

## **Regional workshop for establishing national network of NGOs working on Vlachs issues at Stip**

Regional workshops were organized to offer open space for sharing experiences, exchanging good practices, discussing and defining joint concepts, priorities, as well as cooperation and networking needs. A regional workshop for establishing national network of NGOs working on Vlachs issues was held on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2008 in Stip. Altogether 30 representatives of NGOs working on Vlachs issues from Bitola, Prilep, Skopje, Struga, Ohrid, Stip, Kumanovo and Sveti Nikole participated in the workshop. Representatives of the media (Vlach redaction within MTV) were present, as well. NGO Common Values provided technical assistance for institutional network development, including the facilitation of the network development process (consultancy work). Facilitators of the workshop were Marija Nikolova and Madika Nicha – participants in ToT program.

The aims of the workshop were: non-formal networking, strategic planning and preparation of action plans, and initiative for creation of a Strategy and action plans for the culture and language/education of the Vlachs in Macedonia. The sessions served for identification of problems of the Vlachs community in Macedonia according culture, language and education; for identification of priorities in the action plans; preparation of action plans for affirmation and promotion of the Vlachs culture; maintenance of the language through education; and establishing Coordination Body which will be responsible for monitoring of implementation of the action plans.

In the conclusions of the workshop participants expressed the need for more workshops like this for the purpose of better cooperation among NGOs, which are working on Vlachs issues.

As a result of networking activities a draft version of the National strategy and action plans for culture and education/language of the Vlachs in RM was created, and coordination body responsible for monitoring of their implementation was established.