

# Handbook on 2024 Parliamentary Elections in the Republic of North Macedonia

Second updated edition



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# Impressum

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Second updated edition

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# Introduction

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## Introduction to the parliamentary Elections in the Republic of North Macedonia

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The 11th parliamentary elections in the Republic of North Macedonia will be held on 8 May 2024. The parliamentary elections were called on 14.2.2024, and, the President of the Assembly, Jovan Mitreski, in line with constitutional and legal obligations signed the decision to call elections for MPs in the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia.<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to this decision, the regular parliamentary elections will be held on 8 May 2024 (Wednesday), concurrently with the possible run-off voting for presidential elections, with an election campaign overlap both for the parliamentary and presidential elections. 120 MPs of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia are elected according to the proportional model, with country's territory divided into six electoral districts, each with 20 MPs, as specified in the Electoral Code.<sup>2</sup>

On 14 February, the SEC adopted the calendar of electoral activities to administer the elections for MPs in the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia.<sup>3</sup> The technical government for administering elections was elected on 28 January of this year, i.e. 100 days before the elections, in compliance with the law.<sup>4</sup>

After months of political turmoil over the constitutional changes and intensified demanding by the opposition for extraordinary parliamentary elections, the leaders of political parties represented in the Assembly convened on 4 December 2024 and reached a political agreement for presidential and parliamentary elections. Political leaders reached a consensual agreement that parliamentary elections will be held on Wednesday, May 8, concurrently with the second round of presidential elections. The first round of presidential elections will be held earlier, on Wednesday, 24 April. They opted for 8 May to be Election Day in order to ensure that parliamentary

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1 Decision to call elections <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XP6jrSKDr-BVIDuMAwCjQBGak88qbx2g/view> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

2 Electoral Code stipulates that up to 123 MPs may be elected, with three additional MPs being elected by Macedonian citizens temporarily working or residing abroad (diaspora vote), provided the candidates win the required number of votes. Since the number of registered out-of-country voters for the 2024 parliamentary elections (2,605) is lower than the threshold of votes required to win an in-country seat (5,355), out-of-country voting will not be organized for these elections, so the Assembly in the next term will have 120 MPs.

3 Calendar of electoral activities [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yt9v5sjARjR2\\_FqqebBM6xv7Ucuwze5w/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yt9v5sjARjR2_FqqebBM6xv7Ucuwze5w/view) (last visit on 07.04.2024)

4 Elections announced - candidates still kept in secret <https://www.dw.com/mk/jovan-mitreski-gi-raspisazborite-i-povika-na-fer-i-demokratski-izboren-proces/a-68254138> (last visit on 07.04.2024)



elections are held within the regular term and presidential elections are completed until 12 May when Stevo Pendarovski's term of office ends.

Both the SDSM leader, Dimitar Kovacevski and VMRO-DPMNE leader, Hristijan Mickoski, highlighted that there was a broad consensus during the leadership meeting not only about the dates of elections, but also to accept OSCE/ODIHR remarks on the Electoral Code. However, no agreement was reached on the constitutional changes during the leadership meeting.<sup>5</sup>

In accordance with the law, the technical (Przino) government was formed on 28 January, or 100 days before the elections. Prime Minister Dimitar Kovacevski and Assembly Speaker Talat Xhaferi resigned on 25 January. SDSM parliamentary group coordinator, Jovan Mitreski, was elected as the new president of the Macedonian Assembly on 26 January. 65 MPs voted for his election and 40 were against.<sup>6</sup>

With 65 votes in favor and three against, the Assembly of North Macedonia voted the technical government headed by the first Albanian Prime Minister, Talat Xhaferi of DUI.<sup>7</sup> Prime Minister Talat Xhaferi stressed that the outlined politics of the current government would not change, both internal and foreign policy, underlining that no disruption of the electoral process would be allowed.<sup>8</sup> DUI leader, Ali Ahmeti stressed that it was a historic day, and DUI celebrated this election by wearing red ties that read Prime Minister – Albanian – 28.01.2024.<sup>9</sup>

This government is mainly tasked with organizing fair and democratic parliamentary elections. Even though the largest opposition party VMRO-DPMNE proposed its own candidates, they did not vote the technical government, objecting about Talat Xhaferi leading the government. Given the experiences with technical governments thus far, this political maneuver happens for the second time when in 2016 even though SDSM proposed their ministers, they left the session and did not vote for

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5 Agreement reached on elections: Presidential elections on 24 April, and parliamentary and a second round of presidential elections on the 8 May <https://360stepeni.mk/postignat-dogovor-za-izborite-na-24-april-pretседателски-a-na-8-maj-parlamentarni-so-vtor-krug-pretседателски/> (last visit 07.04.2024)

6 Jovan Mitreski is the new President of the Macedonian Assembly <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/32793109.html> (last visit 07.04.2024)

7 Technical government headed by Xhaferi is elected <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/32795231.html> (last visit 07.04.2024)

8 Xhaferi: The outlined policy of the current government will not change <https://makfax.com.mk/makedonija/%D1%9F%D0%B0%D1%84%D0%B5%D1%80%D0%B8-%D0%B7%D0%B0%D1%86%D1%80%D1%82%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B0-%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B8-%D0%BA%D0%B0-%D0%BD%D0%B0-%D0%B4%D0%BE%D1%81%D0%B5%D0%B3%D0%B0/> (last visit 07.04.2024)

9 DUI celebrates Xhaferi's election as technical prime minister with red ties - <https://360stepeni.mk/dui-go-slavi-izborot-na-dhaferi-za-tehnicki-premier-so-tsrvni-vratovrski/> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

the technical government led by Emil Dimitrev from VMRO-DPMNE.<sup>10</sup>

Bojan Maricic was elected as the first Deputy Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister for European Affairs, replacing Artan Grubi, who still holds the position of Minister for Political System and Inter-Community Relations.

The opposition was granted ministerial posts in the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, as well as additional posts of deputy ministers in the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Information Society and Administration and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy. Panche Toshkovski from VMRO-DPMNE was elected technical Minister of the interior and Gjoko Velkovski a Minister of labor and social policy. Elena Petrova was elected as deputy Minister of finance, Stefan Andonovski as Deputy minister of information society and administration and Cvetan Tripunovski as deputy Minister of agriculture, forestry and water economy.<sup>11</sup>

Following the dissension in the Alliance for Albanians (AA) caused by the presidential candidacy of Arben Taravari and the accession of the Taravari's wing to the joint Albanian opposition "Vredi", on the proposal of the technical Prime Minister Talat Xhaferi, on February 9, the Minister of Health - Fatmir Medziti and Minister of Information Society and Administration - Azir Aliu, were dismissed<sup>12</sup>, while directors of the Taravari wing were dismissed earlier at a government session.

On 28 March, the wing led by Zijadin Sela decided to join the DUI-led "European Front" in the upcoming elections. In respect of the legal battle over who is the legitimate leader of the party, the Court in Tetovo took a first-instance decision that the seals of the Alliance for Albanians party would be awarded to the wing of Zijadin Sela, after which Arben Taravari announced that this decision will be appealed.<sup>13</sup>

Prime Minister Xhaferi and the ministers in the technical government will remain in office after the elections held on May 8 until the new government is formed. Once the final election results are released, the term of office of the additional deputy ministers will end. The government led by Talat Xhaferi is the third technical government so far, after the governments of Emil Dimitriev in 2016 and Oliver Spasovski in 2020.

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10 In 2016, SDSM did not vote the technical Government <https://alsat.mk/mk/vo-2016-godina-sdsm-ne-glasashe-za-tehnickata-vlada/> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

11 The Assembly of North Macedonia elected the transitional government to be led by Talat Xhaferi <https://vlada.mk/node/35835> (last visit 07.04.2024)

12 Ministers Mejiti and Aliu dismissed <https://sdk.mk/index.php/makedonija/razresheni-ministrите-medhiti-i-aliu/> (last visit 07.04.2024)

13 The court in Tetovo decided that Sela should receive the seals from the Alliance for Albanians, Taravari announces an appeal <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/32888402.html> (last visit 07.04.2024)

The period ahead of the political agreement to organize elections was marked by polarized political views of the government and the opposition on adopting the constitutional changes aimed to pursue the European integration processes of the country, and by continuous demands of the opposition for early elections. Opposition party VMRO-DPMNE maintained that it would not vote for constitutional changes, adding that once they came to power, they will secure a better agreement with Bulgaria.

In the context of elections, in January 2022, VMRO-DPMNE requested that the concept of the Przino government is abolished. This opposition party expressed readiness to concede 100 days of technical government for the sake of having early elections, whereby VMRO-DPMNE parliamentary group filed an initiative for draft amendments to the Law on Government. The ruling majority was repeatedly rejecting the claims for early parliamentary elections, and the ruling coalition challenged the way in which this solution was proposed as it was conditioned on early elections. The then SDSM parliamentary group coordinator, Jovan Mitreski, stressed that all political parties need to consent to the removal of the technical government, not just one political party, and called for a political agreement for regular elections. DUI stated that proposing a solution to remove the technical government unilaterally is not deemed good, and such a solution requires a broad consensus, as was the case when the Przino Agreement was adopted and signed in 2015.<sup>14</sup> VMRO-DPMNE's proposal to abolish the technical government 100 days before the elections, also known as the Przino government, was not adopted in the Assembly.<sup>15</sup>

In March 2023, Prime Minister Kovacevski stated that regular elections will be held in 2024, also decisively saying they will observe the coalition agreement reached by former Prime Minister Zoran Zaev and DUI leader Ali Ahmeti in 2020 that the first Albanian Prime Minister will be appointed in the last 100 days of the current government's term.<sup>16</sup>

To reach an agreement on such important political topics, the Presidents of SDSM and VMRO-DPMNE, Dimitar Kovacevski and Hristijan Mickoski, convened for a lead-

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14 VMRO-DPMNE demands abolishing of Przino government and early elections, SDSM and DUI say this will be agreed before the 2024 elections <https://sdk.mk/index.php/makedonija/vmro-dpmne-bara-da-se-ukine-przhinskata-vlada-i-predvreteni-izbori-sdsm-i-dui-velat-deka-toa-ke-se-dogovori-pred-izborite-vo-2024-godina/> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

15 VMRO-DPMNE's proposal to abolish the Przino government not adopted by the Assembly [https://sdk.mk.translate.google/index.php/makedonija/predlogot-na-vmro-dpmne-za-ukinuvane-na-przhinskata-vlada-ne-pomina-vo-sobranieto/?\\_x\\_tr\\_sl=mk&\\_x\\_tr\\_tl=en&\\_x\\_tr\\_hl=en&\\_x\\_tr\\_pto=sc](https://sdk.mk.translate.google/index.php/makedonija/predlogot-na-vmro-dpmne-za-ukinuvane-na-przhinskata-vlada-ne-pomina-vo-sobranieto/?_x_tr_sl=mk&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=en&_x_tr_pto=sc) (last visit on 07.04.2024)

16 Kovachevski against technical government and early elections <https://www.dw.com/mk/kovacevski-protiv-tehnicka-vlada-i-predvreteni-izbori-mickoski-samo-za-izbori/a-65011414> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

ership meeting on 6 June 2023. However, they failed to reach a specific agreement.<sup>17</sup>

At the leadership meeting, Kovachevski proposed that constitutional changes are voted together, and that transitional and final provisions to stipulate that constitutional changes will come into force after the Second Intergovernmental Conference with the EU, while Mickoski demanded that the constitutional changes come into force as of the end of the negotiation process with the EU, i.e. when EU member states start the ratification process.

In order to secure the necessary two-thirds majority, Prime Minister Kovacevski proposed a broad coalition that would include all parties in favor of the country's European integration. Kovachevski came forward with a concrete proposal for VMRO-DPMNE to enter the government and SDSM to let 5 ministerial posts to VMRO-DPMNE after change of Constitution is voted by a two-thirds majority.<sup>18</sup> Mickoski underlined that possible broad government coalition would be acceptable to VMRO-DPMNE, but DUI would not be part of such a government.

On the topic of early parliamentary elections, Kovacevski proposed that early elections are held after adopting the constitutional changes and the opening of two or three chapters of the EU membership negotiations, while Mickoski stressed that the constitutional changes cannot be adopted by this parliamentary composition and called for early elections as soon as possible.<sup>19</sup>

After the leadership meeting, the government and the opposition still had political disagreement regarding the main political topics of the leadership meeting. For this reason, VMRO-DPMNE leader Hristijan Mickoski, on 8 July 2023, announced that they withdraw all offers to reach consensus with the government on constitutional changes and that they would discuss only on early elections. SDSM announced that the government will consider the constitutional changes and this will be publicly announced and submitted to the Assembly, followed by initiating a parliamentary procedure.<sup>20</sup>

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17 Leadership meeting, Kovachevski - Mickoski, proposals exist, but no agreement <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/%D0%BB%D0%B8%D0%B4%D0%B5%D1%80%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8-%D1%81%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%B4%D0%B1%D0%B8---%D1%80%D0%B5%D1%88%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%B5-%D0%B8%D0%BB%D0%B8-%D0%B2%D0%BB%D0%B5%D0%B7-%D0%B2%D0%BE-%D1%9C%D0%BE%D1%80%D1%81%D0%BE%D0%BA%D0%B0%D0%BA/32445902.html> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

18 Constitutional changes with a government without DUI? <https://www.dw.com/mk/liderska-sredba-siroka-vlada-bez-dui-pet-ministri-za-vmrodpmne-garancii-od-eu/a-65847609> (last visit on 09.04.2024)

19 A broad government for constitutional changes without DUI? <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/%D1%88%D0%B8%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%BA%D0%B0-%D0%B2%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B4%D0%B0-%D0%B7%D0%B0-%D1%83%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B0%D0%B0%D0%BD%D0%B8-%D0%B7%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8-%D0%B1%D0%B5%B7-%D0%B4%D1%83%D0%B8-/32448927.html> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

In response to VMRO-DPMNE's requests, on 30 July 2023, DUI ministers and officials submitted their resignations to Prime Minister Dimitar Kovacevski, provided they are activated as soon as the constitutional changes are adopted. The decision on the conditional resignations of the five ministers was announced by DUI leader Ali Ahmeti. SDSM stated that their coalition partner in the Government made the right move to fulfill everything requested by VMRO-DPMNE in order to vote on the constitutional changes. VMRO-DPMNE demanded that the resignations of the DUI ministers are irrevocable and that early parliamentary elections are organized quickly, because everything else is protraction and contrary to citizens' will.<sup>21</sup>

Amid the pronounced political polarization between the government and the opposition, constitutional changes were adopted at the government session on 18 July, and then were submitted for parliamentary procedure.<sup>22</sup> Even though no consensus was reached between the government and the opposition to adopt the constitutional changes, the 123rd parliamentary session began on 18 August 2023 with only one item on the agenda – Proposal for amending the Constitution. Seventy out of 119 attending MPs, voted in favor of adopting the agenda, 47 were against, and there were no abstentions.<sup>23</sup> The session lasted less than three hours and after several deliberations, voting did not take place. Assembly Speaker Talat Xhaferi ended the session and stressed that the vote would be additionally scheduled. Speaker Xhaferi had previously announced that a vote would be taken when conditions were met, that is, when a two-thirds majority is secured.<sup>24</sup>

As it became clear that the ruling majority would not be able to secure a two-thirds majority in this parliamentary composition, political confrontations with the opposition continued and the topic of early elections was readdressed. In October 2023, VMRO-DPMNE gave up exerting pressure to hold early elections and accepted to participate in working groups that would determine the date for the 2024 elections. Saying that elections are extremely important for the state, Mickoski proposed that the second round of presidential and parliamentary elections are held on the same day,

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20 Only elections to be discussed – VMRO-DPMNE withdraws all offers for consensus on constitutional changes <https://telma.com.mk/2023/07/08/kje-razgovara-samo-za-izbori-vmro-dpmne-gi-povlekuva-site-ponudi-zakonsenzus-za-ustavnite-izmeni/> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

21 DUI ministers deposit conditional resignations, VMRO-DPMNE demands they be irrevocable <https://telma.com.mk/2023/07/30/ministrite-na-dui-deponiraa-usloveni-ostavki-vmro-dpmne-bara-tie-da-bidat-neotpoviklivi/> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

22 The constitutional changes adopted at a government session, the Assembly on the <https://360stepeni.mk/ustavnite-izmeni-pominaa-na-vladina-sednitsa-na-red-e-sobranieto/> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

23 Session on constitutional changes begins – 70 MPs voted for the agenda <https://360stepeni.mk/pochna-sednitsata-za-ustavni-izmeni-70-pratenitsi-glasaa-za-dnevniot-red/> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

24 Short debate on constitutional changes, voting postponed <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/kusa-debata-za-ustavnite-izmeni-za-glasanje-kje-se-cheka-/32554063.html> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

i.e. on 8 May, 2024.<sup>25</sup> A political agreement on holding parliamentary and presidential elections was reached at a leadership meeting between the presidents of all parliamentary political parties on 4 December<sup>26</sup>.

In the pre-election period, political parties promoted the candidate lists and their leaders, and presented the programs for the upcoming parliamentary elections. On April 3, the SEC informed that within the legally established deadline, until April 2, 2024, by 24 o'clock, 17 MP candidacies had been received:<sup>27</sup>

Political parties and coalitions	Electoral Districts
SDSM (Coalition "Za Evropska idnina")	ED1, ED 2, ED 3, ED 4, ED 5, ED 6
VMRO-DPMNE (Coalition "Tvoja Macedonia")	ED 1, ED 2, ED 3, ED 4, ED 5, ED 6
ZNAM – Za nasa Makedonija	ED 1, ED 2, ED 3, ED 4, ED 5, ED 6
Rodina	ED 1, ED 2, ED 3, ED 4, ED 5, ED 6
Avaja	ED 3, ED 4, ED 5, ED 6
Rabotnichka partija	ED1, ED2, ED3, ED4, ED5, ED6
Tvoja partija	ED1, ED2, ED3, ED4
GROM	ED1, ED2, ED3, ED4, ED5, ED6
Makedonska era Treta suverenost	ED1, ED2, ED3, ED4, ED5, ED6
DUI (Coalition "Za Evropski front")	ED1, ED2, ED3, ED4, ED5, ED6
Demokrati	ED1, ED2, ED3, ED4, ED5, ED6
Edinstvena Makedonija	ED1, ED2, ED3, ED4, ED5, ED6
Voter group DJULA CELIKU	ED 6
Coalition "Vredi"	ED1, ED2, ED3, ED4, ED5, ED6
Levica	ED1, ED2, ED3, ED4, ED5, ED6
Desna	ED1, ED2, ED3, ED4, ED5, ED6
Nova alternativa	ED 1, ED 2, ED, ED4

25 VMRO-DPMNE gave up early elections <https://www.dw.com/mk/mickoski-se-otkaza-od-predvremenite-izbori-kako-sto-ke-kaze-kovacevski-za-datum-i-den-taka-ke-bide/a-67161999> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

26 Agreement on the date - double election on 8 May <https://www.dw.com/mk/partiite-se-dogovorija-pretsedatelski-i-parlamentarni-izbori-na-8-maj/a-67626319> (last visit on 11.04.2024)

27 17 lists of MPs for the parliamentary elections submitted to the SEC <https://nezavisen.mk/podneseni-17-listina-pratenici-za-parlamentarnite-izbori-do-dik/> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

In parallel to these activities, the political polarization amplified and the political rhetoric intensified, expecting that these processes will culminate during pre-election campaigns. The ODIHR report published on 29 February noted<sup>28</sup> that media coverage of the campaign is fragmented and polarized, coupled with a notable increase in nationalist rhetoric that may result in heightened unrest and tensions, as well as increase in intolerant and violent rhetoric.<sup>29</sup>

The technical Minister of the Interior, Pance Toshkovski, expressed concern about possible irregularities in the sixth electoral district, criticizing that since he was appointed, he had not been enabled by the current government to appoint a new head of the Sector for Internal Affairs Tetovo, even though he has the right to do so in accordance with the law.<sup>30</sup>

On 29 March, the Director of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services (AAVMS), Zoran Trajcevski, stressed that the prosecution should carefully monitor how state money is spent on election advertising for online portals. Trajcevski believes that the Public Prosecutor's Office should pay attention to the online media, which receive 15,000 Euros of state money for party advertisements during elections, adding that 251 internet portals have been registered this year. According to Trajcevski, many of those portals are partisan and disappear after the elections. The same risk was highlighted by the Chairwoman of the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption (SCPC), Tatjana Dimitrovska, who stressed that it was not regulated how 2.5 million Euros would be spent on party advertising on the Internet.<sup>31</sup>

Even before the start of election campaigns, SDSM and VMRO-DPMNE began their political confrontations, and the situation in the Albanian political bloc is similar. SDSM accused VMRO-DPMNE of creating fake news and polls, presented on the public broadcasting service, while VMRO-DPMNE denied it and announced defamation lawsuits.<sup>32</sup> Political confrontations between SDSM and VMRO-DPMNE on these topics can be expected to continue until the elections.

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28 OSCE/ODIHR Report <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/b/e/563592.pdf> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

29 ODIHR with more than 300 election observers, intensified unrest and tensions expected <https://telma.com.mk/2024/03/11/odih-so-poveke-od-300-nabluduvachi-na-izborite-ochekuva-zasileni-nemiri-i-tenzii/> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

30 Toshkovski doubts the regularity of the elections in Tetovo, Gostivar and the surrounding area <https://telma.com.mk/2024/03/27/toshkovski-otvora-somnezh-za-regularnosta-na-izborite-vo-tetovo-gostivar-i-okolinata/> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

31 Risk of misuse of money for election advertisements <https://prizma.mk/rizik-od-zloupotreba-od-parite-za-izborni-reklami/> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

32 VMRO-DPMNE announces defamation lawsuit against SDSM: The documents they published were invented <https://360stepeni.mk/vmro-dpmne-najavi-tuzhba-za-kleveta-protiv-sdsm-dokumentite-shto-gi-objavija-se-izmisleni/> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

In these elections, SDSM will lead the “Coalition for a European Future” promising to be on the forefront of the reform processes and striving for negotiations with the EU to be completed by 2028 and join the EU by 2030.<sup>33</sup> A total of 14 parties will form this coalition.

Although there were some announcements that SDSM and DUI would run jointly in the upcoming elections and form a so-called broad European front, which according to them would unite all political and social actors who support EU membership, these ruling majority parties decided to run independently. To a large extent, this decision is due to intra-party analyses and assessments, but also to the fact that a united opposition front was formed in the Albanian bloc. Due to the emerging political constellations and the fact that the united Albanian opposition “Vredi” came forward with a joint presidential candidate, DUI decided to run with its own candidate for president and not to support SDSM's candidate, Stevo Pendarovski, who in the previous presidential elections was a consensus candidate of SDSM and DUI. Prior to taking this decision, DUI had political confrontation with the incumbent President Stevo Pendarovski, as he did not sign the Law on Games of Chance and Entertainment Games, pointing out that he did so because of serious indications from the EU that the European flag was being abused in the process of adopting this law.<sup>34</sup>

VMRO-DPMNE will lead the coalition “Tvoja Makedonija” and, according to the pre-election program “Platform 1198”, priority will be given to the economy, the fight against corruption and restoring citizens' trust in institutions.<sup>35</sup> A total of 24 parties have joined this coalition.

The parties “Dostoinstvo”, Obединeti za Makedonija (OM) and Demokratski Sojuz (DS), which were coalition partners of SDSM, decided to leave the current coalition with SDSM and joined the VMRO-DPMNE coalition. VMRO-DPMNE leader Hristijan Mickosi stressed that they have a principled joint agreement with these parties to run in the next parliamentary elections.<sup>36</sup> The leaders of “Dostoinstvo”, - Stojanche Angelov, and of “Demokratski Sojuz”- Pavle Trajanov, stressed that their decisions

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33 SDSM and 13 parties formed the “Coalition for a European Future “ <https://www.dw.com/mk/sdsm-i-13-partii-so-koalicijata-za-evropska-idnina-ke-odat-na-izbori/a-68684980> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

34 President Pendarovski did not sign the Decree proclaiming the Law Amending the Law on Games of Chance and Entertainment Games [https://pretsedatel.mk/dopis\\_13022024/](https://pretsedatel.mk/dopis_13022024/) (last visit 09.04.2024)

35 VMRO-DPMNE presented a pre-election coalition “Za tvoja Makedonija” <https://kanal5.com.mk/vmro-dpmne-ja-pretstavi-predizborna-koalicija-narechena-za-tvoja-makedonija/a632907> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

36 Mickosi: We have a principled agreement for the parliamentary elections and we will function as a future government - (last visit on 09.04.2024) <https://makfax.com.mk/makedonija/%D0%BC%D0%B8%D1%86%D0%BA%D0%BE%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8-%D0%B8%D0%BC%D0%B0%D0%BC%D0%B5-%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B8%D0%BD%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%BF%D0%B8%D0%B5%D0%BB%D0%B5%D0%BD-%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BE%D1%80/> (last visit on 09.04.2024)



were largely due to unfulfilled promises and expectations by the current coalition partner, as well as to the blocking of their proposals in Assembly.<sup>37</sup> The leader of “Obedineti za Makedonija” - Ljube Boskovski stressed that the decision to be in coalition with VMRO-DPMNE was for ideological reasons.<sup>38</sup>

In the Albanian political bloc, DUI will lead the Coalition “European Front” in these elections.<sup>39</sup> Confronted with the allied Albanian opposition, DUI decided to run with a broad coalition in these elections. On 25 March in Tetovo, DUI, DPA, Evropska demokratska partija and Narodno Dvizenje signed a coalition agreement on the “European Front” led by Ali Ahmeti. The agreement was signed by the presidents of the four parties, Ali Ahmeti, Menduh Thaci, Arjanit Hoxha and Skender Rexhepi-Zejd, and later joined by other parties from smaller ethnic communities, as well as the wing of Zijadin Sela from AA. Ahmeti stressed that he expected a big victory in the elections and that the front would function until the goal of EU membership was achieved.<sup>40</sup> This coalition is made up of a total of nine parties.

The joint Albanian opposition “Vredi” will try to weaken the long-standing political position of DUI. This coalition is made up of several parties: Izet Medziti’s Demokratsko dvizenje, Biljal Kasami’s Dvizenje BESA, Afrim Gashi’s Alternativa, a part of the Alliance for Albanians party led by party leader Arben Taravari, as well as supporters of Kosovo Prime Minister Albin Kurti’s Samoopredeluvanje party. The goal of this opposition bloc is to squeeze DUI out of power after many years.

The political parties Levica, Maksim Dimitrievski’s “ZNAM – Za nasa Makedonija” and the coalition “Hrabro za Makedonija” led by the Civil Option for Macedonia (GROM) will also claim parliamentary seats, and the party Nova Alternativa of the Mayor of the City of Skopje, Danela Arsovska, will run for elections in the first four electoral districts.

The first round of presidential elections will significantly determine the positions of political parties and will largely be an indicator of the outcome of parliamentary elections. At the same time, political parties will seek to use the first round of presidential elections to mobilize the electorate ahead of the parliamentary elections

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37 Party regroupings before elections <https://www.dw.com/mk/partiite-se-pregrupiraat-pred-izborite-se-pravat-novi-koalicii-se-zaokruzuvaa-izbornite-listi/a-68659288> (last visit on 09.04.2024)

38 Boskovski: Coalition with VMRO-DPMNE will be for ideological reason <https://netpress.com.mk/boshkoski-koalici-a-so-vmro-dpmne-e-bide-od-ideoloshka-prichina/> (last visit on 09.04.2024)

39 Ahmeti will mobilize voters with the European front <https://www.dw.com/mk/ahmeti-so-evropskiot-front-ke-gi-mobilizira-glasacite-i-ke-se-bori-protiv-ruskoto-vlijanie/a-68613769> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

40 Four parties entered the European front of DUI <https://nezavisen.mk/vo-evropskiot-front-na-dui-vlegoa-chetiri-partii/> (last visit on 09.04.2024)

and the decisive second round of presidential elections. The main focus during the election campaign is expected to be on the adoption of constitutional changes aimed at unblocking European integration processes, as well as economic topics to improve citizens' living standards and fight corruption. The issue of the adoption of constitutional changes can also be a key factor in political combinatorics and in the formation of new political constellations after the elections.

### Preparations for the parliamentary elections

On 14 February, the SEC adopted the Calendar of electoral activities to administer the parliamentary elections.<sup>41</sup> As part of its preparatory activities, the SEC continuously replaces the members of the Municipal Election Commissions (MECs) whose mandate either terminated or they requested to be dismissed, but no later than 26 March. According to the calendar, the Municipal Election Commission (MEC) should establish the Election Boards (EBs) no later than 26 March, and by that time the SEC should also form the EBs in the DCOs<sup>42</sup>.

The public inspection of the Voter list in the SEC regional offices, on the website <http://izbirackispisok.gov.mk/>, as well as in the DCOs (for out-of-country voting) was opened in the period 28 February - 18 March 2024. During this period, any citizen who found they are not on the Voters list and who meets the eligibility criteria to vote, could request to be registered. In the period from the announcement of elections to closing of Voter list public inspection, citizens of the Republic of North Macedonia who live abroad and meet the conditions for out-of-country voting could apply to exercise this right.

The Voter List which includes all changes resulting from the public inspection, printed in the form of extracts, is closed by the SEC no later than 15 days after the completed public inspection, that is, by April 2 at latest. At the session held on 2 April, the SEC closed the Voter List both for the parliamentary and presidential elections. 1,815,350 voters are registered in the Voter List for the parliamentary elections, while 1,814,317 voters are registered for the presidential elections.<sup>43</sup>

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41 Calendar for parliamentary elections [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iN8Gim1W542gkDasz\\_aDhK0pX\\_43dEcZ/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iN8Gim1W542gkDasz_aDhK0pX_43dEcZ/view) (last visit on 07.04.2024)

42 Given the insufficient number of registered voters, out-of-country voting will not be organized for these elections.

43 SEC closed the Voter List: For the presidential elections there are 1,814,317 voters, and 1.815.350 for the parliamentary elections <https://360stepeni.mk/dik-go-zakluchi-izbirachkiot-spisok-za-pretседателските-izbori-ima-1-814-317-glasachi-a-za-parlamentarnite-1-815-350/> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

Out-of-country elections will be organized only for the president, because the legal norm on the number of registered voters has not been reached for parliamentary elections. To organize out-of-country voting for parliamentary elections, it was necessary that at least 5,355 voters are registered, equal to the lowest number of votes to win an in-country seat in the electoral districts on the territory of the state in the previous elections.<sup>44</sup>

The SEC signs the concluded Voter List, i.e. the extracts of the Voter List on which votes are cast, no later than 15 days before the Election Day, i.e., no later than 22 April.

According to the calendar, financial reports of campaigners (specifying the costs of income and expenditures on the bank account) are submitted to the SEC, the State Audit Office (SAO) and the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption (SCPC) within the following deadlines:

- » report on received donations for the election campaign on the 11th day of the election campaign, i.e. April 28, as well as within one day after the end of the campaign, i.e. 7 May;
- » overall financial report specifying the income and expenditure costs is submitted immediately, and at the latest within 15 days from the date of closing of the bank account.

Also, broadcasters, print media and electronic media (Internet portals) are obliged to submit a report to the Ministry of Finance (MoF), SEC, SAO and SCPC, on the advertising space used by each of the participants in the election campaign, no later than 21 May.

Organizations and persons file an application to observe the elections to the SEC from the day of the announcement of the elections, and no later than 10 days before the day of voting, i.e. in the period from 14 February to April 27 for these elections. The SEC issues authorizations to election observers within seven days from receiving the application.

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44 Dashtevski: Preparations for the presidential and parliamentary elections without problems, in compliance with the law and calendar <https://mia.mk/en/story/%D0%B4%D0%B0%D1%88%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%B2%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8-%D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B3%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BA%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B5-%D0%B7%D0%B0-%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B5%D1%82%D1%81%D0%B5%D0%B4%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%B5%D0%BB%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B5-%D0%B8-%D0%B7%D0%B0-%D0%BF%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%BD%D1%82%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B5-> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

Political parties submitted their candidate lists for parliamentary elections to the SEC by 24:00 hrs. on 2 April., i.e. 35 days before the day of the elections. By this deadline, lists of 17 participants were submitted, i.e. 11 political parties, five coalitions, as well as one independent list of a group of voters.

Election campaigning for the parliamentary elections begins 20 days before the Election Day, i.e. on 18 April at 00:00 hrs. and lasts until 24:00 hrs. on 6 May.

In accordance with Article 8-a of the Electoral Code, 20 days before the start of the election campaign, no public events can be held on the occasion of commencing a construction or commissioning of a facility or infrastructure financed with funds from the Budget, public funds, as well as funds of public enterprises with state capital.<sup>45</sup>

Coalitions and parties that have their own candidate in the presidential elections will be presented on the ballot under the same order as in presidential candidates, while additional drawing of lots will be organized by SEC for the other parties, in accordance with the latest amendments to the Electoral Code that the Assembly voted at the 150th session.<sup>46</sup>

### Latest amendments to the electoral legislation

Since the last electoral cycle to date, several changes have been made regarding the provisions of the Electoral Code of the Republic of North Macedonia (RNM). In March this year, the Assembly, in a shortened procedure and with 84 votes in favor, adopted the new amendments to the Electoral Code. The changes are related to state election management bodies, political campaign finance, campaign participants, as well as media coverage of the election campaign.<sup>47</sup>

Due to the new developments with the expired validity of citizens' personal documents, there was a serious danger that over 100,000 citizens would be denied the right to vote in the upcoming elections. At the proposal of the SEC, the amendments

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<sup>45</sup> Electoral Code <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZJMruqcNI-yC5VuWSzpfT9BFekPhm5An/view> (last visit on 09.04.2024)

<sup>46</sup> Parties submitted MP candidate lists for parliamentary elections on the 8 May, deadline to submit lists ended <https://360stepeni.mk/partiite-do-dik-gi-dostavija-listite-za-pratenitsi-za-izborite-na-8-maj-rokot-za-podnesuvane-zavrshi/> (last visit on 07.04.2024)

<sup>47</sup> Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, Law Amending the Electoral Code 58/2024

to the Electoral Code also included a transitional provision regulating the right of the voter to be able to vote with an ID card or passport with expired validity in the period of nine months until the day of the presidential and parliamentary elections.<sup>48</sup>

In addition, the provisions regarding the registration of new voters have been clarified, so everyone who turns 18 until the day of elections will have the right to vote. This means that citizens who become adults between the two election cycles will only have the right to vote in the parliamentary elections.<sup>49</sup>

Changes made to Article 61 and 62 of the Electoral Code will significantly impede the election of independent citizens, both locally and nationally. According to Article 61, submitters of independent candidate lists, instead of 1.000 signatures, in future will have to provide signatures of 1% of the registered voters in the Voter List in the specific electoral district.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, according to the changes of Article 62 concerning the election of municipal councilors and mayor, instead of the required 100 to 1.000 signatures (depending on the number of citizens in the respective municipality), now that requirement is increased to 1% of the registered voters in the Voters List for the specific municipality.<sup>51</sup> Some independent councilors that run at the last local elections reacted to the changes, saying there is a danger that they will be removed from participation in the next 2025 local elections.<sup>52</sup>

### State Election Commission

A citizen of the Republic of North Macedonia having a permanent residence in the country, university degree, at least eight years of work experience and who is not a member of a political party body can be elected as member of the State Election Commission. The Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia, within 30 days

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48 "Over 100,000 citizens do not have documents for voting in elections, the SEC proposed amendments to the Electoral Code, the Assembly on the move" Telma, March 04, 2024. Access at <https://telma.com.mk/2024/03/04/nad-100-000-gragani-nemaat-dokumenti-za-glasane-na-izbori-sobranieto-na-poteg-otkako-dik-predlozhi-izmeni-na-izborniot-zakonik/> (last visit: 27 March 2024)

49 "SEC: Citizens who turn 18 between the two rounds of the presidential election on May 8 will only be able to vote for the election of MPs" 360 degrees, March 15, 2024. Access at: <https://360stepeni.mk/dik-graganite-shto-ke-napolnat-18-godini-pomegu-dvata-kruga-na-pretsedatelskite-izbori-na-8-maj-ke-mozhe-da-glasaat-samo-za-izbor-na-pratenitsi/> (last visit: 26 March 2024)

50 For the independent MP list in ED1, instead of 1.000, 3.372 signatures will be needed in future.

51 For independent candidate list or Mayor of the City of Skopje, instead of 1.000, 4,674 signatures will be needed in future.

52 "Parties removed the independent from the ballot" Radio Slobodna Evropa, 12 March 2024. Accessed at: <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/partiite-gi-istisnaa-nezavisnite-na-glasachkoto-livche/32858134.html> (last visit on 1 April 2024)

before the expiration of the mandate of the Commission, publishes the announcement for election of the new composition, i.e. election of the President, Vice President and members of the SEC in the Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, as well as in the daily newspapers. The advertisement lasts for eight days from the date of publication in the Official Gazette.

The procedure for electing members remains the same and is prepared and implemented by the Committee on Election and Appointment Issues within the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia. This committee prepares a proposal for a list of registered candidates and submits it to the Assembly. Of the candidates on the list, the opposition proposes a president and two members, while the ruling parties propose a vice president and three members. All members are elected by a two-thirds majority of the total number of MPs, for a 5-year term as of the Election Day.

Amendments to the Electoral Code of this year oblige the State Election Commission to establish a Center for Continuous Electoral Education as a separate organizational unit in its secretariat, headed by a state adviser at B1 level<sup>53</sup>, who reports to the Commission and the Secretary General. The Center will aim to provide continuous training to the election administration, voters, election participants, media, and election observers, as well as to develop various research and analysis for the needs and at the request of the SEC.<sup>54</sup>

## Party Finance

The Law on Party Finance has not been amended in the last few years. The provisions relating to the specification of assets and party finance (movable and immovable property), the amount of the total funds for annual party finance in the amount of 0.15% of the total source revenues of the Budget of the Republic of North Macedonia, the private sources of funding, the amount of individual donations that may not exceed the sum of 60 average salaries as a donation from legal entities and 30 net average salaries as a donation from individuals, still remain valid. With the latest amendments to the Electoral Code in March 2024, a new paragraph was added to Article 83 that regulates the individual donations that political parties receive for election campaigns. Namely, the amount of the funds cumulatively on the election campaign bank account must not exceed 3,000 euros in denar counter value from

<sup>53</sup> According to Article 24 of the Law on Administrative Servants, a civil servant of B1 category is an administrative management officer of the first level, who meets the conditions, i.e. at least two years in a managerial position in the public sector, or, at least three in a managerial position in the private sector.

<sup>54</sup> Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, Law Amending the Electoral Code 58/2024

the same natural person or 30,000 Euros in denar counter value from the same legal entity.

Funding for political parties, that is, 30% which is provided from the Budget of the Republic of North Macedonia, is further distributed equally to all political parties that have won at least 1% of the total number of votes at the last parliamentary or local elections. 70% of the funds are allocated to political parties according to the number of elected MPs in the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia at the last parliamentary elections and according to the number of elected councilors at the last local elections.

Article 26 of the Law on Party Finance stipulates that the State Audit Office oversees the financing. This Article also stipulates that parties have only one bank account, and in the case of financing by securing funds from loans from commercial banks, in addition to the basic bank account, they may have another special bank account for party funds provided through loan. Also, the political party can transfer funds between its accounts, and the party research-analytical centers have a separate account. Funds from the Budget of the Republic of North Macedonia in the amount of 280,000 euros in denar counter value are also envisaged for annual funding of party research-analytical centers which are established in accordance with the law as part of the internal organization of the party.<sup>55</sup>

The amendments to the law in 2018 created an obligation to submit a financial report on the material and financial operations of the party, including the financial operations on the account, i.e. accounts of the political party. According to the amendments, an additional part of the financial report are the items “sponsorship” and “loan”. The amendments stipulate that the funds intended for party finance will be paid from the Budget, as possible, but no later than March 1 of each current year.

### **Public media**

This election cycle remains subject to the ban made with the amendments to the Electoral Code in 2018, which from the day of the announcement of the elections until the start of the election campaign, broadcasters, print media and electronic media (portals) may not broadcast, i.e. publish paid political advertising, except advertisements and announcements for collecting signatures in support of the candi-

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<sup>55</sup> Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, Law Amending the Law on Party Finance, 140/2018

dacy of a group of voters. In the cases concerning the broadcasting, i.e. publishing of announcements for collecting signatures in support of the candidacies, this is done in marked advertising blocks of the allowed advertising time per real hour. The amendments to the Electoral Code from March 2024, provide for a restriction in the promotion of candidates, i.e., from the moment of confirmation of the candidate lists until the start of the election campaign, election contestants have the right to organize one public event to promote their confirmed lists of candidates and electoral programs. Consequently, Article 69-a prohibits the parties to spend the funds allocated for the election campaign in the previously mentioned period.

Broadcasters covering elections, in the first and second round of election campaign, may broadcast a total of nine minutes and thirty seconds per real hour of program that is solely intended for paid political advertising. Of these nine and a half minutes, a total of four minutes may be allocated to the two biggest ruling parties, four minutes for the two biggest oppositional parties, one minute for political parties in the Assembly that did not win sufficient number of seats at the last election to establish a parliamentary group, as well as thirty seconds for political parties not represented in the Assembly. Given that double elections are held this year, there is a possibility that political parties are advertised for a total of 19 minutes per hour. Earlier, this was the case with the electoral campaign for the 2014 double elections when the political parties agreed on a limit of 15 minutes promotion per hour.<sup>56</sup>

With the latest amendments to the Electoral Code, the public broadcasting service, as well as the television stations that will broadcast paid political advertising, have the obligation to broadcast election-related content in a format accessible to persons with disabilities, i.e. using sign language, subtitles, tone description or other tools to ensure accessibility, at least once, in the period from 16:00 to 24:00 hrs. Furthermore, Article 75 obliges service providers, prior to the start of the election campaign, to submit a schedule to the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Services (AAVMS) of the edition of news and other content that will be broadcast in a format accessible to persons with disabilities, and AAVMS to publish them on its website.

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<sup>56</sup> "Elections 2024: A party propaganda program of epic proportions", Prizma, 08 February 2024. Accessed on: <https://prizma.mk/izbori-2024-partisko-epp-od-epski-razmeri/> (last visit: 26 March 2024)







**History of parliamentary  
elections in the Republic  
of North Macedonia  
(1990 – 2020)**

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# 1. History of parliamentary elections in the Republic of North Macedonia (1990 – 2020)

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Political pluralism that was introduced in 1989 enabled the formation of political parties, giving an opportunity to Macedonian voters to vote in multi-party elections for the first time in **1990**. This year, free multi-party elections were held in all six republics of the SFRY. In 1990, the elections were administered according to the majority, two-round voting system with 120 electoral districts. The then only ruling party, the Union of Communists of Macedonia – Party for Democratic Transformation (SKM-PDP) won in the first round of voting, while VMRO-DPMNE won in the second round of elections. On March 20, 1991, the Assembly voted the first technical government of the Republic of Macedonia, headed by Nikola Kljusev. During this period, the Assembly also elected Kiro Gligorov as the country's first president, and Ljubco Georgievski, the leader of VMRO-DPMNE, as his vice president. The first Government did not last long, when in August 1992 the Assembly voted no confidence. After several attempts to form a new government, the mandate was granted to Branko Crvenkovski from SDSM,<sup>57</sup> and the first political government was formed in independent Macedonia.

After the independence, **the first parliamentary elections** were held in **1994**, concurrently with the first direct presidential elections. MPs were elected under the same model as in the 1990 elections. 38 parties and 283 independent candidates run for elections. The coalition led by the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM) won the elections, while the main opposition parties, VMRO-DPMNE and the Democratic Party of Macedonia, boycotted the second round of voting, accusing of a series of irregularities in the first round of voting. After the elections, Branko Crvenkovski formed the new government, which in its four-year term functioned without the main opposition parties that boycotted the work of the Assembly.

The next **parliamentary elections in 1998** were administered according to an amended electoral model – a mixed electoral system, a combination of a proportional and a majority model, with two-round voting. VMRO-DPMNE won the elec-

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<sup>57</sup> The SKM-PDT at the Party Congress in April 1991 changed its name to the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia, and transformed its ideology from communist to social democratic.

tions with 49 seats, and their leader Ljubco Georgievski formed the government together with the Democratic Alternative (DA) and the Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA). It was the first time that OSCE/ODIHR Mission monitored these elections in the country on invitation extended by the Macedonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The **parliamentary elections in 2002** were marked by strained post-conflict atmosphere. In this election cycle, the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI) that was formed by the leadership of the former National Liberation Army (NLA), emerged as new political entity of the Albanian political bloc on the political scene. In these elections, the electoral model underwent changes once again, by resorting to a proportional electoral model in six electoral districts. This electoral model remained for all subsequent parliamentary elections to date, except for some modifications regarding the diaspora voting. 33 parties ran for the elections, and the government changed as the SDSM-led coalition won the majority of seats. Branko Crvenkovski, one more time, was a prime minister-designate for the new government composed of SDSM, LDP and DUI.

Voter turnout at the **parliamentary elections in 2006** was lowest thus far, and only 56% of all registered voters who exercised their right to vote. Political actors changed roles once again after VMRO-DPMNE won a majority in the Assembly. After the elections, Nikola Gruevski was granted his first mandate to form a government. The new government was made up of the political parties VMRO-DPMNE, DPA, NSDP and PEI. For this government composition, even though DUI won more votes and parliamentary seats, VMRO-DPMNE opted for Menduh Thaci's DPA to be its partner from the Albanian bloc. This led to a political crisis and various blockades imposed by DUI. Given the results, they considered to be the only legitimate representative of the majority of Albanians in the country, and therefore must partake in the government. In 2008, DPA decided to leave the Government as many of the conditions agreed with its partner VMRO-DPMNE were not fulfilled.

Two years after winning the elections in **2008**, the ruling VMRO-DPMNE accepted DUI's parliamentary initiative to dissolve the Assembly and organize new, early elections. Voter turnout in these elections was 57.06%. The VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition won a record 63 seats. Nikola Gruevski once again formed the government, which included ministers of the coalition as well as of DUI who won the elections in the Albanian political bloc.

In **2011**, in the aftermath of the most serious political crises in the country, the second early parliamentary elections requested by the oppositional SDSM were held in the country. These were specific elections because Macedonian citizens abroad

could vote and the number of electoral districts increased from 6 to 9, along with the number of MPs from 120 to 123. MPs from the six in-country electoral districts were elected according to the proportional model, while the majority model applied for the three new electoral districts. 53 political parties participated in the elections, with the VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition winning again. After the elections, VMRO-DPMNE leader Nikola Gruevski formed a government for the third time, which again included DUI as a representative of the Albanian bloc. Voter turnout in these elections was 63.48%.

**Parliamentary elections in 2014** were held concurrently with the presidential elections in the country. The electoral model of the previous elections, including the out-of-country voting, remained unchanged. VMRO-DPMNE's candidate, incumbent President Gjorge Ivanov, once again won the presidential elections, while VMRO-DPMNE's leader, Nikola Gruevski, was given the mandate to form the new government for the fourth time. The Democratic Union for Integration re-entered the new government as a partner from the Albanian bloc. Voter turnout was 62.96%.

The period before the ninth parliamentary elections in **2016** was turbulent and dynamic, marked with great political turmoil that culminated in 2015 with the "wire-tapping affair", followed by a series of mass protests that contributed to great destabilization and the beginning of one of the largest crises in the modern history of the country. To stabilize the relations, the Przino Agreement was signed under the auspices of the international community, which provided for a wide package of measures to resolve the political crisis. In January 2016, SDSM announced that it would not participate in the scheduled elections as the conditions of the Agreement were not met, after which the elections were postponed until December of the same year. In these elections, VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition won the biggest number of 51 seats, while the opposition led by SDSM won 49 seats. Shortly after the elections, DUI and the two largest Macedonian parties started intensive negotiations. The negotiations resulted in a coalition agreement between SDSM and DUI, however, the then president of the country, Gjorge Ivanov, refused to entrust the mandate to the SDSM leader Zoran Zaev, accusing him of "destroying the sovereignty of the state" by accepting the so-called Albanian Platform. After a months-long crisis, including the storming of the Macedonian Assembly on 27 April 2017, Ivanov granted the mandate to Zaev on May 17, 2017, and on May 31, the Assembly voted the new SDSM-led coalition government with 62 votes in favor.

## Parliamentary elections in 2020

The 10th parliamentary elections in 2020 were held during the Covid-19 pandemic. It was specific that these were the first elections to be administered over a period of three days. Self-isolated citizens voted on the first day, i.e. on 13 July, in their homes. On the second day, ill and incapacitated citizens, persons under house arrest, as well as prisoners in penitentiary institutions cast their votes, while July 15 was the main Election Day. Under such circumstances, turnout at elections (52.02%) was lower by 14% compared to 2016 when 66.79% of the registered voters exercised their right to vote.

15 political entities, i.e. 3 coalitions and 12 political parties took part in the elections. Participating coalitions were the ruling SDSM-led coalition “Mozeme”, the opposition VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition “Obnova za Makedonija” and the coalition of the Alliance for Albanians and Alternative. DUI, DPA, political party Levica, Integra – Macedonian Conservative Party, Civil Democratic Union (GDU), MORO – Workers’ party, political party Glas za Makedonija, Edinstvena Makedonija, Social Democratic Union Skopje, Tvoja party, Political party Demokrati and Narodna Partija na Romite independently joined the race for parliamentary seats.

To tackle the risk of spreading the virus, before the start of the campaign, the Government adopted protocols to limit mass events and gatherings, so political parties were forced to use different voter outreach methods. The focus shifted from organizing mass rallies and large gatherings to a massive social media campaign.

Once the voting was completed, the website of the State Election Commission was targeted by hacker attacks, and election results release was thus briefly prolonged. At the press conference, SEC President Oliver Derkoski said that the Commission was working in accordance with the Electoral Code, that the hackers targeted the website and not the election results software, and that the attack was reported to the cybercrime department of the Ministry of Interior.<sup>58</sup>

In these elections, as well as in the parliamentary elections in 2016, there was almost a “dead race” between the two largest parties from the Macedonian bloc, SDSM and VMRO-DPMNE, and both parties won a smaller number of parliamentary seats compared to the previous elections. The SDSM-led coalition “Mozeme”

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<sup>58</sup> “SEC - election results, mandates, hacks, reactions and ratings”, Radio Free Europe, 16 July 2020. Accessed at: <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/%D0%B4%D0%B8%D0%BA-D1%81%D0%B4%D1%81%D0%BC-%D0%B2%D0%BC%D1%80%D0%BE-%D0%B4%D0%BF%D0%BC%D0%BD%D0%B5/30731705.html> (last visit: 05 April 2024)

won the largest number of seats – 46 or 35.89% of the total number of votes. Just behind them, with 2 seats less, was the VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition, which won 44 seats in these elections or 34.57% of the total number of votes. DUI ranked third by the number of seats and won total of 15 parliamentary seats. The Coalition of Alliance for Albanians and Alternative had a significantly better result compared to the previous elections, and won 12 parliamentary seats. For the first time, the political party Levica was represented in the Assembly with two seats, while DPA had lower result than the previous elections and won only one parliamentary seat. Other parties and coalitions that run for elections failed to win enough votes to secure parliamentary seats.

The OSCE/ODIHR mission assessed that even though negative tone prevailed in the election campaign, it was competitive and contestants had the opportunity to convey their messages despite the restrictions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. SDSM assessed the elections as dignified, free, democratic and safe. On the other hand, VMRO-DPMNE pointed out that during the elections there were serious pressures, numerous irregularities and massive bribery of voters. Alliance and Alternative shared accusations of ballot boxes being filled at several polling stations. The political party Levica, meanwhile, submitted 1,982 complaints to the SEC, 1,478 of which were rejected on the grounds that they were submitted without the signature of an authorized person, while the rest were rejected due to lack of evidence.

On 4 August 2020, the Constituent Session of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia was held, at which the mandates of 120 newly elected representatives and the new composition of the Assembly were verified. The session was chaired by the President of the previous term, Talat Xhaferi, who was re-elected during the same month with 62 votes in favor, for a new four-year term.<sup>59</sup> The Assembly elected the new government led by Zoran Zaev, which in addition to SDSM and the coalition included DUI and BESA.

More information on the history of parliamentary elections since independence can be found in the Handbook for Parliamentary Elections in the Republic of North Macedonia 2020.<sup>60</sup>

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59 "Talat Xhaferi re-elected as Speaker of the Assembly", Channel 5, 22 August 2020. Accessed at: <https://kanal5.com.mk/talat-djaferi-reizbran-za-pretsedatel-na-sobranieto/a435725> last visit: 05 April 2024)

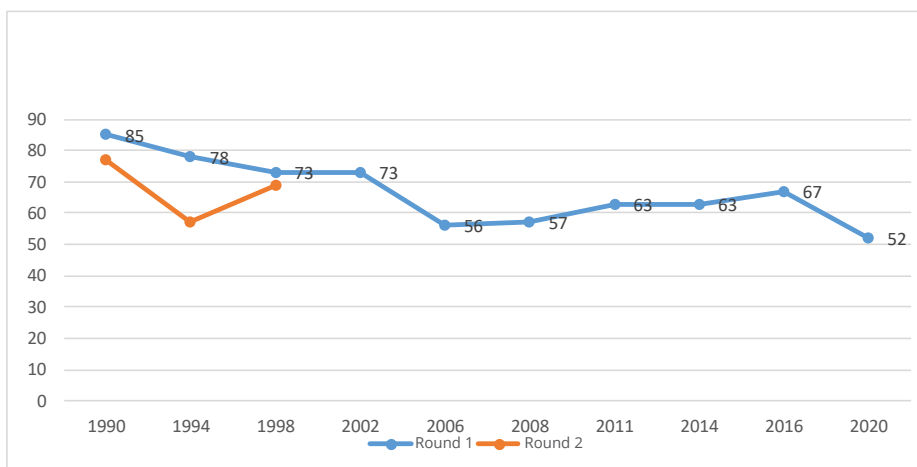
60 Handbook for presidential elections in the Republic of North Macedonia 2019, second supplemented edition. KAS and IDSCS, 2019. page 22-40. Accessed at: [https://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/Priracnik\\_za\\_parlamentarni\\_izbori\\_2020\\_ENG.pdf](https://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/Priracnik_za_parlamentarni_izbori_2020_ENG.pdf) (last visit 05 April 2024)



### Voter turnout in parliamentary elections (1990 – 2020)

Considering the data on all previous parliamentary elections from 1990 to 2020, dynamic changes in voter turnout can be observed. First parliamentary elections in 1990 still hold the record for highest turnout of 85% thus far. For more than a decade, parliamentary elections in 2006 were marked with the lower limit of turnout, however, the previous 2020 parliamentary elections that were held amid the pandemic had lower turnout by 4%, setting the lowest record, i.e. 52% of the total number of registered voters.<sup>61</sup>

*Turnout in parliamentary elections (1990 – 2020)*



61 State Election Commission, Results Archive. Accessed at: <https://www.sec.mk/izbori-arhiva/> ( last visit: 5 April 2024)



2

# **Macedonian Electoral System for Parliamentary Elections**

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## 2. Macedonian Electoral System for Parliamentary Elections<sup>62</sup>

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Members of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia are elected in general, direct and free elections by secret ballot for a 4-year term. 120-123 Members of the Assembly are elected at parliamentary elections, yet, the Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia allows for the Assembly to consist of 120 to 140 MPs.

Parliamentary elections are held according to the proportional electoral model with closed candidate lists, with 20 MPs elected in each of the six electoral districts across the territory of the country. Each political party would win parliamentary seats proportionally to the number of votes cast for its candidate list, compared to the number of votes cast for other candidate lists. Distribution of parliamentary seats is undertaken by applying the D'Hondt formula. Candidates are assigned seats in the order shown on a candidate list.

Elections for Members of the Assembly are held every four years in the last 90 days of the previous parliamentary term, or within 60 days from the day of dissolving the Assembly. In early elections, all deadlines for electoral actions are shortened by five days, except for the deadline set for the election campaign.

Individual Member of the Assembly may have his/her term cut short by resignation, criminal conviction that is punishable with at least five years imprisonment, emerging incompatibility with serving as Member of the Assembly, death or by court decision depriving the MP of the capacity to contract. When the term of office ends on one of these grounds, the "next-on-the-list" principle applies to elect an MP from the respective party list. An exception to this rule is when the term of a female MP ends. In this case, the next female candidate on the party list is elected.

The first session to constitute the new parliamentary composition is held no later than 20 days after the Election Day and is convened by the outgoing President. If the Assembly is not constituted within 20 days, MPs convene and constitute the Assembly on the twenty-first day from the Election Day at 10 o'clock and the session is chaired by the oldest elected MP.

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62 Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, Law Amending the Electoral Code 58/2024

Within a period of ten days of constituting the new Assembly, the President of the Republic of North Macedonia entrusts the mandate to the candidate (designate) of the party that won majority seats to form the new Government. The Prime Minister-designate submits a program to the Assembly and proposes the composition of the Government within 20 days. The Government is then elected by a majority vote of the total number of MPs.

The State Election Commission (SEC), along with the Municipal Election Commissions (MECs), the Election Commission of the City of Skopje, the Electoral Boards (EBs) for in-country voting and out-of-country voting in diplomatic and consular missions (DCOs) of the Republic of North Macedonia serve as electoral management bodies tasked with organizing the parliamentary elections.

The State Election Commission is composed of seven members who are elected by the Assembly for a five-year term, on the proposal of political parties and by a majority vote of the total number of MPs. The State Election Commission, among other competences, publishes the Voter List and is set to open the Voter List for public inspection within 15 days from the date of the announcing the elections.<sup>63</sup> The public inspection of the Voter List lasts for 20 days. The SEC has its own secretariat, headed by a Secretary General, which carries out professional-administrative and organizational-technical work. The SEC is also responsible for voter outreach and education on the methods of voting and exercising the voting right.

All Macedonian citizens over the age of 18, who have contractual capacity and have permanent residence in the electoral district where elections are held are entitled to vote. Elections are held by secret ballot and no one can be held responsible for the vote cast, or requested to inform about the choice or reasons for not voting.

Any adult with contractual capacity has the right to stand as a candidate at parliamentary elections. Each candidate can be nominated on only one list, and any list submitter may submit only one list of candidates for Members of the Assembly. At least 40% of the candidates on the candidate list must belong to the underrepresented gender, with at least one seat in every three seats belonging to the underrepresented gender, and additionally, at least one more seat in every 10 seats.

Registered political parties, either independently or in coalitions, and group of voters can submit a list of candidates for MPs. According to the recent legislative changes of March 2024, a group of voters is required to submit, along with the

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<sup>63</sup> Inspection of the Voter list. Accessed: <https://www.sec.mk/uvid-vo-izbirachki-spisok/> (Accessed on 16 April 2024)

candidate list, signatures of at least 1% of the registered voters in the extract of the Voter list for the respective electoral district.

The function of a Member of the Assembly is incompatible with serving any other elected position, such as President of the Republic, President of the Government, Minister, Judge, Public Prosecutor, Public Attorney, Ombudsman or other elected or appointed position by the Assembly and the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia. Also, it is incompatible with the position of mayor or municipal councilor, other professional and administrative activities in state administration bodies, economic or other profitable activity, as well as serving as member of governing board of public enterprises, public institutions, funds, agencies, offices and other legal entities. In addition, an MP cannot be elected to be a representative of state and social capital in commercial companies.

Election campaign refers to presenting candidates and their programs in public during the pre-election period for certain type of elections. The parliamentary elections campaign starts 20 days before the Election Day, i.e. on 18 April at 00:00 hrs. and ends on 6 May at 24:00 hrs.<sup>64</sup> The day before elections, i.e. 7 May, is the day of pre-election silence when candidates are not allowed to campaign, whereas media are not allowed to use any forms of electoral media presentation of electoral contestants.

Election campaign organizers need to open a separate bank account solely for the purpose of campaign finance, which cannot be used for any other purpose. Campaign finance may be secured from funds on the party's regular account, party's membership fees, donations and loans aimed for the election campaign. Election campaign participants may spend up to 110 denars per registered voter in the respective electoral district for which they submitted a candidate list.

Election campaigns cannot be financed from the budgets of municipalities and the City of Skopje, public enterprises and institutions, associations of citizens, religious communities, religious groups and foundations, foreign governments and international institutions, bodies and organizations of foreign states and other foreign citizens, enterprises with mixed and dominant foreign capital, as well as from unidentified sources. Broadcasters, print media and electronic media (Internet portals), as well as their affiliates, may not finance or donate to political parties and independent candidates, including for the election campaign.

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<sup>64</sup> Calendar of electoral activities for administering elections for Members of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia, State Election Commission. Accessed at: [https://mojotizbor.mk/images/2024/Rokovnik\\_za\\_Parlamentarni\\_izbori\\_2024\\_godina\\_-\\_MK.pdf](https://mojotizbor.mk/images/2024/Rokovnik_za_Parlamentarni_izbori_2024_godina_-_MK.pdf) ( Last visit on 16 April 2024)

According to the legislative changes that were introduced along with the Przino Agreement<sup>65</sup>, as of the day of announcing elections until the end of elections, broadcasters, print media and electronic media (Internet portals) may not publish advertisements that are financed from the national Budget, budgets of the municipalities and the City of Skopje and any other entities entrusted to exercise public powers by law.

During the campaign, all media and the public broadcasting service must provide equal access to ensure that election programs and candidates are presented in equitable, impartial and balanced manner. The Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services (AAVMS) monitors the electoral representation of both the parties and the candidates as well as the broadcasters' programs, and initiates misdemeanor proceedings for any failure to observe the rules.

The public broadcasting service in cooperation with the State Election Commission, informs the citizens, free of charge, about voting methods and techniques, as well as broadcasts other election-related information and provides impartial reporting. According to Electoral Code amendments under the Przino Agreement, 30% of the program should be reporting on in-country and world events, 30% on activities of ruling parties, 30% on activities of opposition parties and 10% on activities undertaken by non-parliamentary political parties and independent candidates.

During election campaign, media that report on elections may broadcast a total of nine minutes and thirty seconds of additional time for advertising per real hour of broadcasting, intended only for paid political advertising. Of these nine and a half minutes, a total of four minutes can be allocated to the two largest ruling political parties, four minutes to the two largest political parties of the opposition, one minute to the political parties in the Assembly that in the last parliamentary elections did not win enough seats to form a parliamentary group, as well as thirty seconds to the political parties not represented in the Assembly. Given that double elections are held this year, parties may be advertised for a total of 19 minutes per hour. Earlier, this was the case in the election campaign for the 2014 double election when the parties agreed on a limit of 15 minutes of promotion per hour.<sup>66</sup>

According to the Electoral Code, disbursement of costs for paid political advertising to broadcasters, print media and electronic media (internet portals) is done by the State Election Commission based on submitted invoice.

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65 Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia, Law Amending the Electoral Code 196/2015

66 "Elections 2024: A party propaganda of epic proportions". Prisma, 8 February, 2024. Accessed at: <https://prizma.mk/izbori-2024-partisko-epp-od-epski-razmeri/> (last visit on 26 March 2024)

Elections can be monitored by accredited observers, based on issued authorization by the SEC. Accreditation to observe elections can be granted to domestic and foreign civil society organizations that have been registered at least one year before the elections, and have incorporated the principle of human rights protection into their statute. Representatives of foreign countries can also observe the elections. Authorized representatives of list submitters also have the right to appoint their representative who will monitor the work of the electoral management bodies.<sup>67</sup>

More information on the Macedonian electoral system for the election of Members of the Assembly can be found in the Handbook on Parliamentary Elections in the Republic of North Macedonia 2020.<sup>68</sup>

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67 Table of accredited observers for the Parliamentary Elections in the Republic of North Macedonia, State Election Commission. Accessed at: <https://www.sec.mk/parlamentarni-izbori-2024/#tab-id-26> (Last visit on 16 April 2024)

68 Handbook on parliamentary elections in the Republic of North Macedonia 2020, second supplemented edition. KAS and IDSCS, 2020. page 42-55. Accessed at: [https://izbornaarhiva.mk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Belegexemplar\\_2019\\_The\\_Republic\\_of\\_Macedonia\\_s\\_2019\\_Presidential\\_Elections\\_Handbook\\_ENG.pdf](https://izbornaarhiva.mk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Belegexemplar_2019_The_Republic_of_Macedonia_s_2019_Presidential_Elections_Handbook_ENG.pdf) (last visit on 05 April 2024)







3

**Electoral  
Districts**

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### 3. Electoral Districts

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The regular parliamentary elections to be held on 8 May 2024 will be administered in the six electoral districts (ED) on the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Shortly prior to the parliamentary elections in 2002, the Law on Electoral Districts was adopted<sup>69</sup>, stipulating 6 electoral districts and dividing the territory of the state into electoral regions with approximately equal number of registered voters. In accordance with the Electoral Code amendments from 2016<sup>70</sup>, the number of voters in one ED can vary – 5/+ 5 percent relative to the average number of voters, which amounts to almost 292,000 per electoral district. In each of the 6 EDs, 20 MPs are elected according to the proportional principle, i.e. 120 MPs of the total 123 MPs.

Prior to the early parliamentary elections in 2011, the Electoral Code was amended<sup>71</sup>, allowing Macedonian citizens in foreign countries to vote for the first time. Out-of-country voting was administered in three electoral districts according to the majority principle. Specifically, electoral district 7 included Europe and Africa, electoral district 8 included North and South America, and electoral district 9 included Asia and Australia. Legislative changes under the Przino Agreement stipulated only one electoral district abroad, i.e. electoral district 7 for Europe, Africa, North America, South America, Australia and Asia, where 3 MPs are elected according to the proportional model.<sup>72</sup> These MPs can be elected if the number of votes cast equals the lowest number of votes to win a single in-country seat. If none of the lists wins the required number of votes, no MP is elected. Macedonian citizens abroad vote in diplomatic and consular missions (DCOs) and the consular offices of the Republic of North Macedonia.

The number of in-country polling stations for these regular elections is 3,360. In the early parliamentary elections in 2020, there were 3,478 polling stations, i.e. 46 less compared to the previous elections in 2016. No more than 1,000 voters may vote in one polling station.

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69 Law on Electoral Districts for Election of Parliamentarians in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, "Official Gazette", no. 43 of 26 June 2002

70 Electoral Code (proposal consolidated text), unofficial version prepared by the Professional Service of the State Election Commission ("Official Gazette", no. 40/06, 136/08, 148/08, 155/08, 163/08, 44/11, 51/11, 54/11, 142/12, 31/13, 34/13, 14/14, 30/14, 196/15, 35/16, 97/16, 99/16 136/16, 142/16, 67/17, 125/17, 35/18, 99/18, 140/18, 208/18, 27/19, 98/19 and 42/20)

71 Electoral Code (consolidated text), "Official Gazette", No.54 of 14 April 2011

72 Electoral Code (consolidated text), unofficial version prepared by the Professional Service of the State Election Commission ("Official Gazette", no. 40/06, 136/08, 148/08, 155/08, 163/08, 44/11, 51/11, 54/11, 142/12, 31/13, 34/13, 14/14, 30/14, 196/15, 35/16, 97/16 and 99/16).

In February 2020, in anticipation of early parliamentary elections, additional amendments to the Electoral Code were voted, with legislative interventions concerning the electoral districts across the territory of the country. Given the new developments, new boundaries were set in two electoral districts – ED 5 and ED 6. Specifically, the Municipality of Debar with 16 polling stations and the Municipality of Mavrovo and Rostusha with 30 polling stations previously in ED5, now fell within the boundaries of ED 6.<sup>73</sup> Such delineation of electoral districts resulted from the recommendations that an electoral district may not differ from the number of voters in the neighboring electoral district by  $\pm 5\%$ .<sup>74</sup>

*Map of the electoral units*



**ED 1** is composed of part of the capital Skopje and part of the central parts of the country, i.e. Skopje municipalities of Aerodrom, Karpos, Kisela Voda, Centar, part of municipality of Chair, Saraj, Sopiste, Makedonski Brod and Studenichani. Based on voters' ethnicity, the majority of voters are ethnic Macedonians. At the last parliamentary elections in 2020, 309,210 voters were registered in this electoral district, distributed across a total of 590 polling stations. 164,287 voters exercised their voting right or 53.16%, which resulted in the following distribution of seats in the electoral district: SDSM led coalition "Mozeme" - 8 seats, VMRO-DPMNE and Coalition - 7 seats, DUI - 2 seats, Alliance for Albanians - 2 seats, while the party Levica won one seat and became part of the legislature for the first time.

73 Law Amending and Supplementing the Electoral Code ("Official Gazette" no. 58 of 11 March 2024

74 "Last minute change of boundaries of two electoral districts" 360 degrees, February 15, 2020 <https://360stepeni.mk/vo-posleden-moment-ke-se-menuvaat-granitsite-na-dve-izborni-edinitsi/> (last visit: April 9, 2024)

**ED 2** also includes part of the capital Skopje and part of the northern parts of the country with an equal population composition, i.e. ethnic Macedonians, Albanians, but Serbs and Roma are also represented. This ED includes the Skopje municipalities of Butel, Gazi Baba, Gjorce Petrov, part of the municipality of Chair, Shuto Orizari, Aracinovo, part of Kumanovo, Lipkovo, part of Staro Nagorichane and Chucher Sandevo. In ED 2 in 2020, according to the State Election Commission, there were 319,820 voters, of which 158,804 (49.65%) went to the polls in a total of 433 polling stations on the territory of the electoral district. At the 2020 elections, VMRO-DPMNE and the Coalition won 7 seats, the Coalition “Mozeme” won 7 seats, DUI won 3 seats, while the Alliance for Albanians also won 3 seats.

**ED 3** includes parts of the central, eastern and northeastern parts of the country. This ED covers the municipalities of Berovo, Veles, Vinica, Gradsko, Delchevo, Zelenikovo, Zrnovci, Ilinden, Karbinci, Kocani, Kratovo, Kriva Palanka, part of Kumanovo, Lozovo, Makedonska Kamenica, Petrovec, Pehcevo, Probitip, Rankovce, Sveti Nikole, part of Staro Nagorichane, Caska, Cheshinovo – Obleshevo and Stip. The dominant population is of Macedonian ethnicity. According to the official data of the State Election Commission, 278,511 voters who exercise their voting right at 668 polling stations are registered in this electoral district. In 2020, voter turnout in ED 3 was 58.4%, that is, 162,648 voters, with VMRO-DPMNE and the Coalition winning 10 seats, followed by the Coalition ‘Mozeme’ with 9 seats, and the party Levica won the second out of two seats in this electoral district in these elections.

**ED 4** covers the territory of the southeastern region of the country. This ED includes part of the city of Bitola, Bogdanci, Bosilevo, Valandovo, Vasilevo, Gevgelija, Demir Kapija, Dojran, Kavadarci, Konce, part of Krivogastani, Mogila, Negotino, Novaci, Novo Selo, Prilep, Radovish, Rosoman and Strumica. This part is dominated by population of Macedonian ethnicity. There are a total of 615 polling stations in ED4 where a total of 282,506 people exercised their voting right in 2020, or 60.77% of the total registered voters. In this ED, VMRO-DPMNE and the Coalition and the Coalition “Mozeme” won 10 seats each in the 2020 elections.

**ED 5** covers the territory of the southwestern part of the country. It includes part of the city of Bitola, Vecvani, part of Debar, Debarca, Demir Hisar, Dolneni, part of Kicevo, part of Krivogastani, Krusevo, Ohrid, Plasnica, Resen, Struga and Center Zupa. The majority of the population is of Macedonian ethnicity, but voters from the Albanian ethnic community also represent a significant part. In the last parliamentary elections in 2020, total of 314,489 voters were registered to vote in 776 polling stations in ED 5. At the 2020 parliamentary elections, voter turnout was 50.92%, i.e. a total of 160,146 voters cast their vote. VMRO-DPMNE and the Coalition won 8 seats, the Coalition

“Mozeme” – 8 seats, DUI – 3 seats and the Alliance for Albanians – 1 seat.

**ED 6** covers the territory of the northwest of the country. It includes Bogovinje, Brvenica, Vrapciste, Gostivar, part of Debar, Zelino, Jegunovce, part of Kicevo, Mavrovo and Rostusha, Tearce and Tetovo. This part of the country is dominated by population of Albanian ethnicity. At the last parliamentary elections in 2020, 309,727 voters were registered to vote at 396 polling stations in ED 6, and the voter turnout was 40.74% or 126,175 voters. At the 2020 parliamentary elections, in this electoral district, DUI won biggest number of seats – 7, followed by the Alliance for Albanians with 6 seats, then the Coalition “Mozeme” – 4 seats, VMRO-DPMNE and the Coalition – 2 seats, and DPA won 1 seat.

**ED 7** includes all Macedonian citizens living or temporarily residing abroad, i.e. in the countries of Europe, Africa, North America, South America, Australia and Asia. In this electoral district, Macedonian citizens abroad can elect 3 MPs according to the proportional model. The parliamentary seats are distributed according to the D’Hondt formula. To be able to vote abroad, citizens of the Republic of North Macedonia who temporarily work or stay abroad and have registered their last residence in the country before the elections should apply for voting at the appropriate DCO/consular office. Thus, they are registered in the special extracts of the Voters List. They can apply by submitting a signed application or send an application by e-mail. The number of polling stations abroad is subject to change, and any DCO/consular office where less than 10 voters applied to vote will not be a designated polling station.

At the last parliamentary elections in 2020, voting was not administered in the diplomatic and consular missions and offices, after the lists of candidates for MPs were submitted to the Assembly.<sup>75</sup> According to the Electoral Code<sup>76</sup>, out-of-country voting is administered if the number of voters is equal to or greater than the lowest number of voters by which an in-country seat was elected at the last elections. At the 2016 parliamentary elections, according to D’Hondt model to calculate seats, in ED 6 that had the lowest turnout, the last MP was elected with 6,500 votes.<sup>77</sup> For the 2020 parliamentary elections, 6,096 voter applications in ED 7 were accepted, while 1,439 applications were rejected on the grounds of not being submitted orderly. The number of applicant voters did not exceed the number of votes by which the

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75 Decision not to administer out-of-country voting in the DCO, 17 March 2020, Accessed at: <https://www.sec.mk/parlamentarni-izbori-2020/#tab-id-18> (last visit: 26 March 2024)

76 Law Amending and Supplementing the Electoral Code (“Official Gazette” no. 58 of 11 March 2024)

77 “It is uncertain whether the diaspora will vote” 360 Degrees, 20 March 2020, Accessed at: <https://360stepeni.mk/neizvesno-e-dali-ke-glasa-dijasporata/> (last visit: 26 March 2024)

MP from ED 6 was elected in 2016. Based on these figures, the parliamentary composition elected in the 2020 elections did not have MPs from ED 7.

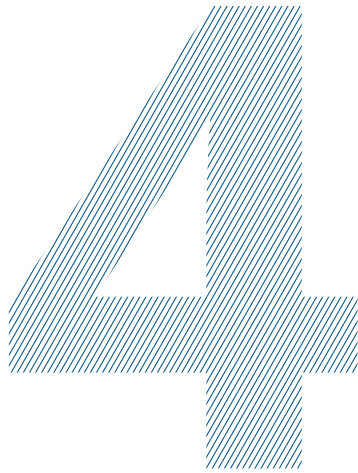
At the parliamentary elections in 2024, out-of-voting will not be administered again in the diplomatic and consular missions and offices as the number of citizens who applied to vote does not suffice.<sup>78</sup>

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78 Radio Free Europe. (2024, 27 March), "A total of 2,571 citizens abroad will be able to vote in the presidential election". <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/32880067.html> (accessed on 29 March 2024)







# 4

## **Overview of participants in 2024 Parliamentary Elections**

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## 4. Overview of participants in 2024 Parliamentary Elections

According to the Calendar of electoral activities to administer parliamentary elections, adopted by the SEC, a total of 17 political entities submitted candidate lists for election of MPs by the prescribed deadline, 2 April 2024. After reviewing the applications, SEC made a decision to accept 17 applications. In these elections, 1,815,350 eligible citizens will have the opportunity to vote for 17 political entities, or 11 political parties, 5 coalitions and one independent list of a group of voters, with 84 candidate lists, which is a sixfold increase compared to 78 candidate lists submitted for 2020 parliamentary elections.

### *Summary of submitted candidate lists for the six electoral districts*

Ord. No.	Party/Coalition	ED 1	ED 2	ED 3	ED 4	ED 5	ED 6
1	Coalition "Za Evropska idnina" – SDSM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Coalition "Tvoja Makedonija" - VMRO-DPMNE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	Coalition "Evropski front" - DUI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Coalition "Vredi"	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Levica	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	Avaja – Dosta e	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
7	Political party Demokrati	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	Political party Desna	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
9	Political party Edinstvena Makedonija	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
10	Dvizenje ZNAM – Za nasa Makedonija	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11	Makedonska era Treta- Suverenisti	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
12	Makedonska obnovitelna reformska opcija – Rabotnicka partija	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
13	Political party Nova Alternativa	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
14	Political party Rodina Makedonija	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
15	Tvoja partija	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
16	Coalition "Hrabro za Makedonija" – GROM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
17	Group of voters Djula Celiku	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓

All political parties, coalitions, as well as leaders of candidate lists who take part in parliamentary elections are presented in this Handbook. Parliamentary parties, that is, SDSM and the coalition, VMRO-DPMNE and the coalition, DUI and the coalition, coalition “Vredi” and Levica<sup>79</sup>, will be presented in more detail.

## Political parties, coalitions and leaders of candidate lists<sup>80</sup>

### Social Democratic Union of Macedonia<sup>81</sup> and “Za Evropska idnina” coalition



Socijaldemokratski sojuz na Makedonija (Social Democratic Union of Macedonia) declares itself as party to the left of the center, with a social democratic ideological provenience. It was founded at the Congress held on 21 April 1991, as the legal successor of the Union of Communists of Macedonia – Party for Democratic Transformation (SKM PDP). During that year, the party changed its name to SDSM and its ideology from communist to social democratic. The party run in all parliamentary and local elections since the country's independence. In 1992, after the dissolution of the first expert government, even though SDSM had no majority in the Assembly, it was granted a mandate and formed the first political government of the Republic of Macedonia. In the period from 1994 to 1998, the party once again had a majority in the Assembly, as it won 85 parliamentary seats together with its coalition partners in the 1994 elections that were boycotted by the opposition in the second round. In the 1998 parliamentary elections, SDSM lost the elections by winning only 27 parliamentary seats. SDSM was the largest opposition party until 2002, when it won the elections with 60 seats together with its coalition partners and remained in power until the next parliamentary elections in 2006. In the 2006 parliamentary elections, the SDSM coalition won 32 seats. Until 2016, SDSM remained in opposition, after losing four election cycles, i.e., in 2008, 2011, 2014 and 2016. In the early parliamentary elections in 2008, together with the coalition, the party won 27 parliamentary seats, and in the early parliamentary

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79 The order of political parties represented in the Assembly is based on the number of seats won in the 2020 parliamentary elections. Other political parties and coalitions are alphabetically ordered.

80 Logos of political parties, biographies and photos of leaders of candidate lists are downloaded from party websites, public institutions' websites and official Facebook profiles of candidates.

81 Handbook on 2020 parliamentary elections in the Republic of North Macedonia (second supplemented edition), Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Institute for Democracy “Societas Civilis” – Skopje. Accessed at: [https://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/Priracnik\\_za\\_parlamentarni\\_izbori\\_2020\\_ENG.pdf](https://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/Priracnik_za_parlamentarni_izbori_2020_ENG.pdf) (last visit on 4 April 2024)

elections in 2011, SDSM won 42 parliamentary seats with the coalition. In the 2014 parliamentary elections, SDSM won 27 seats and the coalition won a total of 34 seats. In the 2016 parliamentary elections, SDSM and the coalition won a total of 49 seats, which was two parliamentary seats less than VMRO-DPMNE, but secured a parliamentary majority together with DUI. In the last parliamentary elections in 2020, SDSM and the coalition “Mozeme” won a total of 46 mandates and secured a parliamentary majority to form a government.<sup>82</sup>

Since the country's independence and the party transformed from SKM-PDP to SDSM in 1991, Branko Crvenkovski was party leader until 2004. He stepped down as party leader when he won at the extraordinary presidential elections in 2004 and became the President of the country. At an extraordinary SDSM Congress in November 2004, Vlado Buckovski was elected president, leading the party to defeat in the 2006 elections. After the elections, Buckovski was voted no confidence and an extraordinary Congress in November 2006 elected Radmila Sekerinska as party leader. Radmila Sekerinska held the position of SDSM President until June 2008, when she handed in her irrevocable resignation as result of losing the early parliamentary elections. In September 2008, at the 8<sup>th</sup> party Congress, Zoran Zaev was elected as acting president. In 2009, after his term as president expired, the party Congress restored Branko Crvenkovski as president of SDSM. He held the position of party leader until 2013, when he stepped down and Zoran Zaev was re-elected in his place. In 2021, in the extraordinary intra-party elections, the incumbent president Dimitar Kovachevski was elected.<sup>83</sup>

After the last local elections in 2021, SDSM is in power in 16 out of 80 municipalities.<sup>84</sup>



In the 2024 parliamentary elections, SDSM leads the coalition “Za Evropska idnina”, along with: Liberalno demokratska partija, Nova socijaldemokratska partija, VMRO Narodna partija, Partija za dvizenje na Turcite, Demokratski

82 State Election Commission, Elections 2020. Accessed: <https://izbornaarhiva.mk/> (last visit on 4 April 2024)

83 Dimitar Kovacevski is the new president of SDSM with 37,649 votes. Accessed at: <https://sdsd.org.mk/pres-konferencii/38964/> (last visit on 4 April 2024)

84 State Election Commission, Elections 2021. Accessed at: <https://izbornaarhiva.mk/> (last visit on 4 April 2024)

sojuz na Vlasite, Sojuz na Romite od Makedonija, Stranka na demokratska akcija na Makedonija, Demokratska obnova na Makedonija, Desnica, Partija na penzionerite, Partija za demokratski prosperitet na Romite, Partija za opshtestven I ekonomski napredok i Srpska stranka vo Makedonija.

“Za Evropska idnina” coalition will run in 2024 elections with candidate lists in six electoral districts.

### **SDSM – Socijaldemokratski sojuz na Makedonija (Social Democratic Union of Macedonia)**

St. “Bihacka” no.8

1000 Skopje

web@sdsd.org.mk

www.sdsd.org.mk

### **Leaders of candidate lists of SDSM and “Za Evropska idnina” coalition <sup>85</sup>**



**ED 1 – Dimitar Kovacevski** is the president of SDSM, a former Prime Minister and Assistant professor at the University American College Skopje. He graduated from the Faculty of Economy at the University “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” in Skopje. He completed his doctoral studies at the Faculty of Economy in Montenegro. Kovacevski was a former deputy finance minister in 2020. He was born in 1974 in Kumanovo.

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<sup>85</sup> State Election Commission: Candidate lists by electoral districts - April 2024. Accessed: Листа на кандидати по политичка партија (sec.mk) (last visit on 15 April 2024)



**ED 2 – Oliver Spasovski** is a former Minister of Interior and Prime Minister in the caretaker government tasked to organize the early parliamentary elections in July 2020. Previously, he held the post of Minister of Interior on four occasions, from 11 November 2015 to 18 May 2016, from 2 September 2016 to 29 December 2016, from 31 May 2017 until he was given the mandate to form a caretaker government on 3 January 2020, and from 1 September 2020 to 29 January 2024. Spasovski was elected Member of the Assembly in two parliamentary terms (2006-2008 and 2011-2014). He graduated

from the Faculty of Economy at the University “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” in Skopje. He was born in 1974 in Kumanovo.



**ED 3 – Sanja Lukarevska** serves as Director of the Public Revenue Office and Vice President of SDSM. She graduated from the Faculty of Law at the University “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” in Skopje. She was born in 1982 in Skopje.



**ED 4 – Venko Filipche** is a former Minister of Health. Prior to taking office, he was a health advisor to Prime Minister Zoran Zaev and Associate professor at the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje. Filipche is also Secretary of the Macedonian Neurosurgical Association as well as a member of the executive committee of the Association of Neurosurgeons of Southeast Europe. He graduated and completed master and doctorate studies from the Medical Faculty in Skopje. He was born in 1977 in Skopje.





**ED 5 - Jovan Mitreski** is the current President of the Assembly, former coordinator of the SDSM parliamentary group who serves his second term as Member of the Assembly in the current parliamentary term. Previously, he was a Member of the Assembly from 2016 to 2020. He graduated from the Faculty of Economy at the University "Ss. Clement of Ohrid" University - Bitola. He was born in 1980 in Struga.



**ED 6 - Slavjanka Petrovska** is Minister of Defence. In the period from 2020 until taking up the post of Minister of Defense, she was a Member of the Assembly. In the period from January to July 2020, Petrovska was an additional Deputy Minister of Interior in the caretaker government tasked to organize the early parliamentary elections in July 2020. She graduated from the Faculty of Law at the University "Ss. Cyril and Methodius" in Skopje. She was born in 1982 in Skopje.

## VMRO-DPMNE and “Tvoja Makedonija” coalition



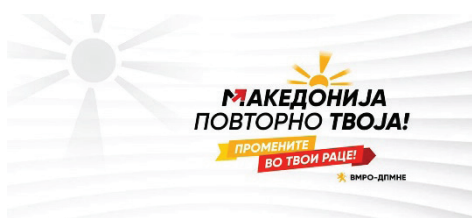
VMRO-DPMNE is a party that declares itself as people's party to the right of the center, with an ideological Christian democrat provenience. Since independence, VMRO-DPMNE has been one of the two largest parties in the country. The party run in almost all parliamentary and local elections, with the exception of the 1994 parliamentary elections when it boycotted the second round. After the third parliamentary elections held in 1998, VMRO-DPMNE formed a government for the first time with 49 seats won, and in coalition with Demokratska Alternativa that won 13 seats, the PD-PA-NDP (later DPA) with 11 seats, and several other small parties. VMRO-DPMNE remained in power until 2002, however, a government of a broad coalition was formed during the conflict from May to November 2001, which also included ministers from the SDSM and the LDP. In 2002, VMRO-DPMNE together with its coalition partners won 33 parliamentary seats, lost the elections and stayed in opposition until 2006. In 2006, together with “Za podobra Makedonija” coalition, the party won the parliamentary elections, with a total of 45 parliamentary seats and formed the government. Since then, VMRO-DPMNE won in four other consecutive election cycles, in the early parliamentary elections in 2008, 2011, 2014 and 2016. In the early parliamentary elections in 2008, together with “Za podobra Makedonija” coalition, the party won a record 63 seats. In the early parliamentary elections in 2011, together with the coalition, this party won a total of 56 parliamentary seats. In the early parliamentary elections in 2014, VMRO-DPMNE had 52 MPs in the Assembly, and together with the coalition partners they held 61 parliamentary seats out of a total of 123 seats in the Assembly. In the early parliamentary elections in 2016, VMRO-DPMNE won 51 parliamentary seats. Even though VMRO-DPMNE won the largest number of parliamentary seats, meaning that the party president, Nikola Gruevski, would receive the mandate from the President of the country, Ivanov, to form a government, the party failed to secure the required majority of 61 MPs within the deadline, thus failed to form a government. The mandate to form a government was then given to SDSM President, Zoran Zaev, whose party won 49 seats in the elections. Zoran Zaev's government was voted in May 2017, with 62 votes in favor.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Handbook on 2020 parliamentary elections in the Republic of North Macedonia (second supplemented edition), Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Institute for Democracy “Societas Civilis” – Skopje. Accessed at: [https://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/Priracnik\\_za\\_parlamentarni\\_izbori\\_2020\\_ENG.pdf](https://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/Priracnik_za_parlamentarni_izbori_2020_ENG.pdf) (last visit on 3 April 2024)

In the last parliamentary elections in 2020, VMRO-DPMNE won 44 parliamentary seats, two seats less than SDSM and “Mozeme” coalition, which won 46 seats and secured a parliamentary majority to form a government.<sup>87</sup>

In the last local elections in 2021, VMRO-DPMNE’s candidates won 42 mayoral posts, out of 80 municipalities and the City of Skopje.<sup>88</sup> Compared to the previous 2017 local elections when VMRO-DPMNE won only 5 mayoral posts, the party managed to win 37 more mayoral posts.

Since its establishment until 2003, Ljubcho Georgievski was the president of VMRO-DPMNE. At the party Congress in May 2003, Georgievski resigned, and Nikola Gruevski was elected in his place. Gruevski led the party until December 2017, when he handed in his resignation that was accepted by the Central Committee. At the 16th extraordinary Congress, held in December 2017, Hristijan Mickovski was elected party president.<sup>89</sup> In 2021, the 17th Congress was held, when the incumbent Hristijan Mickovski was re-elected.<sup>90</sup>



In the parliamentary elections in 2024, VMRO-DPMNE leads the coalition “Твоја Македонија”, along with Socijalistichka partija na Makedonija, Demokratska partija na Srbite vo Makedonija, Demokratski sojuz, Makedonska akcija, Dvizenje za nacionalno edinstvo

na Turcite, Srpska napredna stranka vo Makedonija, Boshnjachka narodna partija, Demokratski sili na Romite, Partija na obedineta demokrati na Makedonija, Partija na Vlasite od Makedonija, GLAS za Makedonija, Nova Liberalna Partija, Socijaldemokratska unija, Romi obedineta za Makedonija, Demokratska partija na Romite, Rabotnichko zemjodelska partija na Republika Makedonija, Obedineta partija za ednakvost na Romite, Dostoinstvo, Trajno makedonsko radikalno obedinuvanje, Obedineta za Makedonija, Makedonski koncept.

87 State Election Commission, Elections 2020. Accessed at: <https://izbornaarhiva.mk/> (last visit on 3 April 2024)

88 State Election Commission, Elections 2021. Accessed at: <https://izbornaarhiva.mk/> (last visit on 3 April 2024)

89 Handbook on 2020 parliamentary elections in the Republic of North Macedonia (second supplemented edition), Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Institute for Democracy “Societas Civilis” – Skopje. Accessed at: [https://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/Priracnik\\_za\\_parlamentarni\\_izbori\\_2020\\_ENG.pdf](https://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/Priracnik_za_parlamentarni_izbori_2020_ENG.pdf) (last visit 04 April 2024)

90 With 489 votes in favor and 3 invalid ballots, Mickovski was re-elected as leader of VMRO-DPMNE, 360 stepeni, December 12, 2021. Accessed at: <https://360stepeni.mk/so-489-glasa-za-i-3-nevazhechki-livchina-mitskoski-reizbran-za-lider-na-vmro-dpmne/> (last visit on 4 April 2024)

In these elections, VMRO-DPMNE led coalition “Tvoja Makedonija” will run the elections with candidate lists in all six electoral districts.

### **VMRO-DPMNE**

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### **Leaders of candidate lists of VMRO-DPMNE and “Tvoja Makedonija” coalition**



**ED1 – Hristijan Mickoski** is president of VMRO-DPMNE and a full-time professor at the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering in Skopje. In the period 2015-2017, he served as Energy Advisor to Prime Ministers Nikola Gruevski and Emil Dimitriev, and in the period from 2016-2017 he was Director General of JSC “Elektrani na Makedonija”. In 2017, he was elected leader of VMRO-DPMNE, and in 2021 he was re-elected to the post. He received his master’s degree and doctorate from the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering in Skopje. He was born in 1977 in Skopje.



**ED2 – Vlado Misajlovski** is Vice President of VMRO-DPMNE and current Member of the Assembly. He graduated from the Faculty of Political Science and International Relations at the University “Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, at the Department of Diplomacy and International Politics, where he completed a master’s degree. Misajlovski was Minister of Transport and Communications from 13 May 2015 to 1 June 2017. He previously held several other positions. He was born in 1985 in Skopje.



**ED3 – Dragan Kovachki** is Member of the Assembly in the current parliamentary term, has a military rank and is a colonel in the Army. He was commander of the 1st Mechanized Infantry Brigade, and head of the section for operations and combat readiness in the 1st Mechanized Infantry Brigade. Kovachki was also the head of the Sector (Military Security and Intelligence Service in the Ministry of Defense). He was head of the counterintelligence department in the military security and intelligence service. He was born in 1977 in Delchevo.



**ED4 – Aleksandar Nikolovski** is Vice President of VMRO-DPMNE and Member of the Assembly. Nikolovski graduated from the Faculty of Law “Iustinianus Primus” in Skopje as political scientist. Nikolovski is member of VMRO-DPMNE for many years and served as Member of the Assembly in several parliamentary terms. From 2009 to 2017, Nikolovski was a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and was again appointed to this post in 2021. In 2022, he was elected Vice-President of the Group of the European People’s Party in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. He was born in 1984 in Ohrid.



**ED5 – Gjorgija Sajkoski** is a Member of the Assembly, Secretary General of VMRO-DPMNE and Doctor of historical sciences. Sajkoski has held several positions, including President of the Council of the Municipality of Kicevo (2009 - 2013), Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Local Self-Government, Member of the Commission for Local Self-Government (2010 - 2014), President of the Municipal committee of VMRO-DPMNE in Kicevo (2010 - 2020) and Director of PE Studencica. He was born in 1972 in Kicevo.



**ED6 – Dafina Stojanovska** is a current Member of the Assembly and a member of the Executive Committee of the party. She also served as Member of the Assembly in the previous two terms (2016-2020 and 2014-2016). Stojanoska is a dentist and had dental practice in Gostivar in the period 2001 - 2008. In the period 2008 – 2016, she was employed at the Health Insurance Fund in Gostivar. She was born in 1974 in Gostivar.

### Democratic Union for Integration<sup>91</sup> and “Evropski Front” coalition



The Democratic Union for Integration was created by the members of the former Albanian National Liberation Army (NLA), which started the armed conflict in 2001. Ideologically, DUI declares itself to be a left-centrist party that advocates greater rights for Albanians and the implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement. The party was established in 2002 and ran for the first time in the parliamentary elections that year and won the largest number of votes among the ethnic Albanian electorate, securing a total of 16 parliamentary seats and becoming part of the SDSM-led government. DUI was part of the Government from 2002 to 2006, when it was represented by the largest number of ministers of an Albanian party thus far. In 2006 parliamentary elections, DUI again won the highest number of votes among the Albanian electorate (12.2%) and 17 parliamentary seats, but after unsuccessful negotiations with VMRO-DPMNE was not included in the then government coalition. As a result, DUI boycotted the work of the Assembly for a long period from 2006 to 2008, when early parliamentary elections were called. In the 2008 parliamentary elections, DUI won 12.8% of the votes and 18 seats, and as the largest political party representing ethnic Albanians entered the government headed by Nikola Gruevski. In the next parliamentary elections in 2011, DUI was again the third largest party in the country, winning 14 seats. In the 2014 parliamentary elections, DUI won 19 seats and formed a government together with VMRO-DPMNE.

In the last parliamentary elections held in 2020, DUI noted an increased result, winning 15 parliamentary seats, which is 5 more than in 2016 parliamentary elections.<sup>92</sup> In coalition with SDSM, DUI once again participated in the Government. Ali Ahmeti has been the leader of the party since it was established.

After the last local elections in 2021, DUI have 11 mayors from a total of 80 municipalities and the City of Skopje, while in the local elections in 2017 there were only 10 mayors.<sup>93</sup>

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91 Handbook on 2020 parliamentary elections in the Republic of North Macedonia (second supplemented edition), Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Institute for Democracy “Societas Civilis” – Skopje. Accessed at: [https://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/Priracnik\\_za\\_parlamentarni\\_izbori\\_2020\\_ENG.pdf](https://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/Priracnik_za_parlamentarni_izbori_2020_ENG.pdf) (last visit on 04 April 2024)

92 State Election Commission, Elections 2020. Accessed: <https://izbornaarhiva.mk/> (last visit on 5 April 2024)

93 State Election Commission, Elections 2021. Accessed: <https://izbornaarhiva.mk/> (last visit on 3 April 2024)

In the 2024 parliamentary elections, DUI leads the “Evropski front” coalition, along with Demokratska partija na Albancite, Evropska demokratska partija, Narodno dvizenje, Alijansa za Albancite (Zijadin Sela)<sup>94</sup>, Dvizenje na Turcite na Makedonija za pravda I demokratija, Demokratska partija na Turcite i Unija na Romite.

In these elections, DUI-led coalition “Evropski front” will run the elections with candidate lists in all six electoral districts.

### **Democratic Union for Integration – DUI**

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<sup>94</sup> The wing of the Alliance of Albanians led by Zijadin Sela decided in the upcoming elections to join the “European Front” led by DUI. After the last decision taken by the Basic Court in Tetovo, Sela received the seals of the Alliance of Albanians, thus officially he is the president of AA. “Zijadin Sela received the seals of the Alliance for Albanians, Taravari announces an appeal” 360 stepeni, 2 April, Accessed at: <https://360stepeni.mk/zijadin-sela-sudski-gi-dobi-pechatite-na-alijansa-za-albantsite-taravari-najavuva-zhalba/> (last visit on 16 April 2024)



### Leaders of candidate lists of “Evropski front” coalition



**ED 1 – Blerim Bexheti** has a law degree and is an attorney by profession. From 2006 to 2009 he was a Member of the Assembly. In the period 2009-2011, he was Mayor of the municipality of Saraj. From 28 July 2011 to 19 June 2014 he was Minister of Justice. Bexheti now serves as mayor of the municipality of Saraj after he won the 2021 elections.



**ED 2 – Sadula Duraku** was born in 1960 in Lipkovo, Kumanovo. He graduated from the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering in Pristina. In 2004, he was appointed Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy and held that function until 2006. In 2006, he was a Member of the Assembly from the DUI parliamentary group. He was mayor of the municipality of Lipkovo in the period 2009-2017. In 2017, he was appointed Minister of Environment and Physical Planning, and in 2019 Deputy Prime Minister for the implementation of the Framework Agreement and political system. He remained in office until 2020.



**ED 3 – Sulejman Baki** was born in Skopje in 1975. He completed his bachelor's and master's studies at the University of Bursa - Uludag, and received his doctorate from the Institute of National History at UKIM in the field of Ottoman history. Since 2011, he has been a professor at the State University of Tetovo, where he is also the Head of the Department of Turkish language and literature. He is a representative of the Movement of Turks of Macedonia for Justice and Democracy. (Dvizenje na Turcite na Makedonija za pravda i demokratija).



**ED 4 – Enver Hussain** was born in 1971 in the village of Topolnica, Radovish. He is a university professor of 1-4 grade teaching at the Goce Delchev University in Stip, and holds a master’s degree in law from the International University of Struga. From 2008 to 2012, he was Vice president of the Democratic Party of Turks of Macedonia. From 2014 to 2017, he was State Secretary at the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, and from 2018 to 2020 he served as State Secretary at the Ministry of Education and Science. He is currently serving as Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Policy.



**ED 5 – Zijadin Sela** is President of the Alliance for Albanians.<sup>95</sup> He was elected a Member of the Assembly in the 2020 and earlier in 2016 elections. He also held the post of Member of the Assembly in the period from 2011 to 2013, before being elected mayor of Struga (2013-2016). He graduated from the Medical Faculty at the University of Tirana. He was born in 1972 in Struga.



**ED 6 – Ali Ahmeti**, since 2002 serves as Member of the Assembly and DUI leader. He is party leader since the party was founded in 2002. In the 2001 conflict, he was the supreme commander and political leader of the National Liberation Army (NLA). In 1983, he received a degree in philosophy from the University of Pristina, Kosovo. He was born in 1959 in the village of Zajas, Kicevo. For the eighth time, Ahmeti is a leader of the candidate list in ED 6.

<sup>95</sup> Sela: The court ruled I am the president of AA, and the seal of the party are its members”, mkd.mk, 03 April 2024. Accessed at: <https://mkd.mk/sela-sudot-presudi-jas-sum-pretседatel-na-aa-a-pechat-na-partijata-se-chlenovite/> (last visit on 22 April 2024)

## Coalition “Vredi”



The coalition “Worth” includes the political parties Alternativa, Dvizenje Besa, Alijansa za Albancite (Arben Taravari) and Demokratsko dvizenje.

**Alternativa** is a political party that declares to be a center-right entity in the ideological spectrum. The party was established in 2019. The Central Assembly appointed Afrim Gashi as the first President. The party originated from former members of Dvizenje Besa, who formed the party after the outcome of 2017 local elections. The political program relies on four main pillars: Development, Integration, Open Dialogue and Justice.

**Dvizenje Besa** is a political party founded in 2014. Biljal Kasami is president of the party. In the 2016 parliamentary elections, Besa won five parliamentary seats, making it the second largest Albanian party in the Assembly.<sup>96</sup> In the 2020 parliamentary elections, the party participated in the SDSM-led coalition and won 4 parliamentary seats.

**Alliance for Albanians** is a political party that emerged from Dvizenje za reformi (Movement for Reform) in the DPA, and was registered as political party shortly before the local elections in 2017 under the name Alliance of Albanians, which was challenged by the leadership of Uniteti and the NDP. In the previous parliamentary elections in 2020, the party was in coalition with the party Alternativa. In those elections, the coalition won 12 seats. Prior to the 2024 elections, the party was divided into two wings, one led by Zijadin Sela and the other by Arben Taravari. After the split, Arben Taravari and the Albanian opposition parties confirmed the coalition and signed a declaration of unity in the upcoming elections. Taravari is also a presidential candidate of the coalition “Vredi”.<sup>97</sup>

**Demokratsko dvizenje** is a political party formed by supporters of Izet Mexhiti from the so-called “Ognena grupa” of DUI. Due to internal disagreements and

<sup>96</sup> State Election Commission, Elections 2020. Accessed at: <https://izbornaarhiva.mk/> (last visit on 5 April 2024)

<sup>97</sup> Zijadin Sela received the seals of the Alliance for Albanians, Taravari announces an appeal” 360 stepeni, 2 April Accessed at: <https://360stepeni.mk/zijadin-sela-sudski-gi-dobi-pechatite-na-alijansa-za-albantsite-taravari-najavuva-zhalba/> (last visit on 16 April 2024)

revolting against the party, Demokratsko dvizenje split off and began to act independently since 2023.<sup>98</sup> Demokratsko dvizenje stands for respect for human rights, rule of law, promotion of the rights and status of Albanians and achievement of economic well-being, to name just a few of its fundamental values.

In these elections, the coalition “Vredi” will run the elections with candidate lists in all six electoral districts.

### Coalition “Vredi”

vlen.mk

### Leaders of the candidate lists of “Vredi” coalition



**ED 1 – Izet Mexhiti** is the leader of Demokratsko dvizenje and Member of the Assembly. He was born in 1977 in Skopje. He graduated from the Faculty of Economy at the University “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” in Skopje. In the period 2001-2003, he was a professor of economics at the secondary school “Arseni Jovkov”. From 2005 to 2017, Medziti was mayor of the municipality of Chair, and in 2019 he became president of the party branch of DUI in that municipality.

In 2023, from the factional “Ognena grupa” in DUI, Mexhiti founded the new party – Demokratsko dvizenje.



**ED 2 – Afrim Gashi** is the leader of Alternativa and Member of the Assembly in the last parliamentary term (2020-2024). He also served as Member of the Assembly in the previous term (2016 - 2020). In 2011, he founded the magazine “Shenja” and until 2014 was its editor-in-chief. He has been active in politics since 2014 and founded Dvizenje Besa, where he served for some time as Secretary General. At the Central Assembly after the split from

Dvizenje Besa, Gashi was elected the first president of the new party Alternativa. He graduated from the Faculty of Law at the University of Tetovo. He was born in 1977 in Skopje.

<sup>98</sup> “Ognenite” became Demokratsko dvizenje, DW, 2 August 2023. Accessed at: „Ognenite” станала Демократско движење – DW – 2.08.2023 (last visit on 15 April).



**ED 3 – Shener Bilali** is a professor at the Faculty of Communications at the International Balkan University. In the period from 2013-2017, he was an associate professor, while in 2017 he became full-time professor at the same faculty. In 2023, he joined Dvizenje Besa. He received his doctorate from the Institute of National History at the University “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” in Skopje.



**ED 4 – Mendurim Zekmani** is a leader of the candidate list in electoral district 4. He studied at the Faculty of Security at the FON University in Skopje.<sup>99</sup>



**ED 5 – Salim Soleimani** is a former Mufti and holds a master degree in theology and Islamic philosophy. He studied and received his master’s degree in Jordan, while for 12 years he headed the Mufti of the Islamic religious community in Struga, where he contributed to the development of religious life, working on the preservation of cultural and spiritual heritage.

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99 No more biographical data was found for the leader of the candidate list of coalition “Vredi” in ED4.



**ED 6 – Biljal Kasami** is the leader of Dvizenje Besa since it was established in 2014. In the 2016 parliamentary elections, he was elected Member of the Assembly, a post he held until 2017 when he resigned to run the local elections. At the early elections in 2020, he was re-elected as Member of the Assembly, and he held the post until 2021, when he became mayor of the municipality of Tetovo. He received his doctorate from the Faculty of Economy

at the University “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” in Skopje. He was born in 1975 in Tetovo.

### Political party Levica <sup>100</sup>



The political party Levica was founded at the end of 2015. The party has a pronounced left-wing ideology and advocates left-wing values, including anti-capitalism, anti-nationalism, anti-militarism and anti-clericalism and anti-conservatism. The focus of the party is on workers' and fundamental human rights, and the party advocates mainly for the poor, underprivileged, marginalized and disadvantaged population. In the 2016 elections, the party run independently, winning 12,120 votes (1.02%) in the 2017 local elections and a total of three council seats, one of which in the Council of the City of Skopje, and one council seat in the municipalities of Karposh and Rosoman, while in the last local elections in 2021, the party won council seats in eight municipalities.<sup>101</sup> In the 2020 parliamentary elections, Levica won two parliamentary seats.<sup>102</sup>

The initiative to establish Levica originated from members of the Movement for social justice "Lenka", members of the leftist movement "Solidarity", members of the Communist Party of Macedonia, trade union members, activists and other leftists. Until 2019, Levica held a collective presidency, the Presidium, composed of seven members with an imperative mandate. At a regular session of the Plenum of the political party Levica, a new party statute was adopted that changed the organizational structure, where in addition to the main governing bodies Plenum, Central Committee, Presidium and Tribunat, a position of president with a four-year term was introduced. Dimitar Apasiev is the current leader of Levica.

Levica submitted its candidate lists in all six electoral districts.

### Political party Levica

Str. Miroslav Krleza no. 20, entrance 1, floor 3

1000 Skopje

contact@levica.mk

www.levica.mk

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100 Handbook on 2020 parliamentary elections in the Republic of North Macedonia (second supplemented edition), Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis" – Skopje. Accessed at: [https://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/Priracnik\\_zaparlamentarni\\_izbori\\_2020\\_ENG.pdf](https://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/Priracnik_zaparlamentarni_izbori_2020_ENG.pdf) (last visit on 05 April 2024)

101 State Election Commission, Elections 2021. Accessed at: <https://izbornaarhiva.mk/> (last visit on 5 April 2024)

102 State Election Commission, Elections 2020. Accessed at: <https://izbornaarhiva.mk/> (last visit on 5 April 2024)



## Leaders of candidate lists of Levica



**ED 1 – Dimitar Apasiev** is the President of Levica, a Member of Assembly in the last parliamentary term (2020 - 2024) and an associate professor at the Faculty of Law at the University “Goce Delchev” - Stip. He is a longtime activist of the Movement for social justice “Lenka”, has participated in a number of domestic and international scientific symposia and is the author of several law books and monographs, as well as over 50 articles and academic papers. He graduated and received his master and doctoral degree from the Faculty of Law at the University “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” in Skopje. He was born in 1983 in Veles.



**ED 2 – Amar Mecinovic** is a political scientist, activist, columnist. In 2021, he was appointed a spokesperson of the party and in 2022 he was elected councilor in the Council of the City of Skopje. He was born in 1996 in Skopje.



**ED 3 – Borislav Krmov** is an art historian. He studied history of art with archaeology. He has worked as art critic and theoretician, as well as construction worker. In 2020, he was elected a Member of the Assembly. He was born in 1981 in Shtip.





**ED 4 – Sashko Janchev** has degree in law and holds a master degree in criminal Law from the Faculty of Law at the University “Ss. Cyril and Methodius”-Skopje. He is a member of the Central Committee and councilor of Levica in the council of the Municipality of Gevgelija. He has been fighting for environmental protection for many years, with a focus on the southern part of the country and mountain Kozhuv to become a national park.



**ED 5 – Jovana Mojsoska** is Secretary General of Levica. She graduated from the Faculty of Security and Financial Control. She initiated and supported several initiatives for the protection of animals and the environment. She was born in 1992 in Struga.



**ED 6 – Igor Dimeski** is Head of the energetics department and councilor of Levica in the municipality of Centar.

## Avaja – Dosta e!



The political party **Avaja**, translated as “Here we come” is the newest party on the Macedonian political scene, established in 2024. Prior to becoming a party, it was a civil movement AVAJA, which began functioning in 2019, led by three organizations: Institute for Research and Policy Analysis Romalitico, Association for Citizens – Romaversitas and Association for Strengthening and Organizing the Roma Community “Romano Avazi”. Akif Kariman was elected the party’s first president. In 2024 parliamentary elections, under the slogan “It is enough”, Avaja will independently run in four electoral districts, ED 3, ED 4, ED 5, ED 6.

### Avaja

Street Franjo Kluz 6/14  
1000 Skopje  
[www.avaja.mk](http://www.avaja.mk)

### Leaders of candidate lists of Avaja

ED 3 - Idris Zejnelov

ED 4 - Qemal Sulejmanov

ED 5 - Remzi Medic

ED 6 - Deniz Ismaili

## Political Party Demokrati



Demokrati is a Macedonian political party that was founded in 2018, and Jorgo Ognenovski was elected president of the party at the Founding Assembly. The party stands for democratic values and respect for fundamental human rights, including voting at elections and referendums, and respecting the will of the citizens. Demokrati will run with candidate lists in all six electoral districts.

### Political party Demokrati

St. Boris Trajkovski 24-1/2  
1000 Skopje  
[www.demokrati.mk](http://www.demokrati.mk)

### Leaders of candidate lists of Demokrati

**ED 1 - Jorgo Ognenovski**

**ED 2 - Dimitar Spasov**

**ED 3 - Violeta Spasova**

**ED 4 - Gabriela Todorovska**

**ED 5 - Gjorgji Veljanov**

**ED 6 - Hirmet Eljezi**

### Political Party Desna



The party was founded in 2022, and Ljupco Palevski - Palcho was elected its first president. Desna emerged as a result of the merging of several citizen associations. Toni Aleksovski is currently the acting president.<sup>103</sup> The party Desna in the parliamentary elections runs with candidate lists in all electoral districts, with the exception of ED 5 and ED 6.

### Political party Desna

St. Dimo Hadzi Dimov 8

1000 Skopje

[www.desna.org.mk](http://www.desna.org.mk)

### Leaders of candidate lists of Desna

**ED 1 - Toni Aleksovski**

**ED 2 - Angjela Mitkovska**

**ED 3 - Zorica Cvetkovska**

**ED 4 - Gjoshko Bojadziev**

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<sup>103</sup> Toni Aleksovski was appointed acting President of the party, after the kidnapping and murder of Vanja Gjorcevska and Pance Zhezovski, for which the former President of Desna, Ljupco Palevski – Palco, is the prime suspect. He is currently awaiting extradition from the Republic of Turkey.

## Political Party Edinstvena Makedonija



Edinstvena Makedonija is a political party founded in 2002 under the name “Narodno dvizenje za Makedonija”. In 2018, the party’s Central Committee decided to change the name to “Edinstvena Makedonija” as well as to completely change party’s policies regarding the Euro-integration process. The party acts with open Euro-Atlantic skepticism, and in accordance with its Statute, it advocates membership in the Eurasian Economic Union and strategic partnership with Russia. Its co-founder and president is Janko Bachev. The party Edinstvena Makedonija runs the parliamentary elections with candidate lists in ED 1, ED 2, ED 3, ED 4 and ED 5.

### Edinstvena Makedonija

St. Dame Gruev 10

1000 Skopje

[www.edinstvenamakedonija.mk](http://www.edinstvenamakedonija.mk)

### Leaders of candidate lists of Edinstvena Makedonija

**ED 1 - Emilija Geleva**

**ED 2 - Toma Dimiskovski**

**ED 3 - Dragan Ugrinovski**

**ED 4 - Janko Bachev**

**ED 5 - Mirjana Mircevski**

## Dvizenje ZNAM – Za nasa Makedonija



Dvizenje ZNAM – Za nasa Makedonija is a political party with a left-wing ideology. The party emerged from the movement created by SDSM’s dissatisfied membership, led by then MP Dimitrievski, who independently ran for 2021 local elections under the motto “Za nase Kumanovo”. With the victory of the mayoral candidate, Maksim Dimitrievski, the civic movement grew into a political party. On 9 October 2023, a founding congress was held, where the incumbent mayor of Kumanovo and candidate for president in 2024 presidential elections, Maksim Dimitrievski, was appointed president of the party.

### **Political party Dvizenje ZNAM – Za nasa Makedonija**

St. Kiril i Metodij no. 50/1-1, Centar

1000 Skopje

[www.dvizenjeznam.org.mk](http://www.dvizenjeznam.org.mk)

### **Leaders of candidate lists of Dvizenje ZNAM- Za nasa Makedonija**

**ED 1 – Boban Karapejovski**

**ED 2 – Daniel Stojcevski**

**ED 3 – Pavle Arsovski**

**ED 4 – Mile Cekov**

**ED 5 – Vesna Bendevska**

**ED 6 – Nebojsa Zaharievski**

### **Makedonska era Treta/ Makedonski nezavisni listi – Suverenisti**



Makedonska era Treta is a political party based in Bitola, which in 2020 emerged from the so-called movement. Its founder is a former Macedonian Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey, Goran Taskovski.

Makedonska era Treta submitted candidate lists in all six electoral districts.

### **Makedonska era Treta/ Makedonski nezavisni listi – Suverenisti**

Shirok Sokak, Bitola

[www.makedonskae3.mk](http://www.makedonskae3.mk)

### **Leaders of candidate lists of Makedonska era Treta/ Makedonski nezavisni listi – Suverenisti**

**ED 1 – Vladimir Trajkovski**

**ED 2 – Marjan Kamilovski**

**ED 3 – Vlado Pavlov**

**ED 4 – Vladimir Gjorgjioski**

**ED 5 – Goran Taskovski**

**ED 6 – Sonja Jovanovska**

## Makedonska obnovitelna reformska opcija – Rabotnichka partija



Makedonska obnovitelna reformska opcija – Rabotnichka partija (MORO-RP) was founded in 2014 as Makedonska obnovitelna reformska opcija – Centralno demokratska unija (MORO-CDU). The party participated in two parliamentary election cycles in 2014 and 2016. In both elections, MORO-RP participated as part of coalitions. In the 2014 parliamentary elections, MORO-RP joined the coalition “Dostoinstvo za Makedonija” together with the party Dostoinstvo, winning 9,265 votes or 0.8% of the total number of votes. In the 2016 parliamentary elections, the party was part of the coalition “Koalicija za promeni I pravda – Tret blok” together with Demokratski sojuz, DEMOS and FRODEM. This coalition won 10,028 votes or 0.8% of the total number of votes. The party did not win parliamentary seats in the elections. Goran Zafirovski is the party president. Rabotnichka partija runs the elections with candidate lists in ED 1 and ED 5.

### MORO- Rabotnichka partija

St. Anton Popov 103-b  
1000 Skopje

### Leaders of candidate lists of Rabotnichka partija

ED 1 - Ana Bobinkova Mijakovska

ED 5 - Ljube Petrevski

## Political party Nova Alternativa



Founded in 2007 by Gjorgji Orovcanec after he left VM-RO-NP. From 2008 until the 2024 elections, Nova Alternativa is part of SDSM-led coalitions. In January 2024, the current mayor of the City of Skopje, Danela Arsovska, took over the party. In these parliamentary elections, Nova Alternativa will run the elections with candidate lists in the first four electoral districts.

### Nova Alternativa

bul. Partizanski odredi 37/014  
1000 Skopje  
[www.novaalternativa.mk](http://www.novaalternativa.mk)

### **Leaders of candidate lists of Nova Alternativa**

**ED 1 - Danela Arsovska**

**ED 2 - Dragan Mitkovski**

**ED 3 - Irena Vitina**

**ED 4 - Ana Cumbuleva**

### **Political party Rodina Makedonija**



The party “Rodina Makedonija” was founded in 2020 and is led by the Presidency as a collective governing body. By its statute, the party is against the country’s membership in the European Union, and also advocates withdrawal from the NATO alliance and accession to the Eurasian Economic Union and BRICS, as well as strategic partnership with Russia. Chairman of the Presidency is Zoran Jovanchev.

The party Rodina will run the parliamentary elections with candidate lists in all six electoral districts.

### **Rodina Makedonija**

St. 27mi mart 10/1-2

1000 Skopje

[www.rodina.org.mk](http://www.rodina.org.mk)

### **Leaders of candidate lists of Rodina Makedonija**

**ED 1 - Tomche Shirkov**

**ED 2 - Zoran Jovanchev**

**ED 3 - Aleksandar Stefanoski**

**ED 4 - Ilija Jankovski**

**ED 5 - Marijan Gacevski**

**ED 6 - Darko Janceski**

## Tvoja partija



“Tvoja” was founded in 2020, and its founders are Aleksandar Torteovski, lawyer, and Mirjana Najcevska, professor. In accordance with the party’s statute, “Tvoja” is a democratic party, acting by combining social change policies with policies to tackle environmental problems, both nationally and internationally, and seeking to create a just, fair and sustainable society. In these elections, “Tvoja” party submitted candidate lists in four electoral districts, i.e. in ED 1, ED 2,

ED 3 and ED 4.

## Tvoja partija

Str. Makedonija no. 25-1/6

1000 Skopje

[www.tvoja.org.mk](http://www.tvoja.org.mk)

## Leaders of candidate lists of Tvoja partija

**ED 1 - Mirjana Najcevska**

**ED 2 - Aleksandar Torteovski**

**ED 3 - Trajko Ajtov**

**ED 4 - Risto Stavrov**

## Gragjanska opcija za Makedonija and “Hrabro za Makedonija” coalition



Gragjanska opcija za Makedonija (GROM) is a political party that was founded in 2013. Stevcho Jakimovski is the party president. The principles of GROM are based on the genuine principles of democratic life: freedom of personal choice and creation of a more just society for every citizen. In the 2014 parliamentary elections, the party ran independently and won one parliamentary seat. In the 2016 parliamentary elections, the party participated in the VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition and won two seats, while in 2020 parliamentary elections it won one seat, also in coalition with VMRO-DPMNE.

In the 2024 parliamentary elections, Gragjanska opcija za Makedonija leads the coalition “Hrabro za Makedonija”, which also includes: Integra – Makedonska konzervativna partija and Partija za celosna emancipacija na Romite od Republika Severna Makedonija.



### **Gragjanska opcija za Makedonija**

St. Prashka no. 21 entrance 1, room 2 and 3

1000 Skopje

grom.mk

### **Leaders of candidate lists of coalition “Hrabro za Makedonija”**

**ED 1 – Dobrila Andonovska**

**ED 2 – Ljupco Ristovski**

**ED 3 – Jordan Nikolov**

**ED 4 – Ruzhica Nikolova**

**ED 5 – Samka Ibraimoski**

**ED 6 – Zoran Sofreski**

### **Group of voters Djula Celiku**

A group of voters, Djula Celiku, will take part in the upcoming parliamentary elections for the first time. The group will run independently only in ED 6.<sup>104</sup>

### **Leaders of candidate lists of the Group of voters Djula Celiku**

**IE 6 - Djula Celiku**

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<sup>104</sup> No more biographical data for the group of voters Djula Celiku could be found, except for the ones listed here.



5

**The Republic of North  
Macedonia's 2024 Parliamentary  
Elections – Results,  
Campaign, Assessments**

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## 5. The Republic of North Macedonia's 2024 Parliamentary Elections – Results, Campaign, Assessments

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### Introduction

The eleventh consecutive parliamentary elections since the country's independence were held on 8 May 2024 concurrently with the first regular parliamentary elections since 2006. A total of 1,815,350 voters were eligible to vote. The voters who were homebound, under house arrest or in penitentiary institutions voted a day earlier, on 7 May. The turnout in the parliamentary elections on 8 May was 53.41 per cent or approximately two per cent higher than the turnout in the 2020 parliamentary elections.

A total of 17 political entities competed in the elections, including 11 political parties, five coalitions and one independent list with 84 candidate lists, or a total of 6 more lists compared to the 2020 elections which were contested by 15 political entities, including 12 political parties and 3 coalitions. Participants in the 2024 parliamentary elections included the Coalition “For a European Future” led by SDSM, Coalition “Your Macedonia” led by VMRO-DPMNE, Coalition “European Front” led by DUI, political parties *the Left*, AVAJA, the Democrats, *the Right* party, United Macedonia, ZNAM Movement, Macedonian Third Era, MORO – Workers' Party, New Alternative, Motherland Macedonia, Your Party, Coalition “Bravely for Macedonia”, as well as the independent Group of voters – Gjula Celiku.

The State Election Commission (SEC) has accredited a total of 942 observers, international journalists and translators to monitor the Presidential Elections, including 342 domestic and 568 international observers. The number of observers is significantly lower than in the previous presidential elections (3,156 domestic and 433 international in the first round, i.e. 3,321 domestic and 809 international in the second round).

The newly constituted parliament consists of 58 members from the “Your Macedonia” coalition, led by VMRO-DPMNE, marking an increase of 14 seats compared to the previous composition. The coalition “For a European Future,” led by SDSM, secured 18 seats, a decrease of 28 from the previous election, representing the worst result in the party's history. The European Front coalition, led by DUI, gained

18 seats, an increase of three since the last elections. The joint Albanian opposition, “VREDI/VLEN” secured 14 seats. The *Left* party increased its representation by four seats, bringing its total to six. For the first time, the ZNAM – For Our Macedonia Movement secured parliamentary representation with six seats. None of the remaining parties or coalitions that participated in the elections obtained sufficient votes to achieve parliamentary representation.

This Handbook also provides a comprehensive overview of the election campaign, including the financial reporting of parties and coalitions, media coverage, election results, protection of voting rights, evaluations by observers and political parties, as well as summarized conclusions on the entire election cycle.

## Election Campaign

The official campaign for the regular parliamentary elections commenced on 18 April and concluded at midnight on 6 May, overlapping with the presidential election campaign that began on 4 April. Central themes of the parliamentary campaign included economic policies, potential constitutional amendments, aspirations for European Union membership, foreign policy objectives, and anti-corruption initiatives.

According to the OSCE/ODIHR observation mission<sup>105</sup>, the campaign was competitive and fundamental freedoms were respected. The process of promoting parties became increasingly more negative and occasionally included threats, personal insults and stereotypes as the Election Day approached. The campaign included numerous debate shows where candidates from various electoral districts engaged in discussions. Political broadcasts aired on all national broadcasters primarily focused on personal criticisms and accusations.

The SDSM-led coalition, “For European Future”, conducted their election campaign under the slogan “We Do Not Give Up on the Future”. The 156-page electoral program “Program for European Future”<sup>106</sup> presented the key goals of the coalition, clustered into seven chapters: New economic energy for European growth and standard; Good governance – a better and just system for all; Care for all; European quality of life; Safe Macedonia; MK in the EU 2030 and Youth – the pillar of the future. The first chapter focuses on the Macedonian economy for the European market, measures for energy independence, development of green economy and agriculture. The second chapter refers to the fight against corruption, digitalization, media freedom and the opening of institutions to citizens. The chapter “Care for all” refers to social and educational measures, while the chapter “European quality of life” refers to the environment and development of culture and sport. The fifth chapter focuses on the security of the country, while the sixth confirms the party’s commitment to the country’s European membership and the country’s overall foreign policy. The last chapter is dedicated to youth, their rights and the youth standard. SDSM’s online campaign was conducted through the party’s website, <https://sdsd.org.mk/>, the official party profiles on social networks Facebook, Instagram and the X Network (formerly Twitter) and the profiles of election list leaders and candidates for MPs. Videos of rallies and meetings with citizens were also posted on the party’s YouTube channel<sup>107</sup>.

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105 OSCE/ODIHR International Election Observation Mission, Republic of North Macedonia, Regular Parliamentary Elections, 8 May 2024, Statement of Initial Findings and Conclusions. Available at <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/f/8/568321.pdf> (last visit: 4 June 2024)

106 “We are not giving up on the future!”, Coalition For European Future. Available at: [https://sdsd.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Programa-za-evropska-idnina-web\\_02.pdf](https://sdsd.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Programa-za-evropska-idnina-web_02.pdf) (last visit: 4 June 2024)

107 SDSM’s YouTube channel. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/SDSMtube> (last visit: 4 June, 2024).

The coalition led by the main opposition party VMRO-DPMNE, “Your Macedonia”, conducted their campaign under the slogan “Macedonia yours again!”. Within the election campaign, the party promoted its election program for the period 2024-2028 titled “Platform #1198”<sup>108</sup>. The program contains 1198 projects, programs, measures and policies that address citizens’ problems. Spanning over 240 pages, the program is organized into six main pillars: Fight for quality living standard; Front against corruption; Institutions operate according to laws; Functional system of citizens; Patriotism that unites; Rights and freedoms. The main focus is placed on several strategic commitments: demography and reduction of youth unemployment, challenges and aspirations of the youth, creation of favorable conditions for business, preservation of natural resources and environmental protection, support for small and medium-sized agricultural producers, development of quality and modern education, construction of a quality and equitable health system and protection of national interests. VMRO-DPMNE’s online campaign was conducted through the website of the party, <https://vmro-dpmne.org.mk/>, the official profiles of the party on social networks Facebook, Instagram and X, as well as the profiles of the leaders and candidates on the electoral lists. Videos of rallies and meetings with citizens were also posted on the party’s YouTube channel<sup>109</sup>.

The coalition “European Front”, led by the Albanian bloc’s DUI party, framed its election campaign around the theme “Europe 2030”. The coalition’s comprehensive political manifesto<sup>110</sup>, spanning 171 pages, was organized into three principal chapters: “One Prime Minister for All”, “Rejecting Russia, Embracing Europe”, and “Achieving Economic Consensus.” The candidates of the “European Front” coalition primarily concentrated their public engagements on the constitutional amendments mandated by Bulgaria for the nation’s European integration. This dedication was prominently highlighted early in the campaign through a symbolic enactment of parliamentary procedures, simulating a vote on the required amendments during a session. In this simulation, Zijadin Sela assumed the role of President of the Assembly, while Bujar Osmani was ceremonially inaugurated as head of state.<sup>111</sup> The election campaign was mainly conducted through DUI’s official website <https://bdi.mk/>, the official party profiles on Facebook, individual profiles of electoral list leaders and parliamentary candidates and the party’s YouTube channel<sup>112</sup>.

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108 “Platform #1198”. Available at: <https://vmro-dpmne.org.mk/nporpama> (last visit: 4 June, 2024)

109 VMRO-DPMNE’s YouTube channel. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/vmrodpmnemacedonia> (last visit: 6 June 2024)

110 “Europe 2030”. Available at: <file:///C:/Users/Dell/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/I23EOJN5/EU%202030%20Final-1.pdf> (last visit: 4 June 2024)

111 “DUI started the campaign for parliamentary elections with simulation for voting on constitutional amendments” Nova Makedonija <https://novamakedonija.com.mk/makedonija/politika/so-simulacija-za-izglasuvanje-na-ustavnite-izmeni-dui-ja-zapochna-kampanjata-za-parlamentarnite-izbori/> (last visit: 5 June 2024)

112 DUI YouTube channel. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/c/BashkimiDemokratikp%C3%ABrIntegrim> (last visit: 5 June 2024)

The Coalition “VLEN/VREDI” led their campaign under the motto “Circle the worthy number”, centered around “Plan 2030”<sup>113</sup>. This program prioritized decentralization processes, bolstering municipal capacities, establishing an Albanian bank, enhancing road and energy infrastructure, supporting the diaspora, introducing dual education, promoting Albanian culture, Europeanizing the judiciary, and advocating for expedited constitutional reforms. In addition to direct meetings with citizens, the campaign was also executed through multiple channels including the coalition’s official website at <https://levizjademokratike.mk/tag/vlen/>, social media platforms such as Facebook and others, official party profiles, and the individual profiles of leaders and candidates on the electoral lists.

The *Left* Party campaigned under the slogan “Incorruptible in Parliament” and presented a comprehensive program<sup>114</sup> spanning thirteen chapters: These chapters covered areas such as labor and social justice, law and anti-corruption, political system and administration, civil society and media, political economy and finance, urban planning, transportation and local governance, culture, tourism and sports, education and science, healthcare, agriculture, ecology and energy, public security and defense, and foreign policy. Their program included several key proposals, such as implementing a six-hour workday, introducing two-shift administration, doubling maternity leave, increasing the basic pension, reducing the retirement age, and advocating for the cancellation of the Prespa Agreement, the Ohrid Framework Agreement, and the Treaty on Good Neighborliness. Additionally, they aimed to abolish bilingualism and the Badinter majority. In addition to direct interactions with citizens, the campaign was conducted mainly through the party’s official website, <https://levica.mk/>, the social networks Facebook, Instagram and X, official party profiles and the individual profiles of the leaders and candidates on the electoral lists. Recordings of the events were distributed through the party’s social networks and its YouTube channel<sup>115</sup>.

The newly established political party, “ZNAM Movement”, made its debut in the parliamentary elections under the banner “Maximum for Macedonia.” ZNAM presented a 5-page election program focusing on key initiatives including investing in energy self-sufficiency, promoting spa and medical tourism, enhancing the living standards of healthcare professionals and educators, combating crime and corruption transparently, safeguarding national values across ethnic communities, and pledging commitment to EU accession once prerequisites are fulfilled. In addition to

113 “Plan 2030”. Available at: <https://vlen.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/VLEN-Izborna-Programa-MK.pdf> (last visit: 4 June 2024)

114 “The incorruptibles in the Assembly!”. Available at: <https://levica.mk/izborna-programa-2024-cela/> (last visit: 5 June 2024)

115 The Left YouTube Channel, Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/Uck1hX0b1siSQjAkyAFGqmCQ> (last visit: 5 June 2024)



engaging with citizens through direct meetings, the campaign was actively conducted via the party's official website at <https://dvizenjeznam.org.mk>, on social media platforms such as Facebook, and through official party profiles and profiles of the leaders and candidates on electoral lists. Event recordings were shared through the party's social media channels and its YouTube channel.<sup>116</sup>

The coalition "Bravely for Macedonia," led by GROM, campaigned under the slogan "Macedonia belongs to the brave!" Their campaign commitments focused on several key areas, including advancing healthcare services, reducing taxes, fostering closer ties with Russia and the BRICS nations, enhancing the basic pension, and promoting self-sufficiency by reducing food imports. In addition to direct citizen engagements, the campaign utilized various platforms, including the official website at <https://grom.mk>, the social network Facebook, official party profiles, and profiles of leaders and candidates listed on electoral lists. Event recordings were disseminated through the party's social media channels and its YouTube channel<sup>117</sup>.

The Right political party outlined its program across 11 pages<sup>118</sup>, emphasizing national interests and proposing the abolition of quotas based on ethnicity and other criteria. Their agenda also included reinstating the previous territorial division of municipalities and reverting to the old national flag, as well as introducing mandatory military service among other priorities. In addition to direct interactions with citizens, the campaign utilized various platforms such as the official website at <https://desna.org.mk/>, Facebook and other social media networks, official party profiles, and profiles of leaders and candidates listed on electoral lists. Recordings of campaign events were shared through the party's social media networks and its YouTube channel<sup>119</sup>.

The United Macedonia Party campaigned under the slogan "United they can do nothing to us!" Their campaign priorities included strengthening cooperation with Russia, revoking the Prespa Agreement, restoring the country's territorial organization to its pre-2004 status, eliminating private enforcement, and selling off 10,000 official vehicles, among other initiatives. In addition to direct engagements with citizens, the campaign was conducted through multiple channels including the party's official website at <https://edinstvenamakedonija.mk>, Facebook and other social media platforms, official party profiles, and profiles of leaders and candidates featured

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116 ZNAM Movement YouTube channel. Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/@dvizenje\\_znam](https://www.youtube.com/@dvizenje_znam) (last visit: 5 June 2024)

117 GROM YouTube channel. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/@grommacedonia> (last visit: 5 June 2024)

118 The Right Political Program. Available at: <https://desna.org.mk/izborna-programa-2024/> (last visit: 5 June 2024)

119 The Right YouTube channel. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/@Desna24> (last visit: 5 June 2024)

on electoral lists. Recordings of campaign events were disseminated through the party's social media networks and its YouTube channel<sup>120</sup>.

New Alternative participated independently in parliamentary elections for the first time across four electoral districts, under the slogan "Law, Justice, Prosperity." Their primary commitments centered on reducing unemployment and economically empowering marginalized regions, enhancing the quality of life for pensioners, and opposing proposals for constitutional amendments, among other initiatives. In addition to direct citizen engagements, the campaign utilized various platforms including the official website at <https://novaalternativa.mk>, Facebook and other social media networks, official party profiles, and profiles of leaders and candidates featured on electoral lists.

The Democrats campaigned under the slogan "Enough!", advocating for comprehensive reforms across political, state, and social spheres. Key commitments included conducting a new census, streamlining the number of municipalities and ministries, implementing a single electoral district system, and revising political party financing regulations. In addition to direct engagements with citizens, the campaign utilized various platforms such as the party's website at <https://demokrati.mk/> Facebook and other social media networks, official party profiles, profiles of leaders and candidates featured on electoral lists, and the party's YouTube channel.<sup>121</sup>

MORO – Worker's Party participated in the parliamentary elections under the slogan "Restore the Place for Young People and Workers." The party's program advocated for reforms across various levels, including the abolition of the Prespa Agreement and the Treaty of Good Neighborliness, the introduction of free education, the elimination of taxes for individuals and households, and combating crime and corruption. In addition to direct interactions with citizens, the campaign utilized multiple platforms such as the party's website at <https://rabotnickapartija.org.mk/>, Facebook and other social media networks, official party profiles, profiles of leaders and candidates featured on electoral lists, and the party's YouTube channel<sup>122</sup>.

Motherland Macedonia campaigned under the slogan "Motherland Takes Macedonia Back". The campaign and election program<sup>123</sup> were anchored in several core

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120 YouTube channel of United Macedonia. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/ndmkanal> (last visit: 30 June 2024)

121 The Democrats YouTube channel. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsyngpM8yVCHuhO0YfnQzg> (last visit: 5 June 2024)

122 MORO's YouTube channel – Workers' Party. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/@user-jt4pl5uu9y> (last visit: 5 June 2024)

123 "The Real Macedonian Road" Available at: <https://rodina.org.mk/nporpama-2> (last visit: 5 June, 2024)

commitments, including safeguarding the traditional Macedonian family, nationalizing all strategically significant legal entities and companies, confiscating illegally acquired property, extending maternity leave, geostrategic realignment of the state, and abolishing redundant agencies and institutions. In addition to direct citizen engagements, the party conducted its campaign through various platforms such as Facebook, the party's website at <https://rodina.org.mk/>, official party profiles, profiles of leaders and candidates featured on electoral lists, and the party's YouTube channel<sup>124</sup>.

Your Party competed in the elections for the second time under the slogan "It's Your Decision." The campaign emphasized several key areas, including the promotion of workers' rights and status, advancement of digitalization and education development, and preservation of the environment. The party predominantly conducted its online campaign through social media platforms such as Facebook and X platform, along with their official website at <https://tvoja.org/>. Additionally, they utilized official party profiles, profiles of leaders and candidates listed on electoral lists, and the party's YouTube channel<sup>125</sup>.

AVAJA Party competed in parliamentary elections for the first time with candidate lists in four electoral districts (ED 3, 4, 5 and 6). The party's commitments were to improve the lives of Roma, encourage inclusiveness and representation of all communities and overcome inequalities in the Macedonian society. In addition to direct citizen engagements, the party conducted its campaign through various platforms including the official website at <https://avaja.mk/>, Facebook and other social media networks, official party profiles, and profiles of leaders and candidates on electoral lists.

The Macedonian Third Era – Sovereignists party campaigned in the elections under the motto "Unification for Macedonia." Their primary focus was on addressing the Macedonian national issue, advocating for the restoration of Macedonian national unity, reclaiming the country's original name, managing Macedonia's foreign debt, and achieving energy independence. The party conducted its campaign through direct meetings with citizens, leveraging social media platforms like Facebook, official party profiles, and profiles of leaders and candidates featured on electoral lists. Additionally, recordings of campaign events were disseminated through the party's social networks and its YouTube channel<sup>126</sup>.

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124 YouTube channel of Motherland Macedonia. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/@rodinamakedonija> (last visit: 5 June 2024)

125 Your Party YouTube channel. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/@user-bp1bq1re6o> (last visit: 5 June 2024)

126 YouTube channel of the Macedonian Third Era. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/@makedonskae3340> (last visit: 5 June 2024)

The independent list of voters, European Citizen Movement, emerged as a new entity within the Albanian political bloc, participating in elections for the first time. Their primary focus centered on fostering a climate of mutual understanding, promoting economic development, depoliticizing education, safeguarding the working environment, and advocating for the rights of people with disabilities. The party conducted its campaign through direct interactions with citizens, utilizing platforms such as the official party website at <https://www.lqe.mk/>, Facebook, official party profiles, and profiles of leaders and candidates featured on electoral lists.

### **Election Campaign Financing<sup>127</sup>**

In accordance with the Election Calendar, participants in the parliamentary elections were required to submit four financial reports in relation to the costs of the election campaign. The first financial report which covers the first 10 days of the election campaign was to be submitted by the parties and coalitions on the eleventh day of the election campaign, 29 April. The second report which covers the second half of the election campaign was to be submitted by the parties and coalitions one day after the end of the election campaign, on 7 May. The third financial report which reports on the income and expenses on the transaction account of the parties, from the day of its opening to the day of voting, the parties and coalitions were required to submit it no later than 31 July. The fourth financial report, which refers to the total revenues and expenditures throughout the campaign, should be submitted by the parties and coalitions immediately, and at the latest within 30 days from the day of closing the transaction account. Transaction accounts of parties for the election campaign should be closed within 60 days of the announcement of the final election results. The financial statements are submitted to the State Election Commission (SEC), the State Audit Office (SAO) and the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption (SCPC), while the fourth financial report is also submitted to the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia. Additionally, the SAO is required within 60 days of the submission of the final financial report to conduct an audit. To finance the election campaign, participants can spend up to 110 MKD per registered voter in the voter list in the municipality where they have submitted a list of candidates.

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<sup>127</sup> The financial reports of the participants in the parliamentary elections are available on the website of the State Audit Office (<https://dzt.mk/mk/izbori/parlamentarni-izbori>)

All contestants submitted the first financial report, with the exception of the AVAJA party. The second financial report was submitted outside of the legally required deadline by the following parties: Your Party, Democrats, ZNAM Movement and United Macedonia. The parties New Alternative and Macedonian Third Era failed to submit the second report. The third financial report was submitted within the legally required deadline by all parties with the exception of New Alternative and Macedonian Third Era. It is important to note that in several cases the parties have submitted the report to the SAO, but not to the SCPC and vice versa, despite the requirement in the Election Calendar that the reports be submitted to both institutions. The fourth financial report has not been submitted to any institution by New Alternative, AVAJA, Macedonian Third Era and the VREDI/VLEN coalition. All other parties submitted the report in a timely manner, with the exception of the ZNAM Movement, which submitted it to the SAO 6 days after the legally required deadline.<sup>128</sup>

According to the submitted financial reports, the coalition led by VMRO-DPMNE incurred the highest expenditure during the election campaign, amounting to MKD 143,253,905 (EUR 2,329,332).<sup>129</sup> The coalition's revenues matched its expenditure, resulting in no financial discrepancy between the two.

The second-largest expenditure during the election campaign was made by the coalition led by SDSM, which spent a total of MKD 98,160,901 (EUR 1,596,112). As with the VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition, the SDSM-led coalition's expenditures equaled the amount of funds raised, resulting in no financial surplus or deficit.

The third-largest campaign expenditure was recorded by the coalition led by DUI, which both raised and spent MKD 58,899,636 (EUR 957,717).

The *Left* party follows in terms of campaign expenditures, having disbursed a total of MKD 58,899,626 (EUR 256,144) during the elections, with revenues equal to expenditures.

The coalition led by the GROM party raised and spent MKD 8,738,486 (EUR 142,089), with no difference between its revenues and expenditures.

For other parties and coalitions that submitted financial reports, campaign revenues and expenditures did not exceed MKD 2,000,000. Specifically, the Democratic Party raised and spent MKD 1,989,786 (EUR 32,354), while Motherland Macedonia

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<sup>128</sup> The review of submitted financial statements was conducted as of 7 August, 2024

<sup>129</sup> Calculations in EUR were made at an average exchange rate of 61.5.

reported MKD 1,179,114 (EUR 19,173). The total revenues and expenditures of Your Party amounted to MKD 1,069,025 (EUR 17,383), and the Workers' Party recorded revenues of MKD 565,420.30 (EUR 9,194). According to the financial statements of the ZNAM Movement, the party's total expenditures for the election campaign were MKD 499,023 (EUR 8,114), with no revenues reported. The *Right* Party neither reported revenues nor expenditures for the election campaign, while the financial report of United Macedonia remains incomplete, preventing a calculation of total revenues and expenditures.

Based on the ratio of funds received and spent, it is evident that most political parties expended all the funds they raised, a notable contrast to the previous election cycle, where parties generally spent less than they raised. In the current reports, only one out of eleven submissions showed expenditures exceeding revenues, which differs from the 2020 parliamentary elections, where three out of ten reports indicated higher expenditures than revenues.

*Financial reports of the participants in the parliamentary elections<sup>130</sup>*

	Total Revenues	Total expenditures
Coalition Your Macedonia	143 253 905	143 253 905
Coalition for European Future	98 160 901	98 160 901
Coalition European Front	58 899 626	58 899 626
The <i>Left</i> Party	15 752 857	15 752 857
Coalition Bravely for Macedonia	8 738 486	8 738 486
The Democrats	1 989 786	1 989 786
Motherland Macedonia	1 179 114	1 179 114
Your Party	1 069 025	1 069 025
Workers' Party	565,420.30	565,420.30
ZNAM Movement	0	499 023
The <i>Right</i> Party	0	0

130 The review of the financial reports was conducted on the basis of the financial statements that the political parties had submitted to the respective authorities as of 7 August 2024.

## Media

The official campaign for parliamentary elections started on 18 April and ended on 6 May, overlapping with the second round of the presidential campaign that began on 4 April. The Electoral Code requires all media outlets, including online news portals, to ensure fair and balanced coverage of elections. Media monitoring results of the ODIHR EOM<sup>131</sup> show that the election-related coverage in broadcast media was overall balanced and neutral in tone

The report, referring both to the parliamentary election campaign and the second-round presidential elections campaign, finds that the Electoral Code was amended through expedited processes lacking transparency and public consultation, which is not in line with international standards and OSCE commitments. The International Election Observation Mission stated that a number of key ODIHR and the Council of Europe's Venice Commission recommendations remain unaddressed, including those to systematically revise the Electoral Code, to ensure equal access to the media in election campaigns and to increase accountability and integrity of campaign financing.

Media monitoring by the ODIHR International Election Observation Mission shows that the public broadcaster *MRT* covered all parliamentary parties in line with the legal provisions establishing a framework for allocating time to political parties in elections, which privileges those already holding seats in parliament.

Broadcasters focused on the major parties and coalitions, with SDSM, VMRO-DPMNE, BDI/DUI, and VLEN/VREDI receiving most prime-time coverage overall. The coalitions led by SDSM and VMRO-DPMNE dominated private broadcasters (24 and 27 per cent of coverage each), both largely in neutral tone. The monitoring shows that *Alsot-M* and *Telma* provided more balanced coverage than other monitored broadcasters, while *Kanal 5* primarily focused on SDSM and VMRO-DPMN, largely in a neutral tone.

Broadcasters were obliged to adjust one edition of their newscasts and one piece of election-related content per day to accommodate persons with sensory impairments. According to the OSCE/ODIHR, positively, in line with the law, national public and private broadcasters monitored by the ODIHR EOM supplemented parts of their prime-time content with subtitles or sign language throughout the electoral campaign.

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<sup>131</sup> OSCE/ODIHR STATEMENT OF PRELIMINARY FINDINGS and CONCLUSIONS - Parliamentary elections and second round of presidential elections, 8 May 2024. Available at <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/f/8/568321.pdf> (last visit: 13.6.2024).

The Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services (AAVMS)<sup>132</sup> is mandated to oversee the electoral media coverage of both parties and candidates and the program service of broadcasters, as of the day of announcing elections until the end of voting on the Election Day.

### Monitoring the public broadcaster

Monitoring data for both MRT 1 and MRT 2, show that the obligations under Article 76-a paragraphs 2 and 3<sup>133</sup> do not allow for substantially balanced coverage of the election process.

The main reason for this was production related. There was a lack of primary staff reporters, that is, a complementary, diligent, appropriately positioned and technically standardized correspondent network that could follow the trajectory outlined in the electoral caravan promotion plan in a timely manner. Certain newsrooms informed the AAVMS about the factual situation even before the start of the campaign. However, in order to provide as much information as possible, they remained open for a reverse, passive communication, that is, each election contestant to submit their own promotional material or for the newsrooms to be able to download it from their official social media accounts.

The AAVMS monitoring analyzed a total of 17 editions of the newscast aired at 19:30, i.e. a material of a total of 8 hours 34 minutes and 54 seconds aired on the First Program Service (MRT 1).

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132 Election media coverage in the second round of the election campaign - from 25 April to 6 May – Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services. Available at <https://avmu.mk/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/report-parliamentary-elections-2024-final.pdf> (last visit: 13.6.2024).

133 Paragraph 2 stipulates the obligation of the public broadcaster during the election campaign to provide equal access to the informative program, i.e. 30% of aired time for daily events in the country and worldwide, 30% aired time for the activities of ruling political parties, 30% of aired time for the activities of oppositional political parties and 10% of aired time for the activities of political parties not represented in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia and for the independent candidates. Paragraph 3 stipulates that aired time to report on campaign activities of political parties will be allocated in accordance with the principles of balanced reporting. "Electoral Code." Available at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZJMruqcNlyC5VuWSzpfT9BFekphm5An/view>



Table 1: Coverage in the newscasts  
Source: AAVMS

	MRT1	MRT2
Coalition for European Future	00:51:10	00:47:30
Coalition "Tvoja Makedonija" VMRO-DPMNE	00:23:41	00:25:07
Coalition European front	1:03:40	1:06:00
Coalition VLEN	00:33:06	00:33:11
Movement ZNAM - Za nasa Makedonija	00:16:29	00:07:14
Levica	00:33:49	00:32:05
Political Party Desna		
Nova Alternativa Skopje	00:02:49	00:01:09
Coalition Hrabro za Makedonija	00:32:54	00:31:56
Political party AVAJA	00:03:20	00:01:47
Rabotnichka partija	00:06:40	00:02:14
Edinstvena Makedonija		
DEMOKRATI	00:04:31	00:02:53
Tvoja Partija		
Rodina Makedonija	00:01:04	00:00:18
Makedonska era treta/Makedonski nezavisni listi	00:01:24	00:00:45
Party European civic movement	00:00:58	00:04:13
Total	4:35:35	4:16:22

In the analyzed central news, MRT 1 allocated 2 hours and 30 minutes to the activities of ruling parties, and 2 hours and 36 minutes to the activities of oppositional parties. Considering that the campaign for the parliamentary elections coincided in part with the campaign for the two rounds of the presidential elections (started on 4 April and lasted until 6 May), the time for the ruling parties also included the parliamentary election activities of the two coalitions – the Coalition for European Future and the Coalition "European Front", led by SDSM and DUI, as well as the activities of the presidential candidates that they supported, Stevo Pendarovski and Bujar Osmani. The activities of both candidates are related to the end of the first round of presidential elections (from 18 to 22 April), but those of Stevo Pendarovski, given that he participated in the second election round, were covered until the end of the election process.

The time for the activities of the opposition parliamentary parties (2 hours and 36 minutes) consists of the electoral promotions of the four political entities that participated in the parliamentary elections: the Coalition “Tvoja Makedonija” – VMRO-DPMNE, the Coalition VLEN, the Coalition “Hrabro za Makedonija” and the party Levica. The activities of the presidential candidates they supported are also covered within this time slot, in the period from 18 to 22 April, when the campaigns of the first round of the presidential elections overlapped with the start of the campaign for the parliamentary elections. The time dedicated to the presidential candidate Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova, supported by VMRO-DPMNE and run in the second round, was also in part included in the time slot for the activities of the oppositional political parties.

MRT 1 allocated about 42 minutes in the central newscast 2 for the campaign activities of non-parliamentary political parties. This volume of information includes the reports on the election activities of eight parties participating in the parliamentary elections: the Movement ZNAM – Za nasa Makedonija; Rabotничка partija; Demokrati; the political party Avaja; Nova Alternativa Skopje; Makedonska era tre-ta/Makedonski nezavisni listi; Rodina Makedonija and Evropsko gragansko dvizenje. This time slot also includes reports about the election campaign of Maksim Dimitrievski, presidential candidate supported by the Movement ZNAM, as the end of the campaign for the first round of presidential elections partially coincided with the start of the campaign for the parliamentary elections.

In the period from 18 April to 6 May, 1 hour and 3 minutes were allocated for the Coalition “European Front”, and 51 minutes for the Coalition for European Future. For Levica, Coalition Hrabro za Makedonija and Coalition VLEN – 33 minutes were allocated, and 24 minutes for the VMRO-DPMNE-led Coalition “Tvoja Makedonija”.

The monitoring of the second program service (MRT 2) included a total of 17 editions of the newscast at 18:30 hrs, by analyzing a material of a total of 8 hours 26 minutes and 54 seconds.

The two coalitions led by DUI and SDSM, that is, the parties in power, were allocated a total of - 1 hour 53 minutes and 30 seconds or 47 minutes and 30 seconds for the Coalition for European Future (SDSM) and 1 hour and 6 minutes for the Coalition “European Front” (DUI).

For the campaign activities of the political parties in the parliamentary opposition (4 political entities), a total of 2 hours 3 minutes and 8 seconds were allocated, as follows: the Coalition VLEN - 33 minutes and 11 seconds; the Coalition Tvoja Make-

donija (VMRO-DPMNE) - 25 minutes and 7 seconds; the party Levica - 32 minutes and 54 seconds, and the Coalition Hrabro za Makedonija (GROM) - 31 minutes and 56 seconds. The reporting on the activities of political parties not represented in the Assembly was covered in total of 22 minutes and 48 seconds.

### **Monitoring of Commercial Media**

Nine commercial national televisions: TV Alsat-M, TV Alfa, TV Kanal 5, TV Sitel, TV Telma, TV 21-M, TV Klan, TV Shenja and TV 24 Vesti were monitored by the AAVMS.

The report notes that none of the newsrooms has been able to fully meet the obligation for balanced coverage of the electoral process based on the principle of proportionality according to the number of confirmed lists of candidates for MPs, prescribed in Article 75-a paragraph 1 item b of the Electoral Code (EC). Only TV Alsat-M informed about the activities of all 17 election contestants.

Reporting in TV newscasts about daily events in the election process, in all newsrooms, was almost identical: presentation of observed party offers, most often separated into a special informative program – a sum of key points made by candidates for MPs when addressing the citizens.

The main reason for the failure to achieve the legally required proportional media reporting was production related. There was a lack of primary staff reporters, that is, a complementary, diligent, appropriately positioned and technically standardized correspondent network that could follow the trajectory outlined in the electoral caravan promotion plan in a timely manner.

The focus in the reporting of other TV stations was mainly on the four major ruling and oppositional coalitions: the Coalition for a European Future, the Coalition “European Front”, the Coalition “Tvoja Makedonija” – VMRO-DPMNE, and the Coalition VLEN. The AAAMS concludes that there were no major differences in allocating the time, with the exception of TV Klan Macedonia, which allocated twice as much time to the “European Front” compared to the other three coalitions.

Table 2: Coverage in commercial broadcasters newscasts

	TV Alsat-M	TV Alfa	TV Kanal 5	TV Sitel	TV Telma	TV 24 Vesti	TV Sonce	TV Klan Makedonija	TV 21-M
Coalition for European Future	00:10:58	00:20:57	00:25:06	00:25:03	00:22:06	00:23:15	00:15:03	00:25:07	00:31:07
Coalition "Tvoja Makedonija" VMRO-DPMNE	00:16:54	00:30:42	00:33:09	00:33:52	00:28:21	00:20:35	00:11:54	00:27:43	00:35:25
Coalition European front	00:15:19	00:18:11	00:19:04	00:18:15	00:23:48	00:09:42	00:02:19	00:52:07	00:55:41
Coalition VLEN	00:23:29	00:13:33	00:14:34	00:16:47	00:27:32	00:10:34	00:01:44	00:26:01	00:59:40
Movement ZNAM - Za nasa Makedonija	00:09:09	00:09:31	00:13:01	00:11:14	00:23:50	00:12:48	00:03:43	00:09:54	00:10:30
Levica	00:06:46	00:08:04	00:02:53	00:07:17	00:10:20	00:08:25	00:01:59	00:05:04	00:03:42
Political Party Desna	00:05:01					00:01:07			00:00:24
Nova Alternativa Skopje	00:05:16	00:04:35	00:02:27	00:00:41	00:04:36	00:01:42	00:03:55	00:01:30	00:02:45
Coalition Hrabro za Makedonija	00:03:57	00:08:45	00:03:43	00:04:24	00:07:36	00:05:59	00:03:52	00:01:30	00:03:10
Political party AVAJA	00:04:57	00:03:13		00:00:28	00:01:08	00:00:35		00:00:22	00:02:35
Rabotnichka partija	00:04:15	00:01:03		00:00:51		00:00:56			00:00:25
Edinstvena Makedonija	00:05:35					00:00:34			
DEMOKRATI	00:05:26	00:04:47		00:02:01	00:02:03	00:02:56	00:04:00	00:00:58	00:02:40
Tvoja Partija	00:04:31	00:00:38							00:02:13
Rodina Makedonija	00:05:33	00:01:05	00:00:25		00:01:15				
Makedonska era treta/Makedonski nezavisni listi	00:04:50	00:00:55							
Party European civic movement	00:04:50								00:00:46
Total	2:16:46	2:05:59	1:54:22	2:00:53	2:32:35	1:39:08	00:48:29	2:30:16	3:31:03

As part of the monitoring, 17 editions of the newscast at 19:00 hrs of TV-Alsat-M were analyzed with a duration of 6 hours 55 minutes and 28 seconds, of which 2 hours 16 minutes and 46 seconds were allocated for the election campaign.

Most of the reporting time in the newscast editions at 19:00 hrs was dedicated to the activities of the opposition Coalition VLEN - 23 minutes and 29 seconds; then the Coalition led by VMRO-DPMNE "Tvoja Makedonija" - 16 minutes and 54 seconds; the Coalition "European Front", led by the ruling DUI - 15 minutes and 19 seconds and the Coalition for a European Future, united around SDSM - 10 minutes and 58 seconds. All other campaign contestants were represented within a single-digit time of 4 - 9 minutes.

Regarding Alpha TV, the monitoring covered 17 editions of the newscast at 17.30 hrs, with a total duration of 9 hours 9 minutes and 43 seconds, of which 2 hours 5

minutes and 59 seconds featured the campaign. However, taken as a whole, in the total reporting time allocated for the election campaign, 14 electoral offers for new MPs were presented, and of them, twice as much time for the biggest opposition and ruling coalitions “Tvoja Makedonija” led by VMRO-DPMNE - 30 minutes and 42 seconds, VLEN- 13 minutes and 33 seconds, SDSM-led Coalition for European future - 20 minutes and 57 seconds, and DUI-led “European Front” - 18 minutes and 11 minutes.

The newscasts at 18:00 hrs on TV Kanal 5 were also monitored, analyzing 17 editions with a duration of 6 hours 44 minutes and 49 seconds. Of these, 1 hour 54 minutes and 22 seconds featured the campaign. This TV station reported about 9 electoral offers out of a total of 17, and the the VMRO-led Coalition “Tvoja Makedonia” was allocated the biggest time of 33 minutes and 9 seconds, then the SDSM-led Coalition for a European Future -25 minutes and 6 seconds, the DUI-led Coalition European Front-19 minutes and 4 seconds, and the Coalition VLEN -14 minutes and 34 seconds.

17 editions of the central newscast at 19:00 hrs on TV Sitel were analyzed, with a duration of 9 hours 32 minutes and 35 seconds, of which 2 hours and 53 seconds featured the election campaign. TV Sitel in the newscast at 19:00 hrs managed to present 11 of the 17 contestants during the official electoral process, and largest ruling and opposition coalitions were allocated most of the time: “Tvoja Makedonija” (VMRO-DPMNE) - 33 minutes and 52 seconds, European Future (SDSM) - 25 minutes and 3 seconds, VLEN - 16 minutes and 47 seconds and “European Front” (DUI) -18 minutes and 15 seconds.

The monitoring report also included TV Telma, where 17 editions of the newscast at 21:30 hrs were analyzed, with a duration of 6 hours 28 minutes and 54 seconds, of which 2 hours 32 minutes and 35 seconds featured the election campaign and the election process. This television allocated most of the time to the VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition “Tvoja Makedonija” - 28 minutes and 21 seconds, then the Coalition VLEN - 27 minutes and 32 seconds, the coalition European Front - 23 minutes and 48 seconds, Movement ZNAM “Za nasa Makedonija” - 23 minutes and 50 seconds, and for the SDSM coalition for European Future – 22 minutes and 06 seconds.

As part of the TV 24 Vesti program, the newscasts at 20:00 hrs were monitored, or a total of 17 editions with a duration of 4 hours 26 minutes and 51 seconds, of which 1 hour 39 minutes and 8 seconds were allocated to the campaign. The SDSM-led Coalition for a European Future was allocated 23 minutes and 15 seconds and the VMRO-led Coalition “Tvoja Makedonija” was allocated 20 minutes and 35 minutes.

## Results of the regular 2024 parliamentary elections

In the regular parliamentary elections held on May 8, 2024, 1,006,436 out of 1,815,350 registered voters exercised their right to vote. The turnout for these elections was 55.44%, marking an increase from 52.02 per cent in the previous parliamentary elections held in 2020.<sup>134</sup>

A total of 11 political parties participated in these elections, one independent list of voters and five coalitions with 84 candidate lists<sup>135</sup>: SDSM-led coalition “for European Future”, VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition “Your Macedonia”, GROM-led coalition “Bravely for Macedonia”, DUI-led coalition “European Front”, “VLEN/VREDI” coalition, political party the Left, Movement ZNAM, United Macedonia, New Alternative - Skopje, Party AVAJA, European Citizen Movement<sup>136</sup>, Macedonian Third Era – Sovereignists, Your Party, Motherland Macedonia, Political Party the Right, Political Party Democrats and Workers’ Party.

According to the results published by the State Election Commission (SEC)<sup>137</sup> the coalition “Your Macedonia” led by the opposition party VMRO-DPMNE secured the highest vote share of 43.36 per cent or 436,407 of the total number of votes. The coalition won a total of 58 parliamentary seats, 14 more than the previous parliamentary elections.

The coalition “For European Future,” led by the ruling SDSM, secured second place in the elections with a total of 154,447 votes, which was 281,960 votes fewer than VMRO-DPMNE. This represented a vote share of 15.35 per cent. The coalition won a total of 18 seats, marking a decrease of 28 seats compared to the previous parliamentary elections. Unlike in previous elections, there was no closely contested battle between the two major parties within the Macedonian political bloc. SDSM experienced a significant decline in votes, resulting in 40 fewer seats compared to the VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition.

The “European Front” coalition led by DUI secured third place with 137,690 votes, earning 18 seats. The opposition parties from the Albanian political bloc—namely, the Democratic Movement, the BESA Movement, Alternative and a faction of the Alliance for Albanians—formed the “VLEN/VREDI” coalition with the aim to remove DUI from power and diminish its influence as the leading party within the Albanian

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<sup>134</sup> The website of the State Election Commission was consulted for all data pertaining to parliamentary election results. Accessed at: <https://rezultati.sec.mk/> (last visit: 10 June 2024).

<sup>135</sup> In the 2020 parliamentary elections, there were 78 lists of candidates, which is 6 fewer than the number of lists submitted for the 2024 parliamentary elections. In the 2020 parliamentary elections, 12 political entities participated, including three coalitions and nine political parties.

<sup>136</sup> Independent list of voters led by Dr. Gyula Celiku

<sup>137</sup> Results based on SEC data as of 10 June 2024

political bloc. The “VLEN/VREDI” coalition garnered 106,937 votes and secured 14 seats, ranking fourth in terms of the total number of votes obtained.

The political party the Left secured fifth place in terms of votes, garnering 68,637 votes with a vote share of 6.82 per cent. This performance earned them 6 parliamentary seats, marking a notable increase from the 2 seats they won in the previous parliamentary elections.

The recently established ZNAM Movement, led by Kumanovo’s mayor and presidential candidate Maksim Dimitrievski, secured the sixth place. The party quickly gained popularity and garnered 56,232 votes, constituting a 5.59 per cent share of the total vote, earning 6 seats in Parliament.

The following parties and coalitions failed to secure seats in the new parliamentary composition: GROM-led coalition “Bravely for Macedonia” with 4,522 votes (0.45 per cent), New Alternative – Skopje with 3,515 votes (0.35 per cent), Party AVAJA with 2,908 votes (0.29 per cent), Your Party with 1,794 votes (0.18 per cent), United Macedonia with 1,688 votes (0.17 per cent), Motherland Macedonia with 1,099 votes (0.11 per cent), Third Macedonian Era – Sovereignists with 966 votes (0.10 per cent), Political Party the Right with 535 votes (0.05 per cent), The Democrats with 912 votes (0.09 per cent), Workers’ Party with 450 votes (0.04 per cent) and European Citizen Movement with 241 votes (0.02 per cent).

The complaints submitted by the VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition and the coalition “VLEN/VREDI” were granted by the SEC and a revote was conducted in Electoral Districts 5 and 6, in seven polling stations: polling station 1272 in the municipality of Ohrid, 1194 and 1202 in Krusevo, 1470 and 1470/1 in Dolneni and 1844 in Struga, polling station 2101 in Zelino in ED 6.138 After the revote, the coalition “VLEN/VREDI” won an additional mandate in ED 6, while the coalition “European Front” lost a mandate in the same electoral district. The revote did not affect the distribution of mandates in the Electoral District 5.139

In terms of gender equality, 42.42% of all candidates were women,<sup>140</sup> aligning closely with the mandated minimum quota of 40% for representation of the under-

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138 “Revote in seven polling stations for the 2024 Parliamentary Elections” <https://lider.mk/>, Available at: <https://lider.mk/preglasuvanje-vo-sedum-izbirachki-mesta-za-parlamentarnite-izbori-2024/> (last visit: 30 May 2024)

139 Conclusion on the publication of final results and allocation of seats for the election of MPs in the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia for ED 5 and 6, Parliamentary Elections 2024, Available at: <https://www.sec.mk/parlamentarni-izbori-2024/> (last visit: 30 May 2024)

140 One third women and only two young people in the new composition of the Macedonian Assembly” Radio MOF. Available at: (<https://www.radiomof.mk/infografik-edna-tretina-zheni-i-samo-dvajca-mladi-vo-noviot-sostav-na-makedonskoto-sobranie/>) (last visit: 30 May 2024)

represented genders on candidate lists. This figure represents a marginal decrease of less than one percent compared to the 43% of women candidates in the preceding early parliamentary elections of 2020.

There was a slight increase in the number of women leading candidate lists for Members of Parliament (MPs), with 25 per cent of the lists being led by women (21 out of 84 lists), compared to 24 per cent in the 2020 elections (18 out of 78 lists). Regarding election outcomes, women secured representation in 40 out of 120 parliamentary seats, constituting 33 per cent of the total, which marks a decrease of 3 percentage points compared to the previous parliamentary term, where women held 36 per cent of the seats.<sup>141</sup>

*Tabular overview of the 2024 parliamentary election results*

Registered voters in the Voter List	Party / Coalition	Total votes	Total votes %	Seats
1, 815,350	Coalition Your Macedonia - VMRO-DPMNE	436,407	43.36%	58
	Coalition for European Future - SDSM	154,447	15.35%	18
	Coalition European Front - DUI	137,690	13.68%	18
	Coalition VLEN/VREDI	106, 937	10.63%	14
	Political Party <i>the Left</i>	68, 637	6.82%	6
	ZNAM Movement	56, 232	5.59%	6
	Coalition Bravely for Macedonia - GROM	4, 522	45%	0
	United Macedonia	1,688	0.17%	0
	Political Party <i>the Right</i>	535	0.05%	0
	The Democrats	912	0,09%	0
	Party AVAJA	2,908	0.29%	0
	Third Macedonian Era - Sovereignists	966	0,10 %	0
	New Alternative	3, 515	35%	0
	Your Party	1, 794	18%	0
	Motherland Macedonia	1, 099	0.11%	0
	European Citizen Movement	241	0,02%	0
	Workers' Party	450	0.04%	0

141 OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission. (2024) Regular parliamentary elections 8 May 2024 – Preliminary Statement. Available at <https://www.osce.org/files/f/8/568321.pdf> (last visit: 31 May 2024)



## Handbook on 2024 Parliamentary Elections in the Republic of North Macedonia

Tabular overview of the 2024 parliamentary election results by Electoral District:

Electoral District	Registered voters in the Voter List	Party / Coalition	Total votes	Total votes %	Seats
ED 1	313,183	Coalition Your Macedonia	80,963	41.63%	10
		Coalition for European Future	27,164	13.97%	3
		Coalition European Front	20,586	10.58%	2
		VLEN/VREDI coalition	21,627	11.12%	2
		Political Party <i>the Left</i>	20,989	10.79%	2
		ZNAM Movement	11,944	6.14%	1
Turnout	62.10%				
ED 2	321,087	Coalition Your Macedonia	66,422	37.72%	8
		Coalition for European Future	18,631	10.58%	2
		Coalition European Front	30,625	17.39%	4
		VLEN/VREDI coalition	25,864	14.69%	3
		Political Party <i>the Left</i>	10,654	6.05%	1
		ZNAM Movement	16,264	9.24%	2
Turnout	54.84%				
ED 3	275,034	Coalition Your Macedonia	96,545	58.29%	14
		Coalition for European Future - SDSM	33,605	20.29%	4
		Political Party <i>the Left</i>	13,404	8.09%	1
		ZNAM Movement	9,426	5.69%	1
Turnout	60.22%				
ED 4	278,721	Coalition Your Macedonia	96,551	56.67%	13
		Coalition for European Future - SDSM	41,965	24.63%	5
		Political Party <i>the Left</i>	12,428	7.29%	1
		ZNAM Movement	8,416	4.94%	1
Turnout	61.13%				
ED 5	310,216	Coalition Your Macedonia	74,287	45.37%	10
		Coalition for European Future	26,668	16.29%	3
		Coalition European Front	27,278	16.66%	4
		VLEN/VREDI coalition	10,793	6.59%	1
		Political Party <i>the Left</i>	9,850	6.02%	1
		ZNAM Movement	8,671	5.30%	1
Turnout	52.79%				

		Coalition Your Macedonia	21, 639	15.90%	3
ED 6	317 109	Coalition for European Future - SDSM	6,414	4.71%	1
		Coalition European Front - DUI	53, 731	39.48%	8
		VLEN/VREDI coalition	47, 849	35.16%	8
Turnout	42.92%				

### Protection of Voting Rights

The Electoral Code ensures the protection of the right to vote. It stipulates that both the submitter of a candidate list and every voter have the right to lodge a complaint with the State Election Commission (SEC) if they believe their rights have been infringed upon. Complaints submitted by list submitters may pertain to the voting process, tabulation and determination of results, while voters can file complaints if their voting rights were violated during the procedure. Due to the urgent nature of the procedure for safeguarding voting rights, complaints or appeals cannot be submitted via mail in such cases.

Complaints must be submitted by list submitters to the SEC within 48 hours of the conclusion of voting, specifically after the initial results are announced. The SEC is obligated to render a decision within 48 hours of receiving the complaint. Notification of the decision by the SEC is conducted via email, with the decision considered submitted five hours after the electronic correspondence is sent. If the SEC issues a negative decision on a complaint, the submitter has the right to file an appeal with the Administrative Court within 24 hours of receiving the SEC's decision. The Administrative Court must make a ruling within 48 hours of receiving the appeal. The Administrative Court has the authority to uphold or overturn the SEC's decision, and its rulings are final—no further appeals or legal remedies are permissible.<sup>142</sup>

In the event of violation of the right to vote, a voter may file a complaint with the SEC within 24 hours. The SEC is mandated to reach a decision within 4 hours of receiving the complaint. If the SEC's decision is unfavorable, the voter has the right to appeal within 24 hours after receiving the SEC's decision by submitting an appeal to the Administrative Court. If the appeal is submitted before expiry of the deadline and the decision from the Administrative Court is in favor of the voter, they will be

<sup>142</sup> Manual for presidential elections in the Republic of North Macedonia 2019, second supplemented edition. KAS and IDSCS, 2019. page 61-62. Accessed at: [https://idsccs.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Belegexemplar\\_2019\\_The\\_Republic\\_of\\_Macedonia\\_s\\_2019\\_Presidential\\_Elections\\_Handbook\\_MKD.pdf](https://idsccs.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Belegexemplar_2019_The_Republic_of_Macedonia_s_2019_Presidential_Elections_Handbook_MKD.pdf) (last visit: 4 June 2024)

permitted to exercise their right to vote.<sup>143</sup>

In its preliminary statement, the OSCE International Observation Mission characterized the elections as competitive and democratic. However, it highlighted negative rhetoric and nationalistic slogans as disruptive factors during an otherwise stable pre-election period. The Mission also noted that election authorities, including the SEC and the Constitutional Court, did not consistently handle election-related complaints in a transparent and effective manner, thereby limiting the efficacy of legal remedies.<sup>144</sup>

On Election Day, the State Election Commission received a total of 490 complaints<sup>145</sup> related to voter registration. Of these, 283 were fully resolved by the close of the polls, 199 were upheld, 68 dismissed, and 16 were invalid. Almost half (195) of the submitted complaints remained unresolved. The Observation Mission underscored the lack of transparency in the SEC's decision-making given that none of the decisions were made public.<sup>146</sup>

In contrast to the Presidential Elections, where only one complaint was filed in the first round for voting procedure violations, the Parliamentary Elections saw a significant increase with 27 complaints submitted to the SEC. The majority of these complaints came from parties within the opposition bloc. Specifically, the coalition VLEN/VREDI filed ten complaints, the VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition "Your Macedonia" filed eight, the SDSM-led coalition "For European Future" filed five, and *the Left* party submitted four complaints.<sup>147</sup>

The State Election Commission granted six of the complaints submitted by the coalition "Your Macedonia" for polling stations 1272 in the Municipality of Ohrid, 1194 and 1202 in the Municipality of Krushevo, 1844 in the Municipality of Struga and polling stations 1470 and 1470/1 in the Municipality of Dolneni. Of the ten complaints filed by the coalition VLEN/VREDI, the SEC granted only one complaint, for polling station 2101 in the Municipality of Zhelino, in Electoral District 6.<sup>148</sup>

143 Ibid.

144 OSCE, International Election Observation Mission - Republic of North Macedonia – Parliamentary elections and second round of presidential elections, 8 May 2024. Available at <https://www.osce.org/files/f/ documents/ff/8/568321.pdf> (last visit: 4 June 2024)

145 It is important to note that some of the complaints filed on Election Day pertain not only to the parliamentary elections but also to the second round of presidential elections. The State Election Commission has not provided precise statistics on the breakdown of these complaints between parliamentary and presidential elections.

146 Ibid.

147 State Election Commission – Parliamentary Elections 2024, Complaints. Accessed at: <https://www.sec.mk/parlamentarni-izbori-2024/#tab-id-13> (last visit: 4 June 2024)

148 State Election Commission – Parliamentary Elections – Decisions on Repeat Voting. Accessed at: <https://www.sec.mk/parlamentarni-izbori-2024/#tab-id-12> (last visit: 5 June 2024)

Dissatisfied with the decisions, the coalition “European Front” exercised its right and appealed the State Election Commission’s rulings to the Administrative Court. However, the court rejected these appeals as unfounded within the specified time-frame, affirming the SEC’s decisions. Consequently, the electoral process at the affected polling stations was nullified. Due to the significant number of registered voters in these polling stations within Electoral Districts 5 and 6, which could impact the final distribution of parliamentary seats, new elections were scheduled at these seven locations after a 14-day period.<sup>149</sup> The repeat electoral procedure in Electoral District 5 did not alter the distribution of seats among the parties. However, after the re-run at the polling station 2101 in Zelino, in Electoral District 6, the coalitions VLEN/VREDI and the European Front each secured eight seats. VLEN/VREDI gained an additional seat, at the expense of the 9<sup>th</sup> MP of the coalition European Front.<sup>150</sup>

### Observer Evaluations of the Electoral Process

A total of 1,303 domestic observers, 775 international observers, 85 translators, and 83 international reporters were accredited to observe the 8 May parliamentary elections and the second round of presidential elections.<sup>151</sup> The largest contingent of domestic observers was provided by the Association for Development of Societal and Social Innovations “WAKE UP,” which contributed 966 observers. The Foundation for Roma Democracy deployed 162 observers, and CIVIL – Center for Freedom 82 observers. Other accredited observer organizations included the Center for Security Research with 46 observers, the Institute for Economic Strategies and International Relations with 20 observers, the National Roma Center – Kumanovo with 14 observers, the Association for Promotion and Development of Inclusive Society “Inkluziva” Kumanovo with 12 observers, and the Macedonian Center for Cultural Development with one observer. In comparison to the 2020 parliamentary elections, which were observed by 2,551 domestic observers, 102 international observers, 56 translators, and 60 international reporters, these elections saw a reduction in the number of domestic observers. Conversely, the number of international observers and international reporters increased.<sup>152</sup> The heightened interest among

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149 Ibid.

150 Klincharovski, Petar. “DUI loses, VLEN/VREDI wins an additional parliamentary seat”, Radio Free Europe. Accessed at: <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/izbori-dui-vlen/32959660.html> (last visit: 5 June 2024)

151 Table of accredited observers for the parliamentary elections in the Republic of North Macedonia, 08.05.2024 <https://www.sec.mk/parlamentarni-izbori-2024/#av-tab-section-1-4-link> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

152 Manual for Presidential Elections, 2020 <https://idscs.org.mk/mk/2020/07/09/%d0%bf%d1%80%d0%b8%d1%80%d0%b0%d1%87%d0%bd%d0%b8%d0%ba-%d0%b7%d0%b0-%d0%bf%d0%b0%d1%80%d0%bb%d0%b0%d0%bc%d0%b5%d0%bd%d1%82%d0%b0%d1%80%d0%bd%d0%b8-%d0%b8%d0%b7%d0%b1%d0%be%d1%80%d0%b8-2020/> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

the international community is largely attributed to the concurrent scheduling of both, parliamentary and presidential elections.

The largest contingent of international observers was deployed by the OSCE/ODIHR – International Election Observation Mission, namely a total of 411 observers, 14 experts, and 31 translators. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe – Ad Hoc Committee for Observing the Presidential Elections in the Republic of North Macedonia contributed 33 observers and 20 translators.

The elections were also observed by representatives of the European Parliament, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (Washington, USA - North Macedonia Branch), the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), the SILBA Initiative for Dialogue and Democracy, the Delegation of CEAP - Kosovo, the Center for Development of Electoral Systems, Reforms, and Training of the Central Election Commission of Georgia, the Center for Continuous Electoral Training in Moldova, and the European Association for Dialogue and Democracy - Bergen, Norway.

The U.S. Embassy observed the elections with a contingent of 69 observers, while the embassies of the Netherlands, Hungary, Albania, and Slovakia each fielded smaller teams. The State Election Commissions of Kosovo, Montenegro, and Ukraine also sent election observers.

The electoral process was observed by a total of 83 international reporters from regional and international media outlets and news agencies, including Al Jazeera Balkans, TRT Balkan, TV N1 Serbia, Austrian Radio Television, Bulgarian National Television, Prva TV Serbia, ZDF Television Germany, ARD Television Germany, Klan Kosova, Radio Television Kosovo, TRT (Public Service of the Republic of Turkey), TV IMEDI, Euronews Serbia, Euronews Albania, Top Channel Albania - Kosovo branch, Agence France-Presse, Reuters News Agency, Associated Press, Western Balkans Office – Agence France-Presse, ABC News Albania, Kosovo Press Information Agency, Albanian Service of Voice of America, Bulgarian News Agency, Macedonian Service of Voice of America, and European Press Photo Agency – EPA.

In its preliminary statement,<sup>153</sup> the OSCE/ODIHR Mission concluded that the 8 May parliamentary and presidential elections were competitive, and that fundamental freedoms were respected, although the process remains insufficiently regulated.

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153 North Macedonia, Parliamentary Elections and Presidential Election - Second Round, 8 May 2024: Statement of Preliminary Findings and Conclusions - <https://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/north-macedonia/568270> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

The report emphasized that the electoral legislation provides an adequate framework for holding democratic elections; however, persistent inconsistencies, gaps, and ambiguities compromised legal certainty and require revision. Extensive and pluralistic media coverage of the campaign allowed voters to make an informed choice; however, negative rhetoric and nationalist slogans marred an otherwise stable pre-election period.

Transparency and accountability of campaign finances were weakened by the minimal finance reporting requirements and the limited capacity of oversight bodies, including for monitoring the misuse of administrative resources.

With respect to the implementation of the electoral process, OSCE/ODIHR assessed that the authorities, including the State Election Commission and the Administrative Court, did not always address election-related complaints in a timely and transparent manner, thereby limiting the effectiveness of legal remedies. Furthermore, it was noted that while the elections were effectively organized, frequent allegations of vote-buying during the pre-election period undermined trust in the process. In the observed polling stations, the voting process was orderly, transparent, and positively evaluated; however, in some instances, electoral boards did not fully adhere to the prescribed procedures during vote counting.

With respect to the legal framework for holding democratic elections, OSCE/ODIHR noted that some provisions do not align with international standards, and persistent inconsistencies, gaps, and ambiguous formulations undermine legal certainty and require further revision. Regrettably, it was observed that the Electoral Code was amended shortly before the elections in an insufficiently transparent expedited procedure and without public consultation, which is not in line with international standards and OSCE commitments. Although the amendments included some previous ODIHR recommendations and technical proposals from the State Election Commission, they largely disregarded recommendations of the inter-agency working group tasked with electoral reform. A number of key ODIHR and the Council of Europe's Venice Commission recommendations remain unaddressed, including those to systematically revise the Electoral Code, to ensure equal access to the media in election campaigns, and to increase accountability and integrity of campaign financing.

With respect to the activities of the election administration, the report notes that it met all legal deadlines and enjoyed public confidence in its technical capacity. During the pre-electoral period, the SEC held regular sessions that were open to the public and broadcast online, but it did not consistently provide public notice of its sessions and sometimes announced them less than an hour in advance.

The voter register was observed to have deficiencies in the systems for registering residential addresses and population registration, which reduce the accuracy of the data. Additionally, previous ODIHR recommendations to update and revise these databases had not been implemented.

In terms of gender equality, the report states that all registered candidate lists met the requirements for gender representation, in accordance with the legal framework mandating at least 40 percent representation of either gender on each candidate list. Nevertheless, it was noted that although women constituted 43 per cent of all parliamentary candidates, they were often placed in the lowest positions allowed by law and women candidates headed only 25 per cent of the lists. The political parties, with the notable exception of one female presidential candidate, featured few women speakers at campaign events and issues related to gender equality were largely absent from the campaign discourse.

The Mission evaluated the campaign activities as competitive, with fundamental freedoms being respected. Nonetheless, it was observed that the regulatory framework governing access to campaign venues, media, and political party financing disproportionately benefitted the four main parliamentary parties over other contestants.

Key issues identified by observers in both, the parliamentary and second-round of presidential campaigns, included economic policy, anti-corruption initiatives, European Union (EU) accession, and proposed constitutional amendments. The tone of the campaigns, particularly on digital platforms, became increasingly negative leading up to the first round of presidential elections and remained so through the second round and the parliamentary campaign. Ethnic Albanian parties featured prominently throughout the campaign; however, representatives of some ethnic minority parties raised concerns that the distribution of state campaign funds according to formula based on parties' representation in parliament hampered their ability to campaign on an equal footing.

The report notes that the formula for distribution of state funds for campaigning disadvantaged smaller and non-parliamentary parties. Only 11 of the 17 parliamentary contestants submitted interim campaign finance reports in a timely manner and in the required format. Furthermore, the reporting requirements for interim financial reports excluded detailed information on contributions and did not require reporting on expenditures, thereby reducing transparency and accountability. The report highlights that minimal campaign finance reporting requirements, deficiencies and inconsistencies in the legal framework as well as the limited resources

and capacities of the oversight bodies, including for monitoring and preventing the misuse of administrative resources, significantly diminished transparency and accountability in the electoral process.

The OSCE/ODIHR mission assessed the media environment as generally free. Observations of the Mission indicated that the public broadcasting service covered the major parliamentary and presidential contestants in line with the formula for allocating time to political parties in elections, which privileges the largest parliamentary parties. While private media outlets generally presented adequate information on all candidates overall, some television channels favored specific candidate lists.

The Mission observed that several televised debates featured candidates from major parliamentary coalitions, and there were three debates between the two presidential candidates in the presidential run-off. These debates were instrumental in enabling voters to make an informed choice. Nevertheless, the report highlights the need for further reforms in the media sector to enhance the viability of outlets, regulate online media, and further align the legal framework with the EU *acquis*.

OSCE/ODIHR found that the legal framework does not sufficiently ensure access to legal redress. Specifically, the SEC did not provide effective legal remedies for complaints submitted on the 24 April Election Day, leaving approximately half of these unresolved by the close of the polls. Further, the majority of its decisions on complaints, available for ODIHR EOM review, lacked detailed reasoning and frequently referenced outdated legal provisions and incorrect remedies for appeals. While the Administrative Court complied with the short deadlines for deciding on appeals, the Constitutional Court did not review in a timely manner two election-related petitions. One petition was rejected after the challenged provisions had already been implemented, while the second one remained undecided prior to the 8 May Election Day. The delay was attributed to the lack of expedited deadlines for constitutional review.

The OSCE/ODIHR mission assessed Election Day as generally peaceful and calm. The Mission observers assessed voting procedures positively in the vast majority of the 1,340 polling stations observed with procedural safeguards, including voter identification, ballot stamping by election officials, and signing of voter lists conducted in line with legal provisions at almost all polling stations. However, the report identified some instances of group and family voting and, in some cases, while not against the law, tracking of voters. Observers reported that nearly half of the polling stations did not consistently meet the legal requirement for election officials to inform voters about voting procedures. This shortcoming is significant as



it reduces the number of invalid ballots. Furthermore, the counting process was negatively assessed in 16 out of the 106 observed polling stations, primarily due to procedural errors and shortcomings in the counting procedures and important safeguards, which occasionally impacted transparency.

The tabulation was generally evaluated as efficient; however limited space and overcrowding sometimes restricted transparency. Mistakes or discrepancies in polling stations results protocols were observed in three out of four instances.

According to the domestic observer CIVIL – Center for Freedom, the parliamentary elections conducted on 8 May were characterized by a peaceful and democratic atmosphere, with no major incidents or significant irregularities reported. CIVIL noted that voters were able to express their electoral preferences freely, in accordance with the Electoral Code and democratic principles and standards.<sup>154</sup>

Nevertheless, adhering to its zero tolerance policy for electoral irregularities, CIVIL reported several types of irregularities observed on 8 May, although these did not markedly affect the overall positive assessment.

CIVIL raised concerns over multiple reports highlighting problematic issues at polling stations. It assessed that some electoral board members throughout the country were inadequately trained and were influenced by political agendas, including campaigning and influencing voters. Additionally, it was noted that, depending on their political affiliation, some members of the electoral boards at the polling stations observed by CIVIL either supported or attempted to obstruct the boycott of the presidential elections. Breaches of electoral silence and violations of voter confidentiality were also reported, with instances where party or citizen observers failed to react.

CIVIL also reported insufficient voter awareness of the voting procedures for the presidential and parliamentary elections, exacerbated by the electoral boards' lack of procedural knowledge. In this context, it was noted that around 50 citizens called to express confusion about whether electoral boards were permitted to ask voters if they intended to take one or two ballots. According to CIVIL, this indicates that procedures and voting rights were not adequately explained during the preparatory period, specifically in the State Election Commission's voter education campaign.

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<sup>154</sup> Derala: Election day was conducted in a peaceful and democratic atmosphere, but with several types of irregularities - <https://civilmedia.mk/derala-izborniot-den-mina-vo-mirna-i-demokratska-atmosfera-no-so-poveke-vidovi-na-neregularnosti/> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

In a joint statement, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, and the EU Commissioner for Neighborhood and Enlargement, Oliver Varhelyi, acknowledged that according to the preliminary findings of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) the presidential and parliamentary elections held on 8 May were conducted in a peaceful and democratic atmosphere. They further noted that the elections were competitive and respected fundamental freedoms, but highlighted that the electoral process remains insufficiently regulated.<sup>155</sup>

### Election evaluation by political parties

Political parties offered varied assessments of the election conduct and voting process. While some described Election Day as peaceful, fair, and democratic, others raised concerns about electoral irregularities, including obstructed voting, political pressures, and electoral manipulation. The initial vote count revealed that the VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition secured the highest number of votes, with 58 seats. This was followed by the SDSM-led coalition “European Front” and the DUI-led coalition, each with 18 seats. The VLEN/VREDI coalition won 14 seats, while both the Left and the ZNAM movement “For Our Macedonia” secured six mandates each. Following the announcement of results, party leaders shared their reactions at press conferences. Some celebrated their victories with party members and supporters, while others conceded defeats. The post-election reactions also included expressions of rivalry, with parties interpreting the results and their seat allocations in relation to their political opponents.

Timco Mucunski, Vice President of VMRO-DPMNE, assessed that the double elections took place generally in a peaceful atmosphere, with several registered irregularities. One of the more serious allegations of electoral irregularities raised by the party is that several officials of the ruling party violated citizens’ voting rights through bribery and pressure tactics.<sup>156</sup> After the announcement of the initial election results, VMRO-DPMNE members and supporters celebrated a double victory in front of the party’s central headquarters in Skopje. The party leadership held a press conference where they declared victory in the parliamentary elections and victory for candidate Gordana Siljanovska Davkova in the presidential elections. The

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155 Constitutional amendments, a puzzle in the post-election statement by Borrell and Varhelyi in North Macedonia <https://360stepeni.mk/ustavnite-izmeni-zavrshija-kako-rebus-vo-izjavata-na-borell-i-varheji-pozborite-vo-s-makedonija/> (last visit: 3 June 2024)

156 “Mucunski: We expect even better results than the first round.” Brif, 08.05.2024. Accessed at: <https://www.brif.mk/mucunski-ochekuvame-ushte-podobri-rezultati-od-prvot-krug/> (last visit: 3 June 2024)

party leader, Hristijan Mickoski, expressed gratitude to the voters and stated that VMRO-DPMNE's goal was to make the people proud of a country that is economically strong and promotes coexistence. Mickoski also remarked that it was time for SDSM and DUI to go into opposition, as the people had voted against crime, corruption, false values, seized state, rigged tenders, and nepotism. He emphasized the need for accountability for committed crimes and corruption. Mickoski also announced that negotiations with the VLEN/VREDI coalition would begin promptly to form a new government and that he intended to talk with the leadership of the ZNAM Movement and the political party *the Left*, however not necessarily implying their inclusion in the new government.<sup>157</sup>

The SDSM electoral headquarters stated that the elections were fair and democratic, with only minor irregularities. The party expressed gratitude to the citizens who voted and demonstrated democratic capacity, as well as to the institutions that showed maturity in conducting democratic, peaceful, and dignified elections.<sup>158</sup> Dimitar Kovacevski, leader of the party, attributed the successful conduct of free, fair, and democratic elections, aligned with European standards, to the stable political environment fostered by the ruling SDSM in preceding years. Following the announcement of the election results, Kovacevski gracefully acknowledged defeat and committed SDSM to assume a responsible, principled, and state-centric role in opposition. He extended congratulations on the victory to VMRO-DPMNE and Gordana Siljanovska Davkova, while expressing disappointment in SDSM's electoral outcome. Looking ahead, Kovacevski emphasized the party's imperative to regain public trust, announcing forthcoming internal elections at all levels—from central to local bodies, beginning with the presidency and leadership positions. Moreover, he outlined plans for revitalizing the party's ideological and ethical framework.<sup>159</sup> Following the announcement of the election results, Fatmir Bytyqi, vice-president of SDSM, submitted his resignation from party office. He emphasized that the effectiveness of his resignation hinged upon similar actions by other members of the party leadership. Bytyqi stressed that this collective step was crucial for restoring public trust, achieving political milestones, and demonstrating personal and political accountability—a principle he has upheld throughout his career.<sup>160</sup>

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157 "Hristijan Mickoski: Macedonia won, SDSM and DUI go to the opposition." TV Telma, 08.05.2024. Accessed at: <https://telma.com.mk/2024/05/08/hristijan-mickoski-makedonija-pobedi-sdsm-i-dui-odat-vo-opozicija/> (last visit: 3 June 2024)

158 "A dignified and successful election day, the elections were fair and democratic." SDSM, 08.05.2024. Accessed at: <https://sds.org.mk/pres-konferencii/84392> (last visit: 3 June 2024)

159 "Kovacevski: SDSM and the Coalition will be responsible, strong, principled and state opposition, the process of internal renewal must be at all levels." SDSM, 08.05.2024. Accessed at: <https://sds.org.mk/pres-konferencii/84398> (last visit: 3 June 2024)

160 "Bytyqi: I decided to resign from the party's vice president function." Kanal 5 TV, 08.05.2024. Accessed at: <https://kanal5.com.mk/bitikji-odluchiv-da-podnesam-ostavka-od-funkcijata-potpresetatel-na-partijata/a639283> (last visit: 3 June 2024).

At a press conference, Ali Ahmeti, leader of DUI, acknowledged the coalition “European Front” as the second-place victor in the elections, highlighting their competition primarily against VMRO-DPMNE. Ahmeti extended congratulations to Hristijan Mickoski and VMRO-DPMNE on their victory, emphasizing that irrespective of VMRO-DPMNE’s future negotiations, the sole legitimate representative of ethnic Albanians remained the “European Front”, which prevailed over Albanian opposition factions. Ahmeti characterized the elections as fair and democratic, underscoring the critical need for stability, peace, adherence to the rule of law, and pursuit of European Union membership in the country’s current context.<sup>161</sup> Following the elections and the conclusion of the complaint submission period, Arber Ademi, head of the DUI election headquarters, alleged that certain political parties engaged in electoral manipulation aimed at depriving the European Front of seats. Ademi asserted that these parties, through opportunistic agreements and disregard for the voters’ will, filed complaints to revoke two mandates from the European Front in the fifth and sixth electoral districts, despite no evidence of voting irregularities in these areas. He accused the complaints of being strategically targeted where the applicants had garnered higher vote counts, in order to secure additional mandates.<sup>162</sup>

Supporters of the VLEN/VREDI coalition gathered at Tetovo square to celebrate the election results following their announcement. BESA leader and Tetovo mayor Biljal Kasami conveyed to the coalition’s election headquarters in Tetovo that VLEN/VREDI emerged victorious among ethnic Albanians, attributing this success to the participation of expatriates in the voting process. Kasami emphasized that VLEN/VREDI achieved a definitive victory in all municipalities with a predominantly Albanian population and anticipated securing a comparable number of parliamentary seats as their political rivals, the “European Front”. Additionally, Kasami disclosed plans to initiate negotiations for a new government coalition comprising VMRO-DPMNE and VLEN/VREDI starting the following day.<sup>163</sup>

Following the closure of polling stations, the election headquarters of *the Left* party raised concerns about voting irregularities. These included allegations of hindering vulnerable groups from exercising their voting rights, presence of promotional materials at polling stations, and instances of voting obstruction. The party also

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161 “Ali Ahmeti from Mala Recica: Our opponent was VMRO-DPMNE.” Plus Info, 08.05.2024. Accessed at: <https://plusinfo.mk/ali-ahmeti-se-oglasilo-od-mala-rechica-nash-protivnik-beshe-vmro-dpmne/> (last visit: 3 June 2024).

162 “The European Front alleged that there was an attempt at electoral manipulation intended to deprive them of two parliamentary seats.” Puls24, 11.05.2024. Accessed at: <https://puls24.mk/европски-фронт-обвини-дека-има-оби/> (last visit: 3 June 2024).

163 “Kasami: Negotiations for new government between VMRO-DPMNE and the VREDI/VLEN Coalition start tomorrow.” 360 Stepeni, 08.05.2024. Accessed at: <https://360stepeni.mk/kasami-od-utre-pochnuvat-pregovore-za-nova-vlada-megu-vmro-dpmne-i-koalitsijata-vredi/> (last visit: 3 June 2024).

reported incidents of intimidation against their activists, allegedly orchestrated by both the government and the main opposition party. The *Left* party spokesperson Amar Mecinovic accused VMRO-DPMNE of spreading false claims that *the Left* had advocated for an election boycott.<sup>164</sup> Following the announcement of the results, party president Dimitar Apasiev declared that *the Left* had achieved its objectives in the elections, specifically aiming for the “pasokification” of SDSM and the overthrow of the “red bourgeoisie.” Apasiev also noted a significant achievement in these elections: the votes garnered by the newly formed movement ZNAM were nearly cut in half compared to the first round of presidential elections. He further commented on the electoral system, lamenting that despite winning more votes than the ZNAM Movement in certain districts, *the Left* was allocated the same number of parliamentary seats, which he argued disadvantaged them.<sup>165</sup>

The Movement ZNAM declared that they had made history, emphasizing that these elections would serve as a valuable lesson for all political entities. Leader Maksim Dimitrievski pledged to fulfill the promises made during the election campaign and to prioritize the interests of the citizens. He extended congratulations to VMRO-DPMNE and Gordana Siljanovska Davkova on their victory<sup>166</sup> and stated that ZNAM would explore coalition possibilities with other parties and expressed readiness to collaborate with any future government in pursuit of national priorities.<sup>167</sup>

## Conclusions

The eleventh parliamentary elections since the independence of the state, held on 8 May 2024, coinciding with the second round of presidential elections, were held in a fair and democratic atmosphere, without incidents and major irregularities. In the parliamentary elections, the main opposition party VMRO-DPMNE and its coalition secured 58 seats by a large margin. Following this victory, it was clear that VMRO-DPMNE leader Hristijan Mickoski would become the new Prime Minister to lead

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164 “The Left: There were irregularities, Bulgarian train, pressures from the current government and dismissal threats from the opposition following the elections.” *Tocka*, 08.05.2024. Accessed at: <https://tocka.com.mk/vesti/481080/levica-imase-neregularnosti-bugarski-voz-pritisoci-od-segasnata-vlast-i-zakani-za-otpustanje-po-izborite-od-opozicijata> (last visit: 3 June 2024).

165 “Apasiev: Hell awaits them in the Assembly, we have six confirmed MPs, we are fighting for the seventh.” *360 Stepeni*, 08.05.2024. Accessed at: <https://360stepeni.mk/apasiev-gi-cheka-pekol-vo-sobraniето-imame-sigurni-shest-pratenika-se-borime-za-sedmiot/> (last visit: 3 June 2024).

166 “Dimitrievski: We have a confirmed parliamentary group, we will stand with the citizens and work diligently on their behalf”. *Vecer*, 08.05.2024. Accessed at: <https://www.vecer.press/dimitrievski-potvrdivme-minimum-pratenichka-grupa/> (last visit: 3 June 2024).

167 “Dimitrievski: We will explore further options for potential coalition with the government.” *Brif*, 09.05.2024. Accessed at: <https://www.brif.mk/dimitrievski-dopolnitelno-ke-gi-razgledame-opcite-za-eventualno-mozhno-koalicirane-so-vlasta/> (last visit: 3 June 2024).

the new government, based on three pillars: European integration, accelerated economic development, and fight against crime and corruption and the rule of law. The SDSM and its coalition experienced a historic defeat, securing only 18 seats, marking their weakest election result to date. Consequently, party leader Dimitar Kovacevski and the entire leadership resigned, initiating intra-party procedures for election of new president. Extraordinary intra-party elections were held on 30 June, resulting in the election of former Health Minister and incumbent MP Venko Filipche as the new president of SDSM.<sup>168</sup> In the Albanian bloc, the DUI-led European Front coalition won 18 seats, while the Albanian opposition bloc VLEN/VREDI secured 14 seats. The newly established political party ZNAM achieved a remarkable result by obtaining 6 parliamentary seats, as did the party *the Left*, which also won 6 parliamentary seats, an increase from the 2 MPs in the previous parliamentary composition.

According to the submitted financial reports<sup>169</sup>, the highest campaign finance expenditure was incurred by the VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition with a total of MKD 143,253,905 (EUR 2,329,332). The second highest expenditure was incurred by the SDSM-led coalition with a total of MKD 98,160,901 (EUR 1,596,112). The next highest expenditure was incurred by the DUI-led coalition with MKD 58,899,636 (EUR 957,717). The *Left* Party spent a total of MKD 15,752,857 (EUR 256,144) in these elections, whereas the ZNAM Movement MKD 499,023 (EUR 8,114). The GROM-led coalition raised and spent a total of MKD 8,738,486 (EUR 142,089), the Democrats MKD 1,989,786 (EUR 32,354), Motherland Macedonia MKD 1,179,114 (EUR 19,173), Your Party MKD 1,069,025 (EUR 17,383), and Workers' Party MKD 565,420,30 (EUR 9,194).

VMRO-DPMNE congratulated the Macedonian people for achieving the required census on the presidential elections and assessed the DUI-initiated boycott of the second round of presidential elections as unsuccessful. VMRO-DPMNE expressed gratitude for the substantial trust they received and noted that, on 8 May, the nation sent a unified message, signaling the beginning of a new chapter. They acknowledged that Election Day was mostly peaceful, with several irregularities to be clarified in the coming period. Specifically, several officials from the then-ruling party were found to be engaging in illegal activities, violating voting rights, and exerting bribes and pressures, which underscored the undemocratic nature of the defeated government.<sup>170</sup>

168 "Venko Filipche elected President of SDSM" <https://sdsd.org.mk/pres-konferencii/85209> (last visit: 2 July 2024)

169 The campaign finance expenditure was reviewed against the financial reports of political parties which were submitted to the respective state authorities by 7 August 2024.

170 "Mucunski: A new chapter begins, governing elites defeated by the people" <https://vmro-dpmne.org.mk/%d0%bf%d1%80%d0%b5%d1%81-%d0%ba%d0%be%d0%bd%d1%84%d0%b5%d1%80%d0%b5%d0%bd%d1%86%d0%b8%d0%b8/%d0%bc%d1%83%d1%86%d1%83%d0%bd%d1%81%d0%ba%d0%b8-%d0%b2%d1%80%d0%b5%d0%bc%d0%b5-%d0%b5-%d0%b7%d0%b0-%d0%bd%d0%be%d0%b2%d0%be-%d0%bf%d0%be%d0%b3%d0%bb%d0%b0%d0%b2%d1%98%d0%b5-%d0%b5%d0%bb%d0%b8%d1%82> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

SDSM assessed the elections as fair and democratic, with minor irregularities, noting that the citizens freely expressed their will on a dignified, peaceful, and successful election day. They emphasized that the citizens demonstrated democratic capacity and the institutions showed maturity, contributing to free, democratic, peaceful, and dignified elections.<sup>171</sup>

On behalf of the European Front, the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI) assessed that the election process was conducted peacefully, without incidents, and condemned attempts by the opposition to incite panic and fear through dissemination of false information. Regarding the remarks about the boycott of the presidential elections, DUI emphasized that the European Front allowed supporters the freedom to choose whether to vote for the president. They observed that voter turnout was lower for the presidential elections compared to the parliamentary elections, but that this discrepancy was not decisive.<sup>172</sup>

VLEN/VREDI strongly condemned DUI's attempt to boycott the election process and asserted that they are the new political force that will represent the interests of Albanians with dignity. They assessed that Election Day was not democratic, given that state institutions tasked with guaranteeing the process instead served DUI. They noted that deputy ministers, ministers, directors, and other party officials were observed on the ground, particularly at polling stations, and their presence was documented. International representatives and observation missions in the country will be informed of these observations.<sup>173</sup>

ZNAM noted that the citizens demonstrated their commitment to state-building by providing the necessary census for the election of a president, thus preventing the state from facing an institutional crisis. They also expressed satisfaction that they successfully presented all measures of their election program during the campaign and extended gratitude to all citizens who participated in the elections and voted for ZNAM.<sup>174</sup>

The political party *The Left* expressed satisfaction with the election results but criticized the electoral model, arguing that the total number of votes won is not ade-

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171 "A dignified and successful election day, the elections were fair and democratic" <https://sds.org.mk/pres-konferencii/84392> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

172 "Ademi: DUI lets supporters decide on whether to cast their vote for president" <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/32938586.html> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

173 "Medziti: VLEN/VREDI is the new political factor to represent the interests of the Albanians" <https://novamakedonija.com.mk/makedonija/politika/vredi-e-noviot-politichki-faktor-koj-kje-gi-zastapuva-interesite-na-albancite-poracha-medjiti/> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

174 "Memov: Citizens demonstrate state-building role by electing new president" <https://telma.com.mk/2024/05/08/memov-graganite-pokazhaa-deka-se-drzhavotvorni-i-go-izbraa-svojoj-nov-pretsedatel/> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

quately reflected in parliamentary seats. They pointed out that, despite their overall vote count exceeding that of ZNAM, they will have an identical number of MPs. In this context, *the Left* announced that one of their first demands would be the introduction of a single electoral unit across the entire country.<sup>175</sup>

The Minister of Interior, Pance Toshkovski, assessed that the elections were the most peaceful and democratic ever held in the country, particularly from a security standpoint. He emphasized that no serious violations of the election process were observed throughout the day.<sup>176</sup>

The OSCE/ODIHR International Observation Mission assessed that the electoral process for the parliamentary and presidential elections was competitive and that fundamental freedoms were respected, although the process remains insufficiently regulated. Their primary remarks pertain to the Electoral Code. According to the mission, the elections were conducted effectively, given the challenge of organizing two concurrent elections.<sup>177</sup>

During the pre-election period, political parties and coalitions had the opportunity to freely present their programs and hold meetings with voters. The official campaign for the parliamentary elections commenced on 18 April and concluded on 6 May, overlapping with the second round of the presidential campaign, which started on 4 April. Political parties, as well as MPs and presidential candidates, conducted large rallies, met with citizens, engaged in door-to-door canvassing, and distributed flyers, posters, billboards, and digital content. The dominant topics of the campaign included the economy, the fight against corruption, European integration, constitutional changes, energy, and local infrastructure issues. While the election campaign was generally focused on positive promotion of candidates, some negative rhetoric and political polarization were evident, particularly intensifying after the first round of the presidential election. The outcome of this round, which reflected the voter sentiment, provided significant indications of the final election results.

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175 "Apasiev: We pasokified SDSM, reduced ZNAM in half, and prepared hell for DPMNE in the Parliament <https://mkd.mk/apasiev-sdsm-go-pasokiziravme-znam-go-prepolovivme-a-dpmne-go-cheka-pekol-vo-sobraniето/> (last visit: 3 July 2024)

176 "This was probably the most peaceful and democratic election held so far <https://makfax.com.mk/makedonija/%D1%82%D0%BE%D1%88%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%B2%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%B8-%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0-%D0%B1%D0%B5%D0%B0-%D0%BC%D0%BE%D0%B6%D0%B5%D0%B1%D0%B8-%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%98%D0%BC%D0%B8%D1%80%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B5-%D0%B8/> (last visit 22 June 2024)

177 Preliminary positive assessment by OSCE/ODIHR on yesterday's Election Day, remarks on the swift amendments to the Electoral Code, <https://360stepeni.mk/preliminarna-pozitivna-otsenka-od-obse-odihr-za-vcherashniot-izboren-den-zabeleshka-za-brzite-izmeni-na-izborniot-zakonik/> (last visit: 22 June 2024)



A total of 27 complaints were submitted related to the results of the parliamentary elections: nine from the VLEN/VREDI coalition, eight from VMRO-DPMNE, five from SDSM, and four from the *Left*. At its session on 13 May, the State Election Commission (SEC) upheld seven of these complaints, including one submitted by VLEN/VREDI coalition, and six by the coalition led by VMRO-DPMNE “Your Macedonia”. The SDSM-led Coalition “For a European Future” also contested the results of one of the seven polling stations. The complaints granted by the SEC related to polling stations in electoral districts 5 and 6. The European Front coalition led by DUI accused political opponents of engaging in electoral engineering and alleged that these opponents, through political pressure and complaints to the SEC, sought to deprive them of parliamentary seats in these districts.<sup>178</sup>

In view of the anticipation that DUI would transition to an opposition role after 22 years in power, their political rhetoric intensified in the post-election period. DUI maintained that, according to the election results, they are the legitimate representatives of the ethnic Albanians in the country and announced plans to prevent any new majorization, urging citizens to join their efforts to protect the Ohrid Framework Agreement. In response, VLEN/VREDI called on DUI to act as a responsible opposition and urged them to refrain from sacrificing North Macedonia’s European prospects for personal or partisan interests.<sup>179</sup>

On 18 May, the SEC unanimously adopted a proposal to repeat the voting at seven polling stations, following decisions made by the Administrative Court. The re-vote was held on Wednesday, 22 May 2024 in Electoral District (ED) 5, polling stations 1470/1 and 1470 in the Municipality of Dolneni, 1194 and 1202 in the Municipality of Krushevo, 1844 in the Municipality of Struga, and 1272 in the Municipality of Ohrid, as well as in ED 6, polling station 2101 in the Municipality of Zhelino.<sup>180</sup>

After the 22 May re-vote at the seven polling stations in the two electoral districts, DUI lost one parliamentary seat in ED 6, which was awarded to the Coalition VLEN/VREDI. The distribution of the parliamentary seats in ED 5 remained unaffected.<sup>181</sup>

On 30 May, the SEC concluded the parliamentary elections. During the session, the results for ED 6 were declared final after the Administrative Court dismissed the

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178 “SEC granted 7 out of 27 submitted complaints - one to VLEN/VREDI coalition, and six to VMRO-DPMNE” <https://24.mk/details/dik-prifati-7-od-27-podneseni-prigovori-eden-od-koalicija-vlen-i-shest-od-vmro-dpmne> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

179 “VMRO-DPMNE and VLEN/VREDI: DUI to be a responsible opposition “that’s the will of the majority” <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/32971004.html> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

180 “SEC: Re-run in seven polling stations on 22 May” <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/32952869.html> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

181 VLEN/VREDI wins a seat at the expense of DUI <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/izbori-dui-vlen/32959660.html> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

European Front's appeal for a re-vote at a polling station in the village of Larce, Zhelino.

According to the final election results, the new parliamentary composition includes MPs from the lists of six political entities that participated independently or in coalition, with their own lists in six electoral districts.

According to the final results released by the SEC, VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition "Your Macedonia" secured 436,407 votes, accounting for 43.36 per cent of the total vote. The SDSM-led coalition "For a European Future" secured 154,447 votes, or 15.35 per cent of the total vote. DUI-led coalition "European Front" secured 137,690 votes, or 13.68 per cent of the total vote. The Coalition VLEN/VREDI secured 106,937 votes, or 10.63 per cent of the total vote. The political party *the Left* received 68,637 votes, or 6.82 per cent of the total vote, while the Movement ZNAM - For Our Macedonia 56,232 votes, or 5.59 per cent of the total vote. In terms of parliamentary seats, the Assembly will include 58 MPs from the VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition "Your Macedonia", 18 MPs each from the coalitions "For a European Future" – SDSM and European Front, 14 MPs from the coalition VLEN/VREDI and 6 MPs each from the parties *the Left* and ZNAM.<sup>182</sup> Voter turnout in the 8 May parliamentary elections was 55.10 per cent, or approximately 3 per cent higher than the turnout in the 2020 parliamentary elections.<sup>183</sup>

The new parliamentary majority in the legislature comprises 78 MPs, including 58 from the VMRO-DPMNE coalition, 14 from VLEN/VREDI, and 6 from ZNAM.

Shortly after the release of the initial election results, VMRO-DPMNE leader Hristijan Mickoski announced the swift formation of a new reform government in collaboration with the VLEN/VREDI coalition, initiating negotiations between the parties. During the political negotiations to form the new government, the party ZNAM also joined the discussions. The negotiations proceeded constructively, leading to a prompt agreement. Under this agreement, VLEN/VREDI was granted the position of Speaker of the Parliament, as one of their principal demands, and six ministerial posts, while ZNAM obtained two ministerial posts. Both parties also acquired directorships and other managerial positions.

The Prime Minister-designate Mickoski emphasized that the government coalition, consisting of VMRO-DPMNE, VLEN/VREDI and ZNAM coalition, had united around

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182 Parliamentary elections – results <https://rezultati.sec.mk/mk/parl/r> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

183 Parliamentary elections – turnout <https://rezultati-prv.sec.mk/mk/parl/t6> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

four key pillars: combating corruption and crime, improving citizens' living standards, accelerating the European integration process and promoting balanced development.<sup>184</sup>

On 28 May 2024, the Constituent Session of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia was held. During the session, the mandates of 118 newly elected MPs were verified, and the new composition of the Assembly was confirmed, as outlined in the Report of the Verification Commission. The remaining two mandates were also validated. The session was chaired by Merita Kolchi Kodzadziku, the oldest MP in the current parliamentary composition.

Afrim Gashi from VLEN/VREDI has been elected the new President of the Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia. Following the verification of the MPs' mandates from the new composition of the Assembly, Gashi was proposed by 75 MPs and subsequently elected to the office. The election of Gashi as Speaker of the Assembly was supported by 76 MPs, while six voted against his appointment.

After the election and delivering the oath of office, Gashi expressed his gratitude to the citizens for their confidence in the parliamentary elections and thanked the MPs for their support in electing him as the leader of the legislature.<sup>185</sup>

On 6 June, President Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova granted VMRO-DPMNE leader Hristijan Mickoski the mandate to form a government. Citing the election results and the distribution of seats in Parliament, the President stated that awarding Mickoski the mandate was a justified legal and political decision.<sup>186</sup>

To effectively implement its pre-election program and prior to the formation of the new government, VMRO-DPMNE submitted amendments to the Law on Organization and Operation of State Administration Bodies. On 8 June, the Assembly adopted these amendments through expedited procedure, by a vote of 88 to 22.

The two-thirds majority required for the adoption of the amendments to the systemic law was secured following a meeting between representatives of VMRO-DPMNE and the European Front. Both parties announced that they had reached an agree-

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184 Prime Minister-designate expects constructive debate on election of new Government; coalition is united around four pillars, <https://novamakedonija.com.mk/makedonija/mandatarot-ochekuva-konstruktivna-debata-za-izbor-na-novata-vlada-koalicijata-e-obedineta-okolu-chetiri-stolba/> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

185 Formation of the 11th Assembly completed, Afrim Gashi assumes role of Speaker" <https://www.sobranie.mk/ns-newsarticle-se-konstituirala-11-sostav-na-sobranieto-afirim-gashi-izbran-za-pretседател.nspk> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

186 Mickoski Prime Minister-designate, ministers and the two-thirds majority are set <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/mandatot-mickoski-ministri-premier/32980451.html> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

ment to support the amendments and to establish an ad hoc committee in the Assembly to ensure equitable representation.<sup>187</sup> During the meeting, discussions also covered the mutual dialogue between the government and the opposition. The request from the European Front coalition to establish an ad hoc committee, proposed by the opposition and chaired by the President, was accepted. This committee will oversee the equitable representation of all ethnic communities in state administration bodies and report to the Assembly bi-annually.<sup>188</sup>

The legal amendments entailed creation of new ministries and affected the structure of some existing ministries. The Ministry of Economy has been expanded to include labor-related functions, while the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy has been restructured into the Ministry of Social Policy, Demography, and Youth. The Agency for Youth and Sports has been dissolved and replaced by a new Ministry of Sport. Responsibilities related to mining and energy previously held by the Ministry of Economy have been transferred to the new Ministry of Energy, Mining, and Mineral Resources. The Ministry of Economy has also shifted its tourism-related duties to the newly established Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been granted additional economic competencies and will be renamed into Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade. The current Ministry of Political Systems and Interethnic Relations will now focus solely on interethnic relations. A new Ministry of Digitalization has been created to take over the responsibilities of the former Ministry of Information Technology and Administration, and a new Ministry of Administration has been established. Additionally, the Secretariat for European Affairs has been restructured into Ministry for European Affairs.<sup>189</sup>

The new government proposed by Mickoski comprises 24 members, including the Prime Minister and 23 deputy prime ministers and ministers. Of these, 20 are ministers with portfolios. The government comprises 15 members from the VMRO-DPMNE-led coalition, six from the VLEN/VREDI coalition, and two from ZNAM.

On presentation of the proposal to the Parliament, Mickoski asserted that the proposed members of the government were committed to achieving immediate results and maximizing their effectiveness, in response to the high expectations of the public. The Prime Minister-designate emphasized that the government would

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187 Law on the Reorganization of Ministries Adopted, <https://www.dw.com/mk/usvoen-zakonot-za-reorganizacija-na-ministerstvata-namesto-16-ke-ima-20/a-69309528> (last visit: 22 June 2024)

188 "European Front endorses Government reorganization, secures ad hoc Committee in return" <https://fokus.mk/evropskiot-front-ke-ja-poddrzhi-reorganizatsijata-na-vladata-za-vozvrat-dobiva-sobraniska-ad-hok-komisija/> (last accessed: 3 July 2024)

189 "DUI supports post-midnight vote for reorganization of ministries" <https://www.slobodnaevropa.mk/a/32984203.html> (last visit: 3 July 2024)

undertake a resolute and unwavering fight against crime, demonstrating no tolerance for misconduct regardless of the party affiliation of the individuals involved. He also underscored that the new government's focus would be on addressing the needs and concerns of young people.<sup>190</sup>

Following the election of the new government in Parliament on 23 June 2024, Hristijan Mickoski became the 13<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister and assumed leadership of the 20<sup>th</sup> government since the country's independence.

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<sup>190</sup> "Parliament convenes to elect new Government led by Hristijan Mickoski" <https://telma.com.mk/2024/06/22/vo-sobranie-pochnuva-sedniczata-za-izbor-na-nova-vlada-predvodena-od-hristijan-miczkoski/> (last visit 22 June 2024)



**Election Archive of the Republic  
of North Macedonia,  
Comprehensive Database  
from 1990 Onwards**

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## 6. Election Archive of the Republic of North Macedonia, Comprehensive Database from 1990 Onwards

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Since March 2016, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation's office in North Macedonia and the Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis" – Skopje (IDSCS) have been implementing the joint project "Electoral Archive of the Republic of North Macedonia since 1990 to date". The aim of the project is to enable comprehensive monitoring of the electoral processes in the Republic of North Macedonia. The project encompasses all previously held presidential, parliamentary, and local elections, consolidating all available documents related to these electoral processes into a single repository.

The need to implement such a project arises from the lack of an official state archive containing all documents and data on election cycles since the declaration of independence of the Republic of North Macedonia. The Election Archive groups the documents into seven sections:

1. Election Announcement Document
2. Voter List
3. Candidate Lists
4. Election Results
5. Election Report
6. Observation reports from international and domestic organizations
7. Electoral Code

In parallel with the organization of the elections, the Election Archive is updated and all relevant documents are uploaded in the above sections. A key feature of the Election Archive is its collection of election handbooks. These handbooks, which cover presidential, parliamentary, and local elections, are created in real time alongside the electoral events in a collaborative effort of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Institute for Democracy "Societas Civilis" – Skopje.

The Election Archive has released a series of eight in-depth handbooks covering various elections. These include detailed information on the 2013, 2017, and 2021 local elections, the 2014 and 2019 presidential elections, as well as the 2014, 2016, and 2020 parliamentary elections. The handbooks are available on the Election Archive website ([izbornaarhiva.mk](http://izbornaarhiva.mk)) in Macedonian, Albanian, and English.



