

Ifimes

Mednarodni inštitut za bližnjevzhodne in balkanske študije  
International Institute for Middle East and Balkan Studies  
Tivolska cesta 50, P.P. 2795, 1001 - Ljubljana, Slovenija

Web: <http://www.ifimes.org>

E-mail: [ifimes@ifimes.org](mailto:ifimes@ifimes.org)

Tel.: +386 (0)41/662-549, +386 (0)41/662-587

+386 (0)1/430-15-33, +386 (0)1/430-15-34

Fax: +386 (0)1/515-37-03

The International Institute for Middle-East and Balkan Studies (**IFIMES**) in Ljubljana, Slovenia, regularly analyses events in the Middle East and the Balkans. On the occasion of the early parliamentary election in Macedonia which is to take place on 1 June 2008 IFIMES has prepared an analysis of the current political situation in that country. The most relevant and interesting sections from the comprehensive analysis are given below.

#### **PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN MACEDONIA:**

### **GRUEVSKI AND THAÇI MOST POPULAR PARTY LEADERS!**

The early parliamentary elections in Macedonia are to be held on 1 June 2008. The Macedonian parliament (Sobranie) comprised of 120 deputies will be elected by the electorate of almost 1.8 million voters according to the proportional system. The leading parties at the forthcoming elections are: VMRO-DPMNE (the ruling conservative party), SDSM (the opposition social-democratic party), Democratic Party of Albanians - DPA (the ruling Albanian party), Democratic Union for Integration - DUI (the opposition Albanian party), New Social Democratic Party - NSDP (new social-democrats, member of the ruling coalition), VMRO-NP (nationalistic right party), DOM (new central political party) and Liberal Democratic Party - LDP (member of the ruling coalition). The parties representing minorities such as Turks, Romany, Bosniaks, Serbs and others traditionally have their representatives in the Macedonian parliament.

#### **VMRO-DPMNE AND DPA – A STABILITY FACTOR**

Macedonia is a multinational state which proclaimed independence on 8 September 1991. The national structure of its inhabitants represents the key political factor which influences the political life in the country. According to unofficial data ethnic Albanians represent one third of the population. Thus the Macedonian political scene is dominated by two groups of parties: the parties representing the Macedonian population and the parties representing the Albanian nation. The present problems in the Macedonian society are not the consequence of the recently proclaimed independence of the state but are rooted deep in the period after the Second World War. After 1945 the communist regime in Macedonia never dealt seriously with the ethnic problems. The resolution of those issues was merely prolonged or swept under the carpet. The exclusive policy continued in 1991 when the Macedonian authorities proclaimed new state symbols without the participation and consent of Albanians as the second largest ethnic community.

The analysts of the IFIMES International Institute are of the opinion that the currently ruling VMRO-DPMNE and DPA structure represents a stability factor and may continue to lead the country on the road to the Euro-Atlantic integration (EU and NATO). The opposition led by SDSM and DUI is not the appropriate alternative to the current government. SDSM still has not managed to consolidate after the defeat at the last election. Even Macedonian President Branko Crvenkovski has joined the campaign in order to help the opposition SDSM party. Tito Petkovski (NSDP) has made some unsuccessful attempts to form a political front with other parties in order to challenge Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski.

DUI was created from the political wing of a former Albanian liberation army and in many ways resembles an extremist party which often uses violence as a method of political action. It functions best in crisis situations and therefore often creates the artificial atmosphere of crisis in order to increase its influence among the Albanian voters. That was the reason why the DUE deputies in the Macedonian parliament voted for the dissolution of the parliament and early elections. Due to its extremist and violent activities which were especially notable during the election campaign DUI has lost its chances to eventually become an EU and USA partner.

The IFIMES International Institute is of the opinion that VMRO-DPMNE and DPA as Macedonia's ruling parties have shown their political responsibility towards their voters and towards the state by dissolving the parliament and triggering early election due to the current political crisis which has resulted most importantly in the prolonged accession of Macedonia to NATO as well as in postponing the negotiations with Greece regarding the row over the country's name.

According to the estimate made by Transparency International Macedonia has made a significant step forward, so that it now ranked as the 84th of all together 179 countries which were included in the survey on corruption (in October 2005 it was the 103rd of all together 159 states included in the survey). (Source: Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index 2007)

### **NIKOLA GRUEVSKI AGAIN THE MANDATARY**

During the past two years since the government has been led by Nikola Gruevski (VMRO-DPMNE) Macedonia has made some important steps in the accession to EU and NATO. Strategic partnership with the USA has been confirmed. After the elections the new (old) Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski will again be faced with difficult challenges such as joining NATO and EU, the dispute over Macedonia's name and the recognition of the neighbouring state of Kosovo as well as the difficult economic situation in the country.

The IFIMES International Institute anticipates many violent incidents and conflicts during the election campaign and urges the current authorities to ensure safety for all political leaders and participants in the election process. An increased number of incidents is expected to break out which may even escalate into more severe violence.

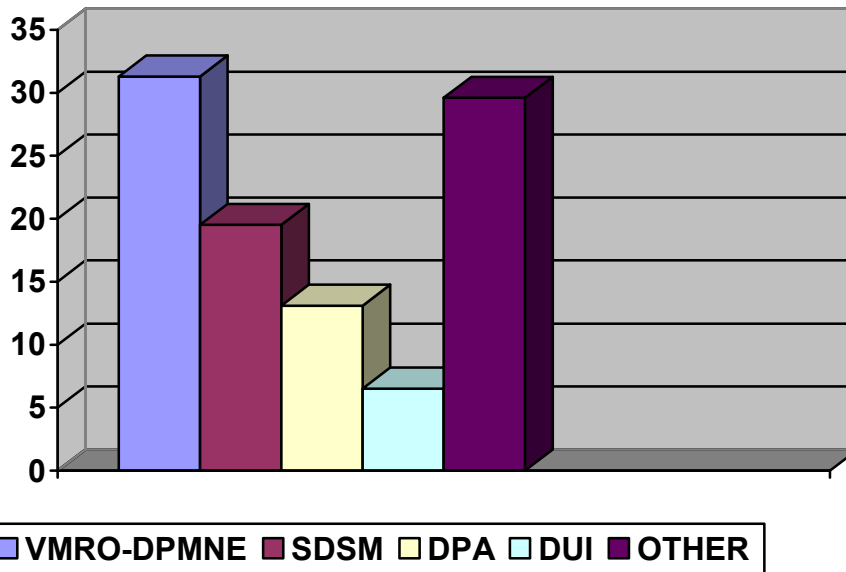
### **PUBLIC OPINION POLL**

Data on the sample:

- The sample: random, three-stage
- Size of the sample: 348 respondents (male and female citizens of lawful age)
- Methodology: telephone survey
- Period: April 14 to 18, 2008
- Degree of reliability: 95%
- Control: per 10% specimens
- Standard deviation: +/- 3
- Territory: 1. Election constituency – Macedonia

- **WHO WOULD YOU VOTE FOR IF THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION WERE HELD TODAY IN MACEDONIA?**

- VMRO DPMNE	31,30%
- SDSM	19,50 %
- DPA	13,10%
- DUI	6,50%.
- OTHER	29,60 %

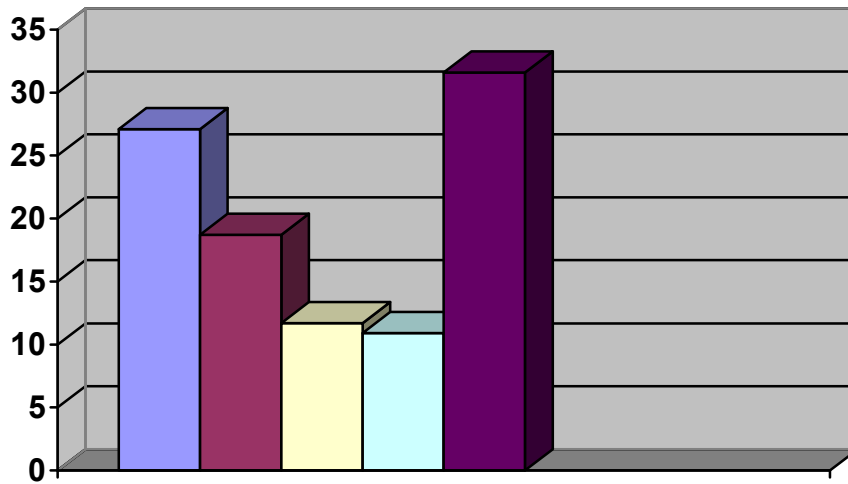


Data on the sample:

- The sample: random, three-stage
- Size of the sample: 348 respondents (male and female citizens of lawful age)
- Methodology: telephone survey
- Period: April 14 to 18, 2008
- Degree of reliability: 95%
- Control: per 10% specimens
- Standard deviation: +/- 3
- Territory: 2. Election constituency – Macedonia

- **WHO WOULD YOU VOTE FOR IF THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION WERE HELD TODAY IN MACEDONIA?**

- VMRO DPMNE	27,10%
- SDSM	18,70 %
- DPA	11,70 %
- DUI	10,90 %.
- OTHER	31,60 %



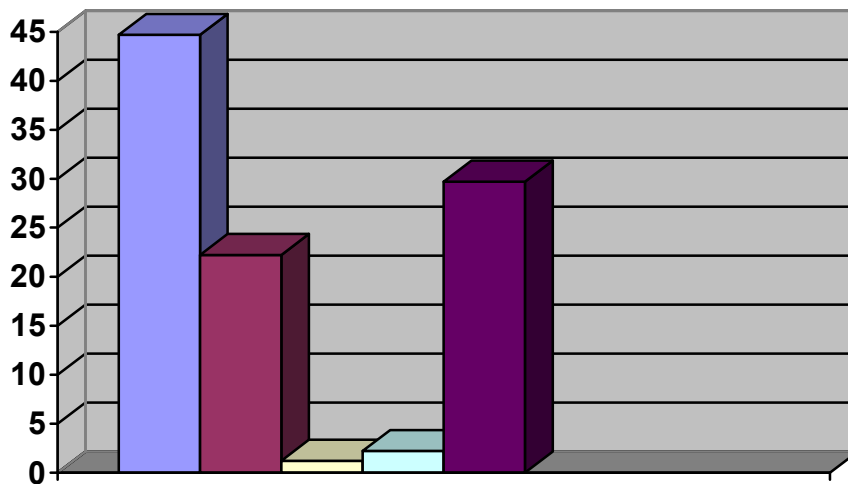
■ VMRO-DPMNE ■ SDSM ■ DPA ■ DUI ■ OTHER

Data on the sample:

- The sample: random, three-stage
- Size of the sample: 348 respondents (male and female citizens of lawful age)
- Methodology: telephone survey
- Period: April 14 to 18, 2008
- Degree of reliability: 95%
- Control: per 10% specimens
- Standard deviation: +/- 3
- Territory: 3. Election constituency – Macedonia

- **WHO WOULD YOU VOTE FOR IF THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION WERE HELD TODAY IN MACEDONIA?**

- VMRO DPMNE 44,70%
- SDSM 22,20 %
- DPA 1,20 %
- DUI 2,20 %.
- OTHER 29,70 %



■ VMRO-DPMNE ■ SDSM ■ DPA ■ DUI ■ OTHER

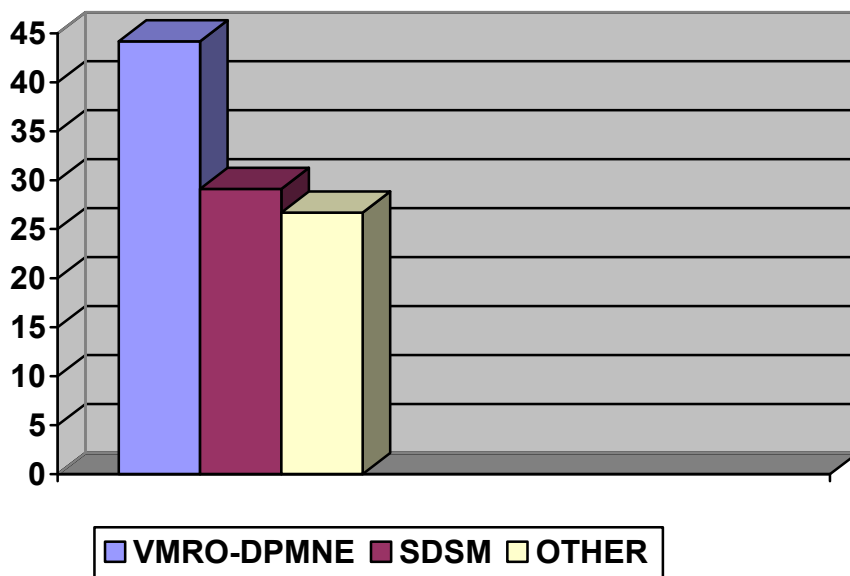
Data on the sample:

- The sample: random, three-stage
- Size of the sample: 348 respondents (male and female citizens of lawful age)

- Methodology: telephone survey
- Period: April 14 to 18, 2008
- Degree of reliability: 95%
- Control: per 10% specimens
- Standard deviation: +/- 3
- Territory: 4. Election constituency – Macedonia

- **WHO WOULD YOU VOTE FOR IF THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION WERE HELD TODAY IN MACEDONIA?**

- VMRO DPMNE 44,20 %
- SDSM 29,10 %
- OTHER 26,70 %

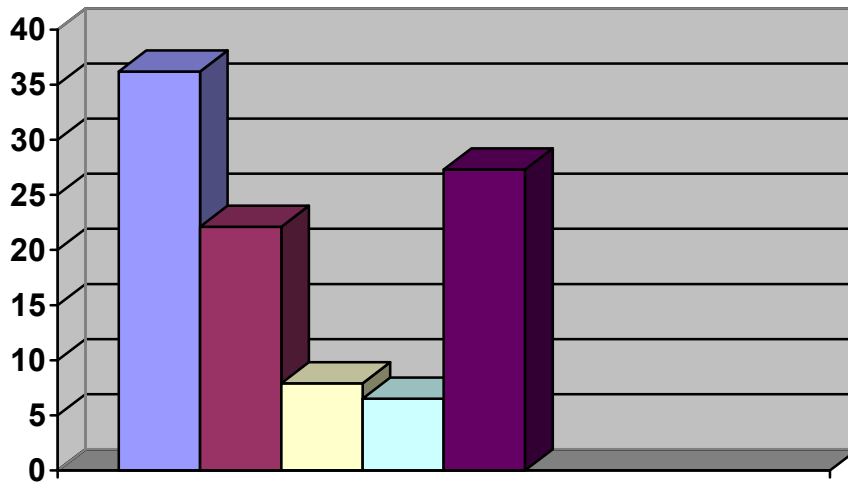


Data on the sample:

- The sample: random, three-stage
- Size of the sample: 348 respondents (male and female citizens of lawful age)
- Methodology: telephone survey
- Period: April 14 to 18, 2008
- Degree of reliability: 95%
- Control: per 10% specimens
- Standard deviation: +/- 3
- Territory: 5. Election constituency – Macedonia

- **WHO WOULD YOU VOTE FOR IF THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION WERE HELD TODAY IN MACEDONIA?**

- VMRO DPMNE 36,20%
- SDSM 22,10 %
- DPA 7,90 %
- DUI 6,50 %.
- OTHER 27,30 %



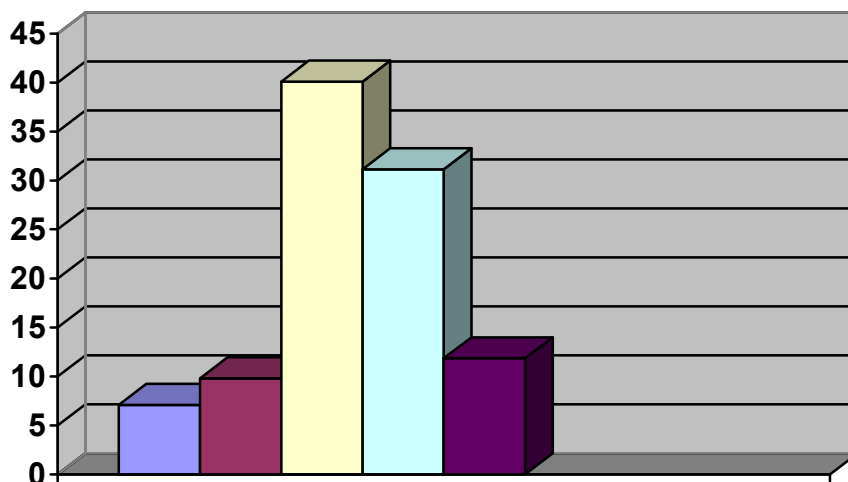
■ VMRO-DPMNE ■ SDSM ■ DPA ■ DUI ■ OTHER

Data on the sample:

- The sample: random, three-stage
- Size of the sample: 348 respondents (male and female citizens of lawful age)
- Methodology: telephone survey
- Period: April 14 to 18, 2008
- Degree of reliability: 95%
- Control: per 10% specimens
- Standard deviation: +/- 3
- Territory: 6. Election constituency – Macedonia

- **WHO WOULD YOU VOTE FOR IF THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION WERE HELD TODAY IN MACEDONIA?**

- VMRO DPMNE 7,10%
- SDSM 9,80 %
- DPA 40,10 %
- DUI 31,15 %.
- OTHER 11,85 %



■ VMRO-DPMNE ■ SDSM ■ DPA ■ DUI ■ OTHER

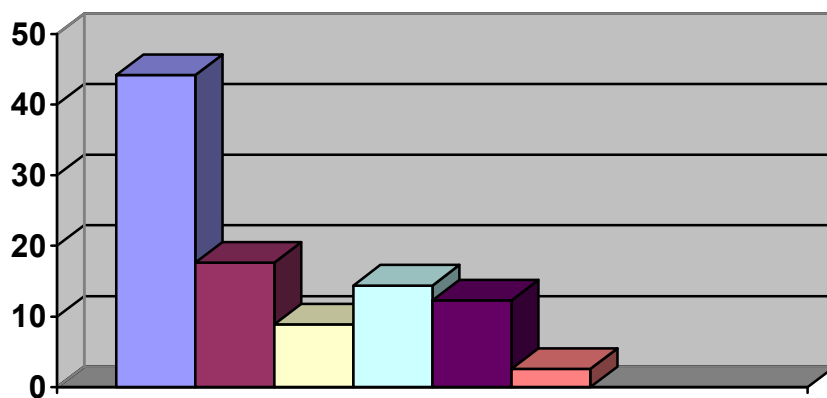
Data on the sample:

- The sample: random, three-stage
- Size of the sample: 2.088 respondents (male and female citizens of lawful age)
- Methodology: telephone survey

- Period: April 14 to 18, 2008
- Degree of reliability: 95%
- Control: per 10% specimens
- Standard deviation: +/- 3
- Territory: Macedonia

**- WHICH MACEDONIAN POLITICAL PARTY LEADERS DO YOU RESPECT MOST?**

- NIKOLA GRUEVSKI (VMRO-DPMNE)	44,20 %
- RADMILA ŠEKERINSKA (SDSM)	17,60 %
- TITO PETKOVSKI (NSDP)	8,90 %
- MENDUH THAČI (DPA)	14,40 %
- ALI AHMETI (DUI)	12,30 %
- OTHER	2,60 %



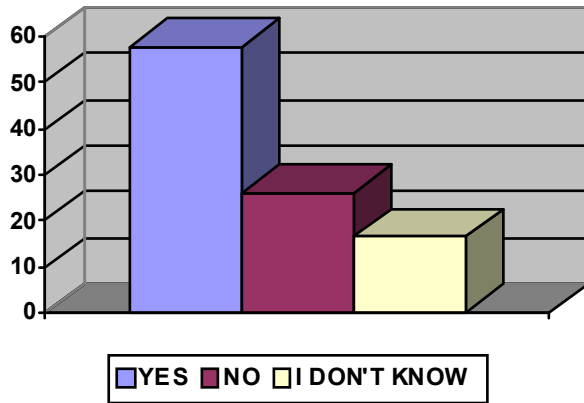
■ NIKOLA GRUEVSKI	■ RADMILA ŠEKERINSKA
■ TITO PETKOVSKI	■ MENDUH THAČI
■ ALI AHMETI	

Data on the sample:

- The sample: random, three-stage
- Size of the sample: 2.088 respondents (male and female citizens of lawful age)
- Methodology: telephone survey
- Period: April 14 to 18, 2008
- Degree of reliability: 95%
- Control: per 10% specimens
- Standard deviation: +/- 3
- Territory: Macedonia

**- WILL YOU TAKE PART AT THE FORTHCOMING PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION ON 1 JUNE 2008?**

- YES	69,40 %
- NO	19,80 %
- I DON'T KNOW	10,80 %



On the basis of surveys carried out the IFIMES International Institute has estimated that after the early parliamentary election in Macedonia the new (old) VMRO-DPMNE - DPA coalition will most probably be formed, whose leaders Nikola Gruevski and Menduh Thaçi are also the most popular party leaders among the Macedonian and Albanian nations respectively. Most votes of minor political parties which will not pass the parliamentary threshold will eventually be transferred to major parties.

The IFIMES International Institute is concerned about the low number of women present in candidate lists and their (lack of) presence in Macedonia's political life. IFIMES believes that in addition to the affirmation of the two major ethnical communities, i.e. Macedonians and Albanians, special attention should be paid to the position and status of minority ethnic communities such as the Romany, Turks, Serbs, Bosniaks and others, whose problems are often neglected or not dealt with properly.

Ljubljana, 29 April 2008

International Institute for Middle-East  
and Balkan Studies (IFIMES) – Ljubljana

Director:  
Bakhtyar Aljaf



**Ifimes**

Mednarodni inštitut za bližnjevzhodne in balkanske študije  
International Institute for Middle-East and Balkan Studies  
Tivolska 50, p.p. 2795, 1001 Ljubljana, Slovenia

1