

TV debate at TV *Uskana* in Kicevo

In the framework of the preparation activities, a meeting with 13 representatives from NGOs working on minority issues in Kicevo, Drugovo and Vranestica, media and members of the local monitoring team was held on 30 May 2008 in NGOSC Kicevo. The aim of this meeting was to discuss the perception of NGO's regarding respect of minorities' rights on local level. All participants agreed that minorities' rights have been violated in the area of language usage, education, proper and equitable representation in the administration.

On 12th June, 2008, a TV debate *Respect of minorities' rights in Kicevo region* was broadcasted between 20.00 and 21:00 hrs. on TV Uskana Kicevo, a local Albanian TV station. The TV debate was held on Macedonian with subtitle on Albanian language. Debate aimed to inform citizens about relevant institutions and existing mechanisms for protection of the rights of ethnic communities. Debaters were: Mirjana Najcevska - expert for human rights, Daut Selimi – regional Ombudsman office in Kicevo, Nuhi Jusufi - Assistant in Municipality of Kicevo and Mladen Vancoski - President of the Commission for Inter-Community Relations in the Municipality of Drugovo. Moderator of the debate was Lulzim Aliu, journalist in TV *Uskana*. Mirjana Najcevska explained the regulations of the rights of the communities in the country within the Constitution and the domestic laws. She stressed out the need of ratifying the Council of Europe's *Charter for minority languages* signed on behalf of the Government in order to improve the position of ethnic communities. Nuhi Jusufi explained how minorities' rights are regulated on local level and interpreted the Law on Local-self Government. Daut Selimi spoke about the competences and the work of the Ombudsman. Mladen Vancoski said that Drugovo is one of the first Municipalities which formed the Commission for Inter-Community Relations, even though there was no law obligation for undertaking this step.

A poll among citizens was broadcasted within the debate. Also, NGOs perceptions about respect for minorities' rights were presented on the debate. Special accent was put on the situation of Roma, Turks and Albanians in the institutions and the need for educational staff from Turkish community in two primary schools in Kicevo and Drugovo. A large number of citizens are not sufficiently informed about the rights of ethnic communities, as well as about institutions responsible for their protection. TV debate was organized by NGOSC Kicevo.

All TV debates were announced with TV spot from the campaign that was broadcasted 2 weeks on the local media.