Tanja KARAKAMISHEVA-JOVANOVSKA*

Issues of Constitutional Identity in a Candidate State: Republic of North Macedonia

ABSTRACT: *Just as the constitutional identities of all countries represent a collection of historical facts, events, and occurrences related to the construction and development of the nation, so too does the Macedonian Constitutional Identity have its historical and contemporary content, reflecting the development of the state in a social, systemic, and institutional sense of the word. This is why it is considered that today's Macedonian Constitutional Identity is a reflection of the past and present, aimed at shaping the future of the state. Generally speaking, contemporary Macedonian Constitutional Identity refers to the set of fundamental principles and values that define the political, legal, and cultural framework of the country, as laid out in its 1991 Constitution. However, the constitutional identity of the state has its roots at the very beginnings of the constitutional development of the country, more specifically in the constitutive decisions of the First Session of ASNOM adopted on August 2nd 1944. These decisions are the inspiration and philosophy behind the first Constitution of the People's Republic of Macedonia from December 31st 1946, the second Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia from 1963, and the last Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia from 1974, when Macedonia was part of the Yugoslav federation. This means that Macedonian Constitutional Identity refers to a complex and evolving concept that balances the recognition of historical legacies with new democratic principles that are part of the independent Macedonian legal system following the adoption of the 1991 Constitution with its own nation's distinctiveness, sovereignty, and democratic governance. It reflects the country's commitment to democracy, rule of law, and human rights, as well as its unique cultural and historical legacy. The 1991 Constitution guarantees that the Macedonian legal system and governance are based on the separation of powers, ensuring the independence of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. A key defined feature of Macedonian Constitutional Identity is the recognition of the country's ethnic and cultural diversity, acknowledging the existence of various minorities in the country, including Albanians, Turks, Roma, Serbs, and others, and providing their rights and participation in the political process. This inclusiveness is particularly reflected in the protection of the languages,*

* Full Professor, Department of Constitutional Law, Iustinianus Primus Faculty of Law, Sc. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, Macedonia; Former Member of the Venice Commission as representative of Republic of Macedonia, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6267-3655.

https://doi.org/10.62733/2025.1.25-48

CC BY NC ND

cultures, and traditions of the country's ethnic minorities, which make up part of the Macedonian Constitutional and National Identity.
KEYWORDS: *Identity, Constitution, History, Culture, Development, Ethnicity, Challenges.*

1.
Historical Retrospective of Macedonian Constitutional Identity Development

Macedonian Constitutional Identity[1] represents the essence of a country's sovereignty, governance system, and the relationship with its citizens, as well as the historical and cultural context in which its constitutional framework was developed. A constitutional identity is essential for maintaining the integrity and continuity of the state, ensuring that laws, policies, and actions align with the foundational principles established in the constitution. The development of the modern Macedonian state, and in this context, the national and constitutional identity of the country, is inevitably connected to the National Liberation War of Yugoslavia and to the first National Liberation Committees formed towards the end of 1941 and at the beginning of 1942. These committees, also known as the local committees, were established in cities and villages across Macedonia. Their goal was not only the liberation of Macedonian territories from fascist occupation but also the organisation of internal structures required to govern the country and define the framework of its political system. The decisions made at the First and Second sessions of AVNOJ (Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia), held in 1942, played a key role in defining the Macedonian people as a constituent part of the then federal community of equal peoples, with the establishment of their statehood within the Yugoslav federation.[2]

From the perspective of human rights and freedoms, these events played a key role in the adoption of the Manifesto of the Main Headquarters, which served as a temporary representative body in Macedonia through which the full equality and national freedom for the Macedonian people within the Yugoslav community was to be ensured. This Manifesto was a precursor to the decisions made by the Anti-Fascist Assembly for the National Liberation of Macedonia (ASNOM), held on August 2nd 1944, at the St. Prohor Pchinski Monastery, when the most important documents of constitutional significance for the state and its constitutional identity were adopted:

1 Dodovski, 2012, pp. 92–105.
2 See: Kambovski, 2014.

1. The Declaration of the ASNOM on the fundamental rights of the citizens of democratic Macedonia, which ensures equality and equal rights for all citizens living in the Macedonian state;
2. The decision for ASNOM to be organised as the supreme legislative and executive representative body, and the highest authority in democratic Macedonia;
3. The decision for ASNOM to introduce the Macedonian language as the official language in the Macedonian state;
4. The decision for ASNOM to declare August 2nd as the national and state holiday of the Macedonian state.
5. In addition to these key documents, the ASNOM also adopted other legal acts important for the internal organisation and governance of the state.

The first session of the ASNOM represents a pivotal turning point in the development of the Macedonian national liberation movement, summarising the results it had already achieved from the time of the liberation uprisings at the very beginning of the 20th century, the Ilinden Uprising of 1903, and the later development of that movement in Macedonia, which had been divided by the Balkan Wars and World War I. It is the culmination of the anti-fascist National Liberation War, during which the swift crystallisation of Macedonian national consciousness and distinctiveness occurred, as well as the definition of a clear national program for a Macedonian state. In such crucial moments, when revolutionary changes in society take place, as was the case with the great revolutions (the American and French) marking the dawn of a new era, the formation of ideological and political views on the future organisation of the state is always driven by progressive ideas and principles of human liberation and national freedom. For the ASNOM, these universal principles were linked to age-old aspirations concerning the distinctiveness of the Macedonian national identity, so its vision for the future of Macedonian society was composed of a synthesis of, on one hand, the ideals of liberty and, on the other, national principles for independent development. The fact that such an aspiration, during the time of the ASNOM, and due to all the international circumstances and positions of the great powers regarding the immutability of former state borders, could only be realised within a common state with the other Yugoslav peoples, reflects a comprehensible realism in making historical decisions and does not diminish their significance in the Constitution of the Macedonian state, and in proclaiming, as its foundation, human freedoms and rights and equality. The post-ASNOM period in the development of the Macedonian state shows a series of deviations in the realisation of the main idea of liberty, dictated by the general characteristics of the social, political, economic, and legal system of the Yugoslav federation. On the other hand, post-ASNOM Macedonian statehood also marks significant progress on a national-cultural and societal level, such as the codification of the Macedonian literary language, the development of Macedonian

literature, arts, education, science, and culture, the establishment of state institutions and societal activities, and more. These changes created the conditions for the realisation of the centuries-old aspiration for an independent Macedonian state and own national identity, which is why the proclamation of the independence and sovereignty of the Republic of Macedonia and the adoption of the Constitution in 1991 appear as the result of state continuity, with ASNOM being a key link in that process.[3]

The constitutional development of North Macedonia, both institutionally and in terms of the advancement of human rights and freedoms and the creation of the Macedonian Constitutional Identity from 1946 to 1991, unfolded in three periods. The first period began in 1946 with the adoption of the first of the People's Republic of Macedonia, and lasted until 1963, comprised of two intermediate stages: the adoption of the Law on Workers' Self-Management in 1950, and the Constitutional Law on the Social and Political Organisation and the Organs of Government of the People's Republic of Macedonia.

The second period began in 1963 and lasted until 1974, while the third period started in 1974 and lasted until 1991. During this latter period, the Macedonian identity gained greater recognition, particularly in terms of language, culture, and historical narrative. With the proclamation of Macedonian independence and sovereignty, the realisation was confirmed that states do not emerge or gain independence and sovereignty through a single act, but as a result of a long historical process of development, in which the state-building idea matures and breaks through, overcoming numerous internal and external obstacles – in our case, from the maturation of Macedonian national consciousness to the overcoming of the resistance and imperialistic aspirations of our neighbours. In the causal chain of historical changes, the assertion that if there had been no Ilinden in 1903, there would have been no ASNOM in 1944, and if neither of these historical events had occurred, there would have been no Third Ilinden, the independence of 1991 has gained exceptional significance. Accepting this thesis has far-reaching consequences, not only in terms of the demand for an objective approach of historical and legal science toward the development of the Macedonian nation and state but also regarding the current social conditions and processes and their relationship to evaluating the key periods of their development. The collapse of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, amidst ethnic conflicts and rising nationalist movements, set the stage for the declaration of independence by the Republic of Macedonia on September 8th 1991. The country's first Constitution, adopted in November 1991, formally established the Republic of Macedonia as an independent and sovereign state, and was a significant step in establishing the country's new constitutional identity. It affirmed Macedonia as a secular, democratic

3 See: Karakamisheva-Jovanovska, 2019.

state, protecting the rights of its citizens and establishing a multi-ethnic society. Today, North Macedonia, in the period of pluralism, democracy, multiculturalism, and democratic rule of law, faces numerous open challenges, such as how to step into the next phase of post-transition and European integration. The perspective of the foundational liberal ideas of ASNOM, as well as those of Ilinden 1903, point to clear directions in its developmental path. A path on which it must keep pace with other Balkan and European countries, especially in the areas of unity, freedom, equality, tolerance, and dialogue.

2.
Elements of the Contemporary North Macedonia's Constitutional Identity[4]

The 1991 Constitution reflects the importance of the nation's historical legacy, including the struggle of the people for independence and sovereignty. It also acknowledges the role of Macedonian history, language, and culture in shaping the country's national identity. However, this has sometimes been a source of tension, especially in the context of regional relations and historical disputes with neighbouring countries. The historical development of Macedonian constitutional identity is closely intertwined with the complex evolution of the Balkan region. It reflects a different blend of ethnic, cultural, and geopolitical factors, which have influenced how the country's constitution has been shaped over time. It is marked by the multidimensional interplay of historical narratives, ethnic identities, geopolitical challenges, and international relations. The country's constitutional identity continues to be a work in progress, shaped by its engagement with European and international standards, while balancing its multi-ethnic society and historical legacies. In this sense, the contemporary Macedonian Constitutional Identity is shaped by several key elements that reflect the nation's legal, political, cultural, and historical context. The first decade following North Macedonia's independence was characterised by a rather unique transition, involving a scandalous process of privatisation (which created a small, but politically powerful, network of oligarchs), as well as a range of scandals dominating the country's political scene.[5] However, different evaluations tended to portray North Macedonia an "island of stability",[6] mostly because it was the only nation-state to emerge

4 National identity is a reflective attitude of the nation towards itself, and thus collective self-knowledge and the possibility of self-determination of the members of the community. It is focused on the elements that shape the culture of a given nation, i.e. language, territory, culture, economic and political life, and common historical memory. See: Sileska, 2021.

5 See: Karakamisheva-Jovanovska, 2024.

6 See: Gligorov, 2006.

from the former Yugoslav federation without some sort of a military conflict and/or intervention.[7] But in early 2001, the notion of an "island of stability" lost its relevance and North Macedonia became a new testing ground for power-sharing experiments. The question which seems to have remained unanswered is what really happened in Macedonia in 2001. Was the conflict imported from Kosovo, with Kosovo terrorists having illegally crossed the border in order to destabilise North Macedonia? Did the "imported" armed group wish to start "a fight for human rights"? Did North Macedonia witness a restricted civic conflict that was supposed to produce a much larger military intervention, or was it an inter-ethnic conflict between the Macedonians and the Albanians? Was it a civil conflict or a conflict that some authors[8] described as a war without a state of war being declared?[9] The 2001 conflict was resolved by the EU-US sponsored Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA). In the background, the negotiators presented the OFA as the only possible resolution to the conflict; as the US chief negotiator James Pardew later observed, the agreement provided Macedonia with an opportunity "to avoid destructive divisions and to develop as a democracy".[10] Indeed, it is undeniable that the OFA substantially altered the country's institutional landscape in political, legislative, and social terms, having established itself as a key political and legal filter in decision-making processes.[11] Its glorification by both domestic and international actors made North Macedonia a testing ground, where members of ethnic communities began to enjoy a great portion of their rights based on statistical variables, thus making the country a rare example in constitutional theory where collective rights were recognised on the grounds of a statistical rather than civil basis.[12] Moreover, the creation and consequent elevation of the status of the OFA has developed hand in hand with Macedonia's European integration. During the 2001 crisis a lot of attention was suddenly paid to Macedonia within the context of the

7 See: Biljana, 2007.
8 See: Ragaru, 2008.
9 Pardew, 2011, pp. 21–23. "The Diplomatic History of the Ohrid Framework Agreement", in "The Ohrid Framework Agreement: Ten Years Later". Ten years from the Ohrid Framework Agreement: Is Macedonia Functioning as a multi-ethnic state?", South Eastern European University, 2011. Other authors have different views for the 2001 conflict in Macedonia. "The conflict in Macedonia in 2001 could be See:n as a further manifestation of the will to greater autonomy, self-rule and even independence by the ethnic Albanian community. What was unique about that particular moment in time was the confluence of forces that encouraged militant armed struggle. The conflict of 2001 can be seen as an extension of the process of violent breakup of Yugoslavia that began with the brief conflict between the Slovenian National Guard and the Yugoslav Army in 1990. The fighting that eventually broke out in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo in the ten years that followed finally spilled over into Macedonia in 2001. The exact moment of the outbreak of violent armed conflict depended upon a number of factors." See more: Seraphinoff, 2012.
10 International IDEA, 2006.
11 See: Karakamisheva-Jovanovska, 2025.
12 See: European Commission, no date.

EU foreign policy agenda, and by the end to the conflict, Skopje had officially launched its European agenda through implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU.[13]

On the other side, the so-called Prespa Agreement[14] signed on 17th June 2018 between Greece and what was then the "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" made deep and complex implications for Macedonian identity both in the legal-constitutional sense and in the broader cultural, political, and emotional dimensions. The most visible change was the constitutional amendment introducing the new name of "Republic of North Macedonia." This change altered the formal state identity in all official contexts, both domestic and international. Article 1(3)(b) of the Agreement specifies that nationality (in passports and other documents) is recorded as "Macedonian/citizen of the Republic of North Macedonia". All international organisations and bilateral relations now refer to the country by its new constitutional name, effectively embedding the name change in external identity representation. Article 7 of the Agreement also explicitly states that the terms *"Macedonia"* and *"Macedonian"* refer to different historical and cultural contexts for each party. For Greece it is linked to the ancient Hellenic civilisation, while for North Macedonia it is referring to the culture, history, and heritage of the Slavic-speaking population and other communities living in its territory since the Middle Ages. This legally codified a distinction that many in North Macedonia perceived as an external imposition on their historical narrative. Provisions required the removal or contextualisation of certain monuments, symbols, and public references deemed to imply a link to ancient Hellenic heritage (e.g., renaming of airports, roads, squares, etc.). This has been viewed by many citizens in the country as a symbolic reshaping of the national narrative. The Prespa Agreement deepened internal divisions between those citizens who see it as a painful but pragmatic step towards Euro-Atlantic integration and those who view it as a capitulation affecting the core of national identity. Supporters argue the Agreement internationally safeguards the contemporary Macedonian identity by removing disputes that have undermined recognition of the Macedonian language and nationality. Critics contend it imposes a narrower, externally defined version of "Macedonian" identity, separating it from certain historical claims.

In 2017, the Friendship, Good-Neighbourliness and Cooperation Treaty was signed between Bulgaria and North Macedonia.[15] It was meant to resolve long-standing disputes and facilitate Skopje's path to the EU, but in practice it directly touches on the core of Macedonian national identity in several ways. While framed as a cooperation and friendship agreement, the Bulgarian–Macedonian treaty places

13 See: Vankovska, 2007.
14 Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018.
15 See: United Nations, 2017.

identity-defining elements, such as history, language, and heritage under bilateral negotiation and EU-linked conditionality. This transforms identity from a sovereign matter into a negotiated, externally influenced construct, which the majority of Macedonians perceive as a direct challenge to their historical continuity and cultural autonomy. The treaty calls for the establishment of a joint multidisciplinary commission to review historical and educational issues. Bulgaria interprets periods of Macedonian history, especially the medieval period, Ottoman era revolutionary movements (e.g. Goce Delčev), and WWII events as parts of "Bulgarian history." For the majority of citizens in North Macedonia, this is seen as a challenge to the distinct Macedonian historical narrative developed after WWII, and therefore as a pressure to reframe national heroes, symbols, and the story of statehood. Bulgaria signed the treaty recognising the "official language of the Republic of North Macedonia" but avoided calling it the "Macedonian language" in a way that implies full linguistic independence from the Bulgarian language. Bulgarian officials often refer to it as a "norm of the Bulgarian language." This fuels domestic perceptions in Macedonia that the treaty undermines the linguistic pillar of identity, since language is central to nationhood. Bulgaria has since linked its interpretation of the treaty to EU negotiation progress, blocking the opening of chapters until North Macedonia commits to historical and linguistic concessions. This converts identity-related issues into political leverage, deepening the sense that sovereignty over national self-definition is compromised.

2.1. National Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity of the Country

The first element of contemporary North Macedonia's Constitutional Identity is sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the country. The country's borders are inviolable and any change to the country's territorial integrity must be carried out in accordance with the will of the people and in compliance with international law. The 1991 Constitution fully accepts the civil concept and defines the sovereignty of citizens in a detailed and systematically concluded charter of individual rights and citizens' freedoms, which begins with the rights of individuals and citizens consistent with the evolution of civil subjectivity in European political history. Sovereignty refers to the Macedonian citizens authority to govern themselves, and to hold full control over its internal and external affairs. No other state or entity can impose decisions that would violate the country's self-governance. This ensures that the country can independently determine its political, economic, social, and cultural development, making decisions without the need for approval from other countries or international organisations. Territorial integrity from the other side means the inviolability of Macedonia's borders. The country's boundaries cannot be altered,

divided, or infringed upon by external forces, and the Constitution specifically states that any changes to the territorial integrity of the country must be carried out in accordance with the will of the people and in compliance with international law. The people's consent through democratic processes is required for any changes, such as secession, annexation, or border modifications. The 1991 Constitution contains provisions to protect the country from any foreign attempts to alter its borders or undermine its sovereignty.[16]

It reinforces the principle that the state's borders are immutable unless the people express their will to change them, through referenda, and even then the process must follow international law. The will of the people is a fundamental aspect of the principle of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state. This ensures that significant decisions are made by the citizens themselves, rather than through external pressures or the political elite alone. The emphasis on sovereignty and territorial integrity in the Macedonian Constitution reflects the country's commitment to safeguarding its independence and borders. It enshrines the notion that Macedonian citizens must have a say in any changes to the country's borders and that these changes must be in accordance with both international law and the democratic process which is a foundational aspect of the country's constitutional identity and its approach to maintaining national unity and security.[17]

Sovereignty is a fundamental part of Macedonian Constitutional Identity. The Constitution explicitly affirms the country's sovereignty, stating that the Republic is a sovereign state. This means that the Republic has the ultimate authority over its territory, people, and governance without interference from external powers. Sovereignty is enshrined in the Constitution in various aspects, including the principles of territorial integrity, political independence, and the self-determination of the people. The Constitution also recognises the Republic's commitment to international cooperation while preserving its sovereignty and independence. In this context, while the country is a member of international organisations and participates in international treaties, it ensures that its sovereignty is respected and maintained within the framework of its constitutional order. In summary, sovereignty as a core component of Macedonian Constitutional Identity, reflects the country's independence and authority to govern itself.

16 See: Rubeli, 2001.
17 See: Bahturidze and Vasilieva, 2020.

2.2. North Macedonia's Commitment to Democratic Governance as an Element of Constitutional Identity

North Macedonia's commitment to democratic governance is a key element of its constitutional identity. The 1991 Constitution establishes democratic principles as foundational to the functioning of the state. It guarantees the rule of law, political pluralism, and fundamental human rights, all of which are essential for democratic governance. The Macedonian Constitution explicitly states that the Republic is a democratic country where the people are the source of all authority. It guarantees free and fair elections, the separation of powers, and the protection of individual freedoms and rights. Furthermore, it emphasises the importance of a multi-party system, the right to participate in political life, and freedom of expression, all of which are central to a functioning democracy.[18] Through these constitutional provisions, the Macedonian state can affirm its commitment to upholding democratic values, ensuring that governance is carried out transparently, with accountability, and in a way that respects the will of the people. This commitment is a cornerstone of the country's constitutional identity, reflecting its dedication to democratic principles as the basis of its political system. The constitutional commitment to democratic governance is usually defined as a cornerstone of North Macedonia's constitutional identity. The 1991 Constitution abandoned the numerous ideological socialist determinations and values that the previous socialist government had had as its basis. These determinations were: the socialist self-governing democracy, the rule of the working class, the undisputed rule of one party, the associated labour and socialist production relations, the communal system, the delegate and assembly systems, etc. The 1991 Constitution affirms a commitment to ownership, political pluralism, and a market economy. It proclaims the principle of division of power and establishes a state with a republican form of rule based on the sovereignty that "derives from the citizens and belongs to the citizens".[19]

The 1991 Constitution established the principle of division (separation) of power. According to this principle, the Assembly, as a constitutional and legislative organ, should affirm and develop in its work all the positive aspects of the parliamentary tradition with an independent and responsible Government, and with a President of the Republic who expresses state unity in the Republic, and the competence determined by the Constitution, who is responsible for his/her work before all citizens of the Republic, by whom he/she was elected. The 1991 Constitution establishes a system of mixed system of organisation of political power with parliamentary and representative democracy, characterised by free and democratic elections, political

18 See: PRIF, 2009.
19 See: Klimovski, 2000.

pluralism, and the rule of law. The Macedonian political system combines elements of both parliamentary democracy and representative democracy. The government is primarily accountable to the Assembly, not directly to the president. The government is led by a president who is the head of government, and its ministers. The country's legislature is unicameral, consisting of the Assembly (Sobranie), which is made up of 120 deputies. These deputies are elected every four years through a proportional D'Hondt electoral model and six electoral constituencies. The role of the Assembly as a representative body of the citizens and the legislative body in the Republic can be seen in its competence. The competence of the Assembly is established by the Constitution, and it is authentic.[20]

The first competence that should be mentioned is the constituent function expressed as the right to adopt and change the Constitution. That means that the Assembly has the right not only to change and supplement the Constitution with constitutional amendments, but also has the right as a regular legislative Assembly to adopt a new Constitution. According to this, no special constituent Assembly is needed for the adoption of a new Constitution. One of the main functions of the Assembly is the legislative function and legislative power.[21] The Assembly also adopts the state Budget, makes decisions related to the Republic reserves, makes decisions concerning the primary international relations through ratifying international agreements, decides on matters of war and peace, oversees the election, selections, appointments and dismissals of the bodies of the Republic, judges at the Constitutional Court, administrative and other officers, performs political control and monitoring functions, and performs other activities determined by the Constitution. The Constitution in general establishes the incompatibility of the office of the MPs with other public offices or professions, and the cases of that incompatibility are defined by law. The Representatives to the Assembly can only be extended in an emergency during a state of war.

The Constitution has established a few bases for the termination of the mandate of Representatives. Above all, a Representative may resign. The right to resign means also the right to elaborate upon his/her resignation. MPs will submit their resignation in person, during the session of the Assembly. On that occasion, the Assembly states that the mandate is terminated with the submission of the resignation. The Constitution has established another form of termination of the mandate of the MPs. The mandate is terminated if he/she is sentenced for a criminal offence resulting in a prison term of at least five years. There is also a possibility of the revocation of the MPs mandate. The MP can have his/her mandate revoked for the committal of a criminal offence making him/her unfit to perform the office of MP, as well as for an

20 See: Daskalovski, 2006; Sandevski, 2009.
21 See: Vision Journal, 2019.

absence from the Assembly of a period longer than six months with no justifiable reason. A revocation of the mandate is determined by the Assembly by a two thirds majority vote of all MPs. In the performance of their representative function, MPs enjoy immunity. There are two types of right to immunity of MPs. The first type is the guaranteed right of the MPs not only to freedom of thought, but also to freedom of responsibility to express an opinion or vote in the Assembly.[22]

The MP cannot be held to have committed a criminal offence or be detained due to views he/she has expressed, or to the way he/she has voted in the Assembly. This means that no one can hold the MP responsible for his/her statements expressed in the Assembly, or for the vote with which he/she has supported some proposition submitted in the Assembly. The other question is his/her responsibility for the violation of the Rules of Procedure and the responsibility in accordance with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure.[23] The second type of the immunity is the protection of the MP from detention without permission of the Assembly. This right protects the MP from the procedure for the deprivation of immunity in cases when the MP does not want to avoid this responsibility. The Assembly can decide to invoke immunity for a MP without his/her request. The Assembly will do this if it is in the interest of the representative function being necessary for the performance of the MP's office. The Constitution guarantee that the MP cannot be detained without the approval of the Assembly. The Commission for mandate/immunity questions can decide to invoke immunity for a MP without his/her request. The decision of the Commission is not final. The Commission is obliged to submit its decision to the Assembly which decides whether it will confirm or repeal that decision. The Assembly is the final arbiter concerning the justification of the deprivation of freedom of the MP. The President of the Assembly presents the question to be discussed in the Assembly which will decide whether it will confirm or repeal the decision recommending detention.

The Assembly establishes permanent and temporary working bodies. Permanent working bodies are a working form of the Assembly defined by the Rules of Procedure for the whole mandate of the Assembly, whereas the temporary working bodies are established for the execution of special assignments only.

Besides the holders of legislative power, the Constitution also establishes an executive power divided between the Government and the President of the Republic. The Government is the main part of the executive power and creator of the policy for the execution of the laws and other acts. The Government is elected by the Assembly and is responsible to the Assembly. The North Macedonia's Government is a collective executive body composed of the president and ministers. The Government must have the confidence of the Assembly, and if the Government loses their confidence

22 See: Gusheva, 2009.
23 See: OSCE, 2020.

by a majority vote of all MPs, the Government is obliged to submit its resignation. The Government cannot survive politically without the confidence of the Assembly. The incumbent Government remains on duty until the election of a new Government. If the president of the Government dismisses more than one third of the initial composition of the Government, the Assembly follows the same procedure as that for the election of a new Government. These constitutional provisions, among others, present the opportunity for the temporary reconstruction of the Government, in order to enable the Government to work more competently and efficiently. The Assembly controls the work of the Government with MPs questions, interpellation, and with the instrument for confidence voting. These instruments are called instruments for parliamentary control and have a preventive effect because they stimulate the Government and other public office holders to exercise their duties carefully and conscientiously. Parliamentary control is closely connected with political and legal responsibility.[24]

On the other side, the President of the Republic is the Chief of State, representing the state within the country and abroad. The President is Commander-in-Chief of the Macedonian Armed Forces as well as the President of the Security Council of the country. The President nominates a mandator to constitute the Government, appoints and dismisses by decree ambassadors and other diplomatic representatives of the Republic abroad, accepts the credentials and letters of recall of foreign diplomatic representatives, grants pardons in accordance with the law, etc. The President concludes international agreements in the name of the state and may propose to the Assembly the declaration of a state of war and state of emergency. If the Assembly cannot meet, the decision to establish the existence of a state of emergency is made by the President of the Republic, who submits it to the Assembly for confirmation as soon as it can convene.

The President is elected in general and direct elections, by secret ballot, for a term of five years and can be re-elected for one additional mandate. The duty of the President is incompatible with the performance of any other public office, profession, or appointment in a political party. The relationship between the President, the Government, and the North Macedonia's Assembly are defined by the Constitution and its political structure. Each institution plays a distinct role, but they are interconnected through the separation of powers and a system of checks and balances. The President should maintain neutral relations with both the Government and the Assembly. While the President can influence political processes, especially through the appointment of the Prime Minister, he/she is not actively involved in day-to-day governance or in the legislative process. The President is a largely ceremonial figure, with a role in formal appointments and foreign affairs, and interacts with both the Assembly and

24 See: New York University School of Law, no date.

Government within the constraints of the Constitution. In essence, relations between the President, Government, and Assembly are based on the principles of cooperation and oversight within a system of separation of powers.[25]

The independent judiciary is a constitutional principle in the country and is a fundamental part of the country's democratic system, responsible for ensuring justice, and upholding the rule of law. It operates independently from both the executive and legislative branches, and its structure is designed to ensure a fair and impartial judicial process. The Macedonian judiciary is constitutionally independent, meaning that judges make decisions based on the law and the facts of each case, without interference from the executive or legislative branches. The Judicial Council is tasked with safeguarding the independence of the judiciary. It is responsible for appointing, promoting, and disciplining judges, and ensuring that judicial officers perform their duties impartially. The judiciary in the country is organised into several types of courts, each with specific roles and jurisdictions. The Macedonian court system is consisted of a Supreme Court of the Republic, being the highest court, 27 basic courts, four appellation courts, and two administrative courts. The Constitution foresees also a Constitutional Court as the highest court concerning constitutional matters, responsible for ensuring that laws and other legal acts comply with the Constitution, and reviewing the constitutionality of laws, decrees, and regulations. It is composed of nine judges, who are appointed by the Assembly for a nine-year term. The Supreme Court is the highest court of appeal in the country which ensures the uniform application of laws and decisions across the country.

2.3. Fundamental Rights and Freedoms as an Element of the Constitutional Identity

Another element of North Macedonia's Constitutional Identity are the fundamental rights and freedoms belonging to all citizens, which places a strong emphasis on the protection of human dignity, equality before the law, and the prevention of discrimination. The 1991 Constitution connects basic human rights and freedoms with the concept of the individual and citizen. Human rights and freedoms are not administered and permitted, but confirmed and guaranteed by the Constitution. The National Catalogue of Human Rights in the country is an integral part of the Constitution, primarily contained in the First Chapter titled "Basic Provisions," in which, among other provisions, the fundamental values of the Macedonian Constitutional order are established. The first of these fundamental values of the constitutional order of the Republic is the recognition of the basic freedoms and rights of the individual and citizen, acknowledged by international law and established by the Constitution.

25 See: Klimovski et al., 2009.

In addition to these, other fundamental values of the constitutional order include the free expression of national identity, the appropriate and fair representation of citizens belonging to all communities, the rule of law, separation of powers, political pluralism, free direct elections, legal protection of property, humanism, social justice, and solidarity, respect for generally accepted norms of international law, and others. Furthermore, in the normative part of the Constitution, human freedoms and rights are regulated in a separate chapter entitled "Basic Freedoms and Rights of the Individual and Citizen," which includes Articles 9 to 60 of the Constitution. Considering that the total number of articles in the Constitution is 134, it can be concluded that more than one third of the total number of articles is dedicated to human freedoms and rights and their protection, which indicates that this matter occupies a central place in the Constitution. The freedoms and rights of the individual and the citizen in the Constitution are systematised according to the universally accepted division of civil and political rights (regulated by Articles 9 to 29) and economic-social rights (regulated by Articles 30 to 49). The remaining provisions of this chapter are systematised under a separate point 3. Guarantees of basic freedoms and rights, and point 4. Foundations of economic relations.[26]

Although Chapter II of the Constitution, which contains the provisions on human freedoms and rights, is titled "Basic Freedoms and Rights of the Individual and Citizen," this should not be understood to mean that the Constitution regulates only a part of the freedoms and rights, or that certain freedoms and rights are established by law. This is because the national catalogue of freedoms and rights contained in the Constitution is quite comprehensive and is regulated in accordance with international documents in the field of human freedoms and rights, i.e., in accordance with the international catalogue of freedoms and rights. Certainly, certain freedoms and rights, such as the rights of national minorities, in addition to internationally accepted guarantees, are regulated in the domestic Constitution in accordance with the specificities of North Macedonia. Considering the fact that human freedoms and rights are constitutional matters, it follows that new rights cannot be established by law, nor can constitutionally established freedoms and rights be narrowed, restricted, or revoked. The law can regulate the manner of their realisation and in certain cases, the conditions under which they can be exercised. This is confirmed by the fact that the Constitution, in several provisions, stipulates that the exercise of certain rights and freedoms should be regulated by law.

The Constitution acknowledges the existence of several ethnic groups within the country, such as Albanians, Turks, Roma, Serbs, and others, and grants them complex rights and freedoms, as well as its protection. From a legal and historical perspective, the position and protection of the rights of national minorities in the

26 See: CECC, 2018.

country originates with point 4 of the Decision for Building Up Yugoslavia on the federal principle adopted at the second meeting of the AVNOJ, according to which the national minorities in Yugoslavia were entitled to all national rights and freedoms. This decision was the basis, not only for the cultural autonomy of the minorities, but it was more specifically a framework for the future constitutional and legal regulation of the minority's rights with greater state and legal importance. The socialist Macedonian Constitutions from 1963 and 1974, which for the minorities used the term nationality/national minorities, broadened the elements for the realisation of this equality, among which the most important guarantees were: 1. The right of every national minority to freely use their own language, to express and develop their culture, and to establish institutions through which they can realise these rights; 2. The equality of the languages and the alphabets of the national minorities with the Macedonian language and the use of the alphabets in public areas where the national minorities live; 3. The obligation of the municipalities and of the Republic to ensure the development of education, the press, radio, television, and cultural activities in the languages of the national minorities; 4. The right of national minorities to use their flags, for which a special law was adopted; 5. The proclamation of the decisions and other important acts of the bodies of the municipalities in which the national minorities live, as well as the posting of inscriptions in their languages in those municipalities; 6. The right of the exercising their rights and the fulfilment of their duties, also in procedures before the state bodies and public services; and 7. The right of the members of the national minorities to an education in their language in the places where they live. The 1991 Macedonian Constitution expresses a continuity establishing the position and the rights of the national minorities within a developed political system.[27]

2.4. Secularism as an Element of North Macedonia's Constitutional Identity

North Macedonia is defined as a secular state in the Constitution, meaning that religion is separate from the state and its institutions, guaranteeing the freedom of religion for all citizens while maintaining the integrity of the state as neutral in matters

27 See: Orlović, 2015.

of faith.[28] This principle ensures that religious groups do not have a formal role in the governance and in the political institutions of the country and *vice versa*, and that all citizens, regardless of their religion, are treated equally before the law. This secular nature of the state reflects North Macedonia's diverse religious landscape, with Orthodox Christianity, Islam, Catholic, and other faiths coexisting. The 1991 Constitution separates the religious communities of the state and in addition to this it stipulates that no "state" religion may exist which would attain a privileged status. All religious communities and religious groups are equal in the constitutional and legal treatment of their activities and rituals. The expression of faith as a social reality, deeply rooted in the freedom of the determination of the individual, is realised by the religious communities with the help of their cadre for whose education they can establish religious schools, which are not included in the public educational system.

Religious groups and communities are free to establish, not only religious schools, but also other social and charitable organisations. Indeed, secularism is an important value embedded in the Macedonian Constitutional Identity. Public institutions, including the judiciary, the police, the military, and government agencies, operate in a secular manner and are prohibited from taking any religious position or discriminating based on religious beliefs. The neutrality of the state ensures that all citizens, regardless of their religious or non-religious affiliations, are treated equally before the law. By ensuring that no single religion is favoured by the state, secularism fosters a culture of tolerance and respect for diverse beliefs and practices. Individuals are free to follow any religion or none at all, creating an environment in which people can live according to their beliefs without state interference. In the national catalogue, the freedom of religion is guaranteed by Article 19 of the Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia, which guarantees freedom of religion. It guarantees the free and public expression of faith, either individually or communally with others. The Macedonian Orthodox Church, as well as the Islamic Religious Community in Macedonia, the Catholic Church, the Evangelical-Methodist Church, the Jewish Community, and other religious communities and groups are separate from the state and are equal before the law. The Macedonian Orthodox Church, as well as the Islamic Religious Community in Macedonia, the Catholic Church, the Evangelical-Methodist

28 According to the Constitution of North Macedonia all religious communities and groups are separate from the state and equal before the law. A constitutional amendment of 2001 lists five religious communities: the Macedonian Orthodox Church (MOC), the Islamic Religious Community of Macedonia (ICM), the Catholic Church, the Evangelical Methodist Church and the Jewish community. This clearly shows that there is no state religion in Macedonia. According to the data of the Commission for Relationships with Religious Communities and Religious Groups, except for the five aforementioned churches and religious communities, there are 25 other registered religious organizations for a total of 30 registered religious organizations that operate in the country (of which 15 churches, 7 religious communities and 8 religious groups). See: Metaj-Stojanova, 2015.

Church, the Jewish Community, and other religious communities and religious groups are free to establish religious schools and social and charitable institutions in a manner provided by law. Freedom of religion, as one aspect of the freedom of belief, conscience, thought, and public expression of thought, according to Article 54 of the Constitution, cannot be limited. From the judicial practice of the Constitutional Court of North Macedonia related to this right, the Decision U. br. 202/2008 of April 15th 2009, which abolished religious education in primary schools, stands out.

2.5. National Symbols as Elements of the Constitutional Identity

The Constitution includes provisions for the protection of national symbols, such as the flag, the anthem, and the coat of arms. These symbols are an important part of the country's constitutional identity and represent the unity of the people.[29] Additionally, the Constitution places an emphasis on the protection of the country's cultural and historical heritage, which includes the recognition of significant events and figures in Macedonia's history. These symbols, events and figures are serving as representations of the state's sovereignty, unity, and national heritage. By safeguarding these symbols, the Constitution underscores their role in shaping the national consciousness and fostering a sense of pride and identity among the citizens. The state flag is an important national symbol that represents the country's sovereignty and identity. It features a red background with a golden sun, symbolising the freedom and prosperity of the nation. The Constitutional Identity is reflected in the flag's importance as a representation of the country's sovereignty and unity, and it is protected as an enduring symbol of national pride. The national anthem, "Denes nad Makedonija" ("Today over Macedonia"), is a symbol of national unity, pride, and sovereignty. It reflects the country's struggle for independence and the aspirations of its people. The Constitution recognises the anthem as a part of the national heritage and an essential symbol of the national identity. The Macedonian coat of arms represents the country's national sovereignty and is another symbol of constitutional identity. It incorporates motifs from the Macedonian national heritage, including elements that represent the country's historical past and cultural diversity reflecting the collective memory of the nation, its struggles for independence, and its cultural diversity. As such, the protection of these symbols reinforces the importance of preserving the country's historical and cultural identity. National symbols are unifying forces that foster solidarity among citizens and serve as visible expressions of the shared values and ideals of the Macedonian people. They promote a sense of belonging, pride, and patriotism.

29 See: ETH Zurich, 2004.

2.6. International Law as Part of North Macedonia's Constitutional Identity

North Macedonia's Constitutional Identity recognises the importance of international law and states that international treaties ratified by the country are a part of its legal system, thus ensuring that North Macedonia's laws are in line with international agreements on human rights, environmental protections, and other key areas. Macedonian Constitution is the supreme law of the country, and constitutional identity is tied to the supremacy of the document. It serves as the ultimate legal authority, ensuring that all laws and government actions comply with the foundational norms and principles set forth by the Constitution. The Constitutional Identity includes the mechanisms for interpreting, protecting, and enforcing the Constitution. On the other hand, the fundamental value of the Macedonian constitutional order is respecting the generally accepted norms of international law. By belonging to the international community, every state, both unitary and federal, comes under the rules or standards of behaviour established in the community. The Macedonian legal system follows a monistic approach to international law, meaning that international law and domestic law are considered as parts of a single legal system. According to this approach, once international treaties are ratified by the state institutions, they automatically become part of its national legal order and are directly applicable without the need for further domestic legislation. This principle is enshrined in the Constitution, particularly in Article 118, which states that "ratified international agreements are part of the internal legal order." As a result, these international treaties and agreements are considered binding and have legal force within the national legal framework. In cases of conflict between international law and domestic law, it is international law, particularly human rights treaties, which generally takes precedence, reflecting the country's commitment to its international obligations. North Macedonia's monistic approach allows for the seamless integration of international law into the domestic legal system, underlining the country's adherence to its international commitments and ensuring that international norms are directly applicable in national legal proceedings.

2.7. Democracy, Rule of Law and Separation of Power

Constitutional identity is directly linked to democracy, i.e. with the concept of citizen-identity for purposes of integration. In this sense, democracy is a core principle of the Macedonian Constitution, political system and identity. As a parliamentary republic, the power in the country ultimately rests with the people, exercised through elected representatives. Democracy cannot exist effectively without the rule of law and separation of powers as fundamental principles. That is why these principles are

enshrined in the Macedonian Constitution, aiming to ensure a democratic system of governance, safeguarding individual and collective rights and freedoms, and preventing the concentration of power in any one branch of government. The rule of law guarantees that all citizens, public officials, and institutions are subject to the law, are equal before the law, and that their rights and freedoms are protected. One of the most important elements of the rule of law in the Macedonian Constitutional system is the principle of judicial independence which means that the judiciary operates independently from the executive and legislative branches, ensuring that legal disputes are resolved fairly and impartially. The rule of law also emphasises the right of individuals to seek justice and have access to a fair trial. The government and its institutions are required to operate transparently, with mechanisms for accountability in place, including oversight by the parliament and independent agencies. The separation of powers ensures that power is not concentrated in one branch, but separated between the President of the Republic and the Government, as executive branches, Assembly as the legislative branch and courts as the judicial branch of governance. All these powers are exercised by a separate institution, which do not exist in a hierarchical relationship with one other. Judicial independence is an integral part of the division of power solely because it prevents the formation of inadmissible ties. Its purpose is to minimise intolerable influences on the courts' decisions of individual cases, especially by the other two power branches. All three mentioned principles and values are fundamental for a democratic and accountable system of governance. However, challenges such as political interference in the judiciary and corruption hinder the full realisation of these principles. Continued reforms and efforts to strengthen Macedonian institutions are crucial to improve the functioning of these democratic principles.

3.
Conclusion

Constitutional identity means constitutionally and nationally defined identity. While some authors believe that the Constitution is a mere reflection of a collection of beliefs, positions and values shaped throughout the history and culture of the given community, which actually means that the Constitution is a recognition of pre-existing identities, others believe that the Constitution, culture and identity all exist in a mutual correlation, i.e. influence each other as a result of the direct influence coming from different social aspects. This makes the Constitution serve as a recognition and creation of new identities. The constitutional identity of a country is, in fact composed of elements that create the political identity of the community, such as: the citizens' awareness of the need of having a distinct identity, the sense of

belonging to a particular community, identification with the values and principles of the specific political system, the sense of joint interest and common welfare, etc. Therefore, Constitutional Identity can be viewed from a formal, as well as an informal aspect. The formal aspect, by default, is linked with the citizens as direct holders of sovereignty, who are at the same time holders of constitutional identity; and the informal (cognitive and affective) aspect is explained through a set of beliefs and values embraced by the citizens of a given country, who share a specific identity.

By gaining independence after the referendum held on 8th September 1991, The Republic of North Macedonia started to build its own constitutional identity as an independent and sovereign country. The Constitution is comprised on the generally accepted principle of democratic states, according to which the Republic is based on the sovereignty of the citizens, and that sovereignty belongs to everyone, regardless of their national, religious, social or other orientation. By adopting the concept of civic sovereignty, the 1991 Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia[30] rejected the concept that existed until then from the 1974 Constitution of the ex-Socialist Republic of Macedonia as part of the ex-SFR Yugoslavia, and in which the position of the citizen was based on the concept of national state, i.e. on the realisation of civic rights as segments of national collectives and of "equal nations and nationalities."

The 1991 Constitution rejected the old concept and joined the group of modern constitutions which base a constitutional identity on their citizens' sovereignty. The 1991 Constitution put an end to the constitutional continuity of the former Yugoslav Federation and gave a completely new dimension, free from the numerous ideologies and values present in the previous Constitution (for example, socialist democracy, joint labour system, system of delegates, working class, etc).

The elements of the Macedonian Constitutional Identity are related to and reflect the country's unique history, democratisation, pluralisation, cultural diversity, and aspirations for international integration. They are defined by the Constitution, which guarantees fundamental rights, democratic governance with the rule of law and separation of powers, democratic and accountable institutions, equality among ethnic groups, secularism, the protection of sovereignty, and the territorial integrity of the country and other values. The North Macedonia's Constitutional Identity is made up of both the historical context of the state and its modern-day international commitments.

30 See: Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia, no date.

Bibliography

- Bahturidze, Z. Vasilieva, N. (2020) 'Problems of implementing the sovereignty of small Balkan countries on the example of North Macedonia', *Balkan Social Science Review*, 2020/16. https://doi.org/10.46763/BSSR2016213b.
- *Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia (1991) Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia,* No. 52/91 [Online]. Available at: https://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/19D704B29EC040A1968D7996AA0F1A56.pdf (Accessed: 30 December 2024).
- Daskalovski, Ž. (2006) *Walking on the Edge: Consolidating Multiethnic Macedonia 1989–2004*. Chapel Hill: NC.
- Dodovski, I. (2012) 'Pride and perplexities: Identity politics in Macedonia and its theatrical refractions' in Hudson, R., Bowman, G. (eds.) *After Yugoslavia: Identities and Politics within the Successor States*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 92–104. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230305137_6.
- European Commission (no date) *EU enlargement: The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia* [Online]. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/candidatecountries/the_former_yugoslav_republic_of_macedonia/relation/index_en.htm (Accessed: 10 June 2023).
- Gligorov, K. (2006) '15 years of independent Republic of Macedonia – Reflections and prospects', *Crossroads: The Macedonian Foreign Policy Journal*, 1(1), pp. 7–9.
- Gusheva, S. (2009) *Legislative activity of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia 1991–2009*. Skopje: Vinsent Grafika.
- Kambovski, V. (2014) 'ASNOM: Exercise of the right of the Macedonian people to self-determination' in I. Katardgiev, V. Kambovski, D. Gjorgiev, M. Dimitrievski, T. Chepreganov (eds.) *Proceedings of the Scientific Meeting on the Occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the First Assembly of ASNOM*. Skopje: MANU [Online]. Available at: http://manu.edu.mk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/ASNOM.pdf. (Accessed: 12 June 2023).
- Karakamisheva-Jovanovska, T. (2019) *Macedonian constitutional story* [Online]. Available at: https://www.pf.ukim.edu.mk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/9.Prof.-Karakamisheva-Jovanovska.pdf (Accessed: 7 January 2023).
- Karakamisheva-Jovanovska, T. (2024) 'Constitutional and legal aspects of the processes of (de)nationalisation and privatisation of land and of state-owned enterprises – Macedonian examples of controversial politicisation and elitisation', *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Law*, 19(37). https://doi.org/10.21029/JAEL.2024.37.227.

- Karakamisheva-Jovanovska, T. (2025) 'Macedonian constitutional identity versus "ever closer union" concept – Challenges, dilemmas, and perspectives' in Szilágyi, J.E., Marinkás, Gy. (eds.) *Maastricht 30: A Central European Perspective*. Miskolc–Budapest: Studies of the Central European Professors' Network, pp. 131–160. https://doi.org/10.54237/profnet.2025.jeszgymmcep_5.
- Klimovski, S. (2000) *Politics and institutions*. Taiwan: Linking Publishing Company.
- Klimovski, S. Deskoska, R. and Karakamiseva-Jovanovska, T. (2009) *Constitutional law*. Skopje: Prosvetno Delo AD.
- Orlović, S. (2015) 'Consociational experiments in the Western Balkans: Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia', *New Balkan Politics*, 2015/17, pp. 29–50.
- Pardew, W.J. (2011) 'The diplomatic history of the Ohrid Framework Agreement' in Blerim, R. (ed.) *The Ohrid Framework Agreement: Ten Years Later*. Tetovo: South East European University, pp. 21–23.
- Ragaru, N. (2008) *Macedonia: Between Ohrid and Brussels* [Online]. Available at: https://spire.sciencespo.fr/hdl:/2441/1d1vlhp8p7t3k7k972q97ek4g/resources/macedonia-between-ohrid-and-brussels-long-version.pdf (Accessed: 5 September 2022).
- Rubeli, A. (2001) 'Threats to sovereignty: The case of Macedonia in the 1990s', *JVF Conference Paper*. Institut für the Wissenschaften vom Menschen.
- Sandevski, T. (2009) *External democracy promotion in post-conflict zones: Evidence from case studies: Macedonia*. Berlin: Freie Universität. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1652123.
- Sielska, Z. (2021) 'Conflicts and national identity and changes in the Constitution of the Republic of North Macedonia after 1991', *Przegląd Prawa Konstytucyjnego*, 6(64). https://doi.org/10.15804/ppk.2021.06.15.
- Vankovska, B. (2007) 'The role of the Ohrid Framework Agreement and the peace process in Macedonia' in Bianchini, S., Marko, J., Nation, C. and Uvalić, M. (eds.) *Regional Cooperation, Peace Enforcement, and the Role of the Treaties in the Balkans*. Ravenna: Longo Editore, pp. 41–63.

Online sources

- Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia (no date) Official website [Online]. Available at: http://www.sobranie.mk/en/default-en.asp?ItemID=9F7452BF44EE814B8DB897C1858B71FF (Accessed: 17 January 2025).
- CECC (2018) National Report: North Macedonia [Online]. Available at: https://www.cecc20172020.org/fileadmin/Dokumenty/Pdf/Questionnaire/National_Reports/English/North_MacedoniaQuestionnaire_XVIII_Congress_of_CECC_eng.pdf (Accessed: 18 January 2025).

- ETH Zurich (2004) DP33 Report [Online]. Available at: https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/18433/DP33.pdf (Accessed: 13 January 2025).
- Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2018) Final Agreement for the settlement of the differences as described in United Nations Security Council Resolutions 817 (1993) and 845 (1993), the termination of the Interim Accord of 1995, and the establishment of a strategic partnership between the Parties [Online]. Available at: https://www.mfa.gr/images/docs/eidikathemata/agreement.pdf (Accessed: 12 August 2025).
- International IDEA (2009) Democracy, Conflict and Human Security Handbook [Online]. Available at: https://www.idea.int/sites/default/files/publications/democracy-conflict-and-human-security-handbook-volume-1.pdf (Accessed: 12 June 2023).
- New Balkan Politics (2015) Issue 17 [Online]. Available at: https://www.newbalkanpolitics.org.mk/cat/issue-17 (Accessed: 19 January 2025).
- New York University School of Law (no date) Globalex: North Macedonia [Online]. Available at: https://www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex/north_macedonia1.html (Accessed: 17 January 2025).
- Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (2020) Annex 2 Report on North Macedonia [Online]. Available at: https://legislationline.org/sites/default/files/documents/e0/357_GEN_MKD_9Nov2020_Annex2_en.pdf (Accessed: 16 January 2025).
- PRIF (2009) PRIF Report 91 [Online]. Available at: https://www.prif.org/fileadmin/Daten/Publikationen/Prif_Reports/2009/prif91.pdf (Accessed: 11 January 2025).
- Sciendo (2015) South East European University Review article [Online]. Available at: https://intapi.sciendo.com/pdf/10.1515/seeur-2015-0019 (Accessed: 17 January 2025).
- Sciendo (2015) South East European University Review article [Online]. Available at: https://intapi.sciendo.com/pdf/10.1515/seeur-2015-0019 (Accessed: 17 January 2025).
- United Nations (2018) Agreement registered under UNTS No. 55013 [Online]. Available at: https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/No%20Volume/55013/Part/I-55013-08000002804f5d3c.pdf (Accessed: 12 August 2025).
- Vision Journal (2019) Sui Generis article [Online]. Available at: https://visionjournal.edu.mk/suigeneris/index.php/sg/article/view/20/18 (Accessed: 16 January 2025).