

# Number 17

# MEDIA MIRROR

December 2006



*The electronic version of the report is available at [www.nvoinfocentar.org.mk](http://www.nvoinfocentar.org.mk)*

## **Media Monitoring in the Republic of Macedonia, 2005/2006**

**Editor:** Goran Stojkovski, M.A.

**Analysts:** Biljana Mihajlovska, Daut Dauti, Iskra Paskalova,  
Marijana Markovic, M.A. and Goce Velichkovski, M.A.

**Monitors:** Aleksandar Stevanovski, Aneta Necak, Angela Kuzmanova, Vasil Astalkovski,  
Elena Slavkovska, Edmond Sotir, Irena Hristov, Kristina Trajkova, Nagip Salja,  
Sultana Culeva, Tina Girova, Tatjana Gashtarovska

**NGO Info - center:** Gradski zid, blok 8, 1000 Skopje; tel/fax: (02) 3233 560; 3216 690  
contact@nvoinfocentar.org.mk; info@nvoinfocentar.org.mk  
[www.nvoinfocentar.org.mk](http://www.nvoinfocentar.org.mk)

## CONTENTS

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Media Approach to Social Political Events and Manner of Information</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.1. General Conclusions</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.1.1. Comparative Data on Reporting of Social-Political Topics</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.2. Comment on Media Approach to Topics</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Specific Aspects of Individual Media Coverage</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>3.1. Television Broadcasters</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>A1 TV</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Kanal 5 TV</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>MTV 1</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>MTV 2 (Programme in Albanian)</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Sitel TV</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Telma TV</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>3.2. Daily Newspapers</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>“Vecer”</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>“Vreme”</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>“Dnevnik”</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>“Utrinski vesnik”</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>“Fakti”</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>“Spic”</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Intensity of Published Material per Media</b>	<b>16</b>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

"Media Mirror" is a programme for continuing monitoring of the media in the Republic of Macedonia, which aims to provide a clear picture of the professional standards and criteria of reporting applied by the media, but also on the manner in which they cover and interpret the key social processes and events.

A special methodology was devised for the purposes of this monitoring, the first of its kind in the country. The methodology was tested by a team consisting of an editor, five analysts and 12 monitors. The results of the monitoring are listed in this report that covers the period from November 27 to December 17, 2006.

The monitoring included six daily newspapers and six national television broadcasters: "Vecer", "Vreme", "Dnevnik", "Utrinski vesnik", "Fakti", "Spic", A1 TV, Kanal 5 TV, MTV 1, MTV 2, Sitel TV and Telma TV. The media were selected for the monitoring on the basis of the perceived influence they have, or may have, on the general public in the Republic of Macedonia.

The applied methodology shows whether the media treatment of the events is thorough, moderate and balanced; whether the journalist texts and stories are supported by precisely named and identified sources; whether they consulted all sides involved in conflict situations; whether they avoid making arbitrary comments and evaluations; etc.

In addition, the analysis explores the manner in which the information is presented (scope, time, source and placement); whether it was accompanied with appropriate illustration; what was the treatment given to diverse political options and personalities, the diverse ethnic and cultural values, through the use of terminology and language; how did they use the journalistic genres and whether there were and what were the differences between the monitored media in terms of presentation of same events or phenomena. At the same time, the monitoring analyzes any eventual positioning of the media towards the government, the opposition, various ethnic communities, political platforms or beliefs.

The subject of this analysis was the media treatment of:

1. Transfer of power (after the 2006 Parliamentary Elections)
2. The international integration issues involving the Republic of Macedonia: EU
3. The Framework Agreement
4. The Civil Sector in Macedonia

A total of 988 published items were analyzed during the period covered by this analysis: text, illustrations, cartoons and comics, articles in the central news programmes covering the said topics. The commercial political advertisements, public statements and announcements were not subject to this monitoring and analysis.

## 2. MEDIA APPROACH TO SOCIAL POLITICAL EVENTS AND MANNER OF INFORMATION

### 2.1. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

- Majority of the media, during the period covered by this analysis, criticized the Government and conclude that, judging from past practice, nothing of significance will change after its first 100 days in office. According to most media, the Government actions have detrimental impact on stability, security and development of the country: *"Without a political consensus, there will be no start of negotiations date (and the Government is unable to establish such a general consensus and dialogue); The country is the main culprit why this perspective moves away from Macedonia and it is rather in bad taste to blame EU and its own crisis for our own failures; In Macedonia, 2007 could be the year of a new story if Gruevski proves unable to repair the political crisis that he created; The European Commission is mad at the Macedonian Government because, even after the criticism in the annual progress report, the politically motivated purges in the administration continue; The Government is involved in a selective*

*battle for political discrediting of its opponents; Gruevski didn't live up to the challenge to establish independent judiciary. He allowed his partner Thaqi to meddle in judicial decisions about prisoners and left Krasniqi free; The Government is to blame for the situation regarding corruption, having in mind the years of its negative influence (intervention) in the nongovernmental sector. It was, in fact, the ruling coalition that made the biggest blow to Macedonian 'Transparency'; etc. (The quotes were taken from seven (of the total of 12) analyzed media. As described later in this text in Chapter 2.2. Comment on Media Approach to Topics, in points on Macedonian Relations with EU, Transfer of Power, the Framework Agreement, the Civil Sector).*

- According to the media, the Government is engaged in a “selective battle for political discrediting of its opponents, while Krasniqi walks around free and phantom armed gangs interrupt ‘Nota-Fest’” and that “the political bulldozer that dealt with illegal construction deflated like an old 'rusty machine'”.

At the same time, the media conclude that, in spite of the announced "bureaucratic guillotine", "the political realignment of the institutions continued to the effect that citizens that entered don't feel like they face an institution of the state, but a party political court”.

### **2.1.1. Comparative Data on Reporting of Social-Political Topics**

For a detailed statistical breakdown of each media's coverage of a given topic, see the appendix to this Report (Table on Intensity of Publication of Materials per Media in the Analyzed Period).

## **2.2. COMMENT ON MEDIA APPROACH TO TOPICS**

### **Transfer of Power**

One feature of the coverage of this topic is that most media continuously and extensively criticized the work of the Government, with the following comments: “It's all the same. *Small salaries that don't come regularly, the life is expensive and tends to become more so. There are no new jobs. The number of 400,000 unemployed doesn't fall. The announced boom in the economic growth has yet to shake up the standards of living*”; “*Lots of talk, little is done – we see only ambitions presented in the economy*”; “*Selective battle for political discrediting of the opponents*”; “*scandalous arrest of Rubincov Zareski; it turned out that there were no grounds to hold him in detention; two people were taken to the same police precinct - Zareski hand-cuffed, Isnifaris Xhemali with his shepherd's club in his hands. We could only speculate why the double standards were applied*”; “*it was a primitive manifestation of public authority which results in the suspect being perceived as a political victim and not subject to regular official procedure*”; “*this Government, as many other before it, uses the veil of the fight against corruption to deal with its political opponents and those it wants out of its way, for one reason or the other*”; “*furthermore, the alignment of the institutions of the system along party lines continues to the effect that a citizens on entry doesn't feel like he faces an institution of the state, but a party court. In that regard, the new Government repeats the mistakes made by its predecessors*”; “*The progress report made in Brussels lists all the black stains created in the first 100 days of Gruevski's Cabinet – no sense for political dialogue and politization of public administration. Gruevski failed to rise to the challenge to create independent judiciary. He allowed Thaqi, his partner in the Government, to meddle in judicial decisions about prisoners, and let Krasniqi walk free. In the coming period, the declarations should turn into concrete actions*”; “*The Government's self-love*” with “*non-transparent spending on commercials and advertising*”; “*In its first 100 days, the Government made a film. A long feature film of the popular, commercial type, intended to be likable and made to entertain, not to enlighten*”<sup>1</sup> (“Dnevnik”, A1 TV, “Utrinski vesnik”, “Vreme”, Kanal A1 TV, “Fakti”, “Spic”).

“Utrinski vesnik” daily concludes that the Government is totally lacking in self-criticism and doesn't admit to any mistakes. It emphasizes that the “media presentation of the government is reduced

---

<sup>1</sup> The quotes were taken from these seven media, ordered by the sequence they are listed above: Kanal 5 TV, December 4, 2006; “Fakti”, December 4, 2006; “Utrinski vesnik”, December 2/3, 2006; A1 TV, 4.12.2006; “Dnevnik” 2.12.2006; “Vreme”, December 5, 2006; Kanal 5 TV, December 4, 2006; “Utrinski vesnik”, December 5, 2006 and December 11, 2006; “Spic”, December 4, 2006.

to an appealing TV commercial for a low-quality product”). The daily placed special emphasis on the relations between coalition partners, emphasizing that VMRO-DPMNE is held hostage by the DPA and that the Ministry of the Interior was used to cover the latter's criminal activities, only to preserve the coalition that is harmful for the state. A1 TV, on the other hand, noted that "the Prime Minister didn't even hint when the citizens would feel the effects of all these projects, which remain far from being completed”.

Unlike the majority of the media, the "Vecer" daily holds identical views with the Government and VMRO-DPMNE. ("More than 50 legislative projects, lowest taxes in Europe, crime-rates reduced by 95 percent, zero-corruption in state institutions, doubled budget funds for agriculture, education and culture, public tender competition on the third mobile phone operator opened. *These are just some of the positive results achieved in the first 100 days of this Government's tenure in office. If we add here the strong message that the country received from the NATO Summit in Riga and the start of negotiations to relax the strict visa regime, we could easily say that this was the best start of a government since the independence*").

### **Macedonia and EU**

Pessimism and disappointment are the main characteristics of the coverage on the topic of Macedonian relations with the EU. Because of the bad news coming from EU institutions and authorities (i.e. their negative views on the desired quicker advance towards EU membership), the media reporting is dominated by disappointing and pessimistic prognosis on the possibility for Macedonian membership in the foreseeable future: "*Gruevski's hopes sunk; the road to membership shall be long and hard, having in mind the slow progress of reforms, especially in the fight against corruption and reforms in the judiciary – the two weakest points of Macedonia that earned us strong criticism by EU's officials earlier this week*" (A1 TV); "*Hitch-hiking to Brussels – Macedonian Way*" ("Vreme" daily, [the suggestive tone of the headline is augmented by a photo of a foot with a toe showing through a tear in the sock, associating strongly to poverty, misery and is direct assessment of the situation in the country]); "*Government under attack by the public over its relaxed approach to the fact that there is not start of negotiations date with EU*" ("Utrinski vesnik"); "*It is this country's own fault that this perspective moves away from Macedonia and it is in rather bad taste to blame EU and its own crisis for our failure*" ("Dnevnik"); "*The European Commission is mad at the Macedonian Government over the fact that, even after the criticism in the annual progress report, the politically motivated purges in the administration continue. Party motivated changes in the administration are unacceptable to Europe and should stop. The consequences will fall on Macedonia - reacts Brussels*" (Kanal 5 TV); "*What message could Brussels expect from Macedonia, when the people that represent her are unable to harmonize their own actions, not to mention harmonizing border security standards with the European ones*" ("Spic").

The approach applied by "Vecer" daily is totally opposed. This media is determined in its praise and support for Government's policies and often engages in open criticism of EU administration and its diplomatic representatives in Macedonia (for instance, Ambassador Erwan Fouere). In addition, this paper is critical of a number of domestic politicians and political entities, which are considered to be "*united in their obstructions of Government's work and policies*" (for example, the article "*Brother-in-Law*", November 27, 2007).

The media provided solid publicity to Prime Minister Gruevski's meeting with his Italian counterpart, Romano Prodi, especially regarding Prodi's view that Macedonia should get a date for the start of negotiations for EU membership. The optimism presented in that coverage (borderline frenetic in "Vecer"), nonetheless remains in the background of the numerous and extensive stories dominated by pessimism, scepticism and criticism.

Another occasion for additional placement of negative assessment of Government's foreign policy in the media was found in the way the German CDU treated VMRO-DPMNE (the party considers itself a part of the family of demo-christian parties in Europe). The media emphasized the fact that CDU didn't invite VMRO-DPMNE as guests at its congress, in a situation when VMRO-DPMNE declared it part of its strategy to create strong and intensive ties with Germany.

This analysis noted a visible failure to adhere to the accepted professional standards for correct and neutral reporting with the media that intensively criticise the Government, but also with the media that engage in unquestionable and non-critical praise and promotion of its actions and policies. Such trends, during the period covered by this report, were noted in Kanal 5 TV and "Vecer" daily. *As described later in this text, in Chapter 3. Specific Aspects, in the sections that analyze the professional standards application in the coverage in the two media.*

### **Framework Agreement**

In general terms, the Ohrid Framework Agreement, i.e. the application of the "Badintaire Majority", was not a dominant topic for the media during the period covered by this analysis. The Badintaire Majority was, indeed, mentioned in reports and stories covering other topics: Leadership meetings; election of members of Judicial Council; the opposition's dissatisfaction with the composition of the Communities' Committee; the conditional agreement of the political parties from the other ethnic communities (actually in the SDSM-led coalition) to give their votes to secure the Badintaire Majority; the application of this principle at the local level; the presentation of Robert Badintaire with a medal of honour by President Crvenkovski.

The opening of the monument to Skender Bey in Skopje proved particularly fertile and attractive topic for journalistic comments. The monument resulted in a series of folklore-historical and philosophical metaphors used by the media. Most of them were used and interpreted by the media as predicting events which, as designed, won't bring any good ("*The New Medieval Order*", "*The Dragons Killed George*", etc.).

While the lack of Badintaire Majority (because of the intentional coalition policies) meant to some that Macedonia is taken back to the situation before the Ohrid Framework Agreement, other people find the calculations with the votes from representatives of smaller communities (Serbs, Roma, Turks), and the combinations regarding the balance of "forces" in the Communities' Committee "interesting political moves". Therefore, "Utrinski vesnik" believes that "*2007 could be a year of new complications in Macedonia if Gruevski fails to repair the political crisis that he himself created when he entered the triangle with DUI and DPA*" ("*Cruise Ticket*", November 28, 2006), while A1 TV (and several other media) reviewed the possible consequences on December 11: *The Constitution will change. The parties in the Government opened the 'Pandora's Box', while the opposition, DUI in particular, us to introduce a provision, an article that would ensure that the party of the Albanians that won the most votes in the Elections will get into the government*, i.e. "*DUI's proposal that Badintaire Majority should also apply to the composition of the Government, i.e. to guarantee that the party of the Albanians that has plurality Albanian votes will obligatory make it into the Government*".

This line of thought culminated in "Fakti" daily newspaper: "*Belgian Model Suits Macedonia Well*" (or the "Swiss" model, as proposed in the article carrying this headline, December 12, 2006).

In its treatment of this topic, "MTV2 - Programmes in Albanian language" took an ambitious approach and presented its own prognosis in a report, in which the author proposed that "*the employment of 99 Albanian translators and interpreters will provide for full implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement*" (December 4, 2006). In another article, on the representation of Albanians in Struga's Office of the Rescue and Defense Directorate, the local correspondent reports that "*not a single Albanian is employed there*", a claim that was not confirmed by any official source (December 1, 2006).

### **The Civil Sector**

The increased media interest of the past period, provoked by the turbulent events in several civic organizations, somewhat subsided. There was a bare minimum of published articles and stories on this topic.

"Vreme" daily published one article under the headline: "*The Absurdity of Macedonian Democracy/the Court Prevented an NGO from Registration, the State is sued in Strasbourg*" ("Vreme" December 13, 2006). Kanal 5 TV emphasized that the Government is unable to deal with the corruption and supported its claim, among other things, with the conclusion that the Government is to blame for the current situation with corruption because of its negative influence (intervention) in the non-governmental sector: *It was, in fact, the ruling coalition that made the biggest blow to Macedonian 'Transparency'. Its President,*

*Gabriela Konevska-Trajkovska was made Vice Prime-Minister in Gruevski's Government, while Taseva and Ordanovski closed the association in their battle for power. Until a new Anti-Corruption Commission is appointed, its capacities and competences are also restricted. The branch of the "Transparency International" closed, the Anti-Corruption Commission without leadership, since its Chairperson Mihajlo Janevski was named Minister in the Government, Macedonia awaits December 9, the International Day of Fight Against Corruption, as a highly corrupt country (Kanal 5 TV, December 9, 2006).*

### **3. SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF INDIVIDUAL MEDIA COVERAGE**

The analysis used six factors in the treatment of selected material (text/stories, illustration, comics, cartoons), to determine the specific aspects characteristic of each individual media: **1.** The approach to the analyzed topics (number and intensity of published materials, their scope, placement in the pages of the print media or the broadcasting schedule); **2.** The genre structure and characteristics of the article or textual unit; **3.** The correlations header-headline-lead and text-illustration [lead-story-footage]; **4.** Sources of information; **5.** Actors and protagonists; **6.** Treatment of facts.

#### **3.1. TELEVISION BROADCASTERS**

##### **A1 TV**

The Transfer of Power, as was common for the period covered by this report, was the most represented topic in the news on A1 TV, with greatest coverage and attention being dedicated to the "100 Days in Office of the Government", the cases of organized crime arrests. The Civil Sector wasn't covered in a single article. The general impression is that A1 TV used the "100 Days in Office" to summarize and repeat some of its criticism of the Government, presented previously on several occasion“.

The descriptive report was the dominant genre form. Commentary/reports were rare, but did take an important place in the general perception of A1 TV's reporting, containing explicit assessment and suggestions that reflect the broadcaster's position towards events and subjects.

The general leads, the headlines and the visual illustration played, in majority of cases, a descriptive role. A number of leads to the stories contain evaluations and opinions similar or identical to those expressed in the corresponding stories.

A1 TV got the information on most events from relevant sources (either participants directly involved in the events or persons with competence to discuss the given topic), whose statements were quoted directly. The views of almost all involved parties are presented in the same article or, on occasion, in a sequence of two articles. On certain events (for example, the arrest of persons involved in "Bachilo (Sheepfold)" and "Denationalized land" cases) there was a notable presence of speculations ("A1 learns...", "we learn unofficially", "allegedly").

The central position in A1's reporting, depending on the importance and appeal of events in terms of how attractive they were, was given to the Government, the Prime Minister and, as a whole, the actors involved in organized crime cases. To mark the 100 Days in Office, in addition to its results, the broadcaster also summarized the criticism on some of its moves and actions, especially its approach to European integrations and non-transparent contracting practices. Prime Minister Gruevski was also targeted by indirect criticism, through the assessment that the presentation of Government's results was "pompous, unprecedented media campaign" in which the Prime Minister "played the role of TV show-host who interrogates his ministers". Significant time was reserved for the opposition's view on the first 100 days in office of the Government, presented with the subtle remark that "criticism lacks deeper analysis". A1 was subtle in its positive remarks on the arrests of persons suspected for involvement in organized crime and abuse of office ("This is one of the biggest actions in the fight against organized crime and corruption"), but didn't fail to note the "double standards" applied by the authorities (the cases of Zarevski and Xhemaili, respectively).

The facts are presented and/or interpreted without overemphasized evaluation that would change their essence. The opinions presented in the period covered by this analysis only confirm previously presented and known views of the broadcaster.

During this period, A1 took the role of evaluator of the work of other media companies. In the dispute surrounding "Spic's" initiative (supported by "Vreme") to not carry advertisements commissioned by the Government, A1 TV took their side ("*the for-free newspaper and voice of the people...*") in the argument against "Dnevnik" and "Utrinski vesnik", which were declared "*pro-government papers with falling circulations, due to the lack of market-based response to the challenge presented by the free-of-charge 'Spic' and the affordable 'Vreme'*".

### KANAL 5 TV

The analysis of the material aired in the news of Kanal 5 TV leads to the conclusion that the broadcaster and its editorial policy are directed towards continuing evaluation and criticism of Government's activities, often moving into straightforward opposition to the Government and its policies. This approach was noted in the articles and stories dedicated to the topic of Transfer of Power, but also regarding the other topics subject to this analysis. The broadcaster presented simplified conclusions on the economic situation in the country, related to the fact that the Government is powerless to deal with the corruption (December 4, December 9, 2006).

The reporting is dominated by informative genres, albeit with express opinionated character of majority of reports and stories. Opinions that the Government tries to limit the rule of the law, i.e. comments on its meddling and attempts to control autonomous social institutions, were placed in reports dedicated to the, still very much alive, case of the "Tetovo University" (it was used to start a debate for vote of confidence for Sulejman Rushiti, Minister of Education, in the Sobranie; December 12, 2006).

The leads to the stories are used by the authors to present their own views and opinions on the reported events (December 7, 2006).

The "*sources in the diplomatic corps*" and "*according to Kanal 5 sources*" were the two constructs used to present information coming from unidentified sources (December 8, 2006). During this period, there was common use of reports that present information gathered in street polls made with anonymous citizens, whose views were interpreted by the author in the context of criticism of the Government (December 4, 2006; December 8, 2006).

There was prominent criticism and negative assessment of the Prime Minister and the Government, especially regarding their work and activities in the first 100 days in office (December 4, 2006).

During this period, the facts were presented in a predominantly neutral manner. Nonetheless, in the articles which used unconfirmed facts, based on information gathered from unidentified sources, there was a notable trend to try to reduce those facts to a common denominator, thus helping the journalists create subjective argumentation used for direct accusations at the expense of the Government (December 9, 2006).

### MTV 1

Transfer of power was, by far, the most represented topic during the period covered by this analysis, especially the events surrounding arrests of former officials and the marking of the first 100 days in office of the new Government. In terms of their number and scope, the Transfer of power was followed by the reports dedicated to EU integration processes, while the Ohrid Framework Agreement and the Civil Sector were represented in a minimum of coverage.

Reports were the dominant genre form used, with notable use of news and statements in the coverage. No difficulties were experienced in terms of determination of the genre of a given article. The information presented by MTV1 were exclusively descriptive in their character.

MTV1 invested greater energy and effort in the presentation of the leads to the stories, aiming to increase the viewers' interest in its stories, taking care that they correspond with the actual contents. The footage used was an integral part of the articles, although, in a number of cases (especially in the stories dedicated to EU integrations), use of incorrectly marked footage was noted.

During the period covered by this analysis, MTV1 relied exclusively on information coming from clearly identified sources.



In spite of the fact that the current Government was the most present actor in the reports dedicated to European integrations, there is the general impression that all larger entities in Macedonian politics received some attention in MTV1 news, especially visible in the treatment of topics related to the marking of the first 100 days in office of this Government and the arrests of former public officials.

The facts were presented as they were, without additional evaluation and interpretation by the journalists.

### **MTV 2 (PROGRAMME IN ALBANIAN)**

MTV2 – Programmes in Albanian demonstrated greatest interest in the events related to the transfer of power, especially the first 100 days in office of the Government. The editorial office also prepared a considerable number of reports on Macedonian relations with the EU.

News, reports and statements were the dominant genre forms, without mixing of genres and without additional evaluations and comments.

The correlations header-headline-lead and text (article) - illustration were logical and correctly presented. Those elements were prepared with professional routine, without efforts to be more creative.

The broadcaster uses a standard approach and presents facts and opinions from official sources (Government ministers, political parties, foreign diplomatic representatives), which are, however, mostly presented through intermediaries - especially in terms of relations with the EU (news agency reports, commonly MIA's).

No specific treatment or approach to individual actors was noted in the MTV2 news.

The approach to facts was neutral.

### **SITEL TV**

During the period covered by this analysis, Sitel TV was concerned mostly with the events related to the current Government's campaign to mark the first 100 days in office, then to the campaign for arrests of former public officials and the activities related to the negotiations to relax the visa regime.

Reports were, by far, the most dominant genre form used by the analyzed stories and, this time, were mostly descriptive in their style and approach. In spite of that general trend, we can't omit the "habit" to use every possible opportunity to criticize DUI, the leading opposition party in the Albanian political bloc ("*...DUI still can't accept its status in the opposition, full four months after the elections...*", November 27, 2006).

There was a visible absence of the customary euphoria in Sitel's leads to the stories. During this period, the broadcaster exhibited greater restraint and the leads provided summary of the contents presented in the corresponding stories. The footage used to illustrate the stories were appropriate, but often unmarked properly.

The trend to construct whole stories and reports without listing of sources of information was registered once again (November 28, 2006). There were cases, albeit with much less regularity and frequency, of use of phrases such as "*as Sitel learns...*" (November 30, 2006).

VMRO-DPMNE remained Sitel's favourite, both judging from the manner of presentation of the party's activities and the number of appearances in the reports. SDSM, as an opposition party, was saved from criticism and was given ample space to present its own views and positions on current events.

The facts discussed during the period covered by this analysis were presented without further interpretation and evaluations.

## TELMA TV

The transfer of power, and the 100 days in office of the Government in particular, were represented in the greatest number of reports, although they completely neglected the analytical approach. The second-ranked topic, the relations with the EU, was covered in a limited number of articles, which means that the broadcaster didn't pay much attention to a number of important events.

The most commonly used genre form was the report, followed by news and statements, including the report on the "open session of the Government" on the occasion of its first 100 days in office. The articles were predominantly descriptive in their character (there were no opinionated interventions).

The lead introductions corresponded to the actual contents of the stories, which were characterized with quality coverage of the events – both text and footage filmed at the reported events.

There was no omission of sources in reports on Telma TV. To the contrary, the topics are treated with arguments presented by a variety of sources. The sources were properly identified and no attempts were made to manipulate them.

During this period, there was neglectable number of actors towards which Telma TV applied the critical or opinionated approach. Such cases were more of an exception to the general rule of neutrality maintained by the broadcaster (on Sulejman Rushiti, Minister of Education: "*Minister Rushiti measures his achievements in the past period in general and rather imprecise categories*", December 4, 2006).

The mainly neutral approach was maintained in the treatment of facts.

### 3.2. DAILY NEWSPAPERS

#### "VE CER"

The transfer of power remains in the focus of interest of the daily. "Vecer" published 33 articles on this topic. The analysis of the published articles leads to the conclusion that the daily continues with its strong support of the Government, at times creating a questionable presentation of current situation in the country. It puts emphasis on positive treatment of the Government and its policies in all areas of social living, especially in terms of finances and economic development (December 5, 2006).

The two genre forms characteristic for the presentation of information in the newspaper are news and reports. In addition to the descriptive articles, there were articles of opinionated and judgmental character.

The headlines correspond to the actual contents of the articles, but often overemphasize a segment of the articles if it could be used to further promote the Government. This trend is most visible in the construction of headlines that present the support of certain European countries for Macedonian membership in the EU received, according to the daily, as a result of successful foreign policy actions of the Government (December 7, 2006).

The omission of sources of information or use of unidentified sources is visible only in articles reporting on activities of the opposition (November 28, 2006).

The paper's favours and positive remarks are reserved for the Prime Minister, while the brunt of its negative qualifications is suffered by the DUI's leader ("*...the destructively inclined Ahmeti...*", November 27, 2006). Another questionable matter is the fact that the paper, while failing to support its claims with any facts, points at Erwan Fouere, the EU representative to Macedonia, as "*...direct participant in the efforts to undermine Government's policies aimed to deal with the so-called 'urbanism mafia'*" (November 27, 2006).

During this period, the paper mainly presented facts. However, in a number of cases they remain unconfirmed or confirmed by unnamed sources, or were missing altogether, especially in articles intended to accuse and discredit the former Government (November 28, 2006).

## “VREME”

The transfer of power was the main topic covered by “Vreme”. Among the articles dedicated to this topic, the majority were dedicated to the cases of organized crime and the 100 Days in Office. One feature of the reporting of “Vreme” during this period was the fact that, in addition to reporting on daily and current affairs, the paper dedicated significant space to presentations of the Government and cabinet members. It carried exhaustive interviews with Prime Minister Gruevski, ministers Aco Spasenoski and Vele Samak, and it presented the main goals and the key members of the teams and cabinets of several Ministers in seven instalments of a continuing story. Yet, judging from their presence in the front-page and the first two pages in the paper, the dominant place in the reporting was reserved to cases of organized crime and corruption.

The report is the main genre form used by “Vreme”. A small fraction of reports contain subtly presented opinions and evaluations. The daily approached the persons it interviewed correctly, although some of the questions asked present direct opinions, suggestions and views held by the journalists. The editorial comments covered the top-stories and persons. Their treatment is mostly critical, with occasional exceptions of moderately positive opinions of some moves and actions of the Government.

A large portion of reports carry headlines with opinionated and suggestive constructions (“*How much work does the Head-of-State do? / He walks around a lot but flies rarely*”, December 9, 2006; “*New Government, Old Rules / The Son of MP Dulic Named Director at the Customs Bureau*”, November 30, 2006). Some articles are announced on the front-page with headlines similar in contents with the headlines used on the inside pages, but the front-page headlines use far more attractive construction. It is worth noting that the central and dominant place on the front-page in a great majority of cases is given to organized crime cases. During this period, important role was reserved to visual illustrations, using a variety of forms (photographs, retouched and composite photos, graphs, photographic stories) with great power of association and metaphorical contents. The front-page is dominated by retouched and composite photographs (Prime Minister’s face is over-imposed on the poster for the “Untouchables” feature film, playing the role of Elliott Ness; photo-robot of the tax evader; the ‘brain’ behind the “Bachilo” case, etc.). To illustrate the “Bachilo” case, graphs and schemes were used to show the movement of money and involved persons, while the ceremony of Gruevski’s presentation of his Master’s Thesis was covered with brief article and photographic story with parodic comments.

“Vreme” quotes information received from named sources without additional comments. During this period, the information was often accompanied with speculations coming from vaguely noted sources (“*sources inside the investigation*”, “*well informed sources*”, “*according to information available to the paper*”, “*our sources*”). A number of articles were constructed solely on basis of speculations.

“Vreme” presented its views and opinions on a number of actors involved in the current events. It evaluated the moves of individuals (the Prime Minister, former Health Minister Dimov, Mayor Mexhiti...), groups defined in general terms (suspects in the “Bachilo” case, politicians, tax-evaders...) and collective entities (the Government). Criticism prevails, but there were cases of positive evaluations which contributed to the balanced (often leaning to the positive) treatment of a number of subjects (the Government, the Prime Minister). Editorial comments often carry suggestions about certain persons considered by the daily to hold the key role in the events subjected to evaluation and assessment. The opinions are often expressed indirectly, using the associative and/or metaphorical power of the visual illustration (composite photos, cartoons, and comics).

“Vreme” mainly presents facts that it uses to construct its views on given events and subjects. This impression is somewhat modified by qualification on a number of persons, presented on basis of information received from sources of questionable validity and veracity.

## “DNEVNIK”

The coverage was dominated by articles dedicated to Transfer of Power. The articles reported on Government's activities in an informative manner. The European integration processes were covered in fewer articles, but those articles often contain commentary and analysis (published in "Evrorama" department), abundant in opinions and suggestions.

Reports dominate the genre structure of articles dedicated to the topic of transfer of power, while commentary/reports are present mostly in the coverage of the topics of Framework Agreement and Macedonian relations with the EU. The facts in informative articles are commonly presented in a descriptive manner.

Headlines that summarize the main topic were used for reports. Only rarely were headlines with suggestive overtones used for reports. The daily often uses boxed features aimed to direct the attention of the readers towards the message that the media wants to convey. Photographs used as illustrations were usually taken at actual events. However, in quite a few cases the otherwise realistic photos are accompanied with captions with suggestive tone.

The messages presented in the "Evrorama" department usually come from unidentified international sources, such as: *"our sources in the European Parliament who wanted to remain anonymous"*, *"an assistant in the Parliament in Brussels"*. The use of unclearly identified sources dominates the articles reporting on conflicting events (for example: *"Dnevnik learns"*, *"sources in security community"*, *"high-ranking official at the Ministry of the Interior"*, *"the Ministry of Education says..."*). Such sources were used to inform the public about the threatening letters directed to the Minister of Education Rushiti – *"The new NLA will use bullets to deal with the Tetovo University"*, November 30, 2006).

There was a notable tendency to present SDSM as *"hypocritical"* party or as *"DUI's patron"*, while DUI, on the other hand, is seen as *"a factor that intentionally undermines the work of the new Government"* (*"The Dragons Killed George"*, of December 30, 2006, presents the author's position that *"SDSM proved to what extent hypocrisy and amnesia can go when they and their coalition partners are concerned"*, commenting on SDSM's position that *"it won't take any part in a political circus aimed at daily political gains"*, regarding the monument to Skender Bey in Skopje).

The facts were usually presented descriptively. With "Dnevnik" there is a tendency to present as many facts as possible, with the intent to make the audience understand it as indicator of the efficient and transparent work of the Government.

## “UTRINSKI VESNIK”

The reporting was dominated by the topic of transfer of power, with frequent mention of the related sub-topics: the first 100 days in office of the new Government and the arrests of former officials. The topic of the Framework Agreement was related to a single current event - the raising of Skender-Bey's monument.

In addition to articles structured as reports, in terms of their genre, there was frequent use of commentary/reports as combination of descriptively presented facts and suggestive, prognosticating and opinionated remarks by the reporters. (*"The experience of the conflict between Crvenkovski and Buckovski, at the time when the latter was the Prime Minister, teaches us that the President of the Republic will take his views in the public only at the time when he feels stronger"* [in *"The Cohabitation President-Prime Minister is Kept in Place by the High Ratings of the Government"*, December 15, 2006]). There were plenty of reporters' commentaries. They contain elements of analysis and pretence to reflect the positions the daily holds on a number of current issues of special social interest (for example, one such comment was: *"Some questions, in spite of the euphoria, deserve an answer"*, December 15, 2006).

Suggestive headlines were often used for articles dedicated to the transfer of power. Suggestive headlines sometimes use two different formulations, one for the front-page, and the other for the inside-page that carries the whole article. The daily commonly carries realistic photographs that depict a scene

from the reported event. Quite often, the caption for the photo is used to emphasize the very point that the article intends to make.

The use of unclear and vaguely identified sources was on the rise: *“the opposition camp”*, *“representatives of the opposition”*, *“high-ranking sources in the Government tell 'Utrinski'”*. It happens often for a single article to use both precisely and vaguely identified sources. Vaguely-named sources are often used when interpreting and evaluating a given event.

Several actors and their relations, as well as their behaviour as individuals, were scrutinized and analyzed by the daily (President Crvenkovski, Prime Minister Gruevski, Vlado Buckovski, as well as several political parties actively involved in current political affairs). In addition to their individual actions and their mutual relations, the daily analyzed their views and positions on concrete current issues and affairs.

The articles of mixed commentary/report character, the facts were often presented with interpretation and evaluation.

### “FAKTI”

The transfer of power and the relations with EU occupied the attention of the newspaper, visible from the great number of articles dedicated to these two topics. Within these two topics, special attention was given to the first 100 days of the Government, dominated by criticism of political entities and some experts.

Reports and news were the main genre forms used in the reporting, together with a great number of statements. Also present in the genre structure were the classical interview (with Rufe Osmani, professor at the University of SEE), and interview presented in indirect speech (with Ollie Rehn).

The majority of headlines were neutral in their tone. However, headlines used with some articles contain opinions and evaluations (primarily in the coverage of the first 100 days in office) as well as predictions (especially on the process of European integrations) primarily on the actors involved, and emphasized by the journalists as important points (*“Far from European Flags”*, December 13, 2006; *“Many Words, Little Work”*, December 4, 2006; *“In Terms of Economy, We Only Hear of Many Ambitions”*, December 4, 2006).

“Fakti” bases its reporting on a number of official and named sources located in the Government, parties, the EU and European diplomatic representatives and experts. The sources are largely balanced, yet, during this period, the sources who criticize the Government's first 100 days actions dominate.

The fact that the paper eliminated the commentary and opinion genres, and the articles don't mix interpretative with informative discourse, points out at the neutrality of the paper. However, the general impression of the coverage of the first 100 days in office of this Government is that more space is given to the critics.

The facts are mainly treated neutrally, with more active approach in the headlines with emphasis on certain facts or statements that still don't reflect the views of the paper (*“Many Words, Little Work”*, December 4, 2006; *“In Terms of Economy, We Only Hear of Many Ambitions”*, December 4, 2006).

### “SPIC”

During the period covered by this analysis, “Spic” dedicated its attention to the topic of the first 100 days of work of the Government (and in particular to the arrests of former officials, on a variety of charges).

Reports, news and op-ed's were the dominant genres used in the analyzed articles. Regarding the character of the textual units, much criticism was noted, especially on the Government's campaign for promotion of its results in the first 100 days in office (*“What we saw during the marking of the first 100 days of Gruevski's Government proves that it was not only fast and full of energy, but can dribble the ball”*, December 6, 2006, front-page, *“A Dribble in 100 Steps”*, the “Pencil-Sharpener” column).

As usual, “Spic” continued with its inclination to support “creative” headlines, such as: *“Government in Action”*, December 5, 2006; *“Hundred Days of Applying Make-Up”*, December 6, regardless whether such headlines provide a caricature of the actual contents of the article or not.

Regarding the visual illustration, it is rarely used to accompany the published text, but when used, it did correspond to the writing.

In spite of the fact that it wasn't a regular practice, a number of articles unavoidably presented information not based on clearly defined sources. Therefore, the paper used phrases such as *"we learn"*, *"sources in the MVR"*, *"representative of the readmission negotiation team"* (*"Sheepfold in a Sheep farm"*, December 1, 2006; *"Visas and Readmission at the Negotiation Table"*, November 29, 2006).

"Spic" attempted to contact all parties involved in the events and provided them the space to present their views. The editorial office, on the other hand, criticized the current Government, especially on evidence in *"Government's Advertisements? Thanks, but no thanks!"*, article that took over the whole front-page and part of page 5 on December 13, 2006.

The EU integrations and the campaign for promotion of the first 100 days in office provoked "Spic's" editorial office to move beyond pure presentation of facts, but to enrich the contents with its own views, at times even before listing all the necessary information (*"What is the message and can the strict Brussels expect from Macedonia, having in mind that people that represent her are unable to coordinate their own actions, not to mention harmonizing the border-security practices with the existing European standards"*, *"Power of Imagination"*, December 4, 2006).

# APPENDICES

**INTENSITY OF PUBLISHED MATERIAL PER MEDIA**

*For the Period: November 27 – December 17, 2006*

Topic	Media												Total (per topic)
	A1	Spic	Vecer	Vreme	Dnevnik	Kanal 5	MTV1	MTV2 (Albanian)	Sitel	Telma	Utrinski vesnik	Fakti	
1. Transfer of Power	44	19	33	155	72	58	36	25	17	43	146	29	<b>677</b>
2. Relations with EU	14	14	16	20	33	13	21	15	12	5	41	21	<b>225</b>
3. The Framework Agreement	7	4	0	17	16	0	4	2	3	1	14	2	<b>70</b>
4. The Civil Sector in Macedonia	0	1	1	3	1	3	1	1	0	1	4	0	<b>16</b>
<b>Total (per Media)</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>988</b>