



Introduction

DOM (Democratic renewal Macedonia) was voted as candidate member in EGP during the EGP Council in Lyon, November 2015. In November 2017 they will be 2 years in that status. According to the EGP Rule book, they have applied to advance their status into full membership.

Following the procedure as described in the EGP Rule Book (Article 5), a Fact-finding mission to Skopje, 21-22 August 2017 was conducted by Committee members Reinhard Butikofer, Oras Tynkkynen and Thomas Waitz.

The agenda of the FFM included meetings with:

- Vladimir Milicin – theater director, ex-director of Open Society Foundation in Macedonia
- Tibor Varadi - EU Delegation in Macedonia - Political adviser
- Sadulla Duraki, Minister of Environment, Jan Makraduli, Deputy Minister of Environment, Ana Petroska, State Secretary of the Environment (DOM member), chief of staff
- Toni Deskovski – lawyer, representing Macedonia in Den Hague, during Court case with Greece
- Nedzet Mustafa, President and Gordana Rodic-Kitarovska, Program director of BAROM (Balkan Roma association)
- Zoran Zaev, Prime minister and Bojan Marichikj, EU affairs adviser to Prime Minister
- Sandra Tomovska, Lipkovo mobile team coordinator - Red Cross Macedonia
- Pavle Bogojevski – MP, LGBTIQ and Human rights activist
- Environmental NGOs:
 - Elena Nikolovska, Communication officer of EkoSvest
 - Antonio Jovanovski, Director of Bidi Zelen)
 - Aleksandra Bujaroska, Lawyer, Front 21/42
- Blazhen Malevski, President of the National Youth Council, and Bojan Petrovski, Logistic assistant
- DOM Central board
- MODOM – DOM youth wing

General political situation

The new government inaugurated in June 2017. A coalition is made from SDSM (Social democrats) and DUI (Albanian party, which was the coalition partner to the previous government as well). In Parliament, the majority (+1) is achieved together with 5 independent MPs and small parties (including DOM with 2 MPs).

This makes the current majority very fragile and raises the need for cohesion within the coalition. Subsequently, independent MPs and small parties have more power than the numbers might suggest. SDSM is evaluated as pragmatic in its approach to the coalition partners.

The general perception is positive and optimistic. The government already made several moves that show their intentions:



- Firing the compromised public prosecutor ¹
- Closing Yugohrom factory due to excessive pollution
- Signing *good neighbors'* agreement with Bulgaria

On the other hand, some of the solutions for the personnel are seen by the critics as problematic. There are many ministers without a portfolio despite the need for downsizing the public administration. Among ministers the level of competences seems to vary. Also, several public agencies have interim directors who produced controversies.

The transition is expected to be hard. The EU reported that Macedonia had been a captured state due to excessive corruption, nepotism and clientelism of the previous government. Relevant institutions are still discovering all the ways through which the previous government abused public institutions, procedures and resources².

VMRO is blocking the Parliament work – divided in 10 parliamentary groups, sabotaging agenda and working process, which is not in the spirit of a democracy but still legal. There is a high expectation from the public and SDSM supporters to make a strong case for the rule of law, by dealing with VMRO corruption and criminal cases..

Euro-Atlantic integration

The Euro-Atlantic integration is one of the priorities of this government. The first priority is to proceed with NATO. This can be continued without a final verdict on the name issue. EU Integration is important and had big support even under the last government. Work is being done on two conditional points from the last progress report: free elections and reforms.

The name issue is still critical, its essence lifted to the question of identity. More than 60% of Macedonian citizens yearly visit Greece, they have good economic relations (Greece is one of the biggest investors) – so the problem is mainly on the political level. They are hoping that it can be solved through international support from NATO, EU and with the support from member states.

DOM

During the FFM, the EGP Committee organised a meeting with the Central Board of DOM and MODOM – the youth wing. EGP was also invited to participate in a public event “European experiences in opposition detrimental mining projects”, together with representatives from Zelenite, Bulgaria.

DOM has currently 2 elected MPs, Maja Morachanin and Liljana Popovska, who are part of the ruling coalition. The exact percentage of the votes they got in the last elections is not possible to calculate outside of the coalition. The party also has a State secretary of the Environment and an Environmental inspector.

¹ <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/marko-zvrlevski-macedonia-s-puppet-prosecutor-faces-dismissal-06-07-2017-1>

² First in-depth report done by expert team, known as Priebe report https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/news_corner/news/news-files/20150619_recommendations_of_the_senior_experts_group.pdf



Female representation in the board is 50+. The Board also has 2 representatives from the youth wing (and 1 in the Central Committee).

The main focus of the party is towards the local elections of 15 October 2017. They have a coalition agreement with the social democrats; 25 candidates will run. They expect to raise their number of local councilors and local mayors. The main topics for the elections are within the environmental scope: air pollution, spatial planning, energy, anti-mining, waste management.

The Party developed a mid-long term political program for the period 2016-2020³. They are still working on a strategic internal development.

MODOM

The youth wing is structurally connected with the party, but with an independent decision-making process. They have local boards in different parts of Macedonia. They support the mother party in campaigning, both for the elections and on topical campaigns. MODOM is member of FYEG and CDNEE young greens networks.

Feedback on DOM from interlocutors:

Positive:

- Managed to profile themselves among smaller parties
- Have authentic face and voice in public. Liljana is well known and recognised as environmental politician
- Visible contribution in environmental awareness as direct result of DOM activities
- Clear devotion to EU integration of Macedonia
- Genuinely interested and active in the sphere of social inclusion (women rights, LGBTIQ)
- Actively outreaching to civil society and institutions (EU delegation, embassies)
- Highly educated membership; altogether more than 6000 members

Critical:

- Still some negative attitudes towards DOM due to their previous coalition with VMRO
- Policies do not appeal enough to rural/farmer communities
- Need to provide more action/results
- Party needs to show more political leadership in their public profile

Proposal:

- Need to open up more to multi-ethnic citizens, to gain membership
- Need to outgrow status of environmental and/or small party
- Should develop even more structural cooperation with civil society
- Need to emphasize Rule of law

General conclusions and next steps:

The Committee considers DOM is fulfilling all EGP criteria for the full membership, as given in the EGP Rule Book:

³ Available in DOM application file



- The party has a national structure and organizational capacities.
- Internal democracy seems in place, with full respect for gender quotas.
- The party actively participates in elections on national and local level.
- Their political program is developed and covers a wide range of topics.
- DOM is active within the Green Balkan regional cooperation.

Taking into account the above, the EGP Committee:

- recommends to the Council delegates in Karlstad to vote in favor of full membership for DOM.
- is prepared to support DOM in their further structural and political development, as well as for concrete topical campaigns on national and regional level.
- expresses willingness to support the organisation of a public hearing on gold/cyanide mining in Macedonia, together with relevant local stakeholders.
- is open to provide advice and/or connect DOM and their partners with relevant stakeholders in order to support further democratization and the EU integration process.

Dossier:

- Statutes
- Programme 2016-2020
- Annex A (Rule book)