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European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance

First report on "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"

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INTRODUCTION

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) was set up in 1994, at the instigation of the first Summit meeting of Heads of State and Government of the member States of Council of Europe, to combat the growing problems of racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance threatening human rights and democratic values in Europe. The members of ECRI were chosen for their recognised expertise in questions relating to racism and intolerance.

The task given to ECRI was to: review member States' legislation, policies and other measures to combat racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance and their effectiveness; propose further action at local, national and European level; formulate general policy recommendations to member States; and to study international legal instruments applicable in the matter with a view to their reinforcement where appropriate.

One aspect of the activities developed by ECRI to fulfil its terms of reference is its country-by-country approach, which involves carrying out an analysis of the situation in each of the member States in order to provide governments with helpful and concrete proposals.

The procedure adopted for the preparation of country-specific reports can be summarised thus:

a. The preliminary collection of information as well as the preparation of the texts of the preliminary draft reports are carried out in small working groups of ECRI. Preliminary sources of information used are wide-ranging, including, *inter alia*, replies provided by governments to a questionnaire sent out by ECRI, input from the relevant national members of ECRI, information on national legislation collected for ECRI by the Swiss Institute of Comparative Law[1], information from international and national non-governmental organisations, various publications and the media.

b. ECRI examines and discusses the preliminary draft report on each country in plenary session and adopts a draft report.

c. The report is sent to the relevant government for a process of confidential dialogue conducted through a government-appointed national liaison officer. The draft country report is re-examined and possibly revised in the light of the comments provided by the latter.

d. The report is then adopted in its final form by ECRI in plenary session, and transmitted through the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, to the government of the country in question. Two months after this transmission, the report is made public, unless the government of the country concerned expressly requests that it is not made public.

To date, five series of ECRI's country-specific reports have been made public, in September 1997, in March 1998, in June 1998, in January 1999 and in March 1999 respectively[2]. A sixth

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1 The report prepared by the Swiss Institute (ref: CRI (98) 80), covering relevant legislation in member States of the Council of Europe is available on the web site www.ecri.coe.int and, in hard copy**,** from ECRI's Secretariat.

2 The first five series comprise reports on Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria**,** the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta**,** the Netherlands**,** Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

series of country-specific reports was transmitted to the governments of the countries concerned in March 1999, and is thus now being made public[3].

The following report contains ECRI's analysis and proposals concerning "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".

It should be noted that ECRI is carrying out its country-by-country procedure by preparing reports for all forty member States of the Council of Europe. This sixth series of reports, for which the procedure was completed by March 1999, will be followed during 1999 by the reports on the remaining member States of the Council of Europe. The order in which the reports are produced has no significance other than that these are the first reports to be completed.

The publication of this report represents the start of an on-going and active process of exchange between ECRI and the authorities of each of the member States, in order to identify solutions to the problems of racism and intolerance facing Europe. ECRI will also welcome the input of non-governmental organisations and other parties working in this field to ensure that its work is as constructive and helpful as possible.

As from 1999, ECRI has begun a follow-up procedure to its country reports, examining what action governments may have taken on the proposals they contained, up-dating their contents generally and focusing on specific issues of concern in greater depth. Some 10 countries will be addressed annually in this way, over the period 1999-2002.

3 Reports on Andorra, Sweden and "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".

REPORT ON "THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA"[4]

Introduction

Following the dissolution of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", as one of the six federal republics, established its independence in a peaceful manner, in spite of prolonged war in the region. Considerable efforts were necessary in order to gain international recognition and admittance to the United Nations as well as the Council of Europe. Owing to some outstanding issues with its neighbours, a certain sense that the identity of the country is not fully recognised is still present. The development of "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" has not been easy, for several reasons. As most other countries of Eastern Europe, "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" is experiencing a period of economic, social and political upheaval and transition. Its stability has been threatened by four years of war in the region. This increased the economic hardship, caused severe emotional distress and brought a large influx of refugees. These events also left many people at that time with an uncertain status, as regards their rights of residence and citizenship.

Further difficulties are posed by the continuing volatile situation in neighbouring areas. As soon as the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Croatia were over, unrest erupted in Albania, which resulted in chaos and instability as well as massive illegal activities in the border region. In the first months of 1998, Kosovo[5], located north-west of "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", and where the population is predominantly of ethnic Albanian origin, experienced a sharp increase in tension and the eruption of violence, causing fears of a spill-over into "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".

The situation of "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" must be seen in the context of these difficulties. However, the country has also received various forms of assistance. In the field of conflict prevention, United Nations forces (United Nations Preventive Deployment Forces, UNPREDEP) have been present on the territory of the country for the past six years, helping to prevent spillover of the conflict from the region, their mission having recently been prolonged. As concerns political transition, the country has been assisted by various bodies on its way towards a society based on the rule of law and the principles of democracy.

According to the 1994 census, carried out with the assistance of the Council of Europe, the population of "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" includes a large Albanian minority (23%) as well as Turkish (4%), Roma (2.3%), Serbian (2%), Vlach (0.4%) and other minorities.

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4 Note: Any development subsequent to 16 October 1998 is not covered by the following analysis and is not taken into account in the conclusions and proposals.

5 Kosovo is, constitutionally, an autonomous province of the Republic of Serbia, which is part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Recent years have seen positive developments in the representation of ethnic Albanians in public life, including government and the judiciary. Nevertheless, as highlighted below, problems of individual discrimination and intolerance towards ethnic-Albanians and members of other minority groups exist in "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia". In this respect, while, in general, human rights are guaranteed by the law, it is necessary to make efforts for their more efficient implementation, as well as for the elimination of prejudice between and towards ethnic groups.

Some of the key areas identified by ECRI as meriting particular attention include:

- the tense state of relationships between different ethnic groups, in particular ethnic Macedonians and Albanians, and the existence of prejudice on both sides;

- the need to keep the law on citizenship under review, with special regard to naturalisation and to the effectiveness of procedures for ensuring its fair implementation, as well as to the introduction of any necessary changes;

- the need to ensure that criminal and administrative law is applied impartially and implemented in a non-discriminatory manner;

- the need for an adequate institutional framework for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.

I LEGAL ASPECTS[6]

A. International legal instruments

1. "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" has ratified most of the relevant international legal instruments in the field of combating racism and intolerance. ECRI hopes that ratification of the European Social Charter, which is currently under consideration, will be effected soon. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages should also be ratified, in conformity with the commitment entered into on accession to the Council of Europe. The procedure to recognise the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to examine individual complaints (Article 14 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination) is currently underway.

B. Constitutional provisions

2. The Constitution establishes the fundamental principles of equality before the law (Article 9) and freedom of religion (Article 19), as well as the right of national minorities freely to express and develop their identity, including the right to instruction in their language in primary and secondary education (Article 48). The Constitution also provides for freedom of association, with an explicit restriction relating to those associations which are aimed, inter alia, at incitement to ethnic, racial or religious hatred or intolerance (Article 20).

3. Article 7 stipulates that the Macedonian language, written using the Cyrillic alphabet, is the official language; however, it also provides for the right of members of national minorities to use their language and alphabet, in accordance with the law, in those units of local self-government where they constitute a majority or a considerable number of the population (see infra, para. 9).

- *Citizenship law*

4. The 1992 Law on Citizenship is based on the principle of legal continuity of the citizenship of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia. Article 26 (1) therefore establishes that a person who, according to the existing regulations, has held citizenship of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia is considered a citizen of the new State[7]. Article 26 (3) establishes that the citizens of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia who possessed another republican nationality and were permanently residing on the territory of "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" at the time of independence, can apply for Macedonian citizenship, within one year of the entry into force of the law, provided they meet certain requirements. These include a 15-year cumulative residency requirement and a permanent source of income. ECRI considers that these transitional requirements, which have been strongly criticised both by members of minority groups and international observers for their restrictive nature, have had an indirect

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6 A full overview of the legislation existing in "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" in the field of combating racism and intolerance is provided in the publication CRI (98) 80 prepared for ECRI by the Swiss Institute of Comparative Law (see bibliography).

7 On the basis of the principle of legal continuity, according to the latest official information, 1 878 820 persons have ex officio acquired Macedonian citizenship.

discriminatory effect on the acquisition of Macedonian citizenship by some segments of the population of the country, particularly some ethnic Albanians and Roma/Gypsies.

5. ECRI notes that, after the expiry of the one-year deadline mentioned above, applicants who had been unsuccessful either because they had not applied in time or because they had not been found eligible, had to apply for citizenship through the ordinary naturalization procedure. Article 7, which lists the requirements for naturalization, contains the same requirements as the ones set out under Article 26 (3); in addition, however, possession of living facilities, physical and mental health, and the payment of an administrative fee of US $ 250 are required. ECRI stresses that the requirements related to living facilities and the administrative fee could also contribute to render acquisition of citizenship more difficult for certain parts of the population, notably ethnic Albanians and Roma/Gypsies. Furthermore, it notes that the criterion related to health might potentially lend itself to arbitrary and discriminatory application.

6. ECRI recognises the sensitivity of these issues. It also notes with approval the existence of a judicial right of appeal; however, it urges the authorities to take all the necessary measures to ensure that naturalisation requirements are not discriminatory in practice, and it considers that a reduction of the period of permanent residency necessary to gain citizenship would be an important first step in this direction. ECRI draws the attention of the authorities to international legal standards in this field, including the European Convention on Nationality, which "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" has signed. It is furthermore felt that a simplified procedure for naturalisation should be set up for those people – such as ethnic-Albanians and Roma/Gypsies -- who were citizens of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and who were residing in the Socialist Republic of Macedonia at the time of independence. ECRI also encourages the authorities to ensure that naturalisation procedures are seen to be easy to understand and their implementation at all levels fair and transparent, particularly as regards the reasons for rejection in any given case. The effectiveness of the existing right of appeal should also be kept under review.

C. Criminal law provisions

7. The Criminal Code contains several important provisions which are relevant to the fight against racism and intolerance. Article 137 criminalizes the limitation or denial of the rights of individuals established by the Constitution, by law or by ratified international covenants on the basis of, inter alia, race, national origin, religious belief and language. Article 417 outlaws the violation of any of the basic human rights and freedoms acknowledged by the international community on the basis of a difference in race, colour of skin, nationality or ethnic appurtenance. Inciting national, racial or religious hatred or intolerance is penalised by Article 319. Further provisions deal with violation of the right to use one's language or alphabet (Article 138) and the crime of genocide (Articles 403 and 408). ECRI notes, however, that the Criminal Code does not consider racial motivation as an aggravating factor to be taken into account by the courts when considering sentence. Consideration could be given to the introduction of a provision in this sense.

   ECRI feels that priority should be given to the full implementation of these provisions; it should be ensured that this implementation is carried out in a non-discriminatory manner. (These matters are examined in greater detail in paragraphs 14 – 17 below).

D. Civil and Administrative Law

8. The principle of non-discrimination is contained in different laws and regulations dealing with specific aspects of civil and administrative law. The prohibition of incitement to national, racial or religious hatred has been further elaborated in legislation dealing with, inter alia, public information, telecommunications and associations. In addition, several laws have been adopted with the aim of strengthening tolerance in society and ensuring the equality of citizens in such fields as inheritance, identity cards and personal names.

   ECRI feels, however, that the authorities of "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" should consider the adoption of specific anti-discrimination legislation in the field of employment, housing, provision of goods and services (including social benefits and health care). Once enacted, information about such legislation should be widely disseminated, especially in areas where substantial numbers of members of minority groups live. Information should be collected systematically on the implementation of the legislation, with careful monitoring undertaken, ideally by a specialised body (see paragraphs 10 and 11 below).

- *Language provisions of the Law on Local Self-Government*

9. This law distinguishes between those units of local self-government in which the members of a particular national minority constitute the majority of the population and those units where the same constitute a "considerable number" of inhabitants (i.e. more than 20%). In both units, the language and alphabet of the national minority must be in use alongside the Macedonian language and alphabet at every session of organs of local self-government, and general acts adopted by these organs are published in both languages. Names of inhabited places, signs of public services and institutions and other public signs are written bilingually in those units where members of a national minority constitute the majority; the same is foreseen for the units where they constitute a "considerable number" of the population, if so decided by the highest organ of self-government. Public services, institutions and enterprises established by units of local self-government must make official use of both languages in the units where members of national minorities constitute a majority, whereas nothing is provided for in this field for those units where they constitute a considerable number. ECRI encourages the authorities to keep the effectiveness of these arrangements under review. In this respect, it is stressed that a swift ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (as mentioned in paragraph 1 above) would provide a valuable base for policy initiatives.

E. Specialised bodies

10. Legislation establishing the functioning of the Public Attorney (Ombudsman) was enacted in February 1997. The Public Attorney protects the constitutional and legal rights of citizens when violated by bodies of state administration and by other bodies and agencies with public powers. The Public Attorney has no formal powers to annul or alter the acts of those bodies which s/he finds to be in violation of the rights of citizens. However, s/he can initiate proceedings before other organs with formal powers, including the courts, as well as take other forms of action, notably issuing recommendations. Organs and agencies are obliged to take action within 30 days in accordance with the Public Attorney's proposals, opinions and recommendations. The Public Attorney submits to the Parliament an annual report.

    ECRI welcomes these developments. The first report of the Public Attorney's activities, covering a nine-month period, was published in June 1998. Some of the complaints appear to concern citizenship, although details of the points at issue are not provided. Many of the applications filed at the Office of the Public Attorney are, however, still pending. In view of the current situation in "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", ECRI considers that it would be advisable that these annual reports monitor specifically the extent of any abuse of public authority on a racially discriminatory basis. ECRI also draws the attention of the authorities to its General Recommendation N° 2 on specialised bodies to combat racism and intolerance at national level, and hopes that the institution of the Public Attorney will develop in accordance with the principles outlined in this Recommendation.

11. In conformity with Article 78 of the Constitution, and at the proposal of the President of the Republic, the Assembly establishes a Council for Inter-Ethnic Relations composed of two representatives from each of the following groups: Macedonians, Albanians, Vlachs, Roma, Turks and others. The Council advises the Assembly on issues affecting inter-ethnic relations. ECRI emphasises the importance of a forum for inter-ethnic dialogue, which can lead to constructive solutions to the problems faced by national minorities as well as contribute to avoiding extra-parliamentary tensions. It notes, however, that the Council of Inter-Ethnic Relations is not a forum dealing specifically with individual complaints, which thus lends even greater importance to the role of the Public Attorney in this regard.

II POLICY ASPECTS

F. Reception and status of non-citizens

12. "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" has witnessed in recent years an increasing flux of immigrants and refugees, largely due to the unstable conditions and unrest in neighbouring region. ECRI recognises the complexity of the situation. There appears, however, to be a lack of a comprehensive policy to deal with this phenomenon in a coherent and systematic manner. With regard to refugees and asylum seekers, the right of asylum is guaranteed in Article 29 of the Constitution; in addition, "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" is a party to the 1951 Geneva Convention on the Legal Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. However, an organic law on asylum seems to be necessary, and the Government is currently working on legislation in this field.

13. ECRI notes that the lack of a clear institutional framework in these areas results in the presence of groups of non-citizens in the territory of "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" with an unclear legal status. It is also concerned that this situation may contribute to sentiments of intolerance and prejudice in the society towards members of such groups. ECRI therefore encourages the authorities to make all possible efforts to establish an adequate legal and policy framework in these fields.

G. Law enforcement

14. There have been worrying reports of excessive use of force by the police. Although these reports do not exclusively refer to ill-treatment of members of minority groups, they suggest that members of minority groups are far more likely to fall victims of such behaviour. During the past few years, several people have died as a result of clashes with the police. In one such clash, in an area predominantly inhabited by ethnic Albanians, in the summer of 1997, three persons, all of them ethnic Albanians, died and at least one hundred were treated for injuries. There have also been reports of ill-treatment of Roma/Gypsies. In this context, ECRI feels that an independent body should be given the task of enquiring into all cases of ill-treatment by police officers, especially of members of minority groups. This body should preferably operate on a local and regional level and in close co-operation with representatives of the minority communities concerned, reporting back to an appropriate central body. An annual report on the findings, conclusions and recommendations of that central body should then be published.

15. In addition, ECRI stresses that it is paramount that all law enforcement officials receive special human rights training, particularly in relation to racism and intolerance, and that they are given a thorough understanding of the relevant national legislation as well as international human rights standards. In this respect, attention is drawn to the study on "Police training concerning migrants and ethnic relations" prepared by the Steering Committee on Migration (CDMG) of the Council of Europe. Furthermore, any discrimination practised by law enforcement officials should be suitably and publicly punished.

16. As a response to reports of a lack of public confidence in the police, further efforts should also be made to build confidence and respect between law enforcement officials and local populations. ECRI is aware of measures undertaken by the Government in order to increase recruitment of persons from minority groups to law enforcement positions, although such groups are reported to be still highly under-represented. ECRI thus encourages the authorities to further expand these initiatives. Additional measures could include, inter alia, co-operation with representatives of minority groups, employment of officials speaking minority languages and recourse to mediators in cases of conflict.

17. As concerns the application of the law, there were reports last year of court proceedings marked by irregularities and violation of due process as well as particularly harsh sentences, some of them inflicted upon members of minority groups. ECRI urges the authorities to take all possible measures to ensure that the application of the law is carried out impartially and in a non-discriminatory way.

H. Education

18. Despite considerable efforts on the part of the Government, the number of students from certain minority groups (especially Albanian and Roma) who receive secondary and higher education is still low.

19. ECRI welcomes the extended provision of education in the languages of minority groups as well as other measures aimed at increasing the number of pupils belonging to national minorities in secondary education. Following such measures, this number is steadily increasing, particularly amongst Albanians and Turks. However, a considerable number of primary students from minority groups do not yet go on to high school, partly because of the structure of class places available in Albanian and Turkish at this level, and partly due to social and cultural factors, such as the lack of interest shown by the mainly rural ethnic minority population (particularly Albanian girls) and their difficult economic situation (especially as concerns Roma). ECRI notes that the authorities are aware of these problems. It encourages them, however, to look further into ways of enhancing the participation of these groups.

20. Some progress has been achieved on the extremely sensitive front of higher education. The introduction of a quota (equivalent to the proportion of the respective minority in the total population) of entering places with eased admission requirements for minorities and the adoption, in 1997, of a law providing for Albanian and Turkish language university education for students at Skopje University's teacher training faculty constitute two very important developments. ECRI also notes that other interesting initiatives have recently been undertaken by the Government in this field, notably the "transitional year" project, which was established in co-operation with the OSCE. However, an organic law on higher education appears to be necessary. Close co-operation with Council of Europe's experts has taken place in this field and a draft law is currently being discussed in Parliament. ECRI recognises the importance of reaching a political solution to these problems, endorses the opinions and recommendations of the Council of Europe's experts and encourages the authorities to adhere to the principles contained in Recommendation 1353 (1998) of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on access of minorities to higher education.

I. Awareness raising and civil society

21. ECRI attaches considerable importance to the development of civil society, including the role of non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Taking into account the tense and unstable conditions in the region, ECRI considers that special attention should be paid to strengthening civil society in “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” in all its aspects. In this respect, ECRI notes that a Law on Associations of Citizens and Foundations was enacted in June 1998. ECRI encourages the authorities to engage in dialogue with NGOs. ECRI also feels that dialogue among these organisations, which are often constituted on an ethnic/religious basis, could be encouraged and its positive effects stressed, the methods and results compared and studied. Measures could be taken to co-ordinate their activities, stressing the particularly important role of the activities carried out by non-governmental organisations and their independent voice.

22. Local initiatives to improve community relations often prove successful and should therefore be encouraged. Building up goodwill and an atmosphere of trust seems particularly important and should be given priority, particularly in the areas with substantial minorities. ECRI feels that better collaboration between local authorities, professional services of various types and a network of voluntary groups could improve

the precarious situation of the most disadvantaged groups, suffering substantially as regards housing, employment, medical services, education as well as law and order.

23. Support should be offered to initiatives which aim to foster good relations and defuse conflicts. ECRI considers, in particular, that politicians and other public figures from all ethnic backgrounds should play an important role in shaping public opinion and in avoiding expressions which might lead to sentiments of inter-ethnic hostility or intolerance. ECRI notes that some initiatives have been taken in this field, such as the adoption by the Assembly of a Declaration on Promotion of Inter-ethnic Relations in the Spirit of Tolerance. The authorities are encouraged to further expand these initiatives. ECRI also points out that programmes exist within the Council of Europe, as well in some other organisations, to fund and organise this type of initiative. ECRI believes that such external support schemes could be introduced or extended.

J. Statistics

24. There appears to be a need for comprehensive statistical information on the effectiveness of remedies in cases of racial discrimination, the number of complaints of racial or racially motivated offences, the judicial action taken on those complaints and the redress or compensation awarded to the victims. This information could cover, inter alia, the operation of anti-discrimination clauses contained in such legal instruments as the Act on Social Organisations and Citizens' Associations, the Act on Political Parties, the Act on Public Information, and the Act on Telecommunications.

25. Although some statistics do exist, further information may also be necessary on the participation of ethnic minorities in public life and on their economic and social situation, especially with regard to access to employment, health, education and housing.

K. Media

26. There appears to be currently no sustained policy of hate speech in the media. However, given the existence of ethnic tensions in the country, ECRI feels that a constant watch should be kept for any manifestation of intolerance and hate speech as well as dissemination of stereotypes and prejudices by the media. In this respect, ECRI draws the attention of the authorities to the recommendations of the Council of Ministers of the Council of Europe No. R (97) 20 on "hate speech" and No. R (97) 21 on the media and the promotion of a culture of tolerance.

27. There are currently several newspapers in Albanian and Turkish. ECRI notes recent positive developments generally towards greater print media pluralism and understands that that this trend is also reflected in newspapers published in the language of minority groups. State television and radio networks and private broadcasting enterprises broadcast programmes in minority languages, including Albanian, Turkish, Vlach, Romany and Serbian.

L. Other areas

- *Freedom of religion*

28. As mentioned under paragraph 2 above, Article 19 of the Constitution provides for freedom of religion. While only the Macedonian Orthodox Church is mentioned by name, it does not enjoy official status.

29. A law on religious communities and groups adopted in 1997 has caused disquiet amongst some of the smaller religious communities. The law distinguishes between "religious communities" and "religious groups". The Macedonian Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church, and the Islamic community are regarded by the law as "religious communities", whereas the non-traditional or "new" religions are categorised as religious groups. The activities that these communities and groups can carry out are similar (including religious services and instruction). However, registration of a religious group - which is necessary for the carrying out of such activities - is subject to several restrictions. In addition the law provides that "one religion can have only one religious community". Although the effects of this law are not fully apparent at the time of writing this report, ECRI encourages the authorities to keep its implementation under review and to ensure that its application is not discriminatory towards faiths other than those of the majority.

- *Roma/Gypsies*

30. Roma/Gypsies are recognized as a minority by the Macedonian Constitution. They have traditionally resided on the territory of "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia". Roma/Gypsies have formed political parties and have some political representation both at national and local level. ECRI is nevertheless concerned that, economically and socially, Roma/Gypsies constitute a disadvantaged minority in “the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”. It considers that the authorities should undertake specific efforts to compile information on the current situation of Roma/Gypsies. On the basis of these findings, ECRI believes special measures are likely to be necessary to combat the discrimination and prejudice faced by the Roma/Gypsy population.

General data as supplied by national authorities
For reasons of consistency, ECRI, in its CBC reports, has, in this box, reproduced statistical data only from the replies of Governments to ECRI's questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent to the government of "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" on 26 March 1996.
ECRI accepts no responsibility for the data below.
Total population by declared ethnic affiliation (1994) - Macedonians 1 295 964 (66.6%); Albanians 441 104 (22.7%); Turks 78 019 (4.0%); Roma 43 707 (2.2%); Vlachs 8 601 (0.4%); Serbs 40 228 (2.1%); others 38 309 (1.9%).
11 021 foreign nationals reside legally in the country

Population: 1,9 million (1994). This figure is taken from the Council of Europe publication "Recent demographic developments in Europe" (see bibliography).

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