition. The balance between ethnic Macedonian treatment of their ethnic Albanian citizens and ethnic Albanian willingness to compromise is the key to preserving internal stability. Ethnic Albanian parties must continue to participate in Macedonia's political life or the country will see further deepening of its ethnic divisions. Much of this depends upon how much tolerance the government shows the Albanians, as well as the pragmatism of Albanian leaders.

With this in mind, ICG recommends the following:

- Public confidence in the integrity and secrecy of the ballot must be restored in Macedonia. The international community should ensure that any declaration of "fair and free" elections is supported by an evaluation of the entire electoral framework rather than just polling day procedures. The opposition parties believe they lost the 1994 elections as a result of electoral fraud and they will be extremely sensitive to any electoral irregularities, irrespective of whether they were intentional or due to administrative shortcomings.
- In the event that the election results are contested as a result of alleged electoral fraud or manipulation, the international community

must work closely with the accredited election observers to investigate all complaints. A written explanation of all conclusions should be made available to the general public as quickly as possible.

- The international community should encourage the new government to set aside its campaign rhetoric once the polling is complete. The first priority should be to form a working coalition rather than settle old political scores, especially through highly-charged public hearings. If the opposition forms a new government, it should be persuaded to proceed with its promised corruption investigations in a thoughtful and legal manner.
- The importance of cordial inter-ethnic relations should be one of the main components in forming a new government. The exclusion of the major Albanian parties from government could lead to an increase in domestic instability. Given the current situation in neighbouring Kosovo and Albania, the new government must ensure that it does not encourage radicalisation of the sizeable ethnic Albanian minority in Macedonia by intentionally blocking them from shaping the new government. International assistance should be predicated on the new government's commitment to improving inter-ethnic relations.
- At least half of the new parliament may be comprised of candidates who have no prior legislative experience. It is important that these new legislators receive adequate training. Many of them may have emerged from bruising campaigns and are not prepared to work with party opponents. The international community should encourage European and US political parties and associations to initiate contacts with the newly-elected officials. The ethnic Macedonian political parties have benefited from campaign advice but now require practical guidance on how to govern in a multi-ethnic government.
- The legislature is the vehicle through which people engage the government and through which parties compete for citizen loyalties. Effective legislatures must have the organisational, procedural and human resources to manage themselves, to make public policy, to pass legislation, to understand and amend the executive budget and to oversee the implementation of government policy. It is critical that legislative reform be implemented to strengthen legislative capabilities in these areas.

**Sarajevo-Skopje, 9 October 1998**



## IX. APPENDICES

### I. Political Parties and Politicians

#### **DA (*Demokratska Alternativa*) - Democratic Alternative**

DA was formed in 1998 by Vasil Tupurkovski, the last Macedonian representative to serve on the former Yugoslavia's Collective Presidency, who returns to domestic politics after several years abroad. Tupurkovski consistently scores high in opinion polls and the party effectively serves as a vehicle for his personal ambition.

- Vasil Tupurkovski            President
- Radmila Kiprijanova-Radovanovic    Executive Council, former president of the University of Skopje
- Savo Klemovski            Executive Council, former president of the University Senate

#### **DPS (*Demokratska Partija na Srbite*) - Democratic Party of Serbs**

DPS was formed in 1992 to press for special recognition for Macedonian Serbs and Montenegrins. The party underwent an internal coup in 1994 and its current leadership is clearly aligned with President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia. Due to the strong-arm tactics of its leadership, the minority status of the Serbs is conspicuously absent from the Constitution.

- Dragisa Miletic            President

#### **DPT (*Demokratska Partija na Turcite*) - Democratic Party of Turks**

DPT represents the interests of the Turkish minority and advocates increased educational opportunities for Turks but does not agitate for autonomy.

- Erdon Sarac            President
- Kenan Hasipi            MP

#### **DPM (*Demokratska Partia na Makedonija*) - Democratic Party of Macedonia**

DPM is an ethnic Macedonian party with headquarters in the predominately ethnic Albanian town of Tetovo. To a large degree, the

party exists simply to represent the minority of ethnic Macedonians living in Tetovo. It has one parliamentary seat.

- Tomislav "Bombaj" Stojanovski      President and MP

### **LDP (*Liberalna Demokratska Partija*) - Liberal Democratic Party**

The Liberal Party was founded in 1990 and patterned itself after the Alliance of Reformist Forces, the party of the last Yugoslav Prime Minister Ante Markovic. The party merged with the Democratic Party, led by Petar Goshev, in 1996 at the time of the local elections. Both parties describe themselves as parties of the centre and have been principally concerned with economic issues such as privatisation. Until forming an election coalition with DPM, LDP had placed itself in the ideological centre and distanced itself from nationalists or communist rivals.

- Petar Goshev      President
- Stojan Andov      President of Executive Council and MP
- Risto Ivanov      Vice President, former Minister of Economics
- Angelka Peeva Mladenovska      Vice President, Member of Skopje City Council
- Risto Penov      Executive Council, Mayor of Skopje
- Zoran Sapuric      Vice President and MP

### **PCER (*Partija za Celosna Emancipacija na Romite*) - Party for the Complete Emancipation of Roma**

The principal concern of the party is to protect the civil rights of the estimated 70,000 Roma who live in Macedonia.

- Abdi Faik      President and MP

### **PDA (*Partija Demokratska Akcija*) - Party of Democratic Action/True Path**

PDA was founded in 1990 and bases its politics on the universality of Islam and supports minority rights.

- Ferid Muhic      Spokesman

**PDP (*Partita Per Prosperitet Demokratik*) - Party of Democratic Prosperity**

PDP was founded in a village near Tetovo on 5 April 1990. It is the largest of the four ethnic Albanian parties. It won 23 seats in the November 1990 elections in the government's first National Assembly. PDP is the largest party of ethnic Albanians and is currently a partner in the governing coalition. There are 11 PDP members of parliament and five PDP ministers.

- Abdurahman Aliti            President and MP
- Nasir Ziberi                Secretary General, deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Labour, Trade and Social Welfare
- Ismet Ramadani            Co-ordinator of PDP parliamentary group, MP
- Mevlan Tahiri              member of the Central Council, MP, member of the delegation to the European Parliament
- Abulmenaf Bexheti        member of the Central Council, Minister of Transportation and Communications.

**PDPA (*Partita per Prosperitet Demokratik te Shqiptareve*) - Party of Democratic Prosperity for Albanians and NDP (*Partia Demokratike Popullore*) – People's Democratic Party**

PDPA began as a radical wing of the PDP and broke away in 1994. The party advocates an agreement proclaiming ethnic Macedonian and ethnic Albanian equality as a precondition to stability. NDP joined PDPA in 1996 for a coalition in the local elections. The two parties formally merged in July 1998 under the name *Partie Demokratike Shqiptare* or the Democratic Party of Albanians. However, the new party, which advocates restructuring Macedonia into a bi-national federation with an autonomous Albanian region, has been stymied in its efforts to register legally.

- Arben Xhaferi              President
- Menduh Thaci              Vice President
- Iljaz Halimi                Vice President
- Bedredin Ibrahimimi      Secretary General
- Aladdin Demiri             Vice President, former Mayor of Tetovo, currently in prison
- Rufi Osmani                Secretary, former Mayor of Gostivar, currently in prison for inciting racial violence and contempt of court

### **SDSM (Socijal Demokratski Sojuz na Makedonija) - Social Democratic Alliance**

SDSM is the successor to the League of Communists of Macedonia. Although the party has been accused of retaining its Communist tendencies, SDSM has repeatedly affirmed its commitment to furthering democracy in the country. The ruling party presents itself as standing in the European democratic tradition. Prime Minister Branko Crvenkovski and President Kiro Gligorov are SDSM members.

- Branko Crvenkovski      President, Prime Minister since 1994
- Tito Petkovski          Executive Council member, President of the Parliament
- Ljubomir Popovski      Secretary General, Internal policy
- Blagoj Handziski        Vice President, Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Gjeorgi Spasov          Minister of Justice
- Lazar Kitanovski        Minister of Defence

### **SPM (Socijalisticka Partija na Makedonija) - Socialist Party of Macedonia**

SPM has been more influential in the governing coalition than its electoral record would suggest. Leader Ljubislav Ivanov (Zingo) is the owner of the country's largest private television, which accounts for much of his influence and popularity. The party has three ministerial seats.

- Ljubisav Ivanov "Zingo"      President, MP
- Zlatka Popovska              Central Committee, Deputy Prime Minister

### **VMRO-DPMNE (Vnatresna Makedonska Revolucionerna Organizacija Demokratska Partija za Makedonsko Nacionalno Edinstvo) - The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation-Democratic Party for Macedonian Unity**

VMRO-DPMNE was founded in 1990 to promote "spiritual, economic, and ethnic union of the divided Macedonian people and the creation of a Macedonian state in a future united Balkans and a united Europe". After winning a plurality of seats in 1990, the party failed to form a government and went into opposition. It boycotted the 1994 elections. The party continues to be distinguished by its solid base of support among the working class and unemployed.

- Ljupco Georgievski      President
- Dosta Dimovska          Vice President
- Nikola Klusev          President of the Council of "Intellectuals",  
Prime Minister after the first elections in 1990

## II. Proportional Candidate Lists of Political Parties

### DA

1. Vasil Tupurkovski
2. Radmila Kiprijanova-Radovanovic
3. Savo Klimovski
4. Stojan Popov
5. Vlado Kambovski
6. Antonio Bikor

### LDP-DPM

1. Petar Goshev
2. Stojan Andov
3. Jovan Manasievski
4. Angelka Peeva-Mladenovska
5. Ace Kocevski
6. Liljana Popovska

### PDP and PDP/NDP

1. Arben Xhaferi
2. Nasir Ziberi
3. Jonuz Abdullahu
4. Abdylhadi Vejseli
5. Hisni Shaqiri
6. Kastriot Haxhirexha

### SDSM

1. Branko Crvenkovski
2. Tito Petkovski
3. Blagoj Handziski
4. Aleksandar Gestakovski
5. Ljubomir Popovski
6. Nikola Popovski

### SPM-led Coalition

1. Zlatka Popovska
2. Ferid Muhic
3. Jovan Lazarov
4. Erdogan Sarac
5. Branko Petrovski
6. Mihail Cvetrov

## VMRO-DPMNE

1. Ljupco Georgievski
2. Nikola Kljusev
3. Dosta Dimovska
4. Boris Stojmenor
5. Dimtar Dimitrov
6. Ljuben Paunovski

### III. Political Polling

#### Political Party Preference

	% Support			
SDSM	18.00*	16**	15***	21****
VMRO-DPMNE	17.29	17	16	18
LDP	10.86	9	8	7.6
PDP-A/NDP	9.43	6	7	5.6
DA	8.14	7	7	7
PDP	5.57	7	7	8
SPM	1.14	3	4	4.3
Boycott Elections	2.86	--	10	9
Undecided	26	23	21	16.7

\* Conducted by Data Press in June 1994 with a sampling of 2,800 eligible voters.

\*\* Conducted by the American-based International Republican Institute in May 1995.

\*\*\* Conducted by BriMa in June 1998 based on a sampling of face-to-face interviews with 912 adults aged 18 or older.

\*\*\*\* Conducted by the Institute for Sociological, Political and Legal Research Centre for Ethnic Relations in Sept. 1998 based on 1,630 interviews with registered voters.

#### Opinion of Leaders

	% Support of ethnic Macedonians	% Support of ethnic Albanians
Kiro Gligorov	80	18
Vasil Tuperkovski	70	26
Branko Crvenkovski	54	20
Tito Petkovski	53	7
Ljubco Georgievski	52	3
Blagoj Handjiski	47	15
Arben Xhaferi	2	86
Abdurahman Aliti	5	78
Fadil Sulejmani	2	89

Conducted by BriMa in June 1998 based on a sampling of face-to-face interviews with 912 adults aged 18 or older.



