



**THE REPUBLIC OF
MACEDONIA'S 2019
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS
HANDBOOK**

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*The signing of the Prespa Agreement on 17th June 2018 initiated the process for a change of the constitutional name of the Republic of Macedonia. The Agreement entered into force on 12.02.2019. Since this Handbook on the Presidential Elections was compiled prior to this agreement's entry into force, the name "Republic of Macedonia" will be used throughout text in the first and the second supplemented edition.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE SIXTH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA



INTRODUCTION TO THE SIXTH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

The sixth presidential elections in the Republic of Macedonia will take place on 21st April 2019. Three candidates are running for the position of President of the Republic of Macedonia: the independent candidate Blerim Reka, supported by the parties BESA and Alliance for Albanians; Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova, supported by the opposition, i.e. the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation-Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE) and its partners from the Coalition for a Better Macedonia; and Stevo Pendarovski, supported by the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia (SDSM), the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI) and 29 other political parties.

The elections were called on 8th February 2019, when the President of the Assembly, Talat Xhaferi, signed the decision to call presidential elections, in accordance with the constitutional and legal obligations. According to this decision, the elections are scheduled for 21st April, with the prospective second round to be held two weeks later, on 5th May.¹ Voting abroad, which will take place in the Diplomatic Consular Missions (DCM), is scheduled one day prior to Election Day, on 20th April, in accordance with the respective time zones. Ill and disabled persons can vote at their homes on 20th April, as well as persons who are serving sentence, who are detained in correctional institutions, or under house arrest, and internally dislocated persons. In case of a second round, these categories of voters will vote one day before Election Day.

Collection of signatures for the applicants for presidential candidates was initiated on 23rd February and concluded on 9th March. Eight applicants initiated this procedure, while only three of them successfully collected the necessary number of signatures. Four applicants (Dimče Petrovski, Filip Petrovski, Josif Mirčevski, and Gospodin Poposki) did not succeed², and one quit the race (Amdi Bajram, Member of the Assembly and president of the Union of Roma from Macedonia). The applicant Filip Petrovski was initially supported by VMRO-DPMNE, but lost to Professor Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova at the party convention. During the collection of signatures, he made accusations against the State Election Commission (SEC) regarding alleged manipulations to the procedure, claiming that invalid lists had been given to the citizens to sign, so that the valid lists had

¹ Decision to call an election for the position of President of the Republic of Macedonia No. 09-1071/1, 8th February 2019, Accessed at: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WHSuEttgccx_oUv_HurGIBDsiWak-tzyq/view (last visited on 11th March 2019).

² The presidential candidate should be supported by at least 10000 voters (by collection of signatures) or by 30 Members of the Assembly.

remained empty. The SEC denied these accusations.³ Only Blerim Reka, Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova, and Stevo Pendarovski successfully finished the collection of signatures.

Blerim Reka announced his candidacy for president via social media on 28th February 2019. On 5th March 2019, his headquarters announced that he had collected the necessary number of signatures, or 11000, in less than 15 hours. He thanked the Alliance for Albanians and BESA for this, the political parties that helped him to obtain the necessary signatures.⁴ Blerim Reka's candidacy is as a result of the unsuccessful negotiation between the parties in opposition, the Alliance for Albanians and BESA, and the government parties, DUI and SDSM, to support a joint consensual presidential candidate.

Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova, a professor at the Faculty of Law in Skopje, announced her candidacy after she had been publicly nominated to run for presidency by 27 professors. Later, Siljanovska-Davkova announced that she would apply for candidacy at the VMRO-DPMNE's convention on 16th February in Struga. She competed with 8 applicants, among which were the Members of the Assembly Vlatko Gjørčev and Filip Petrovski, who was promoted as a candidate nominated by the Central Committee of the party United Macedonia. Siljanovska-Davkova won a total of 408 out of 519 votes, which made her the official presidential candidate of VMRO-DPMNE. On 22nd February, she started the collection of signatures, and the very next day, she announced that she had succeeded in collecting a total of 16000 signatures.⁵

Stevo Pendarovski, who had been SDSM's presidential candidate at the previous presidential elections in 2014, was the last candidate to join the presidential race. His candidacy was announced on 1st March 2019, when SDSM, DUI, and 29 other political parties announced that they had reached an agreement on a joint candidate for the forthcoming elections. Previously, Stevo Pendarovski had been competing within SDSM against three current government ministers: Nikola Dimitrov, Oliver Spasovski, and Radmila Šekerinska. Pendarovski's candidacy was made official at the congress of SDSM, in Skopje on 3rd March, where he won the unanimous support of all the 712 delegates. Although he received full support

³ Candidate Petrovski Claims SEC Manipulates - SEC Denies. TV24, 30.01.2019. Accessed at: <https://24.mk/details/kandidatot-petrovski-obvinuva-za-manipulacii-vo-dik-a-ottamu-go-demantiraat> (last visited on 12.03.2019)

⁴ Blerim Reka - Official Candidate for President of State, Plusinfo, 05.03.2019. Accessed at: <https://plusinfo.mk/и-блерим-река-официјален-кандидат-за-п/> (last visited on 11.03.2019)

⁵ Siljanovska Collected Necessary Signatures in Several Hours. MKD.mk, 11th March 2019, Accessed at: <https://www.mkd.mk/makedonija/politika/siljanovska-za-nekolku-chasa-gi-sobra-potrebnite-10-il-jadi-potpisi> (last visited on 11th March 2019)

from his political party, Pendarovski, like Blerim Reka and Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova, collected signatures for his candidacy. By the envisioned deadline for collecting signatures, he had managed to collect 31267 signatures.⁶

The support of Stevo Pendarovski as a joint candidate of SDSM and DUI was the most uncertain. There were several statements prior to this decision, followed by internal negotiations between SDSM and DUI. DUI adhered to the position it had held during the presidential elections in 2014, promoting a so-called “consensual president”, a president acceptable for all ethnic communities in Macedonia, who would “represent all the citizens of Macedonia”. After the initial failure to reach an agreement with SDSM, DUI announced on 30th January that they would promote their own candidate for the forthcoming presidential elections. However, this option is possible only if an agreement with another party can be reached.⁷

It is a characteristic of these presidential elections that all three presidential candidates confirmed their candidacies by collecting the required number of signatures. The presidential elections are taking place during a time of political turbulence. The change of the constitutional name of the country, the continuation of the process of integration into the EU and NATO, and the unsolved questions that derive from the previous political crisis (the political and judicial processes following the incidents at the Assembly on 27th April 2017, the status of the Special Prosecutor’s Office (SPO), and the court trials that are consequence of its work, as well as the reforms necessary to obtain a date for starting EU accession negotiations, in June this year), have been pressing issues in the public political discourse. In the current context of party polarization, the presidential candidates emphasised that they are supra-party candidates and that they will be independent in their actions, even though they are formally supported by political parties.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

On 8th March, the State Election Commission (SEC)⁸ introduced the Timetable for Conducting Electoral Activities for the Implementation of the Elections for

⁶ Table of collected signatures in support of the candidates, 7th March 2019. State Election Commission. Accessed at: <http://www.sec.mk/tabela-za-sobrani-potpisi-za-poddrshka-na-listi-na-kandidat-za-den-07-mart-2019/> (last visited on 11th March 2019).

⁷ DUI to Promote its Own Candidate for Presidential Elections. TV24, 13.03.2019. Accessed at: <http://www.sec.mk/tabela-za-sobrani-potpisi-za-poddrshka-na-listi-na-kandidat-za-den-07-mart-2019/> (last visited on 13.03.2019).

⁸ For more information regarding the electoral bodies see Chapter 3 – The Macedonian Electoral System: Presidential Elections, section on electoral bodies.

the Presidential Elections.⁹ The SEC continuously supplemented the Municipal Electoral Commissions (MEC) with members in case the former members' mandate ended, or resignations were filed, until 21st February. According to the Timetable, the Municipal Electoral Commission (MEC) should establish the electoral boards (EB) by 24th February 2019, and the same deadline concerns the establishment of EBs in the DCMs.

The Voters' List is available for public review at the regional units of the SEC, on the website <http://izbirackispisok.gov.mk/>, and at the Diplomatic Consular Missions (for voting abroad), between 23rd February and 14th March 2019. The citizens, who are not registered in the Voters' List, although they are eligible to vote, can require to be registered. Citizens of Macedonia who live abroad and are eligible to vote can register to vote in the period from the call of elections until 14th March 2019.

According to the deadlines determined by law, and according to the Timetable of the SEC for the implementation of the 2019 Presidential Elections, the election campaigns may be held from 1st until 19th April 2019.

According to the Timetable, the financial reports (showing the revenues and costs on the bank accounts) of the organisers of the election campaign must be submitted to the SEC, the State Audit Office (SAO) and the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption (SCPC)¹⁰ within the following deadlines:

- The costs and revenues for the first 10 days of the campaign by 11th April;
- The costs and revenues for the campaign in the first round, if there is no second round of voting, by 20th April, and if there is a second round, for the costs and revenues for the second part of the election campaign by 4th May;
- The overall financial reports are filed within no more than 30 days after the closure of the bank accounts¹¹, and submitted to the SEC, the SAO, the SCPC., and the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia.

In a similar manner, the radio broadcasters and the print and electronic media (Internet portals) are obliged to submit their reports on the advertising slots used by the participants in the election campaign to the Ministry of Finance (MF), the SEC, the SAO, and the SCPC, no later than 4th May, if there is no second round, and

⁹ Timetable for Conducting Electoral Activities for the Implementation of the Elections of the President of the Republic of Macedonia. Available at: <http://www.sec.mk/rokovnik-izbori-2019/e>

¹⁰ The SEC, the SAO, the SCPC, as well as the political parties that submitted the reports, are obliged to publish them on their websites.

¹¹ The bank accounts are closed within three months after the announcement of the final results.

by 18th May if there is a second round of voting.¹²

The period stipulated in Article 8a of the Electoral Code, which prohibits public promotion of initiated construction work, or opening facilities and initiating infrastructural projects financed from the state Budget, public funds, or by public enterprises with state capital, commenced on 12th March. According to the Timetable, requests for monitoring of the elections by national and international observers can be submitted in the period between 8th February and 10th April 2019.

Together the presidential elections, snap elections for the position of mayor will take place in the municipalities of Ohrid, Debar, and Novo Selo on 21st April 2019.

¹² Ibid.

1.2 RECENT AMENDMENTS TO THE ELECTORAL LEGISLATION

In the recent period, the regulations in the Electoral Code of the Republic of Macedonia were amended several times. The amendments were related to the state election bodies, the financing of political campaigns, participants in political campaigns, and regulations in the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services.

STATE ELECTION COMMITTEE

In May 2018, the Parliament adopted the amendments to the Electoral Code with 80 votes in favour. The government party and the opposition both supported the amendments, which were related to several articles of the Electoral Code, concerning the State Election Committee (SEC). Based on the supplemented Article 26, the SEC now comprises a total of seven members. Furthermore, the composition of the SEC is defined: one president, one vice president, and five committee members. The mandate of the committee members commences on the day they are elected, and concludes with the election of the next composition of the State Election Committee, with no more than 2 years of service.

The members of the SEC should meet the conditions stipulated in the amendments to Article 27 of the Electoral Code. According to the recent amendments, persons elected to these positions should be citizens of the Republic of Macedonia (RM) with permanent residence in the country, have completed high education, have at least eight years of working experience, and should not be affiliated to any party. The Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia publishes the call for the election of a president, a vice president and members of the SEC in the "Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia", as well as in the daily press. The call is open for eight days, starting on the day of publication in the Official Gazette.

The procedure for election of the members is prepared and implemented by the Committee on Elections and Appointment Issues of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia. This Committee prepares a draft list with the nominated candidates and forwards it to the Assembly. The opposition recommends a president and two members from among the candidates on the draft list, while the government parties recommend a vice president and another three members. All members are elected with a two-thirds majority of overall number of Members of the Assmblly.

Some amendments to Article 28 of the Electoral Code are related to the preconditions for terminating the mandate of SEC members.

According to them, their mandates can be terminated:

- by force of law;
- on personal request;
- due to the lack of expertise or inconsiderate professional conduct;
- due to reaching the retirement age as stipulated by law;
- in case of death; and
- in case of effective sentence to 6 months of imprisonment or more.

With the vote of two-thirds of its members, the SEC can provide recommendations to the Committee on Elections and Appointment Issues of the Assembly, and request for members to be dismissed due to inconsiderate professional conduct.

Some amendments to Article 29 are related to the deadline for recommending new members of the SEC. In accordance with this Article, the President of the Assembly notifies the political parties to give their recommendations for a president and two members (for the opposition), and a vice-president and another three members of the SEC (for the government parties) within three days. If the opposition and the government parties do not exercise their right to recommend candidates, they will be recommended by the Committee on Elections and Appointment Issues of the Assembly.¹³

FINANCING OF POLITICAL PARTIES

In July 2018, the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia adopted the last amendments to the Law on Financing Political Parties. The amendments affect the property and the financing of the political parties (movable and immovable property). Namely, the maximum amount of resources to be allocated for financing of the political parties was fixed at 0.15% of the Republic of Macedonia's Budget. As for private sources of financing, the amount of individual donations may not surpass the sum of 60 average salaries (donation from legal entities), or 30 net average salaries (donation from physical entities). 30% of the resources from the Republic of Macedonia's Budget intended for financing of political parties are allocated equally to all political parties that have won at least 1% of the total number of votes in the previous parliamentary or local elections, while 70% of the resources are allocated to the political parties according to the number of their representatives elected to the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia at the last

¹³ Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, The Law Amending and Supaplementing the Electoral Code 99/2018.

parliamentary elections, and according to the number of elected councilors at the last local elections.

Regarding the control over financing political parties, Article 26 of the Law was supplemented with several paragraphs that emphasize that political parties can only have one bank account. Only in a case of financing by resources obtained from a bank loan, they are allowed to have one additional bank account for those resources. Moreover, political parties may transfer their resources between their accounts, while the Party Research and Analytic Centers (PRAC) must have separate bank accounts. Resources from the Republic of Macedonia's Budget that reach the amount of 280000 EUR in MKD yearly are envisioned for financing the PRAC that are established in accordance with the law, as a part of the internal organization of the party¹⁴.

In addition, according to the recent amendments to the Law on Financing Political Parties, the parties are obliged to provide a financial report on their material and financial spendings, which includes all account activities. The amendments stipulate that the resources allocated for the financing of the political parties should be paid in accordance with the budgetary possibilities, but no later than 1st March each year¹⁵.

Together with the Law on Financing of Political Parties, the Electoral Code of the Republic of Macedonia was amended. On the issue of funding political campaigns, a new paragraph was added to Article 71 (paragraph 7). This supplemented paragraph allows political parties to deposit resources from their basic bank account to another account opened exclusively for financing the election campaign. Moreover, the political party is entitled to transfer resources from the account intended for financing of the campaign to the party's basic bank account.¹⁶

¹⁴ The Party Research and Analytics Centres are established in accordance with the Law on Party Research and Political Centres from 2013. They must employ at least two persons. This law stipulates that these resources for such centres can be allocated to the four political parties with the largest number of representatives in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, which have established such centres (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, Law on Party Research Centres, 23/2013 with amendments and supplements, 15/2015).

¹⁵ Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, the Law amending and supplementing the Law on Financing of Political Parties, 140/2018.

¹⁶ Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, Law amending and supplementing the Electoral Code 140/2018.

PUBLIC MEDIA

The amendments to the Electoral Code from 2018 stipulate that, from the day elections are called until the start of the election campaign, the radio broadcasters, the press, and the electronic media (web portals) should not broadcast or publish any kind of paid political advertising, except for announcements related to collecting signatures in support of candidacies by a group of voters. The latter should be broadcast or published in specifically allocated advertising slots, within the allowed advertising time, limited to one hour in real time. The more significant amendments to the Electoral Code (Article 75-f), are related to regulating political advertising via electronic media, as well as the continuation of the advertising time. The amendments to this article stipulate that during the first and second round of an election campaign, radio broadcasters that cover the elections can broadcast nine minutes per hour of real time, intended only for paid political advertising. Out of these 9 minutes, a total of four minutes may be allocated to the political parties in power, four minutes to the political parties of the opposition, and one minute to the political parties that are not represented in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia.

Some supplements refer to the manner of fulfilling the financial obligations towards the radio broadcasters, the press and the electronic media, in relation to the paid political advertising of the parties that participate in the election campaign. The Ministry of Finance covers the expenditures for the announcements made within the paid political advertising to the radio broadcasters, the press, and the electronic media, upon submitted invoice. As an appendix to the submitted invoice, a media plan and a report on the services provided should be attached, which should be confirmed by the respective radio broadcasters, press, or electronic medium, as well as the participants in the election campaign.

Some amendments to Article 76-c of the Electoral Code specify the monitoring of political advertising during election campaign by the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services (AAVMS) and the SEC. The AAVMS is obliged to monitor the election media presentation and the programme service of the radio broadcasters, while the SEC monitors the electronic media (web portals) and the press.¹⁷ The AAVMS and the SEC are obliged to prepare weekly reports on the respective media they monitor, and to publish them on their web sites. In cases of there are violations of the regulations for advertising, the AAVMS and the SEC

¹⁷ Although the amendments to the Electoral Code do not clearly stipulate that the SEC should monitor the press along with the electronic media (web portals), they have already implemented activities in practice that encompass the monitoring of the press.

should press charges against the radio broadcaster/electronic medium within 48 hours after the violation is detected. In relations to this kind of misdemeanor procedures, the competent court is obliged to make a decision within 48 hours with determined deadlines for filing a complaint. According to the law, the methodology for monitoring the media contents should be determined by the AAVMS.¹⁸

¹⁸ Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, the Law amending and supplementing the Law on Financing of Political Parties, 140/2018.

HISTORY OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN MACEDONIA (1991-2014)



HISTORY OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN MACEDONIA (1991-2014)¹⁹



**Kiro Gligorov,
the First President of the
Republic of Macedonia
(1991 - 1999)**

The first president of the independent Republic of Macedonia was Kiro Gligorov. He was elected by secret vote in the Macedonian Assembly on 27 January 1991 with 114 votes out of the total of 119 MPs present²⁰. All subsequent presidential elections took place as general and direct elections where all citizens were able to participate with their right to vote if registered on the voters' list.

The first direct presidential elections in Macedonia were held on 16 October 1994. Only two candidates²¹ took part in the elections, which were held in a single electoral round with a repeated voting at some polling stations due to determined irregularities²². The then president, Kiro Gligorov, ²³won 52.55% (715,087 votes) of the votes of the total number of citizens registered in the voters' list, and his opponent, the presidential candidate Ljubisha Georgievski 14.49% (197,109 votes). The turnout on the elections was 1,053,761 voters in total, or 77.44% of the citizens registered in the voters' list²⁴. One of the specifics of these elections was the fact that the State Election Commission invalidated a great number of ballot papers – 130,820 votes were invalidated (12.41% of the ballot papers).

Due to this turn of events, the party Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization – Democratic Party for Macedonian National Unity (VMRO-DPMNE), which had nominated Ljubisha Georgievski as their presidential candidate,

¹⁹ All photos have been downloaded from the President of the Republic of Macedonia's website: <http://www.president.gov.mk/> (accessed on: 11 February 2014).

²⁰ Shorthand notes from the Fifth Session of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia's Assembly, held on 27 January 1991. Skopje, 27 January 1991. Available at: <http://sobranie.mk/WBStorage/Files/05sed27jan-91god.pdf> (Accessed on: 11 February 2014).

²¹ The State Election Commission rejected the candidates Habit Shaban and Gjorgjija Atanasoski because they did not fulfill the condition stipulated in Article 6, paragraph 1 of the former Law on Presidential Election of the Republic of Macedonia, Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, No.20/94. The Law stipulated support for candidacy of at least 10 000 voters or 30 MPs in the least.

²² The repeated voting took place on 30 October the same year in 7 electoral units, at a total of 11 polling stations.

²³ At the elections, Kiro Gligorov was proposed as a candidate of SDSM.

²⁴ The State Election Commission, Report on the Presidential Elections in the Republic of Macedonia from 1994. Number 30-282. 8 November 1994.

submitted a complaint to the State Election Commission (SEC), demanding the elections to be cancelled. The complaint was overruled, which made Kiro Gligorov the first President of the Republic of Macedonia appointed at general and direct elections. Kiro Gligorov was the Head of State until 19 November 1999²⁵.



**Boris Trajkovski,
the Second President
of the Republic of
Macedonia
(1999 - 2004)**

The second general and direct presidential elections took place in 1999.

Six candidates took part in the elections: Boris Trajkovski (VMRO-DPMNE), Vasil Tupurkovski (Democratic Alternative, DA), Muarem Nexhipi (Party for Democratic Prosperity of the Albanians, PDPA), Muhamed Halili (Party for Democratic Prosperity, PDP), Stojan Andov (Liberal Democratic Party, LDP) and Tito Petkovski from (Social Democratic Union of Macedonia, SDSM)²⁶.

The first round was held on 31 October, and the second round on 14 November 1999. Due to irregularities in the election process in the second round the voting was repeated on 5 December 1999 at 230 polling stations in total. Boris Trajkovski was elected President of the Republic of Macedonia. After the voting in the first round, Tito Petkovski had 32.71% of the votes (343,606 votes), Boris Trajkovski 20.85% (219,098 votes), Vasil Tuporkovski 15.54% (163,206 votes), Muarem Nexhipi 14.85% (155,978 votes), Stojan Andov 10.66% (111,983 votes), and Muharem Halili 4.35% (45,731 votes). A total of 11,013 ballot papers were invalidated (0.68%). The turnout in the first round was 1,039,602, or 64.44% of the voters registered in the voters' list²⁷.

²⁵ President Kiro Gligorov recessed from his position in the period between 3 October 1995 and 10 January 1996, because of his recuperation after an attempt at assassination. The interim state presidency was assumed by the former President of the Assembly – Stojan Andov.

²⁶ The State Election Commission's website on the presidential elections in 1999: http://www.sec.mk/arhiva/1999_pretsedatelski/ (Accessed on: 11 February 2014).

²⁷ According to the OSCE Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. The Republic of Macedonia, Presidential Elections, 31 October and 14 November 1999, Final Report. Warsaw, 31 January 2000. Available at: <http://www.osce.org/mk/odihr/elections/fyrom/15910> (last accessed on 11 February 2014). The results have been taken from the OSCE-ODIHR's report, which rely on official data published by the SEC. The website of SEC does not contain data on the results of the presidential elections in 1999.

Only two candidates took part in the second round of the elections: Tito Petkovski and Boris Trajkovski.

After the second round and the repeated voting in some polling stations, Boris Trajkovski won 53.4% of the votes (582,808), and Tito Petkovski 46.18% (513,614). A total of 16,821 ballot papers were invalidated (1.01%). The turnout in the second round was 1,096,422 voters in total, or 68.08% of the registered voters²⁸.

Boris Trajkovski was President of the Republic of Macedonia from 15 December 1999 until 26 February 2004.²⁹



**Branko Crvenkovski,
the Third President of the
Republic of Macedonia
(2004 - 2009)**

The presidential elections of 2004 were the third presidential elections since the Republic of Macedonia's independence. In the first round of the elections on 14 April 2004, the citizens could choose among four proposed candidates: Branko Crvenkovski (SDSM), Gzim Ostreni (Democratic Union for Integration, DUI), Zudi Xhelili (Democratic Party of the Albanians, DPA), and Sashko Kedev (VMRO-DPMNE).

The turnout on the day of voting was 935,372, or 55.2% of the voters registered in the voters' list. According to statistics, Branko Crvenkovski won 42.47% (385,347), Sashko Kedev 34.07% (309,132), Gzim Ostreni 14.79% (134,208), and Zudi Xhelili 8.67% of the valid votes (78,714).

In the second round held on 28 April 2004, Branko Crvenkovski won the majority of votes, and thus became the third President of the Republic of Macedonia. He won the trust of 550,317 i.e. 60.5% of the total number of votes, while Sashko Kedev was supported by 329,179 voters, or 36.2%³⁰.

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ President Boris Trajkovski died in a plane crash on 26 February 2004. In accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, between 26 February and 12 May 2004, the position was temporarily held by Ljupcho Jordanovski, the former President of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia's Assembly.

³⁰ According to the OSCE Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. The Republic of Macedonia, Presidential Elections, 14 and 18 April 2004, Final Report. Warsaw, 13 July 2004. Available at: <http://www.osce.org/mk/odihr/elections/fyrom/35248> (last accessed on 11 February 2014). The results have been taken from the OSCE-ODIHR's report, which rely on official data published by the SEC. The website of the SEC does not contain data on the implementation and the results of the presidential elections in 2004.

In the second round the turnout was 909,289 voters or 53.6% of the citizens registered in the voters' list.

Branko Crvenkovski was the President of the Republic of Macedonia from 12 May 2004 until 12 May 2009.



**Gjorge Ivanov,
the Fourth President
of the Republic of
Macedonia
(2009 - 2019)**

The current President of the Republic of Macedonia, Gjorge Ivanov, was first elected at the presidency on the penultimate presidential elections held in 2009. At these elections, seven candidates who fulfilled the conditions were running for office. For the first time, a female candidate took part in the electoral race, Mirushe Hoxha, supported by the DPA.

After the first electoral round on 22 March 2009, the first two best ranked candidates were Gjorge Ivanov supported by VMRO-DPMNE, who won 35.04% of the valid ballots (345,850 votes), and Ljubomir Danailov – Frchkoski, supported by SDSM, with 20.54% (202,691 votes). Imer Selmani (New Democracy, ND) won 14.95% (147,547 votes), followed by Ljube Boshkoski (United for Macedonia, OM) with 14.88% (146,878), Agron Buxhaku (DUI) with 7.46% (73,629), Nano Ruzin (LDP) with 4.06% (40,042), and Mirushe Hoxha (DPA) with 3.06% (30,225)³¹.

The turnout in the first round was 1,019,258 voters, or 56.88% of the overall number of citizens registered in the voters List (1,792,028 citizens). The second electoral round took place on 5 April 2009. Gjorge Ivanov won 63.14%, i.e. 453,616 of the total number of valid ballots, while the presidential candidate Ljubomir Danailov Frchkoski won 36.86%, or 264,828 votes³². In the second electoral round the turnout was 764,039 voters, or 42.63% of the registered citizens.

³¹ The State Election Commission. Presidential Elections 2009. Announcement of the results from the first round of voting. Available at: http://www.sec.mk/arhiva/2009_pretsedatelskillokalni/2009/fajlovi/rezultati/konecni/PretsedatelDrzava.pdf (last accessed on 11 February 2014).

³² The State Election Commission. Presidential Elections 2009. Announcement of the results from the voting in the second round. Available at: http://www.sec.mk/arhiva/2009_pretsedatelskillokalni/2009/fajlovi/rezultati2/konecni/pret/Pretsedatel_konecni.pdf (last accessed on 11 February 2014).

The presidential elections in 2014 were the fifth direct presidential elections in the Republic of Macedonia since its independence. Citizens had the choice between four nominated candidates: Gjorge Ivanov (VMRO-DPMNE), Stevo Pendarovski (SDSM), Iljaz Halimi (DPA) and Zoran Popovski (GROM).

In the first electoral round on 13 April 2014, the turnout was 869,617 voters or 48.86% of the 1,799,572 citizens registered in the voters' list. Gjorge Ivanov won 51.69% of the total number of valid ballots (449,442), and Stevo Pendarovski 37.52% (326,164). These two candidates entered the second electoral round, which was held on 27 April 2014.

Iljaz Halimi, with 4.48% (38,966) and Zoran Popovski with 3.61% (31,368) of the votes concluded their presidential race in the first electoral round.

The second electoral round ended with the victory of Gjorge Ivanov, who won 55.28% of the total number of valid ballots (i.e. 534,910 votes), while Stevo Pendarovski gained 41.14% (389,077). The second round of the presidential elections was held together with snap elections, which contributed to an increased turnout in the second electoral round, reaching the number of 967,676 voters, i.e. 54.38% of the total number of registered voters.³³

³³ The Republic of Macedonia's 2014 Presidential Elections Handbook, second supplemental edition, KAS and IDSCS, 2014. Accessed at: <http://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/priracnikpretsedatel-ski2014mkupd.pdf> (last visited on 25 January 2019).

THE MACEDONIAN ELECTORAL SYSTEM: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS



THE MACEDONIAN ELECTORAL SYSTEM: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

ELECTORAL SYSTEM FOR THE PRESIDENT

The President of the Republic of Macedonia is elected for a mandate of 5 years by general, direct, free, and secret ballot. The election of the President of the Republic of Macedonia is determined by the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia and the Electoral Code.

Therefore, in order to change certain regulations related to the election of the state president, the Parliament has to amend the Constitution, with the support of a two-thirds majority.

The presidential elections will be carried out in 7 Electoral Districts (ED). The territory of the Republic of Macedonia's territory is divided into 6 EDs. The 7th ED comprises the polling stations outside the state territory, including all Macedonian citizens with the right to vote, who reside abroad.

In the first round the candidate with the majority of votes of the total number of citizens registered in the voters' list is elected. If only one candidate is running, and he/she does not reach the required majority of votes in the first election round, the procedure will be repeated. If there are more candidates, and none of them gains the required majority of votes, a second round is carried out after 14 days. The two candidates who reached the largest number of votes in the first round take part in this round. In the second round, the candidate who wins the majority of cast votes is elected, i.e. if more than 40% of the registered voters have voted. If none of the candidates gains the required majority of votes even in the second round, the entire election procedure is repeated.

The presidential election should be concluded in the last 60 days of the previous president's mandate. If the mandate is terminated earlier due to various reasons, then the new president should be elected in a period of 40 days after the termination of the mandate. The presidential mandate can be terminated based on the Constitution or in case of death, resignation, or permanent impediment. Only the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Macedonia can officially determine whether the conditions for termination of the presidential mandate have been met.

The Constitution does not allow for a vacuum in the presidential mandate; so that, if the President is not able to perform his/her function, the Constitution stipulates that he/she be substituted by the President of the Assembly, who will pursue his work in the Assembly during this period.

ELECTORAL BODIES

The State Election Commission (SEC), together with the Municipal Election Commissions (MEC), the Election Boards (EB) for voting in the country and the Diplomatic and Consular Missions (DCM) of the Republic of Macedonia are responsible for implementing the presidential elections.

The **State Election Commission** comprises seven members elected by the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia with a two-thirds majority. The mandate of the members starts on the day they are elected by the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia and ends with the election of the new composition of the Commission. It cannot exceed two years. The members of the SEC are elected within 60 days after the constitutive session of the Assembly. The President, the Vice President, and the members of the State Election Commission are appointed by the Committee on Elections and Appointment Issues of the Republic of Macedonia, after a public call is announced and upon recommendations from the government and opposition parties, depending on the candidates' position.³⁴ The SEC's expert committee chaired by the Secretary General, is in charge of all professional administrative, organisational, and technical activities.

One of the responsibilities of the SEC is to publish the Voters' List, which has to be made available to the citizens for review, within a period of 15 days after the day when elections are called. The public reviewing of the Voters' List is open for 20 days.

Within each municipality, a **Municipal Election Committee** (MEC) is established. The MECs are responsible for implementing the elections in their municipality and for monitoring the work of the election boards. They are composed of five members, one of whom is the president, and each of the members has a deputy. The members and the deputies of the Municipal Election Committees are elected from the employees of the state, public, and municipal administration, as well as the administration of the City of Skopje, after the Ministry of Information Society

³⁴ Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, Law on Amending and Supplementing the Electoral Code 208/18.

and Administration has forwarded the data to the SEC. The SEC randomly selects the members and the deputies with a mandate of five years, if they fulfill the criterion of holding a university degree. The presidents of the Municipal Election Committee, and the Election Committee of the City of Skopje appoint a secretary and a deputy, from among the candidates who are law graduates, for a period of five years.³⁵

For each polling station, an **Election Board** (EB) is established, comprising five members, one of which is the president, and deputies for each member. The president of the Election Board and his deputy, two members and their deputies are randomly selected from among the employees of the state, public and municipal administration, for a period of four years. One member of the EB and his/her deputy are nominated upon recommendation from the political parties in opposition who gained the highest number of votes in the previous parliamentary elections. The other members and their deputies are nominated upon the recommendation from the governing political parties that gained the majority of votes in the previous parliamentary elections. The random selection of the members of the Election Boards from among the employees of the administration is conducted by the MEC and the City of Skopje's Election Commission for their areas of responsibility, upon request from the SEC.

In the municipalities with a minority population of at least 20 per cent, the principle of equal and just representation is applied to the composition of the MEC and the Electoral Boards. The law also stipulates for each gender to be represented by at least 30 per cent of the members of the electoral organs. The members of the MEC and the Electoral Boards cannot be selected or appointed by government officials, the Assembly or by employees of the state administration of the Ombudsman, the Ministries of Justice, Defence, Internal Affairs, the Secretariat for Legislation, the State Statistical Office, the Crisis Management Centre, the technical and expert services of the Administrative Court, the SEC and the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption (SCPC).³⁶

The number of polling stations for the presidential elections in the country is 3480, i.e. it has not increased since the previous elections. There are 32 polling stations abroad in the DCMs, but the elections will be organized only in the DCMs with a minimum of ten registered voters.

³⁵ Ibid

³⁶ KAS, IDSCS, The Republic of Macedonia's 2017 Local Elections Handbook, second updated edition. Available at: http://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/ENG_MANUAL.pdf

THE RIGHT AND THE PROCEDURE OF NOMINATING PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES

Persons who want to run for presidency in the Republic of Macedonia must fulfill the following conditions:

- they must be citizens of the Republic of Macedonia;
- they must be over 40 years old on the day of the elections;
- they must have been residents of the Republic of Macedonia for a minimum of 10 years within the last 15 years;
- they cannot be elected more than twice in a row.

The presidential candidate should be recommended by at least 30 Members of the Assembly or 10,000 voters. The candidate lists can be filed by political parties, party coalitions registered with the State Election Commission, groups of voters and Members of the Assembly. The collection of signatures by groups of voters is open for 15 days, and it commences on the 15th day after the elections are called. One voter can give his/her signature to one presidential candidate only. The signatures are collected in the municipalities and the regional units of the State Election Commission with a form, witnessed by a public servant. The voters filing the list should be eligible to vote and permanent residents of the Republic of Macedonia.

Candidacies for President of the Republic of Macedonia should be filed to the State Election Commission by the official representative of the candidate. The SEC will then determine whether the candidacy meets the deadline and whether it is in accordance with the electoral provisions. If any irregularities are observed, the SEC will summon the official representative of the candidate to eradicate them within a period of 48 hours. If the list meets all provisions and any irregularities are eradicated within the given period of time, the SEC will accept it. If the irregularities cannot be eradicated within 48 hours, the SEC will reject the candidacy within a period of 24 hours. In case of rejection, the representative of the candidate can file a complaint against the SEC's decision at the Administrative Court. The complaint should be submitted within 24 hours, and the Administrative Court is obliged to decide on it within another 24 hours. The candidate files a written statement on candidacy, which is irrevocable.

The SEC is obliged to publish the list of the Republic of Macedonia's presidential candidates in the Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, at least 25 days prior to the elections.

ELECTION CAMPAIGN

The election campaign encompasses the public presentation of the candidates confirmed by the competent electoral organs and their programmes during the pre-election period: public gatherings and other public events carried out by the campaign organiser, public display of posters, video presentations at public places, election media and internet presentation and distribution of printed materials. The participants in the campaign are obliged to remove the posters no later than 30 days after the elections are concluded.³⁷

The organisers of the election campaign are responsible for its implementation as well as its legitimacy, including the campaign activities carried out by anyone authorized by them. The presidential election campaign starts 20 days prior to the day of election and ends one day before the elections. The election campaign for the 2019 presidential elections starts at midnight on 1st April 2019. The campaign for the first round ends on 19th April 2019 at midnight. The election campaign for the second round ends on 3rd May 2019 at midnight.³⁸ The days before the first and the second voting round are days of pre-electoral silence, i.e. no campaign activities may take place on those days.

The organisers of the election campaign have to open a separate bank account for the purposes of the campaign, which may be financed only by financial means from this account. The bank accounts can be opened 48 hours after the elections are called, but no later than 48 hours after the candidacy is confirmed. The accounts are closed within three months after the presidential elections are concluded.

The donors can be natural or legal persons from the Republic of Macedonia. Natural persons may donate an amount up to 3,000 EUR, and the legal persons up to 30,000 EUR in Macedonian denars. The donation may be comprised of money, goods, and services, but their total value may not surpass the determined amounts.

The election campaign can be financed from the political party's membership fee. The election campaign cannot be financed with means deriving from public corporations and public institutions, associations of citizens, religious communities, religious groups and foundations, foreign governments, international institutions, organs and organizations of foreign states and other foreign persons, proprietries with mixed capital where the foreign capital is dominant, or from unidentified sources.

³⁷ Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, the Law on Amending and Supplementing the Electoral Code 208/18.

³⁸ The deadlines for conducting election activities for the implementation of the presidential elections in the Republic of Macedonia are available at: <http://www.sec.mk/rokovnik-izbori-2019/>

The election campaign cannot be financed from the Republic of Macedonia's Budget, the municipal budgets and the budget of the City of Skopje, except for the compensations for election expenditures which are in possession of the election campaign organisers, and if the political parties obtain resources from the Republic of Macedonia's Budget based on their results at the previous elections.

Each participant in the election campaign can spend up to 110 MKD per registered voter in the constituency, i.e. the municipality for which a list of candidates is submitted, i.e. the list of candidates in the first and the second round of voting.³⁹ The political parties have to submit their financial reports on the election campaign to the SEC, the State Audit Office (SAO), and to the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption (SCPC) one day before the first round, and one day before the second round, if it takes place and the candidate participants in it.⁴⁰

If candidates' rights are violated during the public appearances and announcements, they have the right to press charges for protection of their rights. In this case, the competent general court convenes urgently, and the decision is announced in the public media.

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC MEDIA

During the election campaign the public radio broadcasting service and the commercial radiobroadcasters are obliged to present their information on the elections in a just, balanced, and unbiased manner.

The Election Code clearly states which contents are considered suitable for the media presentation of elections, and which contents should not be broadcast before the start of the election campaign, as well as the way of conduct of the broadcasters from the day when the elections are called until the day determined for the start of the election campaign. The Electoral Code obliges the radiobroadcasters to guarantee balanced media coverage of the elections and to apply the principle of equality in all forms of media presentation for the presidential candidates in the first and second round. The paid political advertising is exempt from the principle of proportional representation, i.e. equality.

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, the Law Amending and Supplementing the Electoral Code 208/18.

Radio broadcasters, the press, and electronic media (web portals) are not allowed to broadcast, i.e. to publish paid political advertisements from the day the elections are called until the start of the election campaign, except for announcements and statements related to the collection of signatures for the support of the candidates by a group of voters. Announcements related to the latter may be broadcast or published in specifically allocated advertisement slots of 9 minutes within one hour of real time, as stipulated in the Electoral Code, as well as how they should be distributed.⁴¹

Editors, journalists, programme hosts and presenters who take part in the programmes of the radio broadcasters are not allowed to participate in the pre-election activities of political parties, coalitions, groups of voters or their representatives. If such a person decides to participate in any campaign activities, their engagement in the radio programmes should be suspended until the elections are concluded.⁴²

Within 5 days after the elections are called, radiobroadcasters and print media are obliged to determine their price lists for paid political advertising of election participants. These price lists should be publicly announced at least twice before the start of the election campaign, and they should not be altered during the election campaign. If media provide discounts for paid political advertising, they are considered as donations in monetary value, they may not exceed 30,000 EUR⁴³ in Macedonian denars.

Paid political advertisement should be appropriately and visibly labeled as “paid political advertisement”, it should be explicitly indicated who commissioned the advertisement, and the latter should be clearly separated from the other content of the medium. Paid political advertisement should not be broadcast as part of the news, special informative programmes, educational programmes, programmes for children, or reports on religious, sports, cultural, entertainment or other types of events. Minors are not allowed to participate in paid political advertisement.

The public radio broadcasting service Macedonian Radio Television (MRTV) should not broadcast paid political advertisement. In cooperation with the SEC, MRTV is obliged to inform the citizens on the voting procedure without any financial

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² KAS, IDSCS, The Republic of Macedonia's 2016 Parliamentary elections handbook, second updated edition. Available at: http://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/Belegexemplar_2016_The_Republic_of_Macedonias_2016_Parliamentary_Elections_Handbook_ENG_version.pdf

⁴³ Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, the Law on Amending and Supplementing the Law on Financing of the Political Parties, 140/2018.

compensation, and it should also broadcast other information related to the election process. MRTV is required to provide equal access to its informative programme. 30% of the programme should relate to events in the country and around the world, 30% to activities of the governing parties, 30% to activities of the opposition parties, and 10% to activities of non-parliamentary political parties. During the election campaign, MRTV is obligated to broadcast political presentation of the election participants in a balanced manner, free of charge. This balance has to be proportional to the number of confirmed candidacies submitted by Members of the Assembly. The Assembly Channel should provide free political presentation up to three hours daily for the opposition and governing parties in accordance with the results of the last parliamentary elections and one hour for candidacies that were submitted by groups, who are not represented in the Assembly. The free political presentation has to be adequately and visibly designated as “free of charge political presentation” during the entire duration of the broadcast. Unlike MRTV, radio broadcasting companies are not allowed to broadcast free political presentation, from the day the elections are called until their conclusion.⁴⁴

The Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services (AAMS)⁴⁵ is responsible for monitoring the media presentation of the political parties and the candidates in radio broadcasts and electronic media (internet portals) from the day elections are called until the end of the voting on Election Day. If the Agency observes any irregularities, it may press charges against the broadcaster violating the regulations.⁴⁶ The organs of the AAMS are the Council and the director. The Council is comprised of seven members, appointed by the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia. The candidates for Council members are selected by public call, announced by the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, no later than six months before the mandate of the Council member expires. The candidates file a statement of candidacy confirming that they fulfil the legal provisions and criteria.⁴⁷ Additionally, they have to submit supporting letters, either from two civic

⁴⁴ KAS, IDSCS, The Republic of Macedonia's 2016 Parliamentary elections handbook, second updated edition. Available at: http://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/Belegexemplar_2016_The_Republic_of_Macedonias_2016_Parliamentary_Elections_Handbook_ENG_version.pdf

⁴⁵ Formerly, the competent organ was the Radiobroadcasting Council, which was renamed into Agency for Audio and Audio-visual Media Services based on the Law on Audio and Audio-visual Media Services. Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia 184/2013.

⁴⁶ KAS, IDSCS, The Republic of Macedonia's 2016 Parliamentary elections handbook, second updated edition. Available at: http://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/Belegexemplar_2016_The_Republic_of_Macedonias_2016_Parliamentary_Elections_Handbook_ENG_version.pdf

⁴⁷ The members of the Council should have completed secondary education, and have at least eight years of work experience in their area of expertise, and be publically recognised in the area of communication, journalism, informatics, culture, economy or law. Persons who have been members of the administrative organs of the political parties in the last 10 years are not eligible for membership in the council.

organisations that have been active for more than five years and achieved results in the field of media and human rights, from at least one association of journalists, from a relevant organisation, association or a chamber in the area of information and communication technologies and services, or from two higher education institutions that offer programmes in the field of communicology, journalism, culture, economy or law. The candidacies are reviewed by the Committee on Election and Appointment Issues of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, in order to confirm that there is no conflict of interests. Within one month after the public announcement is concluded, the Committee is obliged to organise a public debate, and invite the organisations that have supported the candidacies, as well as other relevant participants. The candidates are elected by the Committee with a two-thirds majority, maintaining equal gender and ethnic representation while drafting the list of suggested candidates. The mandate of the members is five years.⁴⁸

When announcing results from public opinion polls the media are obliged to provide information on who commissioned and financed the poll, the institution that conducted the survey, the applied methodology, the scope and structure of the respondents, as well as when the survey was conducted. Such information should not be published during the last five days prior to the Election Day of the first and second round of voting.

After the end of the election process, i.e. 15 days after the campaign is concluded, the radiobroadcasters and print media are obliged to file a report on the advertising space used by each of the election campaign organisers and the amounts paid or requested to this end. This report has to be submitted to the Ministry of Finance, the SEC, the State Audit Office, and the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption, which are obliged to publish it on their Internet websites.

For any irregularities in relation to the media presentation and political advertisement, radiobroadcasters and print media will be fined with 1,500 to 5,000 EUR depending on the offence. The AAMS will initiate a settlement procedure. Should this not be successful, infringement proceedings are initiated at the competent general court.

⁴⁸ Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, the Law on Amending and Supplementing the Law on Audio and Audiovisual Media Services, 247/18.

LIMITATIONS FOR CURRENT STATE OFFICIALS

The function of the President of the Republic of Macedonia cannot be merged with the function of the Member of the Assembly, council member or mayor.

From the day the decision to call elections is made until the end of the elections, the following activities are prohibited:⁴⁹

- To start construction work or to organise public events regarding the construction of facilities sponsored by the Budget, public funds, or resources obtained from public companies and other legal entities operating with state capital. This concerns the construction of new infrastructural facilities, such as roads, water pipelines, power lines, sewage systems, sports facilities and other edifices, and facilities intended for social activities, schools, kindergartens and similar facilities, unless Budget funds have previously been allocated for their construction, i.e. they are part of the implementation of a programme introduced with a law during the current year. The prohibition on organising public events does not apply to giving public statements by state officials or candidates for public office on public gatherings, interviews with the media, debates in the media, or as a response to a journalist's question.⁵⁰
- To pay incomes, pensions, social aid, or other types of payments and material compensations from the Budget funds or from public funds, aside from the regular monthly payments, This concerns all yearly transfers and payments, and single transfers from Budget or public funds. It is also prohibited to alienate state capital, and to sign collective contracts;

The Ministry of Finance is obliged to announce all Budget payments, except for regular incomes, pensions, and communal fees, on their website in a special database for budgetary expenditures. Moreover, the Ministry of Finance has to file a pre-election financial report two weeks after the elections are called. The law stipulates that the report should offer a review of all planned and realized Budget revenues and expenditures, from the start of the fiscal year until the day of filing the report, which is published on the Ministry's website.⁵¹

⁴⁹ By a Constitutional Court decision from 2017 (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No.57/17) paragraph 1 section 1, and paragraph 2 section 2 of the Electoral Code, which refer to the management of Budget funds and the distribution of subsidies, were invalidated. The complete decision is available at: <http://ustavensud.mk/?p=11684>.

⁵⁰ Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, the Law on Amending and Supplementing the Electoral Code 208/18.

⁵¹ Ibid.

If a presidential candidate is member of the Army of the Republic of Macedonia, the uniformed section of the Police, the authorized personnel at the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, or the Intelligence Agency, their professional engagement will be suspended from the day their candidacy is confirmed.

THE MANDATE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

The mandate of the President of the Republic of Macedonia begins with signing and delivering the Solemn Oath of Office at the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, which should take place 10 days after the final results are announced, but no earlier than the termination date of the previous president's mandate. The Solemn Oath is as follows:

"I affirm that I will faithfully and responsibly execute the office of the President of the Republic of Macedonia, I will respect the Constitution and the laws and I will protect the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of the Republic of Macedonia."

By assuming office, the president receives a mandate:

- to represent the state;
- to be Supreme Commander of the Army of the Republic of Macedonia;
- to determine the mandate for constituting the Government of the Republic of Macedonia;
- to appoint and revoke with decree the ambassadors and representatives of the Republic of Macedonia abroad;
- to receive the letters of credence and revocation of the foreign diplomatic representatives;
- to nominate two judges of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Macedonia;
- to nominate two members of the Judicial Council of the Republic of Macedonia;
- to appoint three members of the Security Council of the Republic of Macedonia;
- to appoint and dismiss other state officials and public servants as determined by the Constitution and the laws;
- to award honors and titles in accordance with the law;
- to grant a pardon in accordance with the law, and
- to conduct other functions as determined by the Constitution.

The State President informs the Assembly on issues of competence at least once a year, usually in December. The Assembly can request the President to provide his/her opinion on issues of competence.

The position of the State President is detached from any other public, political or professional function. He/she enjoys immunity in conducting his/her function, but is held responsible in case of infringing the Constitution or the laws during his/her term of office. The procedure for determining his/her responsibility is initiated by the Assembly with a two-thirds majority, but the Assembly does not have the right to decide upon the President's responsibility. The Administrative Court brings about the decision on the President's responsibility with a two-thirds majority, and can decide to revoke the President's immunity with a two-thirds majority.

MONITORING THE ELECTIONS⁵²

Election observers with an accreditation issued by the SEC have the right to monitor the elections. The accreditation for observers can be issued to national citizen organisations, which have been registered for at least one year, and have incorporated the principle of human rights protection in their statute. International organisations and foreign representatives can also monitor the elections. The official representatives of the presidential candidates have the right to appoint their representative to monitor the work of the electoral bodies.

⁵² KAS, IDSCS, The Republic of Macedonia's 2016 Parliamentary elections handbook, second updated edition. Available at: http://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/Belegexemplar_2016_The_Republic_of_Macedonias_2016_Parliamentary_Elections_Handbook_MKD_version.pdf

PARTICIPANTS AT THE 2019 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS



PARTICIPANTS AT THE 2019 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS⁵³

Blerim Reka



Blerim Reka is a full-time professor at the Faculty of Law at the Southeast European University (SEEU) in Tetovo. He runs for presidency at the 2019 presidential elections as an independent candidate, however, with the support of the political parties “Alliance for the Albanians” and “Besa”.

Reka graduated in Law at the University of Prishtina and obtained his Master’s degree in 1994 from the University of Prishtina, with the thesis “The Disloyal Competition and the Monopoly as Violations of the Free Flow of Goods and Services in the Common Market”. He obtained his PhD from the Universities of Prishtina and Graz, with the thesis “The Legal System in Post-war Kosovo during the Administration of the UN’s Interim Mission in Kosovo 1999-2001: Powers and

Limitations”. He has authored many publications related to law, EU institutions and EU integration. Within the SEEU, he has held the position of a Vice Rector for Research (2005-2006), as well as a Dean of the Faculty for Public Administration.⁵⁴

From 2006 to 2010, Blerim Reka was appointed to the post of Ambassador as Head of the Republic of Macedonia’s Mission to the European Union in Brussels. Later, Reka was a Councilor on EU Integration to the President of the Republic of Kosovo (2011-2013). He has been a member of the Expert Committee on External Affairs of the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo (2011-2013), a member of the Legal Council of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia (2003-2006), as well as a member of the Expert Team on National Strategy for EU Integration of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia (2004). He was involved in the constitutional amendments deriving from the Ohrid Framework Agreement.⁵⁵

Blerim Reka was born on 22nd May 1960 in Skopje. He is married and has three children.

⁵³ Candidates are listed in alphabetical order based on their fist names.

⁵⁴ Blerim Reka, Southeast European University. Accessed at: <https://www.seeu.edu.mk/en/~b.reka> (last visited on 06.03.2019).

⁵⁵ Professor Dr. Blerim Reka. Geopolitical Intelligence Services. Accessed at: <https://www.gisreportson-line.com/blerim-reka,12,expert.html> (last visited on 06.03.2019).

Gordana Siljanovska Davkova



Gordana Siljanovska Davkova is a professor at Faculty of Law at the University “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” in Skopje. She completed her primary and secondary education in Skopje, and graduated in Law at the University “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” in Skopje in 1978. She obtained her Master’s degree from the same faculty. In 1994, she completed her PhD studies *cum laude* at the Law Faculty in Ljubljana, the Republic of Slovenia, with the thesis “*Local Self-government – between Norms and Reality*”. She runs for presidency at the 2019 presidential elections as a candidate supported by VMRO-DPMNE.

In 1989 she was appointed to the post of Assistant Professor in Legal System at the Law Faculty in Skopje. In 1994, she was appointed Associate Professor in Constitutional Law and Political System. She started working as a full-time professor at the Faculty of Law in 2004.

Between 1992 and 1994, Siljanovska Davkova was appointed to the post of Minister without Portfolio. Since 1994, she has been a member of the expert team on gender issues at the UNDP. In 1998, she was appointed to the post of expert on election issues at the UN. Between 2008 and 2016, she represented the Republic of Macedonia at the Venice Commission. She has been active in several civic organizations throughout the years, some of which she founded herself. She has received many awards, among which a recognition for her contribution to the rule of law, granted by the OSCE Mission in Macedonia, as well as a medal for her contribution to gender equality, awarded by the Women’s Union of Macedonia.

Siljanovska Davkova is an author or co-author of more than 200 publications on legal matters, the political system, and constitutional law.

She was born on 11th May 1955 in Ohrid. She is married and has two children.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Curriculum Vitae; website of the Faculty of Law “Iustinianus Primus”, Skopje; Accessed at: <http://pf.ukim.edu.mk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/C.V.-GORDANA-SILJANOVSKA-DAVKOVA-2c-2016.pdf> (last visited on 21.02.2019)

Stevo Pendarovski



Stevo Pendarovski is a university professor at the Faculty of Political Studies at the American College in Skopje. He graduated in 1987 from the Faculty of Law at the University “Ss. Cyril and Methodius” in Skopje, and completed his Master and PhD studies at the Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research in Skopje at the same university. Pendarovski runs for presidency for the second time at the 2019 elections. He lost the 2014 presidential elections to Gjorgje Ivanov in the second round. At the 2019 presidential elections he runs for presidency as a common candidate of SDSM, DUI and 29 other political parties.

Pendarovski wrote his Master’s thesis on “New Geopolitics of the Republic of Macedonia: the Contradictions Between the Communist and Transitional Matrices”, and his PhD thesis on “The EU’s Foreign and Security Policy and the Small Countries: the National Discourse Framework”.⁵⁷ He currently holds the post of Associate Professor on International Security, Foreign Policy and Globalisation.

Between 2001 and 2004, Stevo Pendarovski was appointed a national security councilor at President Boris Trajkovski’s Office. Between 2005 and 2009 he was appointed to the post of foreign policy councilor at President Branko Crvenkovski’s Office. He was a president of the State Election Commission in the period between 2004 and 2005. Previously, between 1998 and 2001, he had held the position of a Deputy Minister at the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as well as a Chief of the Analytics and Research Department at the same ministry. At the 2016 parliamentary elections, Stevo Pendarovski was elected a member of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia. Since November 2019, he has been appointed to the post of a coordinator of the Republic of Macedonia’s preparations for NATO membership.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ The 2014 Presidential Elections Handbook. Accessed at: <http://izbornaarhiva.mk/dokumentacija/priracnici/priracnikpretsedatelski2014mkupd.pdf> (last visited on 04.03.2019).

⁵⁸ Official website of the Republic of Macedonia’s government. Accessed at: <https://vlada.mk/NacionalniKoordinatori/StevoPendarovski> (last visited on 04.03.2019).

Pendarovski has authored several books and scientific studies published in Macedonia and abroad. He has taken part in many scientific conferences, public debates, and discussions.

Stevo Pendarovski was born on 3rd April 1963 in Skopje. He is married and has one child.

ELECTORAL ARCHIVES OF THE ELECTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA SINCE 1990



ELECTORAL ARCHIVES OF THE ELECTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA SINCE 1990

Since March 2016, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, with its representative office in the Republic of Macedonia, and the Institute for Democracy “Societas Civilis” – Skopje (IDSCS) have been implementing the joint project “Electoral Archives of the Elections in the Republic of Macedonia since 1990”, with the goal of enabling comprehensive monitoring of the election processes in the Republic of Macedonia since 1990. This project encompasses all elections since 1990: presidential, parliamentary and local, gathering all the available documents related to the election processes. The need for implementing a project of this kind derives from the lack of official state archives with all the documents and data related to the election cycles since the independence of the Republic of Macedonia. The Electoral Archives groups the documents in 7 sections:

1. Documents for Calling Elections
2. Voter List
3. Candidate Lists
4. Election Results
5. Election Reports
6. Reports from International and Domestic Monitoring Organizations
7. Electoral Code

The Electoral Archives are updated elections, and all relevant documents are attached in each of the listed sections. A crucial component of the Election Archive are the manuals for presidential, parliamentary and local elections prepared during the election period. These manuals are published in cooperation by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Institute for Democracy „Societas Civilis” - Skopje. So far, five manuals have been compiled: for the local elections in 2013, the presidential elections in 2014, and the parliamentary elections in 2014 and in 2016, as well as for the local elections in 2017. All manuals are available on the website of the Election Archive in Macedonian, Albanian and English. The Electoral Archive is available on the website: <http://www.izbornaarhiva.mk/>

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The cover photo is taken from <http://pretsedatel.mk/>

The candidate photos are taken from their respective campaign pages.

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