

PEOPLE-CENTRED ANALYSES REPORT 2010 Interethnic Relations



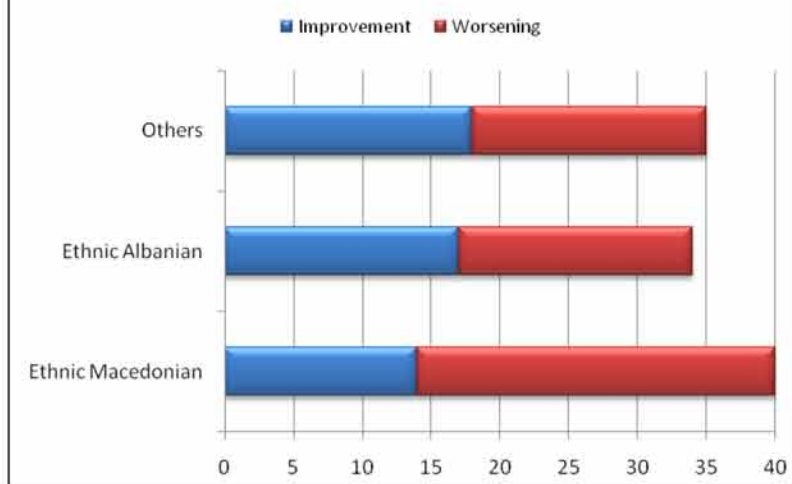
The majority of respondents (58%) saw no change in the state of the interethnic relations in the country over the 12 months prior to the survey, and a tenth (11%) thought they had improved.

Macedonian society can be described as simultaneously a multiethnic, multinational, plural and multicultural young democracy. A brief review of the structure of ethnic affiliation associated with the survey findings is provided by Interethnic relations chapter.

According to the findings presented in the Report, key issues are the economic problems and discriminatory consequences of the economic system and the widening of the so-called frustration gap. Another worrying issue is related to the redistribution of public resources and political power through equitable representation, decentralization and other non-discriminatory policies. This Chapter also focuses on the role of political parties and leaders, and the perception of interethnic relations in the country.

Equitable representation is an important instrument of political and social inclusion of minorities in the society. In the course of the last few years there has been a significant increase of equitable representation in the administration, army, police and judicial system, although the quota has not yet been reached. According to the latest data on the ethnic composition, 22% of the professional army representatives are ethnic Albanians, 2.3% are Turks, 1.3% are Roma and 2.4% are Serbs. On the other hand “party-ization” of the state administration is considered as continuously present weakness. According to the statement of a member of the European Court of Auditors, the hardship that the European projects for institutional strengthening face is due, among other things, to the “unstable administration”, i.e. party changes in the administration after each election.

Expectations of change in inter-ethnic relations over the subsequent six months



Half of the respondents frequently go to restaurants or coffee bars owned by persons from a different ethnic group.

Most people view inter-ethnic tensions as less dangerous than those between the rich and the poor, and between employees and managers. Most also consider that the inter-ethnic relations did not worsen in 2009, and they do not expect them to worsen in the future. Asked whether they expect a violent ethnic conflict, the majority answered that there was no such risk or that it is very low.



In order to make the society more stable, cohesive and inclusive, to improve interethnic relations and to lower the level of prejudice, intolerance and discrimination, the Report points out on a two-track strategy:

- Long-term governmental policies, aimed at reducing the underlying conditions that make interethnic conflicts more likely - the high level of unemployment, poverty, inequality and discrimination, especially against the Roma population.

- Policy-makers, as well as activists from civil society, should affirm the stabilizing effects of implementing the OFA to create a more tolerant multiethnic society.

Political parties and leaders are driving agents for enhancing the environment of tolerance, and for fostering functional multiethnic society. Governmental policies, as well as the NGOs should focus on the improvement of the quality of public and private education, because education is seen by most people as a factor of ethnic cohesion more than any other social institution apart from the family. State institutions should develop and support projects of common learning and activities. One of the recommendations stemming out from this publication is to promote projects that will strengthen the contacts between pupils from different nationalities.

About People-centred Analysis Report Series: The People-Centred Analyses Report 2010 continues to examine the trends and social inclusion aspects as initiated from its first issue of March 2008, where the main focus of the Report was the Social Inclusion examined through the lenses of Governance and Ethnic dimensions. This series of reports continued with the second issue in April 2009, where the main focus was placed on Regional development and Quality of life. Each report was based on the findings of a survey of 1,000 respondents (3000 respondents for the second- Regional report) across the country with financial support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). These reports aim at creating a space for professional, non-partisan, balanced, pragmatic and constructive independent policy research and capacities in the country, with a view to enhance the inclusiveness and evidence based policy making, the quality of governance and ultimately people's lives.

ABOUT SOCIAL INCLUSION CONCEPT: Social inclusion defines the values of a society by recognizing the “duty to care” of the government to provide all necessary means for every person to be a part of mainstream society with equal social, economic and/or political opportunities. It also addresses all forms of within-country inequalities. Social inclusion is a response to institutional inefficiencies, which is a long-term process that requires changes in social attitudes and power relations. It also has an operational bias, devising workable policy responses, effectively recognizing that the State has a ‘duty to care’ to include and involve all members of society in political, economic and social processes. Furthermore, social inclusion has to respond to various discriminations such as gender, age, ethnicity or disability, etc.

ABOUT SEEU: South-East European University is a higher education institution in its eighth year of operation. From opening its campus in Tetovo in October 2001, it has succeeded in establishing itself as a quality-led, financially sustainable university. It is now regarded as a model for multi-ethnic, multi-lingual higher education in South East Europe. It has succeeded in combining the best of European and US experience, and has continued to benefit from academic collaborations sponsored by the EU Commission and USAID, among other donors. SEEU reaches out to other institutions in promoting research collaboration, exchange of students and staff and its community. www.seeu.edu.mk