

Public debate at Delcevo

First public debate on the topic *Situation with the non-majority ethnic communities in Delcevo, Pehcevo, Berovo, Makedonska Kamenica, Vinica and Kocani* was held in Delcevo on October 25th 2007. A total of 48 representatives from NGOs, local government and public institutions from Delcevo, Pehcevo, Berovo, Makedonska Kamenica, Vinica and Kocani participated in the debate. Media representatives from national TV stations *Channel 5* and *MTV* covered the event.

Presentations on the topic were made by:

- Ms. Anife Demirovska, director of the Department for development and improvement of education of ethnic communities, she presented the activities of this particular department of the Ministry of education for the inclusion of Roma children in the regular education;
- Ms. Lence Bajkova, representative of the Ministry of transport and connections, presented the plan of the Ministry for solving the problem of Roma housing as one of the priorities within the Decade for Roma Inclusion;
- Mr. Kirco Ivanov, President of the Municipality Council, addressed the situation of non-majority ethnic communities in Delcevo and their representation within the municipality structures;
- Mr. Zekir Abdulov, representative of NGO Kham – Delcevo, spoke about the problems and needs of Roma community in Delcevo and the region, especially in the field of education and employment;
- Zaklina Paunovska Angelkovik, representative of NGO Ednakvi za site (Equal for All) – Kocani, addressed the needs of Roma community in Kocani.

During the debate the main topics of discussion were inadequate representation of non-majority ethnic communities in the public institutions, education and housing of Roma population. Discussions were modest, but open. Compared with the first meetings (initial networking meetings) the level of trust and openness to speak about the needs and problems among participants had increased.