

Regional meeting at Bitola

Fourth regional meeting with Ombudsman office was held in Bitola, on 26 November 2008, organized by NGOSCs in Resen, Prilep and Negotino. The goal of the meeting was to initiate cooperation between Commissions for Inter-Community Relations, Councils of Municipalities of Bitola, Prilep, Resen, Demir Hisar, Novaci, Mogila, Krivogastani, Negotino, Kavadarci, Krusevo and Dolneni and the regional Ombudsman office in Bitola for ethnic issues on regional level. 53 representatives of the Councils of the municipalities and Commissions for Inter-Community Relations participated. In this region, only Municipality of Krushevo and Dolneni¹ established Commission for Inter-Community Relations as obligation from the Law on Local Self-Government.

The regional meeting started with presentations by Liljana Ilievska – Deputy Ombudsman from the regional office in Bitola, Tanja Georgievska – representative of ZELS; Bekim Sulejmanoski - president of the Commission for Inter-Community Relations in Krusevo, Sabit Kamiloski - president of the Commission for Inter-Community Relations in Dolneni and Adrijana Trendova, project coordinator. Moderator of the meeting was Igor Tasevski from *Center for Civic Initiatives* - Prilep. The discussion of the meeting was very constructive and stimulating. The participants discussed the role and work of the Commissions for Inter-Community Relations, the jurisdiction of the Deputy Ombudsman and the future activities of ZELS for support of Commissions for Inter-Community Relations. Experience of the Commissions for Inter-Community Relations for solved, partly solved and open issues of ethnic communities was also presented within the meeting.

¹ Krusevo (21.31% Albanians), Dolneni (26.65% Albanians, 19.14% Turks)