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Context Analysis and Methodology Review Report (WP2)

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

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Context Analysis

Country Profile

Just a basic overview of the structure of Macedonian society will reveal the main ethnic and cultural cleavages within it. According to last census of population, performed in 2002, Macedonia has 2,022,547 citizens, 1,297,982 (64.17%) of whom are Macedonians, 509,083 (25.17%) are Albanians, 77,959 (3.85%) are Turks, 53,879 (2.66%) are Roma, 9,695 (0.47%) are Vlach, 35,939 (1.77%) are Serbs, 17,018 (0.84%) are Bosniaks, by their free self-declared ethnicity, while 20,993 (1.03%) have declared that they belong to other than the above mentioned ethnical groups (State Statistical Office, 2005: 34). This ethnical structure of the Macedonian society, in great extent overlaps with its linguistic structure, having in mind that the members of these ethnic groups have mainly preserved their native languages, and they also use them more or less actively in every-day communication, at least on a family level. Also, the ethnic composition of the Macedonian society reflects its religious structure, where vast majority of ethnic Macedonians, Serbs and Vlach declare themselves as Orthodox Christians, while most of Albanians, Turks, Roma and Bosniaks declare themselves as Muslims.

These ethno-cultural differences are recognized by the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia. In its Preamble, "the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, the Macedonian people, as well as citizens living within its borders, which are part of the Albanian people, Turkish people, Vlach people, Roma people, Serbian people, Bosniak people and others" are declared as "equal in their rights and obligations towards the common good - the Republic of Macedonia." By fully recognizing the differences in its citizens' ethno-cultural identities (and their equality) in its basic definition, the Macedonian state strictly follows the political model of multiculturalism, which defines "the demand for recognition" and "identity" as its central issues (Taylor, 1994: 25-69; Atanasov, 2003: 119). Hence, the Macedonian multicultural model engages into a continuous effort of reflecting ethno-cultural difference in the public sphere on at least four major points.

At the point of expression and development of the ethno-cultural identities in the public sphere, the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia "guaranties protection of ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of all communities."

At the point of education, the Constitution guaranties the rights for education on communities' native languages in primary and secondary schools, and also the rights of the members of those communities to establish "cultural, artistic and educational institutions, as well as scientific and other societies in order to preserve, tend and develop their identity" (Constitution, Article 48: 3, 4).

At the point of reflection of the composition of the society within the composition of state institutions, the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia declares the "appropriate and fair representation of citizens belonging to all communities within the institutions of state authority and other public institutions on all levels" as one of the "basic values of the constitutional order in the Republic of Macedonia" (Constitution, Article 8: 2).

The last point, the reflection of the linguistic identity within the state's institution, has not been fully resolved yet. The Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia declares the Macedonian language and its Cyrillic alphabet as the official language on "whole territory of the Republic of Macedonia and in its international relations" (Constitution, Article 7: 1). Besides the Macedonian language, Constitution stipulates, under specific conditions listed in Article 7, as an official language "any other language spoken by at least 20% of the population."

Introduction

The most significant manifestation of the processes of migration in Macedonia is the issue of human trafficking: both of women and of illegal migrants. Other familiar forms of migration such as educational and labor migration (brain-drain), migration through marriage and asylum are not dominant (with insignificant or not evidenced number of cases) and therefore not problematized or researched. Nor do the Government or state bodies deal with them.

Trafficking of human beings as one of the forms of migration in the Republic of Macedonia is showing a strong gender aspect. Mostly the aim of trafficking is sexual exploitation (dominantly women, and few cases of men), trafficking of illegal migrants and in some cases exploitation of labor (dominantly male victims).

The gender dimension of trafficking is one aspect that is lacking in most definitions of trafficking. The Research Center in Gender Studies ("Euro-Balkan" Institute) emphasizes this aspect of trafficking as a form of gender determined violence and sexually determined exploitation. (Бадаревски и Каровска, 2004)

In the beginning of the 90s, when the Republic of Macedonia became an independent country, it was assessed as a transit country for trafficking. A decade later, particularly in the period 1999-2003 (mainly as a result of the crises from 1999 and 2001), the assessment was that Macedonia is a country of destination or temporary destination. Currently, Macedonia is more often considered a transit country for women-victims of trafficking, who are being "transferred into neighboring countries through organized channels, whereas a lesser number of them are transferred to Italy and other Western European states," while "a smaller portion of female persons who have illegally entered the territory of the Republic of Macedonia most frequently remain in the western part of the country, where, by means of various false promises of employment in catering companies, they are sold, often multiple times in a chain of traffickers into prostitution." (National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration in the Republic of Macedonia, 2006: 9). Women-victims of trafficking mainly originate from Eastern and Southeast European countries: Moldova, Rumania, Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Albania, Serbia and Montenegro (Ibid; IOM, 2005: 19, 101).

There is also not much data on Macedonia as a country of origin for inter-national trafficking or on Macedonian women being trafficked abroad. The total number of reported cases of Macedonian women trafficked outside the country is eight: four to Belgium, two to Italy, one to Germany, and one minor from Albania. (Limanovska, 2005).

The second aspect of the problem of trafficking of human beings – smuggling of illegal immigrants, also becomes more prominent, along with the change of position of Macedonia in the international crime networks for trafficking of women, from a mainly destination country to a mainly transit country. In many media reports, Macedonia is portrayed as an important transit point for trafficking of illegal migrants, mainly to Greece.

1.1. Shelter and support for the victims of trafficking

The Macedonian government was the first in the region to open a shelter for international victims in April 2001. Victims are not allowed to leave the building except for court appearances or for medical visits. Daily activities and victim assistance are managed by the local NGO, in partnership with IOM. Three teams, each consisting of a social worker and a psychologist, are in charge of the daily routine. In addition, a medical doctor, two nurses, a psychotherapist and a child psychologist are also part of the permanent team. In the region, only the FYROM government invites repatriated victims to return and testify. In the past these witnesses were accommodated at the shelter during trials. This practice was abandoned by the MOI in order to avoid re-victimization of the witness. Instead, for the most recent cases (in autumn 2003), witnesses were accommodated in alternative secure and secret locations in accordance with the SOP. (*Changing Patterns and Trends*, 2004).

The **IOM Mission** in Skopje was established in 1999 with the purpose to assist the country in the implementation of the Stabilization and Association Agreement, with particular emphasis on migration management. Since then, IOM Skopje activities have expanded to address a variety of pressing migration related issues including trafficking in human beings, technical cooperation and institutional capacity building in the field of migration (<http://www.iomskopje.org.mk>).

The **Transit Center** (TC) for foreigners is a center where all identified victims of trafficking are processed until their voluntary repatriation. The TC is founded by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Victims can get medical and social help and basic legal help (Krasic, Danailov 2005). Open Gate - La Strada is one of the most active NGOs dealing with combating trafficking in human beings in collaboration with bodies of the government and international organizations, mostly in the areas of lobbying and campaigning, prevention, education and providing social support to the victims of trafficking (Limanovska 2003).

The main goal of the association **"For Happy Childhood"** is help and support of women, children and families at risk, through education, training, counseling and therapy for individuals and groups (Стаменкова Трајкова, 2005).

1.2. Review of Research Literature

Reviewing the literature that covers the topics of gender, migration, and intercultural relations, either published in Macedonia or covering the country in the analysis, imposes, at the very beginning, several remarks that will provide the context of the review: a note about the intention of the review, and the scope and the criteria according to which the material

was selected for treatment. Only recently a gender perspective in the analysis of sociological phenomena has been accepted as a legitimate viewpoint and a methodological tool in the domestic production of literature. Therefore, it seemed relevant to also include, even though it is a slight digression from the focus of the review, a short note into the pioneering research in the area of gender studies in general, that introduced the very concept of gender into the Macedonian academic milieu and gender analysis as a methodological tool. The main intention here is, therefore, to provide an overview of research projects and papers, covering the issue of migration (predominantly the problem of trafficking as a most striking migration phenomenon in Macedonia), that encompass gender analysis as a methodological tool and take into consideration gender biases. The scope of the review and the criteria according to which the material is selected logically follow this intention: the review will list the most relevant research, but will focus mainly on those few that avoid the neutral stance and either use gender analysis as a methodological tool, or take into consideration gender differences. The classification of the papers will, consequently, accept a "gender" perspective as one of the criteria and treat those papers written from a "neutral" point of view (that mostly draw from empirical data and pretend to represent the "objective" state of the art) separately from those that claim to include a gender perspective, at the same time modestly aware of the possible constraints and shortcomings of the chosen methodological approach. The first group, almost as a rule, represent documents and research studies prepared for the needs of government officials, covering mostly the areas where the concept of the universal human being is most dominant: human rights, legislation, law and criminal justice. Data are usually gendered in the reports, but gender as a methodological perspective and as a factor in the analysis has only recently (after several research projects that included team members of various profiles, among them both gender experts and government officials) been included as a factor in the analysis. Emphasis will be put on the second group of research papers that approach the phenomena of trafficking from the aspect of gender and treat the subject as gender-based violence. This group includes several research studies, which we consider most relevant for this review, having in mind both the intention of the authors and the novelty of the approach when it comes to the Republic of Macedonia.

Finally, the last group of reviewed papers comprises mostly research conducted by international research teams and solicited by international organizations, covering the entire region of Southeastern Europe.

Research in the Area of Gender Studies (General)

At the end of the 90s and the beginning of this century, several research activities and publishing initiatives significantly influenced the academic and theoretical scene in Macedonia and literally introduced the concept of gender into mainstream theory. Three volumes containing 26 papers that resulted from a research project starting in 2001 in the area of gender studies in various disciplines (sociology, literary theory, anthropology, philosophy, ethnology, law, psychology etc.), edited by Katerina Kolozova, were published from year 2002 until year 2004 (Kolozova 2002 and Kolozova 2004). *Identities: Journal for Politics, Gender, and Culture* has been publishing research papers in the area of gender studies and

related fields since 2001 (bilingually, in Macedonian and English/French/German). Starting in 2003 and ending in 2004, a team of researchers at the Center for Support and Development of Curricula in the Area of Gender Studies, (joint body of the Research Center in Gender Studies and Ss. Cyril and Methodius University from Skopje), worked on an extensive research project that included mapping of the existing curricula in the area of gender studies offered at the University of Skopje, analysis of the content and the recommended literature as well as University policies. The research report (unpublished) offered statistical data and recommendations for structural inclusion of a gender perspective and gender issues in the official curricula. These efforts resulted in establishing the first accredited postgraduate program in gender studies.

2. Research in the Area of Gender, Trafficking, and Migration

2.1. A. Gender-Neutral Approach

The first group of studies follows the approach of treating the issue of trafficking as an aspect of organized crime and irregular migration, having the focus mostly on the national and international legislation, suggesting legal measures for prevention and coping with the phenomenon. Two publications (Krasic 2006 and Velkoska 2005), for example, examine legislative procedures in the domestic and the international law when dealing with trafficking. *Practicum* (Krasic and Danailov 2005) is organized as a basic training manual for law enforcing officers dealing with trafficking, providing information about the standards for human rights and application of efficient police instruments regulated by international documents and national legislation. *Practicum* also contains recommendations on the integration of non-governmental organizations in combating trafficking on several levels.

2.2. Research using a Gender Perspective/Focus on Women

Methodologically and theoretically, the most significant research initiatives in the area of trafficking in human beings, that integrated the principles of gender equality and protection of human rights and freedoms as a theoretical vantage point, were conducted by a team of researchers organized by the Research Center in Gender Studies and led by Bobi Badarevski. The unpublished research *Report on the Project: A Gender Perspective in the implementation of a National Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings* (2005), as well as *A Gender Perspective of Trafficking in Human Beings* (Бадаревски и Каровска 2004), a publication that summarized the experiences of three public fora that took place during 2003 and 2004, treated the phenomenon of trafficking as gender-based violence and a gender discrimination issue, and the gender inequality as a crucial factor for the emergence of the phenomenon of trafficking. The research papers argued that promoting a gender perspective in the treatment of trafficking will lead to new and more efficient strategies for combating the problem, which will combine a gender and legislative analysis in the context of the issues of migration. The position of the authors is to reject the liberal-neutral discourse which neglects the gender perspective. The Palermo Definition,¹ for example, is considered a necessary,

¹ "Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of

although not sufficient definition of the phenomenon: it reveals the formal elements, but not the real nature of trafficking. After discussing the topics of victimization, rights of the victims of trafficking, legal provisions against prostitution and similar issues, the authors identify three areas/levels of research: the conceptual area (the way the phenomenon is conceptually positioned in the various areas that constitute it); the area of human rights and freedoms (where the gender perspective in the analysis takes place); the area that challenges the strategic positioning of empirical research and particular activities in combating trafficking. It is important to mention that the research team also involved representatives of the National Commission for Combating Trafficking (Бадаревски и Каровска 2004: 13).

Another study conducted in Macedonia and published in Sarajevo, in the anthology *Stereotyping: Representations of Women in Print Media in South East Europe* (2006), gives yet another perspective on the issue of trafficking. The paper by Bobi Badarevski (Badarevski 2006) entitled "Critical Discourse Analysis of the Trafficking in Women in Print Media in Macedonia: A Gender Perspective" analyzes the discourse on trafficking in women in the printed media in Macedonia, finding implicit discriminatory discursive implications in the representation of women.

The author proposes a methodology of discourse analysis drawing on the principles of a gender perspective: first, gender categories are relational concepts, constituted by a certain centre of power; there are no objective metaphysical differences of a unified gender subject, gender identities are discursively constructed and depend on the context; language, therefore doesn't represent "reality", it is only a medium of producing and maintaining power. Finally, even though the production of stereotypes is natural, there are no "natural" stereotypes since they are signifying representations under a particular power interpretation. The conclusion is that trafficking in women is partly a discursive phenomenon, perpetuated by the paradoxes of discourse.²

Two other research studies worth mentioning, address particular problems of women facing trafficking or migration. The first one (Стаменкова Трајкова et al. 2005) highlights the experiences of women-victims and descriptively examines the practices of governmental and non-governmental organizations providing psychosocial support for the victims. The author concludes that it is hard to evaluate the results of the research and the success of the Center in improvement of the lives of the victims on the basis of the evaluation forms and personal messages the victims write when leaving the Center. The second publication (Bubevska and Hoxha 2006) contains 6 interviews, product of an oral history research, conducted with Macedonian and Albanian women who suffered loss, violence, or forced migration during the

power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;

² "Dissatisfaction with official vocabularies and discourses as source of stereotypes is experienced as limiting and misleading, moving away from the true state of affairs of trafficking in women. These internal paradoxes of the discourse, such as victim/immigrant, prostitution/exploitation of prostitution, morality/human rights, only limit the writing on trafficking, and force both the author and the reader to perpetuate the received stereotypes of women and men." (Badarevski 2006, 244).

crisis in Macedonia in year 2001. The editors and authors venture from the conviction that the small, personal stories are neglected by the big narratives of the official history. The oral history method is proposed as the most suitable one for recording the experiences of marginalized groups.

3. Regional and International Research in the Area of Trafficking and Migration (covering Macedonia)

The last group of research studies under review comprises 4 publications solicited by international organizations, covering the entire region of Southeastern Europe (Surtees 2007; Limanovska 2003; Limanovska 2005; *Changing Patterns and Trends* 2004). The last three are fairly general research studies that either report on the situation of trafficking or focus on the prevention of trafficking in given period. The most significant, given the subject of this review, is the recent excellent publication of the International Centre for Migration Policies Development (Surtees 2007). The author offers what she claims to be "a different take on the issue of trafficking": acknowledging victims' self-articulated needs, aiming to demonstrate that it is not possible to offer one general solution, proposing instead selective and targeted intervention on different levels (Surtees 2007: 3). The publication, which, although signed by one author, is a product of a research team of a dozen experts from several countries, focuses on identification, return and assistance experiences of persons trafficked in the region of Southeastern Europe, who were interviewed about the different stages of assistance and protection (Surtees 2007, 25). Even though the publication doesn't carry the documentary character of the oral history method, it succeeds in abandoning the neutral and technical approach typical for publications with similar ambitions on the topic of trafficking. One of the conclusions considers the issues of sex and gender, stating that both men and women could be victims of trafficking, but often have different trafficking experiences, so assumptions about sex and gender also inform how anti-trafficking measures are undertaken and offered with women often seen as victims in need of protection and men often over-looked as unlucky migrants. It is recommended that more attention is needed to how sex and gender inform how trafficking plays as well as how anti-trafficking interventions can support victims of both sexes.

Conclusion

To sum up: one can note the apparent changing trends in the approach towards the problem of trafficking in human beings, both in the theoretical as well as in the empirical research studies in the Republic of Macedonia, from the liberal-neutral stance of universal human rights perspectives towards the more sensitive instruments of gender analysis.

Research Methods: Gender, Migration/Trafficking

The issue of migration can be approached by investigating trafficking as one of the forms of illegal external and internal gender migration in Macedonia. Trafficking is one of the most sensitive and complex issues for research. For the needs of profound and methodologically relevant research, three research domains should be addressed, as identified by Бадаревски и Каровска (2004):

The conceptual domain (the conceptual establishment of trafficking in human beings on different fields that constitute the problem);

The domain of human rights and the rights of women (a domain for the development of a gender perspective analysis);

The domain of strategic setup of empirical research and concrete answers and actions in combating of trafficking in human beings.

The aim of another relevant study, mentioned above, that deals directly with the victims of trafficking (Surtees 2007) is to explore how the existing identification, referral and assistance framework is understood, perceived and experienced by the victims.

The study is based on fieldwork and interviews undertaken in Southeastern Europe, in the traditional countries of origin (Albania, Moldova and Romania) as well as countries of transit and destination, which have also become countries of origin (Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia). While trafficked persons were interviewed in five countries (namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Romania and Serbia), it is important to note that their travel and/or exploitation experiences often involved the other five countries in the SEE region—Bulgaria, Croatia, the UN administered territory of Kosovo, Macedonia and Montenegro — as well as countries further field, like countries in the Middle East, Russia and the former Soviet States, various countries in the EU and Turkey. The method that was used for data gathering was semi-structured interviews with trafficked persons. These interviews were conducted at various stages of their post-trafficking life. "A semi-structured interview format was selected because it allows for the collection of comparable data by following a set sequence of themes, while at the same time allowing for flexibility to adapt to the specific situation of the respondent." (Surtees 2007: 28).

One can note that this specific approach could be beneficial especially for comparability of intercultural interactions and exploring the differences and similarities in the practices of identification, referral and assistance of victims in different ethnic and cultural areas pertaining in the same region, but in different states.

If one judges according to the most innovative methodological approach to the issue of trafficking, two research studies (Бадаревски и Каровска 2004 and *Report on the Project Gender Perspective in Implementation of National Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings* 2005) inevitably require to be mentioned.

The phenomenon of trafficking is dominantly being approached from legal and criminological perspectives. Even though criminology and legislation have an irreplaceable role as premises in the approaches to trafficking, they can also be determining and limiting, if one narrows the methodology only to these two approaches (Бадаревски и Каровска 2004: 13).

On the other hand, the methodological approach used in both studies is based on a gender perspective and gender analysis. Gender analysis represents a series of methodological approaches for analyzing the gender positioning of people, mutual relations regarding the differences in their socio/political/cultural contexts, their status and the different resources available to them. The implementation of a gender perspective in the analyzed material involves a process of assessment of implications in every planned action regarding women and men, in legislation, politics or programs on all levels and areas. When applied on researching

on trafficking in human beings, the approach also uses the analysis of national and international legislation on trafficking in human beings as well as an analysis of existent definitions of trafficking (different perspectives of the definition of trafficking in human beings and the use of different definitions between the relevant organizations in Macedonia and in the world).

Trafficking in human beings was also approached with the aim to find out the perception of trafficking by potential victims of trafficking. In 2005, in the framework of a project conducted by the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Macedonia, a focus group was formed with, what were thought to be, potential victims of trafficking. All participants of the focus group were female high school students from Macedonian, Albanian and Turkish ethnic groups from the towns of Gostivar, Skopje and Veles. (Report on the Project Gender Perspective 2005). We might suggest, at this point, while giving deserved credit for the efforts, that a much more profound study about the awareness of potential victims of trafficking is needed. Surveys or semi-structured interviews with potential victims will provide more relevant data on the perception of potential victims; these should comprise more interviewed persons, from all ethnic/cultural groups (Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish, Roma, Serbian, Vlachi) in the country and target urban/rural areas from the eastern, western, southern and northern parts of the Republic of Macedonia.

As a conclusion, we will suggest that what is lacking in researching trafficking in human beings in Macedonia are the stories of the victims. It is true that the practice shows that only few women-victims of trafficking were both able and willing to share their story in order to help other potential victims. Most of the victims suffer great trauma, so therapists (psychologists or psychiatrists) and social workers have to work with them, in order to help them overcome or mitigate the consequences of trauma and to be able to articulate the event (Стаменкова Трајкова 2005). In the studies, the issue of trafficking was not approached through directly interviewing victims and most of the research was focused either on potential victims (awareness of the possible risks and entanglement of trafficking), or on interviews with experts (human rights activists, gender theoreticians or people who work with victims). The main reasons for this, as explained, are the difficulties in the attempts to approach the victims and the fact that the shelters are isolated and guarded by the police. However, the research potential of the oral history method makes the efforts to approach the victims who are willing and capable to share their story, worthwhile, having in mind the sensitivity of the issue.

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www.identities.org.mk

(Appendix:

Women in Politics. In the past few years women have become more active in public and political life. An indicator for this increase are the numbers of the election results regarding gender. In 2005 in the Local Elections the number of women elected in the position of Councilor (22,7%) and Mayor (3,5%) was increased in comparison with the number of women elected in 2000 (Councilor 8,4% and Mayor 2, 4%). (<http://www.mzl.org.mk>).

In the Parliamentary Elections in 2006 from the elected members of the Parliament Assembly, 30% were women, which shows an increase of women's participation in political

life in comparison with the Parliamentary Elections in 2002 where from the 120 members of the Parliamentary Assembly 17,5% were women. This increase of women's participation in political life can be attributed to the efforts of women's NGOs and women's Lobby groups (www.sobranie.mk).

Integration of Gender Studies in Academia in the Republic of Macedonia. The introduction of gender studies in academia was never smooth and easy. The first courses of gender studies, or courses that integrated gender studies aspects, emerged in the 90's (the title of this course was "feminist literature theory" and the first course including the term *gender* was "gender and culture," introduced in 1999). One of the main reasons for such a late process of establishing genders studies in the higher education institutions can be traced back to the communist ideology. Although the contribution of the communist constitution to equality regulations and practices cannot be denied (for example, in communist countries there was never the case of salary difference between men and women in the same position; the regime also enabled the increase of women's employment etc.), Again paradoxically, countries that were not affected by the communist regime, where "equality of all the human kind" was not cultivated, manifest faster rising of awareness for women's situation and gender issues, and therefore it was crucial for the emergence and introduction of WGS, like the case in Turkey, and other Western European (capitalistic) countries. Thus, it can be concluded that, a weaker political and discursive climate concerning "equality" was somehow more likely to render gender inequalities discussable. (Alkan, A, Milosavljevic-Cajetinac, T, Gavritova, V, 2007).

Gender studies were first introduced in 2000 through informal/alternative (not accredited) education, organized by the NGO sector ("Euro-Balkan" Institute and Unions of Women's Organizations of the Republic of Macedonia). Accredited gender studies are now offered on undergraduate (BA, since 2007 at the state University of St. Cyril and Methodius, Faculty of Philosophy) and graduate level (MA and PhD, starting year 2007, organized by the "Euro-Balkan" Institute).