

Public debate at Veles

On 9th June, 2008, a public debate *Education of minorities' representatives - challenges and problems* was held in Veles with aim to identify the actual situation in the field of minorities' education, to contribute in informing the citizens about challenges in the educational system at higher level and to work on improvement of educational opportunities in the region. The Foundation Open Society Institute – Macedonia organized the public debate in cooperation with NGO Support Center Veles. Total of 120 participants – representatives of institutions, NGOs and media from Veles, Cashka and Gradsko – attended the event. Debaters were: Ace Kocevski, Mayor of Veles Municipality, Biljana Doneva, representative of Cashka Municipality, Asen Prlickov, Director of the school „Vasil Glavinov” - Veles, Murati Nejaz, representative of the Parents' council of the school „Vasil Glavinov” - Veles and Zati Ramadanov, President of NGO „Romani Bah”, Veles. The debate was moderated by Vesa Skortova from NGO Support Center Veles.

Debate ended with the following conclusions: Government has to establish mechanisms for education of non-majority ethnic communities; children and education should not be used for political purposes; economically sustainable education has to be promoted; investing in reconstruction of educational objects is needed; work on awareness raising for overcoming educational problems of Roma and Albanian' girls has to be improved; support and finances for children from socially endangered families have to be provided; partnership relations between schools and parents have to be built up.

Overviews of the debate were broadcasted on local media: TV Zdravkin, TV Kanal 21, Radio 5 FM and CD Radio.